

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

1345



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 Spink Arms Hotel  
other names/site number Lionel Artis Center

2. Location

street & number 410 North Meridian Street N/A  not for publication  
city or town Indianapolis N/A  vicinity  
state Indiana code IN county Marion code 097 zip code 46204

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 forth in 36CFR 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.)  
Signature of certifying official/Title C. St Date 10-25-01  
State or Federal agency and bureau Indiana D-SHPO

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 Edson A Beall Date of Action 12/7/01

Spink Arms Hotel  
Name of Property

Marion IN  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	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)

DOMESTIC: Hotel

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Tudor Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation BRICK
- walls BRICK
- STONE: Limestone
- roof SYNTHETICS: Vinyl
- other

**Narrative Description**

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

**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**

(Mark "x" in all the 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)

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1919-1922

**Significant Dates**

1919, 1922

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Spink, E.G. Company, builder

Eldridge, William K., architect

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographic 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):

- 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:

Indiana State Library & Indianapolis Public Library

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

16	572090	4402430
Zone	Easting	Northing

3 

Zone	Easting	Northing

2 

--	--	--

4 

--	--	--

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 William L. Selm  
organization for Meridian Renaissance, LP date 01-05-2000  
street & number 401 East 41st Street telephone 317-283-7820  
city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46205

**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 Meridian Renaissance Associates, LP  
street & number 1030 North College Avenue telephone 317-705-0384  
city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46202

**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 listings. 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 20503.

SPINK ARMS HOTEL

---

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Exterior

The Spink Arms Hotel is situated on the west side of the 400 block of North Meridian Street, three blocks north of Monument Circle. It occupies most of the southeast quarter of City Square 15. The Spink Arms is eight stories in height resting on a full basement, and it is visually striking, consisting of two identical towers linked together by a one-story connector at ground level. The building is free standing with all of its exterior walls exposed. (Photos #1,2,3 & 4) The Spink Arms is flanked on the south by the seven-story historic (1895) Blacherne apartment building (listed NR) and a small parking lot on the north. Behind (west) the Spink Arms is a four-story parking garage built in 1922.

The Spink Arms is constructed of a reinforced concrete frame with concrete and tile floors and tile walls. The curtain walls are hollow tiles faced with one course of red-brown brick. Limestone details are found throughout the facade as windowsills, parapet coping, window lintels, quoins, buttress caps and gables, and cornices. The entire first floor of the main (east) facade is faced with smooth, plain ashlar veneer blocks.

The building is a good example of commercial residential Tudor Revival Style. This style is apparent with the twin four-story oriels on each tower, the crenelated parapet, decorative buttresses, and the pattern of repeating full length bays on the north and south facades of both towers. Decorative heraldic stone panels complete the Tudor Revival look.

The twin towers are nearly identical. The first floor facade is a monolithic horizontal band of smooth, unadorned ashlar limestone punctuated by aluminum framed plate glass windows and doors. The centered entrance is located in the connector and is protected by a trapezoidal canopy. The tower bases reflect the bay articulation of the upper floors with a centered entrance flanked by two display windows. Above the windows at the lintel height is a hood belt course extending across the tower bases and touching the entrance canopy. The smooth ashlar extends up to the window sill level of the second story and serves as the parapet above the centered main entrance above the canopy. The aforementioned ashlar entrance and fenestration were the result of a remodeling campaign of the mid-1950s when the Spink Arms Hotel was renamed the Continental Hotel. (Photo #4)

The main facades of the towers are divided into three bays articulated by four piers. The two flanking bays of each tower have a four-story oriel serving the four floors between and including the third and sixth floors. The oriels are three-sided with a window on each wall. The oriels are

SPINK ARMS HOTEL

---

highlighted with limestone quoins, bases, mullions and entablatured caps. The second story windows are tripartite. The windows above the oriels are paired at the seventh and eighth floors.

The centered narrow bay between the oriels serves the stair landings with a window at each landing except at the second story which has a pair of French doors with an iron balconet. (Photo #5) A decorative limestone heraldic panel is set above the top landing window. The decorative parapet continues the Tudor Revival styling with the pier tops and brickwork profile; crenelated parapet and Tudor molded belt course at the parapet base. (Photo #6) The landing fenestrations retain their original steel eight-over-eight sash windows. (Photo #5)

The north and south facades of both towers are nearly identical with a pattern of projecting bay windows, buttresses, and crenelated parapets. (Photos # 3 & 7) The exception on these walls are the boarded up first floor window on the north wall of the north tower where a bay window existed until its removal in 1972; and the south wall of the south tower has some bays that do not reach the ground and the wall is stuccoed from grade to the window sill level of the first floor. Stucco covers the wall where a one-story commercial wing originally connected the Spink Arms to the Blacherne apartment building to the south. Stairwell windows have their original steel sashes and light configuration.

