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United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

**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 Title Guarantee and Trust Company Building

and/or common TITLE GUARANTEE AND TRUST COMPANY BUILDING

2. Location

street & number 401-411 WEST FIFTH STREET n/a not for publication

city, town LOS ANGELES n/a vicinity of congressional district

state CALIFORNIA code 06 county LOS ANGELES code 037

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	Public Acquisition	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Four-Eleven Associates, c/o David G. Houk, Managing General Partner

street & number 411 West Fifth Street, Suite 800

city, town Los Angeles n/a vicinity of state CALIFORNIA 90013

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. LOS ANGELES COUNTY HALL OF RECORDS

street & number 320 WEST TEMPLE STREET

city, town LOS ANGELES state CALIFORNIA

6. Representation in Existing Surveystitle L.A. PEOPLE MOVER (DOT/UMTA) has this property been determined eligible? yes nodate March 28, 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE, P. O. Box 2390

city, town SACRAMENTO state CALIFORNIA 95811

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	date <u> </u> n/a <u> </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Title Guarantee & Trust Company Building, 401 West Fifth Street, is a multi-story building ranging up to fourteen stories in height in the tower area. The structure is fireproof and is built of steel frame construction with reinforced concrete and tile. It is built in a rectangular building plan and is designed in a Gothic influenced example of the Zig Zag Moderne Style. It is prominently located at the N.W. corner of the intersection of Fifth and Hill Streets, and is associated with several other major buildings in the Pershing Square area.

The building is set back at the eleventh story. The set back is used to build up in even proportioned masses to the roof. This, in conjunction with the flying buttresses in the tower area, adds to the grace and symmetry of the building and assists in carrying the Gothic sense of verticality to the highest point of the structure. In addition, the overall simplicity of detailing compliments the graceful lines and massing effect of the structure itself.

The building has two major entry areas. The first, is located on Fifth Street, and it provides access to the elevator lobby. It is simply detailed with an inset terra cotta surround and a bas-relief panel above. The second entry is a corner entrance, providing access to the commercial area. The commercial frontage has metal showcase windows on both the Fifth and Hill Street facades. These windows have been partially filled in with brick without damage to the metal detailing.

The curved design of the corner entrance is carried up to the eleventh story in a three window bay. Directly above the first story, flanking this bay on both the Fifth and Hill Street facades, there are twin decorative terra cotta balconies below two identical three window bays which are carried up to the twelfth story level. The Fifth Street facade consists of one of the flanking three window bays and four two window bays. Each bay is separated by a wide terra cotta pier, and the windows within each bay are separated by a narrow pier. The piers are carried slightly above the eleventh story level, culminating in shallow caps. Wide terra cotta spandrels separate the double hung sash windows at each floor level. A decorative terra cotta panel runs at the eleventh story level above the twin window bays, and a similar panel with pier caps runs at the twelfth story level above the three window bay. The Hill Street facade is detailed in an identical manner. The Hill Street facade consists, however, of two double window bays and the previously described three window bay.

The set back at the eleventh story level carries the detailing of the piers to a parapet above the twelfth story. The panels above the twelfth story are simple terra cotta with the exception of the previously described three window bays. A machinery penthouse is located on the roof of the twelfth story, and it is simply sheathed in terra cotta identical to that of the building surface.

A stepped and set back tower rises from the building mass at the S.E. corner of the structure. This feature is listed as a two story space but the actual height exceeds, by approximately five times, the typical floor height of the stories below. The tower is flanked by twin flying buttresses on both the Fifth and Hill Street facades. These buttresses extend to slightly less than half of the tower height. Four corner piers

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are carried above the buttresses to the lower level of the tower cap. Narrow twin decorative panels are placed on all four sides of the tower above the buttresses and to the top of the four corner piers. The tower cap consists of decorative terra cotta panels set between shallow piers. A flagpole rises above and is centrally located on the roof of the tower.

The elevator lobby, although small, is an elegantly detailed space. The floor is laid in tile and terrazzo. The walls are of marble and architectural tile. The ceiling is done in tile and the brass elevator doors are original. Six murals by Hugo Ballin, depicting the history and growth of Los Angeles, are set on all four walls of the lobby area.

