

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 15 1975
DATE ENTERED	SEP 5 1975

**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

Masonic Temple

AND/OR COMMON

Merchandise Building

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

528 Hennepin Avenue

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Minneapolis

__ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

5th

STATE

Minnesota

CODE

27

COUNTY

Hennepin

CODE

053

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Masonic Lodge Halls

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Frank Sherman

STREET & NUMBER

217 Merchandise Building - 528 Hennepin Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Minneapolis

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Minnesota

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds - Hennepin County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Third Avenue at Fourth Street South

CITY, TOWN

Minneapolis

STATE

Minnesota

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Statewide Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1974

__FEDERAL STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Minnesota Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Building 25, Fort Snelling - St. Paul

STATE

Minnesota

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Masonic Temple/Merchandise Building is situated on a prominent corner at Sixth Street and Hennepin Avenue in downtown Minneapolis (SW 88' Lot 182 : SW 88' of SE½ Lot 3 : Lots 1, 2, & 3, Block 1, Hoag's Addition). It is an eight-storey building of Ohio white sandstone executed in a Richardsonian Romanesque mode. Distinct design features include two corner towers which spring from first storey corbelled bases and originally rose to terminate in Moorish onion domes above the eighth storey parapet. These domes have been removed several decades ago because of their deteriorated condition. The parapet/cornice is of pressed metal decorated by an alternating column/arch pattern. The eighth storey also boasts four Syrian-arched balconies (two on each street facade). The center of each facade is marked by a slightly projecting four-window bay.

The Hennepin Avenue entrance forms a setting for many intricately carved motifs. An arch with dominant keystone springs from squat columns with foliated capitals. Above the door, in the tympanum of the arch, are the well-preserved gilt letters "528 - MERCHANDISE-BUILDING". Carved Masonic symbols and heads decorate the area adjacent to and immediately above the arch. Immediately above the first storey of the entrance bay-design motifs include two storey lotus-type Egyptian columns and diminutive ionic columns. At the fourth storey level, the Egyptian columns terminate in a balustraded balcony bearing the carved letters "MASONIC TEMPLE". To the left and right respectively are the Masonic symbols of the terrestrial and celestial globes. Also noteworthy are the Egyptian winged-sun motifs directly above the eighth storey windows in the central bays of both street facades.

Essentially, the exterior stonework on the building is in very good condition, although many of the intricate carvings mentioned in the preceding paragraph and elsewhere on the building are almost obscured by a dark cover of coal-dust and pollution caused grime. The windows on the ground floor have been filled in with glass-block. The non-street facades are of unornamented brick.

The interior of the 88 feet by 153 feet fire-proof-construction building was originally intended to serve three functions. The first and basement storeys were intended for one large general store, however, the space was capable of being divided into three or four stores or general offices. The entire fronts on both Hennepin Avenue and Sixth Street on the second through seventh storeys were devoted to approximately 120 offices. Walls separating these offices were of the partition type which could be moved or removed to provide necessary accommodations for individual occupants. Offices were served by two elevators.

The apartments for the lodges are totally distinct from the office and store portions of the building. The entire northeastern portion above the first storey was set apart for Masonic purposes. On the second storey there are two large Blue Lodge halls with balconies which extend through two storeys. On the fourth storey is the Consistory Chamber and an additional Blue Lodge hall -- also two storeys in height. The sixth storey houses the two-storey Commandery chamber. The entire eighth storey was devoted to a large hall, 80 feet by 114 feet, for drill purposes, convocations and banquets, and was completely equipped with adjoining parlors, reception rooms, kitchen, and closets. This area has been altered in recent years to serve as a multi-purpose meeting area.

(see continuation sheet)

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The interior arrangement of the building has survived in a relatively unchanged state, save change in position of office and store partitions and lowering of office ceilings. The portion of the building devoted to Masonic functions has retained original design integrity.

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input 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 1888

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Long and Kees

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In May of 1885 several members of the Masonic Order in Minneapolis conceived the idea of erecting a Masonic Temple building as a permanent meeting place and base of operation for the various Masonic bodies then in existence. During July of 1886 the Board of Directors comprised of delegates of the various bodies purchased a site 88 feet by 165 feet at the corner of Hennepin Avenue and Sixth Street. This site was adjacent to the grandiose West Hotel (razed during World War II).

For the design, the Board of Directors commissioned the noted local architectural firm of Long and Kees. This firm was credited with the design of several important Minneapolis commercial buildings and residences. In 1889 Long and Kees submitted the winning design for the Minneapolis City Hall/Hennepin County Courthouse Building (N.R.: 4 December 1974). Visits were made to other cities for purpose of observing the most modern methods or architectural design and construction as well as the most suitable interior arrangements to accommodate the functions of the various Masonic bodies. "It was decided to combine in the structure both the necessary appointments for the lodges and such other arrangements for stores and business offices as would afford a steady rental, thus giving to the capital stock a character of permanent and substantial value.

The Masonic Temple/Merchandise Building remains today as a significant element in the history of Minneapolis -- both in the area of architecture and as a representative of the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the Masonic Order. Architecturally, this building is the last remaining Richardsonian Romanesque business block which has retained near total exterior design integrity and a significant degree of original interior arrangement. Further, this building attests to the skilled craftsmanship of the nineteenth century stone mason which is nearly unduplicatable in modern times.