The west (rear) walls of the towers face the alley, Bird Street, and are flat with no projections, divided into five bays. Some of the service openings serving the basement have been bricked up. As with the main facade, the centered bay windows serving the stairwell are the originals with their awning type steel sashes with eight-over-eight lights.

The roofs of the towers are flat but are pierced by vents and air conditioning units. Each tower has three elevator and stairwell penthouses. The roof of the first floor connector has flat and gabled portions. All of the roofs are covered with a membrane.

The remodeling campaign of 1972 resulted in the wholesale replacement of all window sashes, except where noted at the stairwells; the reconfiguration of all rooms; and the replacement or covering of all original materials except as noted hereafter. The 1972 remodeling also resulted in the removal of the one-story commercial wing to the south abutting the Blacherne. The first floor housed a number of meeting rooms, coffee shop, beauty parlor, lounge, kitchen as well as dining and assembly rooms. Newspaper articles mention a Crystal Ballroom, but no specific evidence remains since the 1972 remodeling. The alteration of the main facade of the first floor was the result of a remodeling campaign in the 1950s, when the flat Moderne character replaced the Tudor Gothic piers and arches.

SPINK ARMS HOTEL

---

Interior

The Spink Arms currently contains 248 units of either studio or one-bedroom size. Every unit had a kitchen facility and a full bathroom. The rooms and central corridors were entirely reconfigured during the 1972 remodeling campaign. (Photos #8 & 9) The results were the loss of all hardware, woodwork, fixture and finishes. Only the projecting bay windows have retained their original woodwork casings. (Photo #8) The steel staircases remain intact and functioning. (Photo #10)

The public spaces of the first floor have likewise been remodeled with room reconfiguration and the removal or covering of all original wall, ceiling, and floor finishes. (Photo #11) In the center assembly area, below the lobby, some evidence remains of the building's former elegance. Marble that continues from the lobby area is on the floor. Above the suspended ceiling tile in the center assembly area is the underside of a skylight roof with its glass block and steel framework. (Photo #12) This skylight roof is in disrepair and it was covered with a roofing membrane during the 1972 remodeling. The basement with its raw concrete columns, walls and floor, and the tile block ceiling is intact.

Despite the radical transformation of the interior from a market rate apartment hotel of the 1920s to public housing for the elderly fifty years later, the Spink Arms still has a commanding presence on Meridian Street with its two Tudor towers facing the Indiana World War Memorial and North Meridian Street, the primary artery of Indianapolis. The current (1999-2000) renovation is a certified tax act project which will result in a more sympathetic interior reconfiguration and first floor facade.

SPINK ARMS HOTEL

---

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Spink Arms Hotel is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. Spink Arms is a significant example of the work of Edgar George Spink, a significant builder and developer in Indianapolis' past; and it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type and period. Spink, the visionary housing developer of the First World War period and the 1920s, is credited with changing Indianapolis with the development of numerous large apartment buildings and introducing the residential hotel as transitional housing.

The Spink Arms Hotel occupies the site of two substantial nineteenth century houses removed to make way for the hotel. The south tower was constructed in 1919 as an apartment hotel building named the "Spink Arms." This apartment hotel was one of many multi-unit residential buildings in the ever expanding portfolio of the E.G. Spink Company. The north tower and the one-story link connecting both towers were constructed in 1921-1922. The Spink Arms was noted as the "first commercial hotel of magnitude north of Ohio Street."

The north tower was intended to provide rooms for transients as well as commercial tenant space on the first floor offering goods and services to guests and the general public. The center lobby served both the apartment tenants and hotel guests. As completed in 1922, the twin towered hotel contained 237 apartments of which seventy were for transient use. The Spink Arms Hotel was operated by the Spink Hotel Company, a subsidiary of E.G. Spink Company. Spink Hotel Company also operated the nearby Haugh Hotel at 127 East Michigan Street, and later the Hotel Spink near Union Station. The hotel knowledge of the E. G. Spink Company was later employed in the development, design, and construction of the Marott Hotel two miles north at 2625 North Meridian Street in 1926. The Spink Arms was Spink's prototype for the Marott Hotel, also an apartment hotel, with its twin towers linked by a ground floor, one-story connector accommodating public space, commercial tenants and an elaborate centered front entrance. Spink was an original co-owner of the Marott as well as its developer and builder. The Marott was listed in the National Register in 1982.

