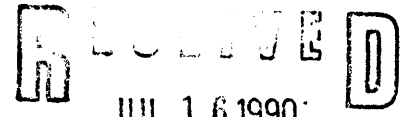


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and sub categories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name The Smith Austermuhl Insurance Co.
other names/ Site Number ONJH Inventory Number 040867

2. Location

street & number N.W. Corner 5th & Market not for publication
city, town Camden vicinity
state New Jersey code NJ 034 county Camden code m7 ZIP CODE 08101

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Bank, Insurance, and Legal Buildings in Camden, NJ. 1873-1938
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 36 CFR part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
[Signature] 7/11/90
Signature of certifying official Acting Commissioner, DEP/DSHPO
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. Patrick Andrews
 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:)
8/24/90
Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
COMMERCE/TRADE/business

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)
LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/
Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)
foundation STONE/Granite
walls Brick
STONE/Terra-Cotta
roof Asphalt
other Granite Portico

Describe present and historic physical appearance

SUMMARY

The Smith-Austermuhl Company building is a large two-story brick commercial building built in 1920 in Colonial Revival style. It stands at the northwest corner of the intersection of Market and Sixth Streets in central downtown Camden. The building is the design of Thomas Stephen, a local architect who designed many buildings in the Camden area. The Smith-Austermuhl Building is a prominent landmark on Market Street and is within a short distance of the city's other large public and commercial buildings. The building is vacant and boarded up at present but was occupied until very recently. It retains most of its original fabric and the building's integrity is high.

The two story Smith-Austermuhl Building is a large fully-detached commercial building with its main facade on Market Street. This is a broad and busy commercial street, and the building is prominent in the streetscape. The building fills the complete lot on which it stands, and its south and east walls rise directly from the sidewalk. There is no street landscaping in the area. The exterior is of red brick laid in plain bond. A water table tops a granite foundation and continues around the two main sides of the building. A parapet designed to look like a solid balustrade rises above a flat roof.

The facade is five bays wide with the main entrance in the central bay. The door, now boarded up, is within a one bay wide entry porch in which Doric marble columns support a segmentally arched pediment. There is a carved cartouche within the pediment which has a dentilled cornice. The

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture

1920-1938

N/A

Commerce

Cultural affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Architect Builder

N/A

Stephen, Thomas architect
Standard Construction Co. - builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SUMMARY

The Smith-Austermuhl Company building at the corner of Fifth and Market Streets is the only large office building in Camden which was built specifically for insurance agency offices. There are two other buildings in this multiple property nomination which housed the home offices of insurance companies, but the Smith-Austermuhl company was a broker and agent for many different companies. By 1920 the company had outgrown its small original office and built this large Colonial Revival building to accommodate its expanding business. The building is significant for its association with the growth of the insurance business in Camden in the 1920s. As one of two examples of the work of local architect Thomas Stephen that are in this multiple property nomination the building is also architecturally significant. The Smith-Austermuhl building fits within property type #2, Buildings constructed for the Legal Profession and/or the Insurance Business and within the one context of the multiple property nomination: Banking, the Insurance Business, and the legal profession in the city of Camden, New Jersey from 1873 to 1938.

The Smith-Austermuhl Company building appears to be the only extant building in Camden which was built especially for use by insurance brokers and agents. The New Jersey Insurance laws encouraged agents who represented "foreign" or out-of-state companies to operate in New Jersey and they flourished in Camden during its early twentieth century boom period. At that time Camden's industrial expansion led to a concurrent boom in banking, insurance,

See continuation sheet

9. Major Biographical References

see main bibliography

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file NPS): N/A

- 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
- Specific repository _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of property Less than one acre

USGS quad Camden

UTM References

A 118 489635 442167d
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

see continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The Smith-Austermuhl Building is located on the Northwest corner of Sixth and Market Streets in the City of Camden, Camden County, New Jersey, legally described as Block 118, Lot 13.

see continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes lot #13, block 118, which has been historically associated with the property.

see continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Priscilla M. Thmpson; Franklyn M. Thompson

organization The History Store

street & number 827 Tatnall Street

city or town Wilmington, DE 19801

date June 1, 1988

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state DE

zip code 19801

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Smith-Austermuhl Company

Section number 7 Page 1

other bays on the first floor each contain one large window (now boarded up) topped by flat limestone arches with stone keystones. Above each of these windows is a flat panel separating it from the second floor. Five arched windows across the second floor of the facade have stone keystones, sills, and impost. A border of single bricks outlines a huge arch rising from the water table to the top of the second floor windows as if to define an arched reveal. The name of the company is carved in a stone panel at the cornice line in the central bay. Originally the second floor windows held three vertical lights and the first floor windows held one large light with a transom above.

