

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Advertising Building

and or common Mary Muffet Building

2. Location

street & number 1627-29 Locust Street  not for publication

city, town St. Louis  vicinity of

state Missouri code 29 county City of St. Louis code 510

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A 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 type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Allen H. Cutler

street & number 4351 New Falls Road

city, town Levittown, PA 19056  vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Louis City Hall

street & number Market Street at Tucker Boulevard

city, town St. Louis MO 63103 state

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Architectural Survey of the Central Business District, St. Louis  
has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date October 1975; revised April 1977; February 1982  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Landmarks Association of St. Louis

city, town St. Louis state Missouri

## 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 Advertising Building is a nine-story reinforced concrete commercial building located on the northeast corner of 17th and Locust Streets just west of the heart of St. Louis' Central Business District. Designed in 1917 by St. Louis architect Albert B. Groves, the building is faced with a reddish brown brick and trimmed with greyish white and red terra cotta.

Measuring 55'x 155', the building is three bays wide on Locust and St. Charles Streets and extends eight bays on 17th Street. The principal (south) and rear (north) elevations (Photos #1 & 2) are similarly designed: the three-bay first story bases are established by elliptical arches trimmed with greyish white terra cotta featuring oak leaf and acorn motifs. Greyish white terra cotta buttresses surmounted by pinnacles frame the arches. Uninterrupted brick piers rise the length of the shaft separating groups of triple windows with moveable sash. Canted sills are fashioned of red terra cotta. The spandrels on the shaft feature recessed brick lozenges. The attic stories are defined by checkerwork of greyish white terra cotta and reddish brown brick, accented with gargoyles perched on small round pedestals (Photo #3). Terra cotta richly embellishes the attic stories which feature crenellated parapets and terra cotta piers with pinnacles. The Gothic tower effect thus produced is more pronounced on the rear elevation due to the recessing of the center attic bay (Photo #2).

The east elevation is unarticulated and relieved by random double-hung windows and a fire escape well (Photo #2). On the west elevation, quadruple double-hung windows are featured in the center six bays; the first and last bays have smaller, triple windows. An extended terra cotta lintel course is employed in the eighth and ninth stories; and terra cotta quoins embellish the first floor openings similar to the front and rear designs (Photo #1). The only noteworthy alteration on the exterior has been the complete or partial boarding up of ground floor openings (Photo #4).

The interior has been remodeled over the years. Concrete floors are supported by fourteen concrete pillars with conical capitals formerly connected by concrete strips molded to the ceiling.

## 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 checked="" 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 1917 Builder/Architect Albert B. Groves, Architect

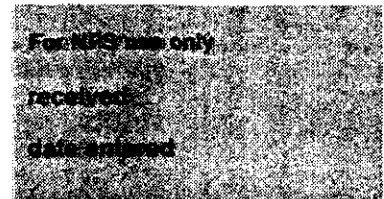
### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Advertising Building qualifies for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C and is significant in the following areas: **ARCHITECTURE:** Designed in 1917 by St. Louis architect Albert B. Groves, the nine-story Advertising Building embodies characteristics of the St. Louis commercial building of the first quarter of the twentieth century as it adapted historic styles to the developing technology of modern structural systems. Employing a reinforced concrete frame, the building displays fine Gothic detailing in traditional local materials of brick and terra cotta which are an interesting variant of the prevailing classically detailed commercial buildings of the period. The building survives virtually unaltered. **COMMERCE:** The building was originally constructed and promoted as the Advertising Building, an innovative project at the time which consolidated advertising agencies and related firms in one building to facilitate business. Among the firms that located in the building, Gardner Advertising Company paralleled the national growth pattern of advertising agencies during the prosperous twenties and played an important role in introducing modern advertising techniques in the Midwest.