The Spink Arms Hotel was constructed immediately following the First World War when Indianapolis was beginning a growth spurt and enjoying the general healthy economic climate of the nation. The city's population grew steadily throughout the nineteenth century with the coming of industrialization and the railroads, and this growth continued into the twentieth century with the city's population at 105,436 in 1890 growing to 169,164 in 1900; 233,650 in 1910 and increasing to 314,194 in 1920 and growing to 364,161 in 1930. The 1920s saw the rebuilding and expansion of the central business district. Small nineteenth century commercial buildings and office buildings were razed to make way for larger office and commercial buildings, while

SPINK ARMS HOTEL

---

nineteenth century houses along Meridian and other north-south streets were razed to be replaced by commercial buildings. The Spink Arms Hotel was unique at the time as it was a substantial hotel with commercial space intruding into the 400 block which heretofore had been strictly residential as represented by the mid-nineteenth century houses and the turn of the century apartment buildings. The Spink Arms Hotel could immediately satisfy some of the growing demand for housing, which was created by the growing city population and the growing central business district offering more employment opportunities.

By 1925 the stately apartment house the Blacherne, the city's oldest apartment building (built 1895) immediately to the south, was renamed "Spink Arms Annex." The Spink Arms Hotel was sold to the Sheraton Hotel in 1953 which changed the name to "Hotel Continental" in June of that year. In 1954 the hotel was purchased by Max Goldberg, a local real estate holder who embarked on a "top-to-bottom" renovation in 1955-1956. This remodeling campaign resulted in the new Moderne facade of the entire first floor and the addition of the canopy.

Change came to the Spink Arms in 1966 when the Indianapolis Housing Authority purchased it and it changed from a market rate apartment hotel to public housing apartments for the elderly. More drastic changes followed with the radical remodeling in 1972-1974. The revamped hotel was renamed the Lionel F. Artis Apartments in 1974 in honor of the original manager of the Lockefield Garden Apartments on Indiana Avenue. In 1998, after over thirty years of service as public housing, the building was vacated and sold to be redeveloped again for market-rate apartments.

The Spink Arms Hotel is the work of Edgar George Spink, a visionary who was the uncrowned apartment king of Indianapolis of the 1920s. Spink was responsible for transforming the city with the moniker "city of homes" with rapid construction of apartment buildings of varying shapes, sizes and styles, meeting the challenges of the post World War housing shortage. Spink also pioneered the apartment hotel as he constructed not only the Spink Arms but also the 1926 landmark Marott Hotel (at 2625 North Meridian Street).

Spink (1867-1927) was a native of Washington, Indiana, the son of a druggist there. After studies at St. Mary's College in Kentucky and work as a telegrapher, Spink moved to Lexington, Kentucky, where he worked in the Post Office and taught in a commercial college followed by work in banking and investment. In 1904, Spink moved to Indianapolis, where his parents and two sisters had relocated. He came here to build the Fletcher Sanatorium. Spink became president of the Home Building and Realty Company which bought and sold real estate, stocks, bonds and fire insurance and built "homes on easy payments." In 1912 Spink founded the E.G. Spink Company which described itself as "home builders and general contractors" and began

SPINK ARMS HOTEL

---

building apartment buildings in 1914. Spink was credited for introducing to Indianapolis the idea of the small apartment, essentially a studio apartment with private bathroom and kitchenette.

Spink's talent and energy were spent on meeting the insatiable demand for apartments in the immediate and near downtown area. He is credited with the construction of more than sixty apartment buildings in Indianapolis. Spink was a pioneer in real estate development in that E.G. Spink Company had subsidiary companies to develop, construct and manage hotels and apartments in Indianapolis. His many apartment buildings all bore the name "Spink Apartments" centered near downtown or farther north to 38th Street. Most of his apartment buildings are still standing and functioning, such as The Lodge at 829 North Pennsylvania Street and the Spink-Jefferson (now the Renaissance Tower at 230 East 9th Street) both of which are listed in National Register as part of the Apartments and Flats of Downtown Indianapolis Thematic District, listed September 15, 1983. E.G. Spink Company was also responsible for six apartment buildings included in the proposed Shortridge Meridian Street Apartments Historic District (National Register, listed 3/15/00).

