

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Kentucky	
COUNTY: Jefferson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Louisville Credit Mens Association (Old Bank of Louisville)

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Old Bank of Louisville

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
320 West Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Louisville

STATE: **Kentucky** CODE: COUNTY: **Jefferson** CODE:

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Louisville Credit Mens Association

STREET AND NUMBER:
320 West Main Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Louisville** STATE: **Kentucky** CODE:

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Louisville** STATE: **Kentucky** CODE:

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: **1934** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **District of Columbia** CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

 Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed

(Check One)

 Altered Unaltered

(Check One)

 Moved Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Old Bank of Louisville is built on a narrow rectangular downtown city lot flanked on either side by post-Civil War commercial buildings somewhat taller than the bank. The importance of the exterior of the bank is in the dramatic front elevation. It is, in brief, a Greek Revival distyle-in-antis doorway increased to the scale of an entire building. The effect is monumental. The facade is stone. The two fluted columns-in-antis are in the Ionic Order, and the flanking antae are battered, giving the whole building a tremendous visual focus. Above the columns and antae is a simple entablature carrying a superbly scaled cast iron parapet with bold anthemion cresting. This cresting is very similar to that shown in Plate 26 in Minard Lafever's Beauties of Modern Architecture.

Behind the columns-in-antis is a recessed entrance porch. There are three very tall, thin rectangular window bays in the stone wall that separates the porch from the banking room. The bottom half of the center bay serves as the entrance doorway. Early photographs show a simple pair of entrance doors and no surrounding architrave. (The present Lafeversque wooden frontispiece is a modern addition and completely out of scale and out of spirit with the rest of the facade.) The entrance gives access to the large rectangular banking room which occupies three quarters of the space of the original bank. Behind the banking room is an office, the original vault, and a corridor. What was an open yard behind the bank has since been filled in by an addition to the bank.

The banking room is three bays wide and six bays deep. On the long axis the first and last bays have flat ceilings at cornice height. These bays are divided from the four central bays by pairs of Ionic columns corresponding in design with the engaged pilasters along the side walls which mark the bays. The ceiling of the central four bays is a magnificent oval coffered dome with a central oval skylight. This oval dome, with the coffering graduating in size as it rises toward the oculus gives great dramatic impact to the interior space of the bank. Another extremely fine detail is the three identical doorways at the end of the banking room. They too are very much in the spirit of the Lafever plates. They have anthemion cresting and rows of rosettes set in the face of the architrave. The foundations and supporting piers in the basement are partly brick and partly stone. The floor joists are wooden and support a modern sub-floor covered with linoleum.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) c. 1836

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Bank of Louisville was built at 320 West Main Street ca. 1836. Traditionally thought to be the work of Gideon Shryock, recent research would seem to indicate that the building was designed by James H. Dakin, a New Orleans architect and that the construction was supervised by Shryock.

The bank is built on a narrow street front city lot, between two warehouse commercial buildings. The street facade is a single, monumental, stone distyle-in-antis screen rising to a cast iron parapet with anthemion cresting. Behind the columns-in-antis and flanking battered antae is an open recessed entrance porch which gives access to the large rectangular banking room which is covered by a beautifully executed oval dome with graduated coffering. In the center of the dome is an oval skylight.

James H. Dakin, and James Gallier, Sr., his New Orleans partner at this time, were both originally from New York and both had worked closely with the architect Minard Lafever and prepared illustrations for Lafever's architectural style books, The Modern Builders Guide (1833), and The Beauties of Modern Architecture (1835).

The design of the facade of the old Bank of Louisville is in essence a distyle-in-antis doorway design similar to Plates 25 and 26 in The Beauties of Modern Architecture magnified to the scale of an entire building. Much of the interior detailing is also closely based on the Lafever plates. The old Bank of Louisville combines superbly executed Greek Revival architectural detail with an unexpected and bold design brilliantly adapted to a narrow, restricted city site. The result is one of the most sophisticated and original examples of small scale commercial architecture ever built in the United States.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Talbot Hamlin, Greek Revival Architecture in America, (Dover Publications, NY: 1944), pp. 247-248;

Minard Lafever, The Beauties of Modern Architecture, (New York, 1835);

Louisville (American Guide Series) (New York, 1940);

Rexford Newcomb, Old Kentucky Architecture, (New York, 1940);

Pamela Thompson, Gideon Shryock, unpublished manuscript, 1962.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		38	15	23
NE	° ' "	° ' "		85	45	22
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

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

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

W. Brown Morton III, Architect

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

DATE

8/27/71

STREET AND NUMBER:

801 - 19th Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN:

Washington

STATE

District of Columbia

CODE

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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 _____

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 _____

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STATE	
Kentucky	
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8. Significance (1)

Louisville Credit Mens Assoc.
(Old Bank of Louisville)

HISTORY

In 1833, Minard Lafever published The Modern Builders Guide; in 1835, he published The Beauties of Modern Architecture, both were style books of Greek Revival architectural detail and building techniques. The books enjoyed a wide popularity and influenced countless Greek Revival buildings across the nation. Plates 25 and 26 in the latter book illustrate a design for distyle-in-antis motif sliding doors between two rooms. The entire composition and especially the anthenion cresting appears to be the design source for the facade of the Old Bank of Louisville.

