

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED DEC 19 1975

MAY 3 1976

DATE ENTERED

**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

St. James Building

AND/OR COMMON

Cohen Bros. Department Store

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

117 W. Duval Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Jacksonville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

3rd

STATE

Florida

CODE

012

COUNTY

Duval

CODE

031

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	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

St. James Realty and Department Store

STREET & NUMBER

117 W. Duval Street

CITY, TOWN

Jacksonville

VICINITY OF

STATE

Florida

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Duval County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Bay Street

CITY, TOWN

Jacksonville

STATE

Florida

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

N/A

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Occupying the entire block to the north of Hemming Park, the St. James Building has been a Jacksonville landmark since its completion in 1912. The Cohen Brothers, who commissioned the construction of the building, subcontracted all of the work, under the direct supervision of the architect, Henry John Klutho. The building has been in continual use as a department store since it was first opened.

Built of reinforced concrete with a tar and gravel roof, the building has undergone numerous remodelings during the more than sixty years of its use. The basic exterior has remained intact, however, with the exception of the first floor facade and the removal of flag poles and ornamental direct current electric lights which were situated above the cornice. The exterior fabric is a buff-yellow brick with terra cotta moldings. The original plan of the building was a five-story U-shape structure, surrounding a two-story section topped with a domed skylight at the third level. The main entrance is centrally located within the bottom of the U facing Hemming Park. Subsidiary entrances leading into the main shopping area are located in the center of each arm of the U. The two-story section of the plan has been remodeled and increased to five stories, the height of the front and side elevations. The rear facade has always functioned as a service entrance and still has the original canopy intact. The height of the two-story section was increased in 1929. At that time, the domed skylight which covered this section was removed. In the words of the architect, with the removal of this seventy-five foot octagonal dome, "a showplace was killed."

Remodeling of the ground floor exterior removed the original canopies from the main and side entrances and altered the size, location and style of the display windows. The main entrance is located in the center of the south facade within a central pavilion which rises to a level approximately twelve feet above the main mass of the building. The pavilion is set into framing pilasters which support a cast iron entablature having an architrave supporting a square molding beneath a plain sunken frieze and dentilled cornice. An attic space above the entablature completes the tower which held a 29,000 gallon water tank which served the building. The pilaster capitals were similar to, although larger than, all of the other capitals on the facades of the building. Klutho required that all molds used to cast the capitals in terra cotta be sent to him for final approval. All of the terra cotta ornament throughout the building was Klutho's original design and in his use of surface ornament the influence of Louis Sullivan is very much in evidence. The capitals on this structure are a grouping of geometric forms, organic swirling motifs, orbs and four pointed stars creating volutes which grow out of each corner of the pilaster. The orbs are supported by pendants which extend below the full capital a few inches. Below the capitals of the

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pavilion are semi-circular grilles surrounded by three concentric bands of concrete. Below this is a plaque supported by three vertical members between pilasters. At the base of these pilasters, as well as at the base of all others on each facade, is a medallion, the primary feature of which is a four-pointed star.

The six bays to the right and left of the pavilion are separated by pilasters running the full height of the building. The nine bays on the sides of the building are likewise separated. Each of the pilasters at the corners and at each side of the subsidiary entrances has been accentuated. These pilasters differ from all of the others (except those of the central pavilion) in that they are wider and their capitals and medallions are larger. At the top of each bay between the capitals is a grille encircled by a checkerboard pattern of raised white colored terra cotta and one-half inch recessed dark green colored terra cotta. Between the rows of windows of the second, third, and fourth floors is a plain, white plaque surrounded by a checkerboard pattern similar to that surrounding the grilles at the top of each bay. The interior has gone through numerous remodelings. All of the original mechanical equipment has been replaced with the possible exception of some of the elevators. The original interior column capitals are still in place, though hidden by the dropped ceiling. A significant addition to the building was Jacksonville's first commercial escalator, installed in 1947. It is still in use.

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 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 1912

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Henry John Klutho

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The St. James Building occupies the site of the late 1800's St. James Hotel. This was an important Jacksonville hotel which opened on January 1, 1869. The original structure consisted of a wooden building facing on Laura Street between Duval and Church Streets. Subsequent additions, including the hotel gardens, eventually covered virtually the entire block. Northern investors built the original (1869) structure for \$30,000. Mr. J. B. Campbell managed the hotel from 1869 until its total destruction in the May 3, 1901 fire. The hotel introduced the first use of electricity for lighting to Jacksonville with the building of an electric plant by J. B. Campbell in 1883. The city did not begin work on an electric plant until the following year.

