

**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 Old Commercial National Bank Building
and/or common United Mercantile Bank Building

2. Location

street & number 509 Market Street, corner of Market and Texas not for publication
city, town Shreveport vicinity of _____ congressional district 4th--Charles Roemer
state Louisiana code 022 county Caddo Parish code 017

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied (partially)	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<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:

4. Owner of Property

name United Building Company
street & number 509 Market Street
city, town Shreveport vicinity of _____ state Louisiana

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Caddo Parish Courthouse
street & number 500 Texas Street
city, town Shreveport state Louisiana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Historic Resources Inventory
title Shreveport, LA compiled by R. Wright has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1979-80 federal state county local
depository for survey records Planning Department - City of Shreveport
city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Original: The ten story bank/office building, designed by the architectural firm of Mann and Stern of Little Rock, Arkansas, is located on the northeast corner of Texas Street, traditionally and still the major street in downtown Shreveport, and Market Street.

When built the bank was the tallest building in Shreveport by four stories. Its verticality is emphasized by piers which run the height of the building. The piers run continuously from the third through eighth floor clad in a white ceramic glazed brick. The piers are interrupted by a fascia above the ground floor, frieze above the second floor and a massive two story entablature. The substantial portion of these horizontal members, particularly ornamental decoration, is done in white-glazed terra cotta. The frieze above the second floor reiterates the corner line adjacent three story buildings.

The major curtain wall material on the ground, mezzanine and second story is terra cotta. The piers and spandrels from the third through eighth are brick. The ninth and tenth floors are clad in terra cotta.

From the corner of Texas and Market, the building appears to be a massive rectilinear slab. However, the building is a rectangle in plan only on the ground and mezzanine levels, and an "L" for the remaining floors. The Texas Street elevation is divided by five bays between six piers. The wider Market Street elevation is divided by seven bays between eight piers. Of minor vertical emphasis are mullions which create a 1-2-1 window pattern within each bay.

Typical of its period, all major decorative elements are in terra cotta. These include horizontal members such as the cornice and brackets which lead the piers into each major horizontal member. The styling of these elements appear to be an eclectic cross between Sullivanesque ornaments and quasi-classical scrolls and flutes. Decorative treatment can also be seen in the brick off-sets in the spandrels.

Present: The only major alteration to the exterior occurred in the 1970's when the ground floor was remodeled. The alterations were extensive, with new marble cladding for the piers and a stucco fascia, anodized bronze mullions, and tinted glazing. At this same time, United Mercantile Bank added a drive-through teller structure, with a unistrut roof on the lot next to the bank building on Market Street.

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Continuation sheet Shreveport Commercial
Historic District

Item number 7

Page 2

7. Description (Continued)

(Appended by LA National Register Staff)

The building has an "L" shaped plan with a central corridor in each wing of the "L." This plan is repeated on every floor. There are pretentious paneled spaces on the first floor and on the top floor. There is also an ornamental steel stair. Aside from these features, the interior spaces are nondescript and somewhat dilapidated.

The building is constructed with masonry bearing walls and steel framing. It was structurally conservative though it did incorporate some of the new technology embodied in the Chicago Style. Of special note are the three part Chicago Style windows.

The only major change since construction has been the remodeling of the ground floor (photo #1).

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1910 **Builder/Architect** Mann and Stern, Little Rock, Ark.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Significance - Historical

When built in 1910 and for over a dozen years, the building was the tallest structure in Shreveport. It remained the tallest building in the City for 14 years until 1924 upon the completion of the 17-story Slattery Building, also by the architects Mann and Stern. The occupants were among the most powerful and wealthy in the City, which was then experiencing boom years brought on by the discovery of oil and gas in Northwestern Louisiana. The most famous person associated with the building was, however, not an occupant. In the early 1920's, on the onset of his political career as Governor and Senator, Huey P. Long, as a private lawyer represented a former vice president in litigation with the Commercial National Bank.

The building was built for the Commercial National Bank, who remained in the building until 1940 whereupon moving into their current headquarters.

Architectural

The building is the best example in Shreveport of early Mid-western skyscrapers, a la Sullivan's Wainwright Building in St. Louis. Of note is the ornate terra cotta detailing, typical of its time, on the cornice and bracketing the brick piers.

Addendum by National Register Staff:

It should be noted that the above building is the largest and most richly ornamented Chicago style skyscraper in Shreveport. It is also one of less than six examples extant in Louisiana.

9. Major Bibliographical References

UTM NOT VERIFIED

THOMPSON, BAILEY, editor, "Historic Shreveport", 1st ed.; Ch. 1, pg. 18
 Shreveport Publishing Co., Shreveport, 1980, 128 pgs.
 STUCK, GOODLOE, The Shreveport Times, "Look up to find glazed terra cotta",
 pg. 7-E, August 20, 1978, Shreveport Times, Shreveport, 1978
 Historical Preservation Archives, Louisiana State University, Shreveport, Louisiana

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property approx. .10 acre

Quadrangle name Bossier City Quad, La.