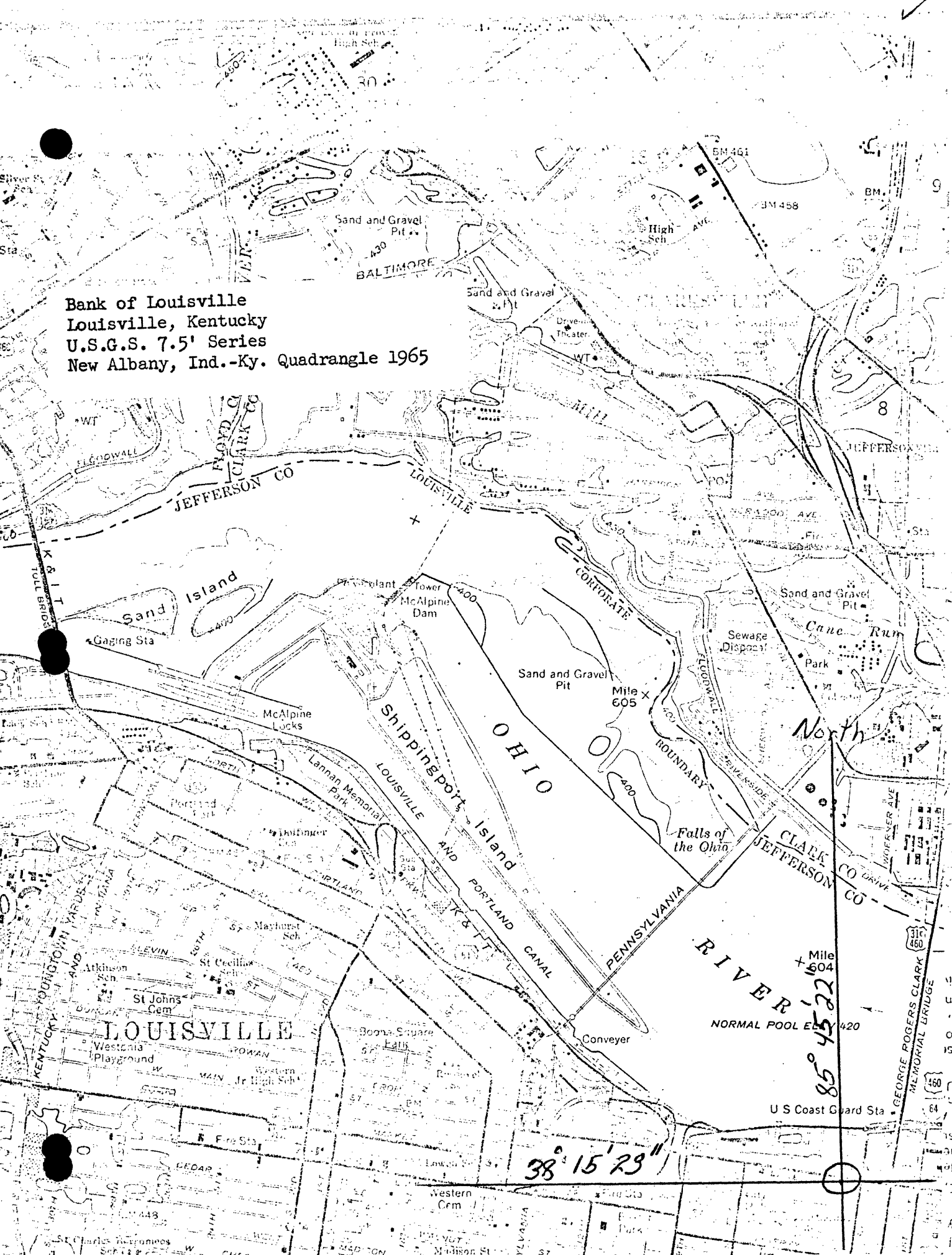
Very little is known about the history of this building. Tradition places the date of construction at 1837 and identifies the architect as Gideon Shryock, the architect of the Jefferson County Courthouse. However some recent research has cast doubt on this tradition. In the Jefferson County Courthouse records are the notes of the meetings in 1836 at which the plans for the Courthouse were accepted. In describing the specifications for the masonry the request is made for stonework just like the bank. This would suggest that the bank was at least partially under construction in 1836 based perhaps on the Lafever illustrations published in 1835.