The Sixth Street side of the building is eleven bays wide - all bays are of equal width except one which contains two narrow windows. In each of the other bays a brick arch outlines the first and second floor windows like those on the facade. The first floor windows on the side are now filled with glass brick. Originally there was a gable roofed one-bay-wide entry porch near the center of this side of the building.

The overall dimensions of the building are 60 feet on Market Street by 120 feet on Sixth Street. At the time of its construction there was a Tennessee white marble counter in the general offices and the floors were of double thick maple. Furnishings of mahogany and white enamel decorated the private offices of executives. Smith-Austermuhl occupied the first floor and divided the second floor into 21 offices for rent to other businesses. In the basement there was space for a restaurant.

The Smith-Austermuhl Company building is in good physical condition and retains a high degree of integrity. Built by the Standard Construction Company, the workmanship is excellent. Although some windows are boarded up and others now contain glass brick, there is no question about the reversibility of this alteration. The building meets all the registration requirements for this property type #2, buildings constructed for the legal profession and/or the insurance business, in the multiple property nomination and is an excellent example of a large intact early twentieth century low rise office building.

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Smith-Austermuhl Company

Section number 8 Page 1

and the legal profession. In addition, modern technology such as the automobile and laws including those regarding workmen's compensation made new types of insurance necessary. The Smith Austermuhl Company founded by Andrew B.F. Smith, Charles F. Austermuhl, and David Baird, Jr. handled all types of insurance to meet these new needs. These founders had solid political connections and tended to be promoters of the Greater Camden Movement. They were similar to the founders of other banks and insurance companies. Smith-Austermuhl was also directly involved in real estate by developing Wildwood Avenue off Park Boulevard in 1915.

The Smith-Austermuhl Company started operation in about 1914 in a small building on Market Street. Their combined efforts in real estate and insurance were apparently very profitable, for their new 1920 building was definitely grandiose in comparison to their former offices. The Company contracted with local Camden architect Thomas Stephen for the new building's design. Stephen, who also designed the Central Trust Company building, (which is in this multiple property nomination) conducted a large architectural practice from his Market Street office.

Thomas Stephen began his career as a carpenter, and by 1891 did business as an architect. His designs included work of all types, but among the best known of his works today would be the Harleigh Cemetery Gates on Haddon Avenue. Stephen eventually moved his residence to Merchantville, but his office remained in Camden, where his son eventually also worked with him. Standard Construction Company built the insurance agent's new office building which cost about \$150,000 in 1920. Smith-Austermuhl occupied the entire first floor and divided the second floor into 21 offices for financial and investment firms. The original plan called for a restaurant to occupy the basement. The design is less imposing than that of most of the Neo-Classical Revival banks in this nomination, but the use of classical elements evokes the same image of longevity and solidity.

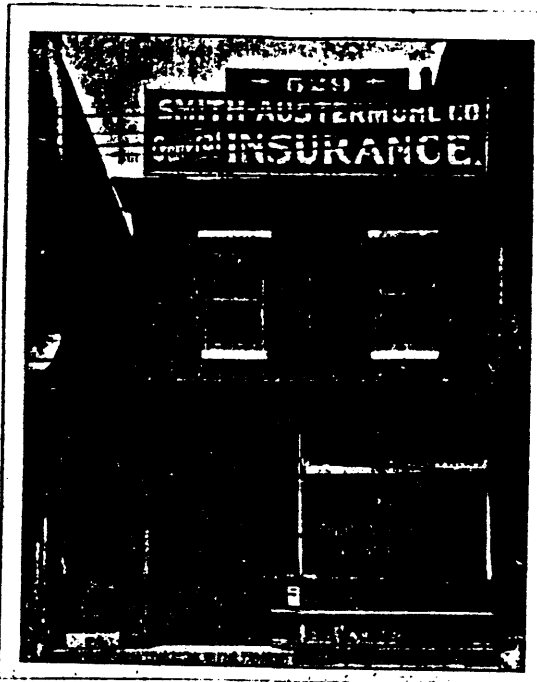
Although the building is now vacant, it retains most of its original fabric and a high degree of integrity on the exterior. A prominent landmark on Market Street in Camden, the Smith-Austermuhl Building is a tangible reminder of the city's early twentieth century boom in banking and insurance. A 1981 survey of Camden architecture and a 1987 survey of banks, insurance, and legal buildings in Camden both identified this building. The surveys followed federal guidelines and the results are on file at the Office of New Jersey Heritage. The