The building, with the exception of the previously mentioned alterations to the street level frontage is unaltered. The design of the building is a complex treatise combining Gothic elements of the Zig Zag Moderne style with more typical Art Deco detailing. The detailing itself is deceptively simple, for the graceful vertical proportioning of the building imparts a greater sense of decoration than actually exists. As such, the building is unique, and its powerful architectural statement carries with it a profound sense of time and place. In addition, its size and prominent location in the Pershing Square area serves to make it a visual and aesthetic landmark.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	1930-1931	Builder/Architect	Parkinson & Parkinson
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Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The Title Guarantee and Trust Company Building is significant as one of the two best examples of the Art Deco style among commercial buildings in Los Angeles, and for its architectural quality and integrity. The structure is **further** significant for its design, lobby artwork, and quality of construction. It is associated with the following prominent firms and individuals; the architectural firm of Parkinson & Parkinson, muralist Hugo Ballin, and the P.J. Walker Company construction firm. Upon its completion in 1931, it was considered one of the finest commercial office buildings in Los Angeles. The Title Guarantee and Trust Company Building is highly visible to the public, being situated adjacent to Pershing Square and dominating the architectural landscape of the Hill and Fifth Street intersection in the heart of downtown Los Angeles. Pershing Square is one of the most significant historic, visual, cultural, and social focal points of downtown Los Angeles. The Title Guarantee Building, in addition to the Biltmore Hotel, Pershing Square Building, and Pacific Mutual Building, visually and architecturally anchors Pershing Square. The structure has been previously determined to be eligible for National Register of Historic Places listing, as part of the 1979 Los Angeles Downtown People Mover Survey, and more recently as part of the current Metro Rail Study. The walls of the lobby are decorated by six murals depicting various aspects of Los Angeles history. The Title Guarantee and Trust Company Building exhibits a powerful sense of historical and architectural time and place unique to Los Angeles.

The structure was conceived to accommodate the office needs of the Title Guarantee and Trust Company. Title Guarantee commissioned the prominent Los Angeles architectural firm of Parkinson & Parkinson to design the structure. The P.J. Walker Company, recognized as one of Los Angeles premier construction firms, was contracted to erect the edifice at an estimated cost of \$800,000. Construction was begun on September 6, 1930 and was completed the following year.

The eminent architect John Parkinson (1861-1935) was responsible for the design of many of the most prominent commercial and governmental buildings in the American West, particularly Southern California. A great number of his designs are already represented on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Broadway Historic District and the Spring Street Historic District. An additional 10 structures designed by Parkinson have recently been determined eligible for National Register Listing as part of the recently completed architectural survey of the Central Business District conducted by the Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles. Parkinson began his architectural career in Seattle in association with Evers from 1890-94. Moving to Los Angeles in 1895, Parkinson designed structures to fulfill the needs of that growing city in every conceivable fashion. He became associated with Edwin Bergstrom from 1904-1915, and later with his son Donald B. Parkinson, after

9. Major Bibliographical References

Architectural Digest, 1931, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp 48-49.

Los Angeles Times, Sept. 1, 1930, II, p. 2.

Los Angeles City Building Permits.

Southwest Builder And Contractor, Nov. 7, 1930, p. 53; July 17, 1931, pp 46-47.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.23

Quadrangle name Hollywood, CA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	1	3	8	4	5	4	0	3	7	6	8	1	0	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B

Zone		Easting						Northing						

C

Zone		Easting						Northing						

D

Zone		Easting						Northing						

E

Zone		Easting						Northing						

F

Zone		Easting						Northing						

G

Zone		Easting						Northing						

H

Zone		Easting						Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

That certain real property in the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, State of California, known as "T. G. and T. Co. Property" as per map recorded in Book 169, page 39 of Maps, in the Office of the County Recorder of said County. **Boundaries encompass the building on its historic**

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries 86' x 119' lot.