Another interesting combination of coincidences revolves around a letter from the Board of the Bank of Louisville to the architect James H. Dakin in New Orleans asking him to bring to Louisville the plans for the skylight of the new bank building. James H. Dakin had worked for Lafever and executed names of the plates in The Modern Builders Guide. He moved to New Orleans to join his architect brother Charles B. Dakin and the architect James Gallier, Sr. Both the Dakins and Gallier were originally from New York and Gallier had been a partner of Minard Lafever for one year and had also designed some of the plates for Lafever's books.

A third piece to the puzzle is a deposition filed in Jefferson County Courthouse by Gideon Shryock stating that he was the superintendent in charge of construction of the Bank of Louisville. Shryock does not mention being the architect. He was both the architect and superintendent for the Jefferson County Courthouse. Further research should be done to sort out the degree to which Shryock, Dakin, and Gallier, together or separately, were responsible for the design of the building.

For some time the Old Bank of Louisville has served as the Headquarters of the Louisville Credit Mens Association, however it is soon to be used as part of a performing arts center currently taking shape in Louisville.

Bank of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky
U.S.G.S. 7.5' Series
New Albany, Ind.-Ky. Quadrangle 1965



Mile 604
85° 45' 22" N

38° 15' 23" N

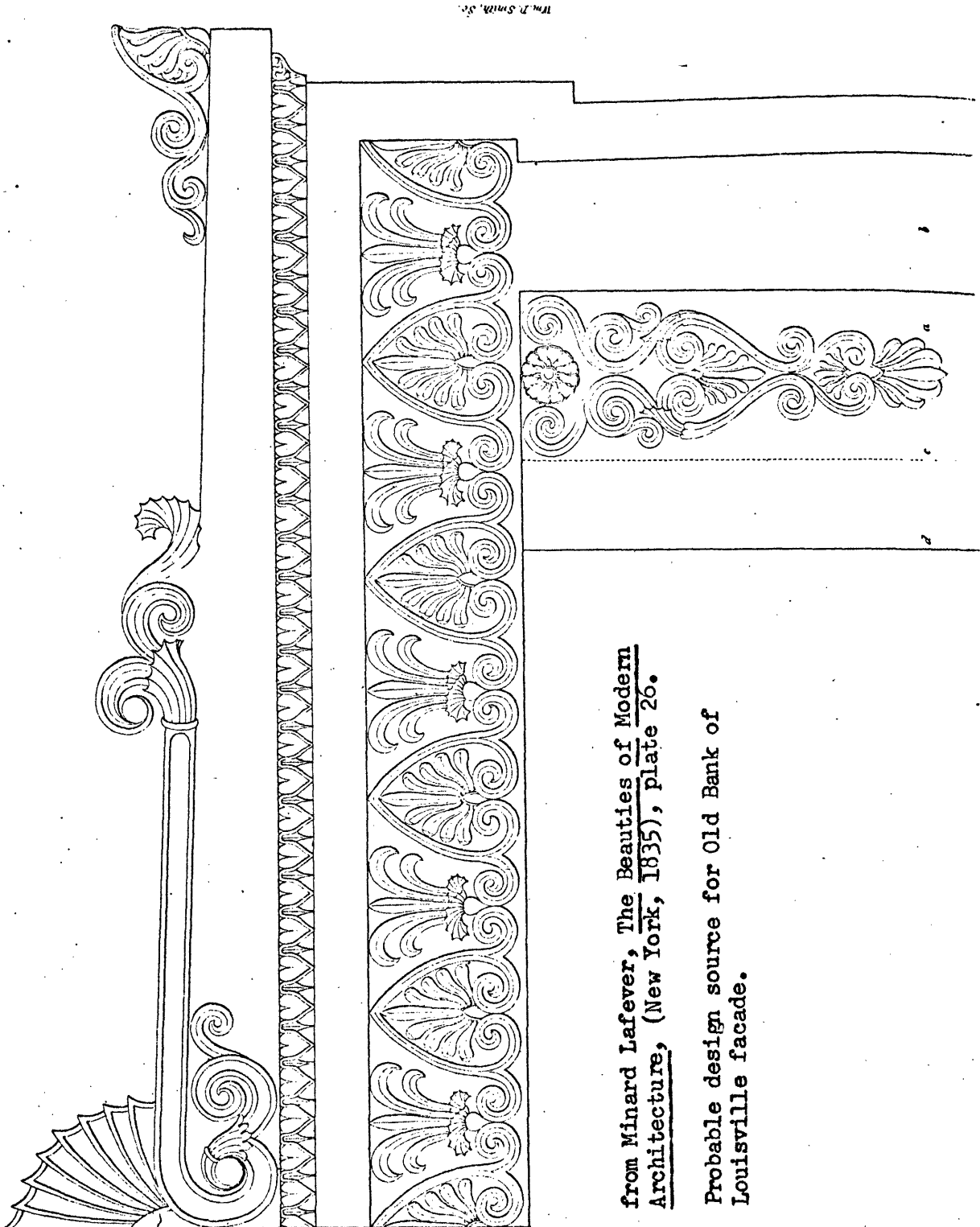
316
460
60
64

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from Minard Lefever, The Beauties of Modern Architecture, (New York, 1835), plate 26.

Probable design source for Old Bank of Louisville facade.

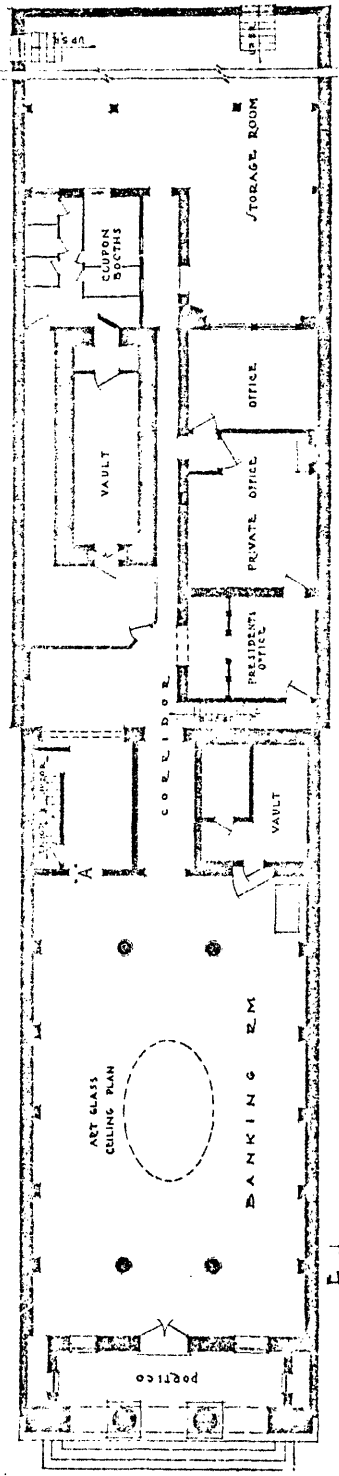
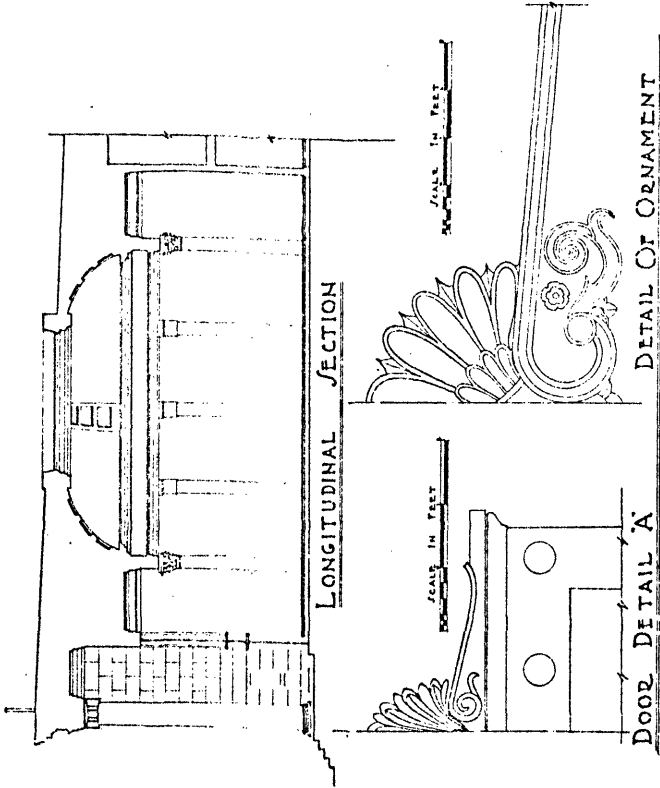
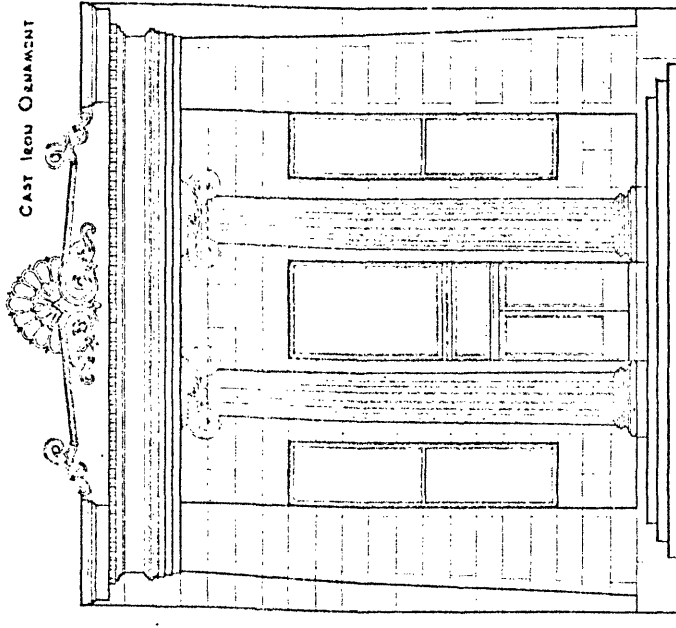
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PLATE 112