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Smith-Austermuhl Company

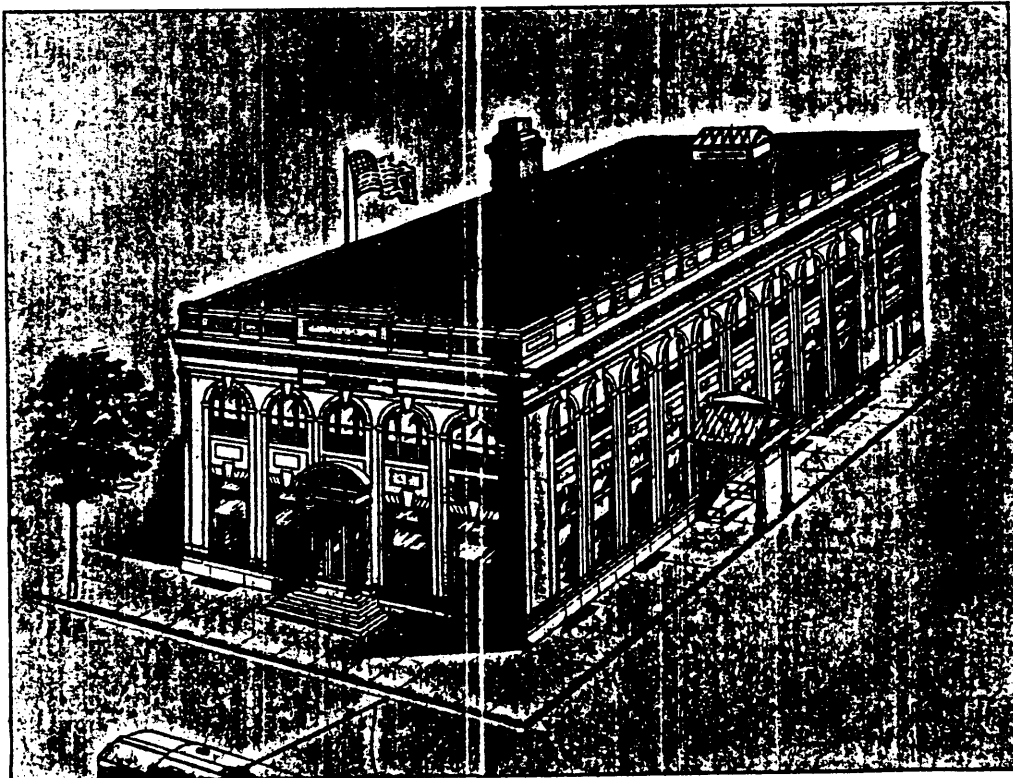
Section number 8 Page 2

preservation planner for the City of Camden and the Office of New Jersey Heritage have evaluated the buildings included in both surveys and determined that the Smith-Austermuhl Company building is eligible for the multiple property nomination on the basis of its history, architectural significance, and integrity.