Spink died in 1927 after selling many of his apartment buildings to rival apartment builder, developer and manager T.A. Moynahan. Spink's impact on Indianapolis' built environment was recognized at the time of his death. This success was noted in a lengthy obituary and editorial in the Indianapolis Star. Spink was successful in understanding the housing needs and lifestyles of bachelors, single working women, aged couples and newlyweds in the context of the building boom and economic growth in Indianapolis in the interwar years.

The Spink Arms Hotel was designed by E.G. Spink Company architect William K. Eldridge (1858-1928). Eldridge was a graduate engineer of Purdue University and a native of Lafayette, Indiana. He relocated to Indianapolis in 1900 and was listed in city directories as civil engineer and later as architect. By 1918 he was associated with E.G. Spink Company designing Spink's numerous apartment and hotel buildings. Eldridge worked for Spink for fifteen years and later was a partner in Eldridge and Fox, a building contractor.

The Spink and Eldridge collaboration produced a distinctive hotel/apartment building in its design and size. The Spink Arms is the largest historic residential building in the central business district. It was surpassed in size three decades later when the Essex House Apartments (demolished) was completed in 1952 with 390 apartments. The Marrott, for which the Spink Arms served as prototype, and the Spink are the only historic twin-tower, high rise residential buildings in the city with the series of projecting bays providing light, ventilation and a floorplan amenity. With its exterior intact the Spink Arms expresses these distinctive features.

SPINK ARMS HOTEL

---

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bibliography

Bass Photo Company Collection. Negative #91692F, #77951F, #91692, & #290549F. Indiana Historical Society Library. Indianapolis.

Bodenhamer, David J. & Robert G. Barrows. The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis. Indianapolis; Indiana University Press, 1994.

Brown, Paul Donald, ed. Indianapolis Men of Affairs. Indianapolis: American Biographical Society, 1923.

Indianapolis News. September 5, 1956; and August 8, 1972.

Indianapolis Star. May 13, 1922; March 18, 1927; March 19, 1927; December 31, 1928; and September 24, 1966.

Perry Associates. "Rehabilitation and Alterations for the Continental Hotel." Indianapolis, March 31, 1972.

Polk, and Company, R.L. Indianapolis City Directories. Indianapolis: R.L. Polk & Co., 1905-1928.

Rabb, Kate Milner and William Herschell. An Account of Indianapolis and Marion County. Dayton, Ohio: Dayton Historical Publishing Co., 1924.

Record of Building Permits, 1921-1922. City Microfilm Division, City of Indianapolis.

Sanborn Map Company. Insurance Maps of Indianapolis, Indiana. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1887, 1914-15, 1914-15 corrected to 1956, and 1956 corrected to 1969.

Sanborn-Perris Company. Insurance Maps of Indianapolis, Indiana. New York: Sanborn-Perris Company, 1898 and 1898 corrected to 1913.

**SPINK ARMS HOTEL**

---

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The Spink Arms Hotel occupies two parcels of land thus: 81.50 feet on Meridian Street by 202.50 feet beginning 61 feet north of the southeast corner of square 15; and 60 feet north of 142. 5 feet south side of 202.50 feet; east end of Square 15. This parcel of land had rough configures to that of Lots 4 & 5 of City Square 15 of the original City of Indianapolis.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The real estate described above in the Verbal Boundary Description is the property on which sits the Spink Arms Hotel, owned by the stated source of record.

SPINK ARMS HOTEL

---

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

The following information is identical for all photographs.