SCALE ELEVATION FEET

SCALE FEET

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

•BANK OF LOUISVILLE•
•LOUISVILLE KENTUCKY•

N

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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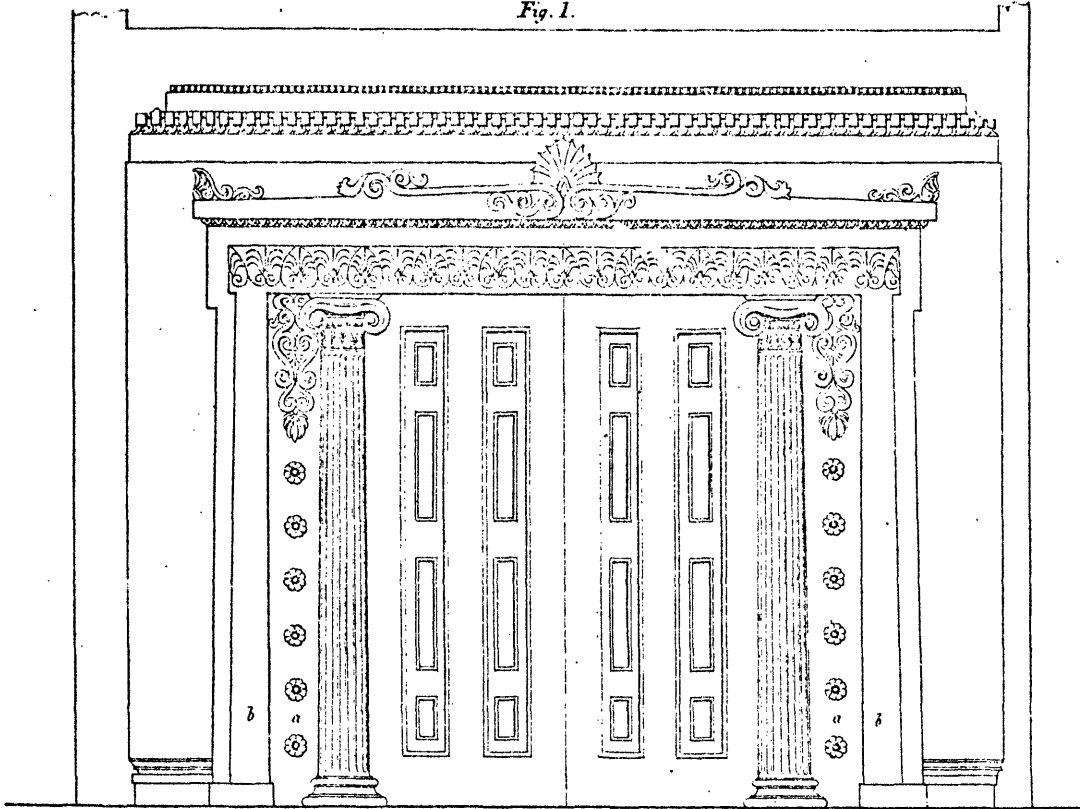
(Continuation Sheet)

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PL. 25.

Fig. 1.



from Minard Lafever, The Beauties of Modern Architecture,
(New York, 1835), plate 25.

Probable design source for Old Bank of Louisville facade.

Fig. 2.