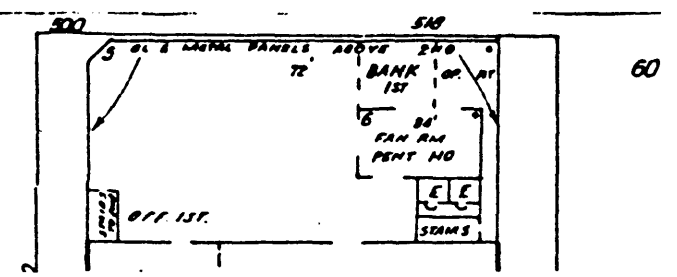
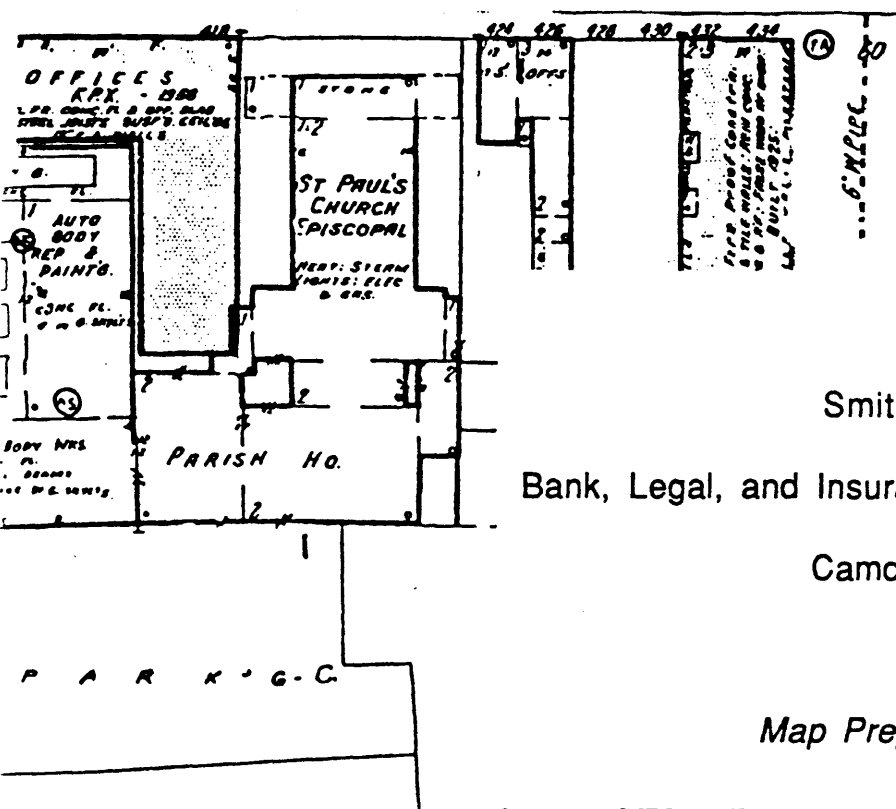
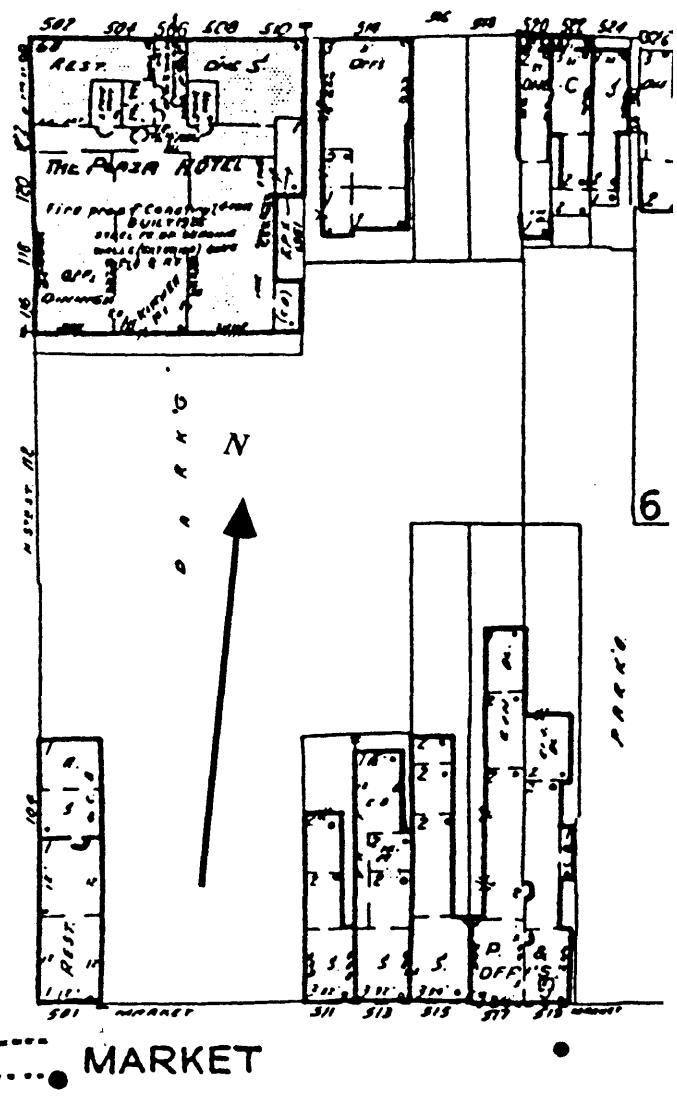
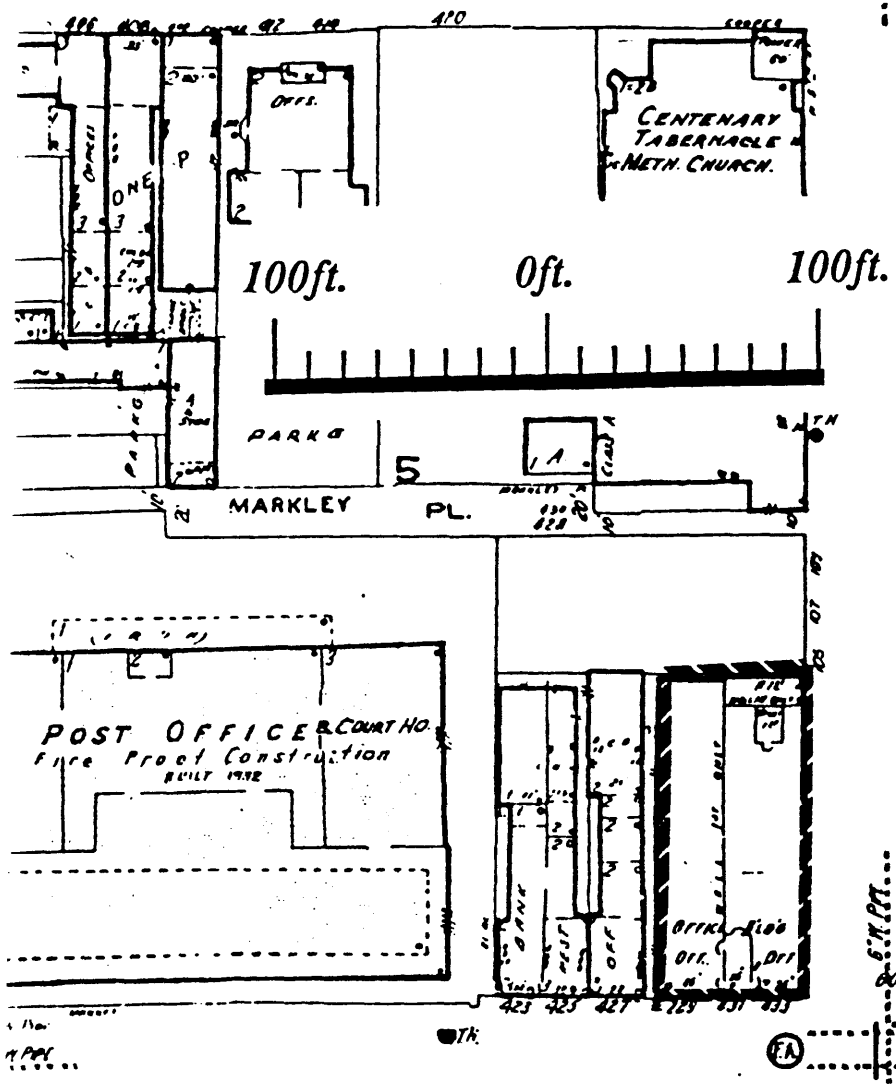