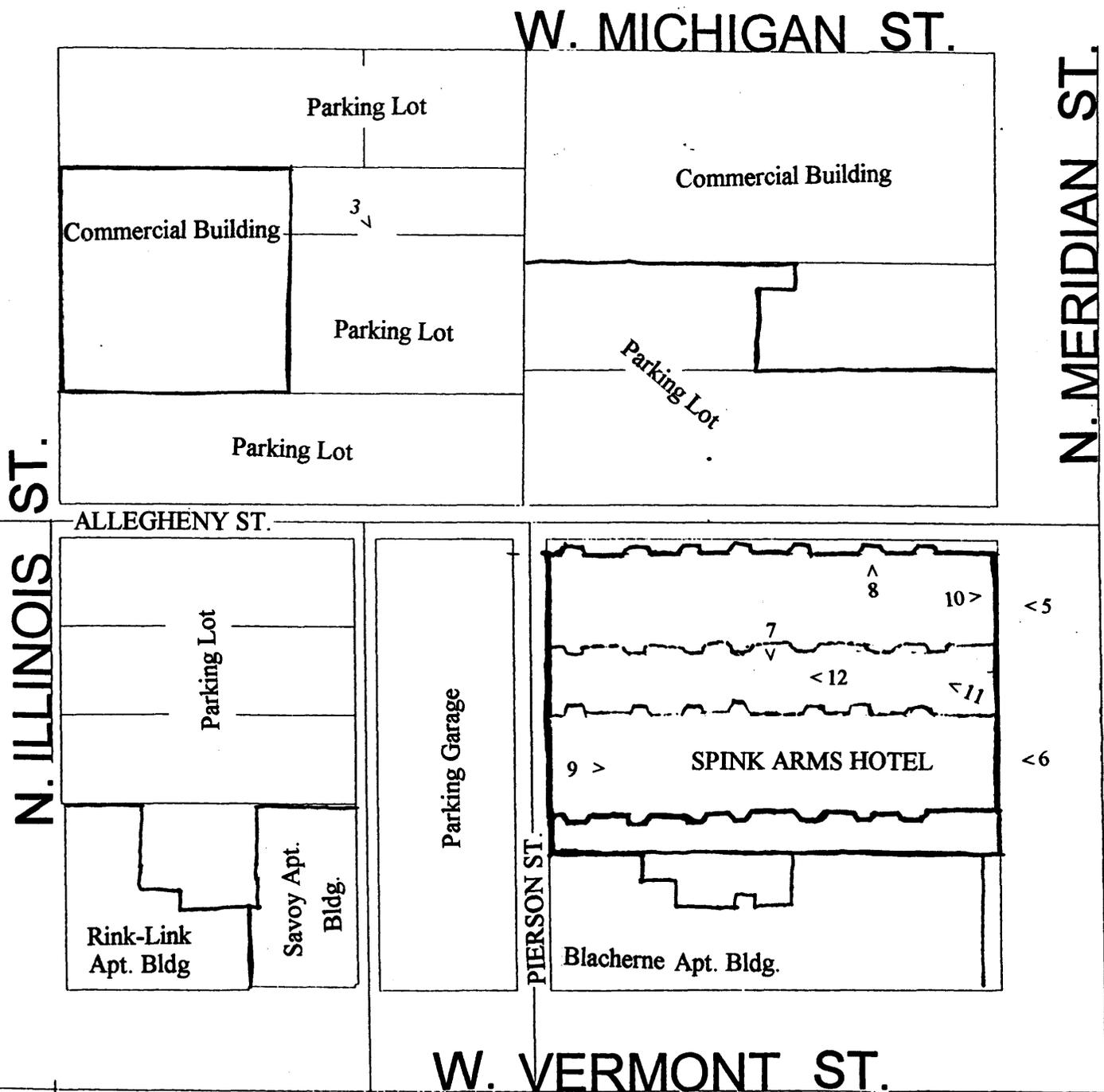
Spink Arms Hotel, 410 N. Meridian Street  
Marion County, Indiana  
Marsh Davis  
September 13 & 15, 1999  
IN Division Historic Preservation & Archaeology  
402 West Washington Street, Room W274  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

<b>Photo #</b>	<b>Description</b>
#1	400 Block North Meridian Street; View Southwest
#2	Main (East) Facade; View Northwest
#3	North Facade; View Southeast
#4	Main (East) Facade; View West
#5	Detail, Main (East) Facade, Balconet of North Tower; View Northwest
#6	Detail, Main (East) Facade, Parapet of South Tower; View West
#7	Detail, North Facade, South Tower, View South
#8	Interior Detail, Bay Window of North Tower; View North
#9	Interior Detail, South Tower Corridor; View East
#10	Interior Detail, 2nd Floor Stair Landing North Tower; View East
#11	Interior Detail, 1st Floor Lobby; View West
#12	Interior Detail, Former Ballroom; View West

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet  
Additional Documentation: Sketch Map

**SPINK ARMS HOTEL**

410 North Meridian Street  
Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana  
< O Photograph i.d. numbers & camera views



< 1

< 4

< 2