After the 1901 fire, the only large hotel to be rebuilt was the Windsor. The Windsor originally (1875) occupied the entire block to the west of Hemming Park. The hotel was rebuilt on the same site in 1902 by Messrs. Dodge and Cullins, who also acquired the property once occupied by the St. James Hotel. To prevent competition from construction of another hotel on the Park, Dodge and Cullins made an effort in 1905 to sell the property to the City, providing it be forever maintained as the St. James Park. The owners were more successful in 1910 when they sold the St. James Hotel site to the Cohen Brothers. Within the deed was the condition which excluded the Cohens from building a hotel on the site.

The Cohen Brothers, Samuel and Morris, came to Jacksonville, in 1867 from their father's firm in New York City. They opened their first store in a log cabin on East Bay Street ("Cohens" by Natalie Glickstein. Jacksonville, Vol. 12, No. 4. July-August, 1975, page 31). As the business grew and facilities needed expanding, the Cohen business moved to various buildings along Bay Street. After their store was destroyed in the fire of 1901, they set up a temporary store at 303 West Bay Street (Advertisement in the Florida Times-Union, October 27, 1901). By this time, Jacob was the sole manager of the business although the name remained Cohen Brothers Department Store.

With the guidance of architect H. J. Klutho, Jacob developed a design for a department store and office building. The structure was completed in 1912 and remains a landmark in present-day Jacksonville. At the time of its construction, the St. James Building was one of the finest department stores in the South and strongly reflects the genius of the architect. The "Big Store", as it was referred to, had charge

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Attached Continuation Sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 10 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 7	4 36 6 2 1 0	3 3 5 5 3 6 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

Diane D. Greer, Historic Sites Specialist

February 27, 1975

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Division of Archives, History & Records Management 488-7365 (904)

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Tallahassee

Florida

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL XX

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

Robert Williams

TITLE

Florida State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

12/10/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Acting

DATE

5/3/76

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

5.3.76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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accounts dating back to 1912 bearing the names of some of Jacksonville's pioneer families: Acosta, Cummer, Finklestein, Fletcher, Lane and Baldwin. Jacob Cohen continued to run the store until the time of his death in 1927. Until very recently the store has been run by members of the Cohen family.

Henry John Klutho came to Jacksonville from New York in 1901 after learning that a devastating fire had destroyed most of the city on the north side of the St. John's River. Credited with designing most of the finest new buildings in this area between 1901 and 1941, Klutho's best known designs included the City Hall, Courthouse and Board of Trade (all demolished) and the Public Library, YMCA and St. James Building. In addition to the afore mentioned, Klutho designed many other commercial and public buildings and many fine residences, among which his own home was best known. His buildings were the first and finest to appear in Jacksonville after the 1901 fire. He continued to practice architecture in Jacksonville through the 1930's, 40's, and 50's. During his later career he designed many schools for the Duval County Board of Public Instruction. Through his best known commercial designs in downtown Jacksonville and such commissions as the Governor's Mansion in Tallahassee and additions to the Florida State Capitol, Klutho has come to be recognized as one of the finest architects to emerge from this state during the twentieth century. The St. James Building is particularly significant within the context of Klutho's architectural career for it shows, more than any other of his structures, the strong influence which the work of Louis Sullivan had on his commercial designs.

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City Hall, Jacksonville, Florida. Building and Zoning Permit Office. City of Jacksonville Records (Subgroup: microfilm copy of original drawing and specifications for the St. James Building).

Davis, Frederick T. History of Jacksonville, Florida and Vicinity 1513-1924. Jacksonville: The Florida Historical Society, 1925.

Duval County Courthouse, Jacksonville, Florida. Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court. Duval County Records (Subgroup: Deed Book 63, p. 130).

Florida Times-Union, October 27, 1901, p. 10 (advertisement for temporary facility at 303 West Bay Street describing the line which the store carried); January 29, 1911, p. 2 (article containing a discussion of the impending construction of the building and a preliminary sketch by the architect).

Glickstein, Natalie. "Cohens." In Jacksonville, Vol. 12, No. 4 (July-August, 1975), pp. 30-33.

Klutho, H. J. Some Buildings by the Architect, H. J. Klutho, 1901-1941. Unpublished pamphlet in possession of Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives, History and Records Management, Tallahassee, Florida.

_____. "Store and Office Building for Messrs Cohen Bros, Jacksonville, Florida," The Western Architect, June, 1914. This article contains Klutho's original drawings for the St. James Building. A copy is on file at the Division of Archives, History and Records Management, Tallahassee, Florida.

Seitner, Colonel Robert. Personal Interview (by Diane Greer), June 27, 1975. Jacksonville, Florida. Colonel Seitner is Jacob Cohen's son-in-law and was until recently president of the St. James Corporation and Realty Company.