The Smith-Austermuhl Company began business in its handsome new building at Market and Fifth streets on Monday. The structure is 60 feet wide and 120 feet deep and is reported to have cost in the neighborhood of \$150,000. It has a granite base with Colonial design, tapestry brick and marble sills. The entrance is pure Italian marble of beautiful texture, while the floor and stairs are of solid marble. The counter in the general offices on the first floor, east side, is of Tennessee white marble. The floors are of double thick maple and finely finished. There are private offices for the officers and the furnishings are in mahogany and white enamel, producing a beautiful effect. The company occupies the first floor, and the 21 offices on the second floor are occupied by financial and investment concerns. The basement will have an up-to-the-minute restaurant to be opened in a short time by David Reese and William Yohan. The members of the firm are Andrew B. F. Smith, Charles F. Austermuhl and David Baird, Jr. *W. J. Price 10-16-1910*

XEROX OF MATERIAL
IN CAMDEN HISTORICAL
SOCIETY VERTICAL FILE



THE NEW SMITH-AUSTERMUHL BUILDING, FIFTH AND MARKET STS., CAMDEN



Boundary Map

Smith Austermuhl Building

Bank, Legal, and Insurance Buildings in Camden, NJ 1873-1938
 City of Camden
 Camden County, New Jersey
 Camden Quad

Map Prepared by The History Store