state	n/a	code	county	n/a	code
state		code	county		code

state	code	county	code
state		county	

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard Starzak, Architectural Historian; Roger G. Hatheway, President

organization Roger G. Hatheway & Associates date November 14, 1983

street & number 1633 Westwood Boulevard telephone (213) 478-1176

city or town Los Angeles state CA 90024

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Marian Mitchell Wilson

title Resputy SHPO date 6/22/84

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the National Register

date 7/26/84

for Shelores Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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1919. Mr. Parkinson designed Los Angeles first Class "A" office building, the Homer Laughlin Building (1898), now used as the Grand Central Market. Los Angeles Central Business District is dominated by commercial designs created by this architect, including: The Washington Building (1912); The Southern California Gas Company Building (1923-25); The Title Insurance Building (1927); and the Southern California Telephone Company (1929). He designed many of Los Angeles most important Hotels: The Alexandria (1905) and addition (1910); The Rosslyn (1912-13) and Annex (1923); and the King Edward. Los Angeles Union Station (1936-1939), long the busiest traveler terminal in the city, was constructed after a Parkinson design. He designed major department stores such as Bullock's, the Broadway, and Blackstone's. The heart of the University of Southern California campus was designed by Parkinson, including the Administration, Science, Bridge Hall, and Student Union Buildings. He designed the original California Club and Los Angeles Athletic Club. In collaboration with A.C. Martin and John Austin, Parkinson designed the Los Angeles City Hall, and the Los Angeles Union Terminal Buildings. The Los Angeles Coliseum represents the enduring quality of John Parkinson's work, having been the site for the 1932 Olympics, and the intended site for the return of the Games in 1984. John Parkinson's architectural achievements extended outside the Los Angeles area. In Seattle, his designs include the Pacific and Eppler Buildings and the Butler Hotel. In Salt Lake City: Kearns Building; the Utah Hotel; and the Union Railroad Station. He also designed the Southern Hotel in Dallas in 1906.

Percival John Walker entered the construction business in San Francisco in 1895, The P.J. Walker Company became very successful as a result of the rebuilding of San Francisco following the 1906 earthquake. The firm constructed several structures in downtown Los Angeles which have recently been determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register, including the following: The William May Garland Building, 117 W. 9th St. in 1923-25; The Southern California Gas Co., 810 S. Flower St. in 1923-25; The Belasco Theatre, 1048 S. Hill St. in 1926; The Alexander and Oviatt Building, 615 S. Olive St.; The Hart Building (Bullock's), 650 S. Hill St. in 1928; and the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, 409 W. Olympic Blvd. in 1929.

Six murals in the lobby area represent important periods in the development of the City of Los Angeles. The murals are among the finest in quality and scope executed by the distinguished artist Hugo Ballin still extant in Los Angeles. The murals represent the prehistoric age, dramatizing the significant archeological discoveries made at the La Brea Tar Pits; the period of Spanish and Mexican influence, represented by a scene of life on a typical rancho; the signing of the treaty of Cahuenga, or the beginning of American influence; a depiction of the first United States survey by Lt. Ord in 1849; the arrival of the railroad in 1876, tying Los Angeles to the rest of the nation; and finally an interpretation of the rapid growth of the City to the time of construction.