Effects of St. Louis' rise in national rank to the fourth largest manufacturing city in the country were evident in the rapid westwardly expansion of the Central Business District at the turn of the century. A milestone of progress was marked in 1899 with the construction of a large warehouse building at 13th and Washington that forged across the barrier of 12th Street, long the outer limits for business property. Six years later a local syndicate's record-breaking purchase of over 1,200 front feet on Washington Avenue between 13th and 18th Streets signaled a new era of growth for St. Louis' wholesale district.<sup>1</sup> At that time there was also wide speculation that Locust Street, another major east/west thoroughfare, would be the "scene of the next big land deal" between 14th and 18th Streets. Locust Street, it was claimed, was destined to become a rival of Olive Street as a retail center and of Washington Avenue as the hub of the city's wholesale trade. Announcement of plans to clear the site of the city's Exposition Hall which had blocked Locust Street between 13th and 14th Streets since its construction in 1884 further enhanced the street's potential for westward development.<sup>2</sup> By the end of 1911, the St. Louis Republic, under the heading "Business Boom in District," discussed the success of the Seventeenth Street Realty Company in the area surrounding the Advertising Building site saying, "The transition of this section of the city from an antiquated residence section to a high-class mercantile district has been rapid....The Seventeenth Street Realty Company has been the greatest factor in developing upper Washington Avenue and Locust Street....further improvements are contemplated."<sup>3</sup> Seventeenth Street Realty, incorporated primarily to build and sell buildings in this area, financed the construction of the Advertising Building.

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Plans for the building were drawn up by Cornell-trained architect Albert B. Groves whose design was in keeping with the monumental spirit already established for commercial warehouses and business blocks along the corridors of Locust Street and Washington Avenue. Groves, however, provided an individual solution to the building type which most commonly was articulated in a Classical vocabulary. On both the primary and rear elevations of the Advertising Building, terra cotta buttresses, pinnacles, gargoyles and crenellation impart a decidedly Gothic character to the whole, enhanced by uninterrupted brick piers in the shaft which accentuate the vertical lines (Photos #1, 2, 3). Most likely influenced by New York's Woolworth Building of 1913, the use of Gothic ornament on the Advertising Building broke new ground for St. Louis business blocks although earlier Groves had tentatively used Gothic motifs in a 1914 commercial building. During the next decade, the style was subsequently used by other local architects in three or four commercial buildings.

Groves became the foremost designer of other commercial buildings which filled the western leg of Locust Street and Washington Avenue by the 1920s. Long associated with Brown Shoe Company, Groves achieved special recognition for his 1906 design for Brown's general offices on Washington Avenue and 17th Street (razed) and for his expertise in factory design published in the American Architect in 1918 and given form in eleven shoe factories. Known locally for the versatility of his portfolio, the architect received prestigious commissions for eighteen churches and numerous large houses in St. Louis private places in addition to his commercial work. Groves' important designs outside Missouri include the First National Bank Building and the Taliaferro house in Tampa, Florida, and buildings in Denver, New York and Oklahoma.

Completed late in 1917, the building was constructed to house firms especially associated with the rapidly rising business of advertising. At the announcement of the building's imminent opening, a local newspaper stated, "Already several of St. Louis' largest advertising agencies have taken quarters in the new structure. The plan of grouping business firms in the same lines in a single building has found favor throughout the country and is gaining strength here."<sup>4</sup> Among the firms which immediately located in the new Advertising Building were the Gardner Advertising Company (still prominent) and the Fisher-Ruebel-Brown Advertising Agency. Gardner's prominent association with the building is documented by a 1927 photograph showing a four and a half story sign installed on the southwest corner of the building (Photo #4).

Until the end of the nineteenth century, advertising agencies served only as brokers of space in publications; filling the purchased space was up to the advertisers themselves. This often resulted in ineffective and sometimes false advertising. As the twentieth century neared, the impact of national advertising in a calculated manner became evident, and advertising agencies gradually stepped into the role.

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Gardner Advertising pioneered in offering such creative services to clients as copywriting, illustrating and multi-media advertising using a planned campaign strategy. They were the first agency, in 1923, to use recipes in food advertising, now a common practice. Gardner was also the first to use a real-life character in a comic-strip advertisement, signing cowboy Tom Mix to endorse Ralston Purina products in 1933. The company's founder, Herbert S. Gardner helped, in 1917, to establish the influential American Association of Advertising Agencies whose intensive "Truth-in-Advertising" campaign marked the end of much of the quackery and false claims that were typical of Victorian and early twentieth century advertising.