Quadrangle scale 1=24000

UMT References

A

1	5	4	2	9	8	5	0	3	5	9	7	5	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

Please refer to sketch map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Alvin Childs, Jr.

organization _____ date _____

street & number 600 Hutchinson Building telephone (318) 222-0847

city or town Shreveport state Louisiana

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 Robert B. DeBlieux

title Deputy SHPO date 1/14/82

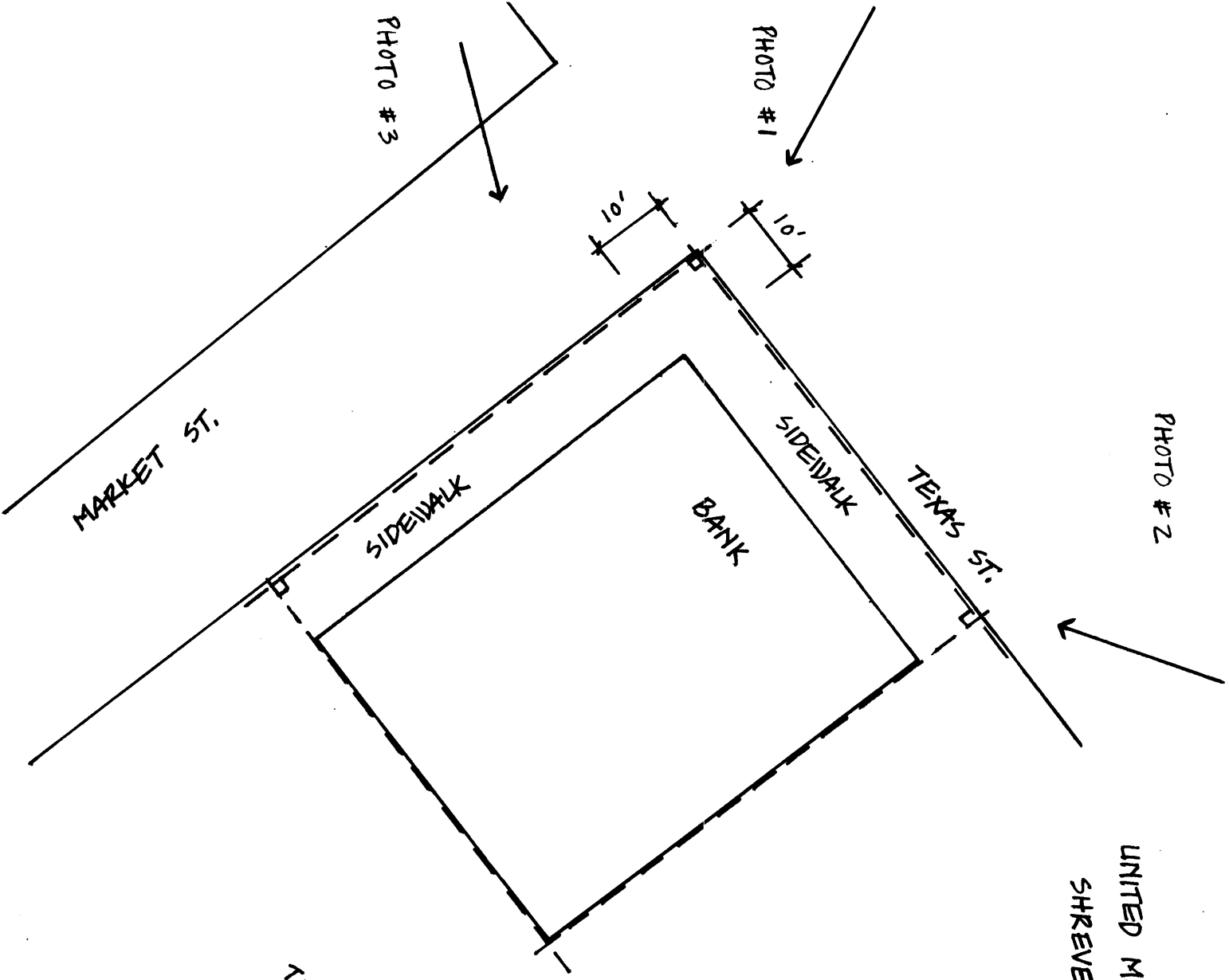
For HCRS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Beth Grosvenor date 3/11/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration



UNITED MERCANTILE BANK BUILDING
 SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA

SITE BOUNDARIES PARALLEL BLDG. FACADES AND BOUNDING STREETS AT DISTANCES SHOWN. THE CORNER TWO BOUNDARIES ON MARKET & TEXAS ST. FOLLOW THE INSIDE CURBLINE, WHILE THE OTHER TWO FOLLOW THE BLDG. PARTY WALLS.

SCALE 1" = 20' APPROX.