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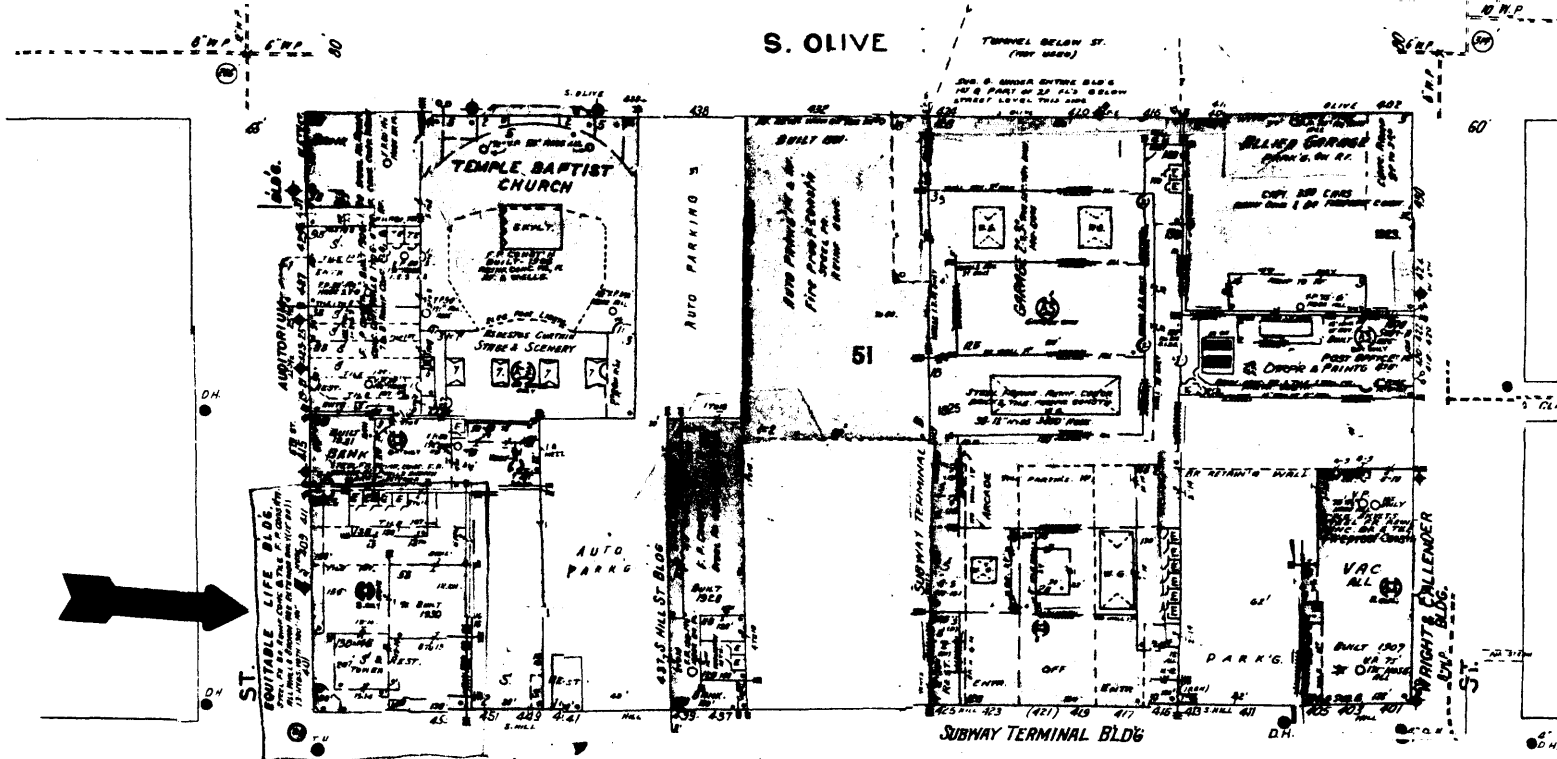
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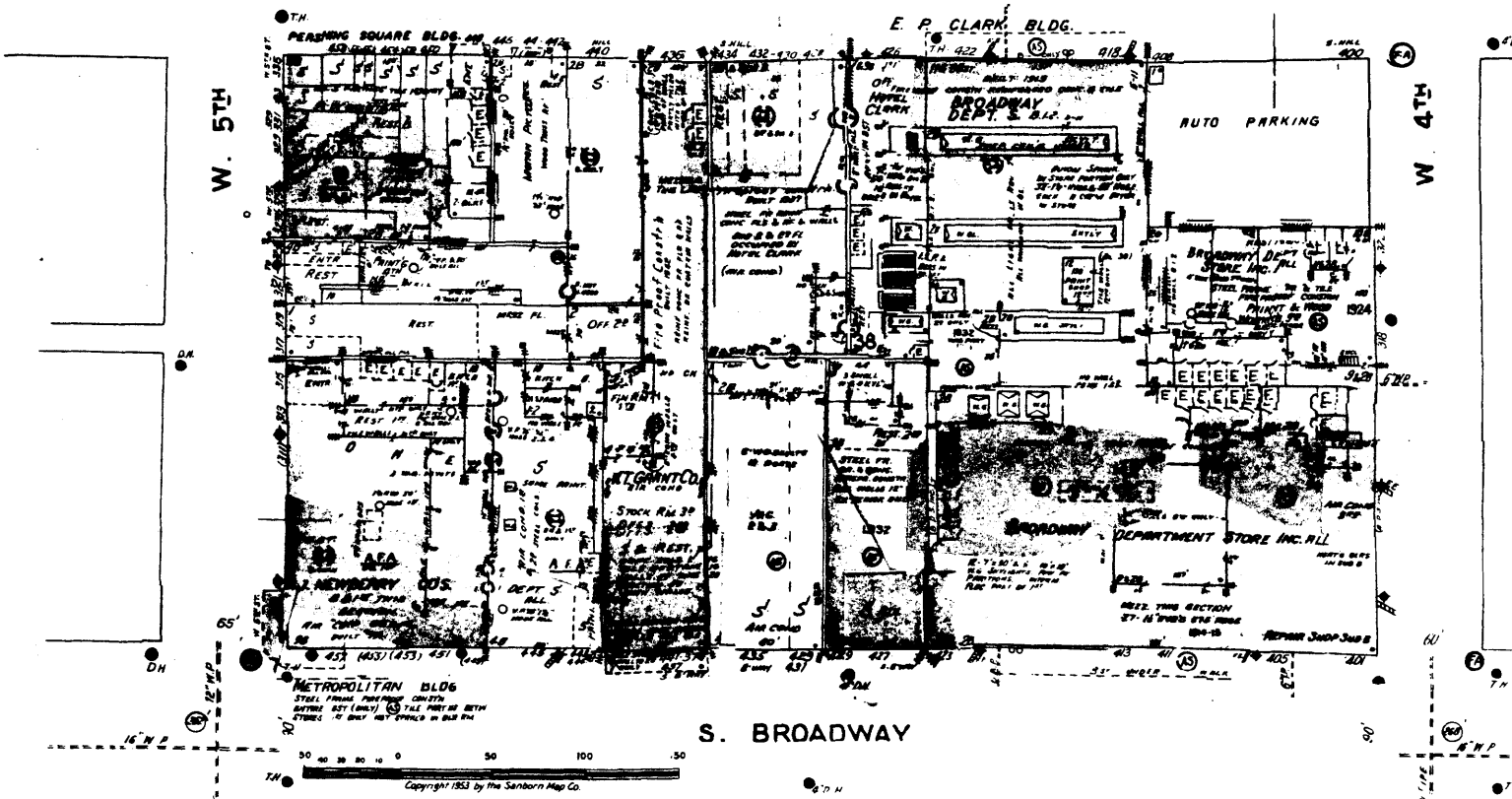
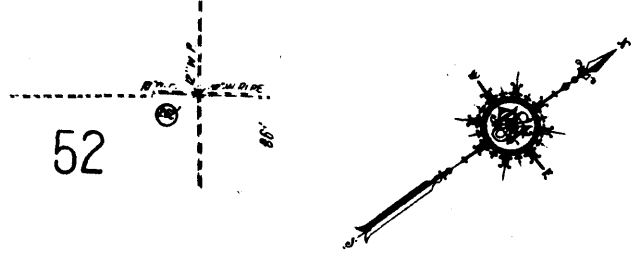
2

Hugo Ballin was born in New York City on March 7, 1879, and died in Los Angeles in November, 1956. He studied in Rome, Florence, and the Art Students' League in New York. Hugo Ballin achieved national prominence as an artist during the 1920's and 1930's. Specializing in mural decorations, Mr. Ballin's works included the executive chamber in Madison, Wisconsin and rooms in the Oliver Gould Jennings Residence, New York City and the E.D. Brandegee Residence, Boston, Mass. Additional works were represented in the National Museum, Washington, D.C., the Montclair Museum in New Jersey, and the Ann Mary Brown Memorial at Brown University, Rhode Island. Hugo Ballin's career reached its zenith in Los Angeles, in which he chose to reside at 2118 Woodland Way in the Hollywood area. Here his murals graced such prominent structures as: the Planetarium at Griffith Observatory; The Los Angeles Times Building; The Wilshire Boulevard Temple; The One Bunker Hill Building (Edison); The Title Guarantee and Trust Company Building; and the main entrance of the General Hospital. Mr. Ballin also executed murals for the Burbank City Hall and the California National Bank of La Jolla. Interestingly, Mr. Ballin produced and mounted sets for over 90 feature length motion pictures, including the silent film classics "Jane Eyre", "Vanity Fair", and "Heritage".

The architecture of the Title Guarantee and Trust Company Building is, therefore, the product of the collaborative efforts of some of the finest Los Angeles professionals of the period. A number of commercial office structures were designed in the Art Deco style at this time, but the Title Guarantee is one of the two most outstanding examples.



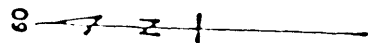
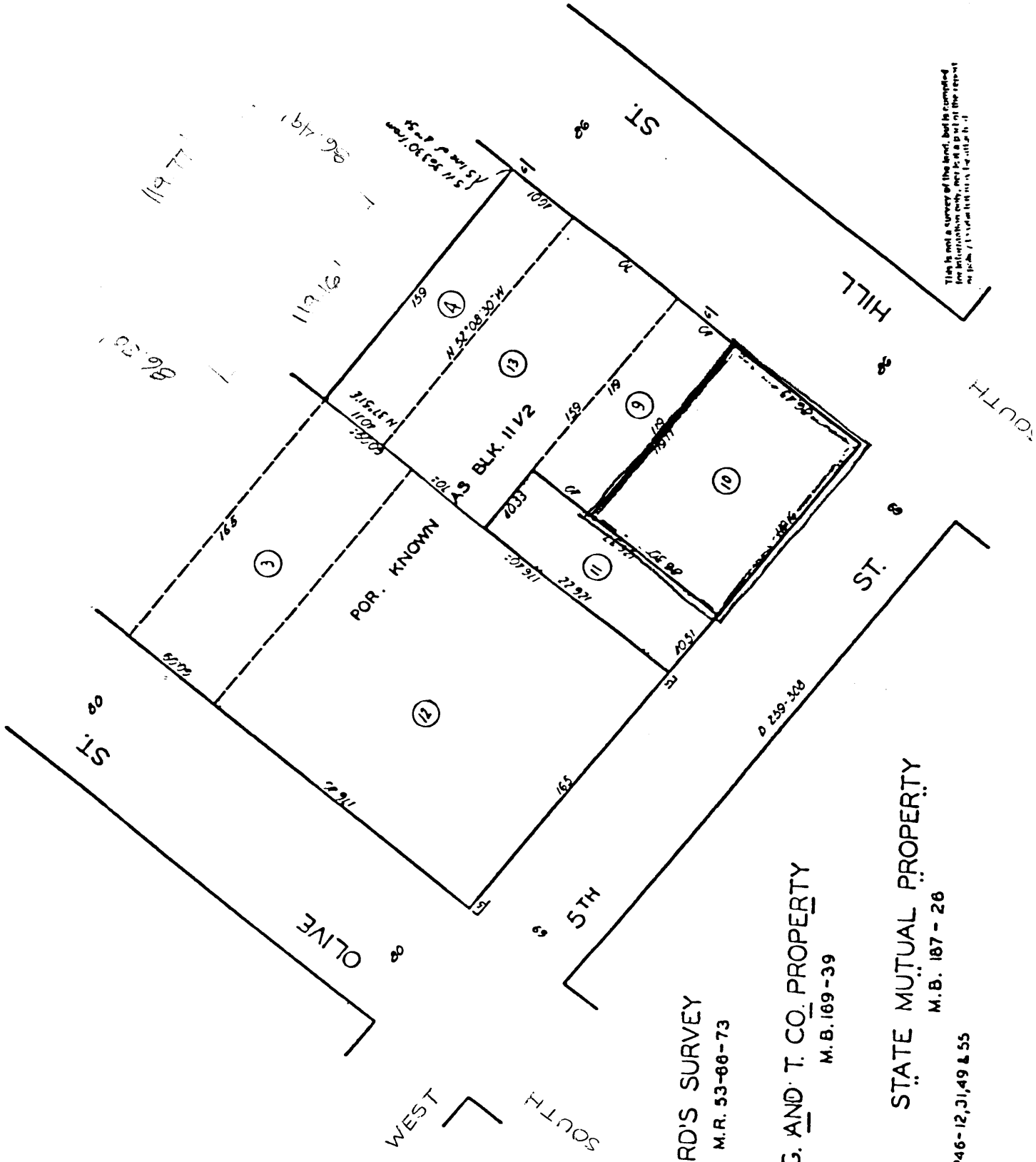
TITLE GUARANTEE &
TRUST COMPANY BUILDING
401 West Fifth Street
Los Angeles, California



TITLE GUARANTEE AND TRUST BUILDING
 411 West Fifth Street
 Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, CA

5149	28
ALL 1" = 50'	

75-76



ORD'S SURVEY
 M.R. 53-66-73

T.G. AND T. CO. PROPERTY
 M.B. 169-39

STATE MUTUAL PROPERTY
 M.B. 187-28

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FOR PREV. ASSMT. SEE: 246-12, 31, 49 & 55

This is not a survey of the land, but is compiled from information furnished by the owner on the report as made by a licensed professional surveyor.