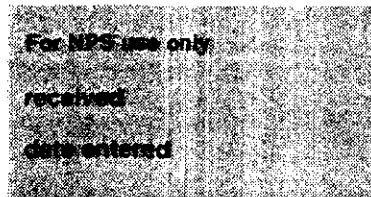
Following World War I, the U. S. economy experienced an upward swing. High-paying wartime jobs, along with wartime privations, heightened consumer desires for modern, glamorous goods. Reflecting this trend, national advertising expenditures, which had slumped in the teens, went from a low of \$1,468,000,000 in 1918 to almost \$4 billion by 1929.<sup>5</sup> Experiencing a similar growth, Gardner's client billings went from \$919,000 to \$4,004,000 during the same period.<sup>6</sup> Gardner Advertising was very much a part of the marketing scene both locally and nationally, adding such clients as Funk & Wagnalls, Brooks Tomato Products, Northern Paper Mills, Pet Milk, Russell Stover, McGraw Hill and Charles Scribner's Sons during the halcyon days before the stock market crash of 1929.

The Advertising Building housed, in addition to the advertising agencies themselves, printing houses, manufacturer's agents, engravers, artists, printers' suppliers, photographers and magazines (including some trade journals such as The Dry Goodsman) all associated with the business of advertising.

Beginning in the 1930s the dispersal of light manufacturing to outlying areas in Missouri and Illinois gradually undermined the status Locust Street and Washington Avenue once held as a thriving wholesale center of the city. With this demise, the area lost some of its appeal to image-conscious advertising agencies and related businesses who subsequently began to vacate the building; Gardner left late in 1936. Other trades and businesses gradually made their way into the Advertising Building. During the 1940s the Mary Muffet clothing factory and assorted thread and button concerns moved into the building. (The factory is no longer there but the building is commonly known today as the Mary Muffet Building.) In the 1950s, a sewing machine company and clothing workers' unions set up there. Printing companies continue in business in the building, joined by a few other light manufacturing companies. Future plans for the building are tentative.

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FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 31 October 1905.

<sup>2</sup>St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 15 October 1905; 5 November 1905.

<sup>3</sup>St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 17 December 1911.

<sup>4</sup>St. Louis Globe-Democrat, 30 December 1917.

<sup>5</sup>Frank Presbrey, The History and Development of Advertising (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1929), p. 524.

<sup>6</sup>Beatrice Adams, Let's Not Mince Any Bones (St. Louis: Western, 1972), p. 391.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Granite City, IL/MO

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	5	7	4	3	3	9	0	4	2	7	9	4	4	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** The Advertising Building is located in City Block 828 and fronts approximately 55 feet along the north side of Locust Street, 155 feet along the east side of Seventeenth Street, 55 feet along the south side of St. Charles Street and 155 feet along the western property line of the adjoining vacant lot.

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

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By © Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc., 1984

name/title Cynthia Hill Longwisch, Researcher; Mary M. Stiritz, Research Associate, Editor

organization Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc. date November 5, 1984

street & number 721 Olive - Rm. 1113 telephone (314) 421-6474


city or town St. Louis, MO 63101 state

# 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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title John Karel, Director & Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Parks & Historic Preservation date 11-29-84

### For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Adams, Beatrice. Let's Not Mince Any Bones. St. Louis: Western Publishing Co., 1972.

French, George. 20th Century Advertising. New York: Van Nostrand, 1926.

Presbrey, Frank. The History and Development of Advertising. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1929.

St. Louis Globe-Democrat, 30 December 1917.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 15 October 1905; 31 October 1905; 5 November 1905.

St. Louis Republic, 17 December 1911.

Wood, James Playsted. The Story of Advertising. New York: Ronald Press, 1958.



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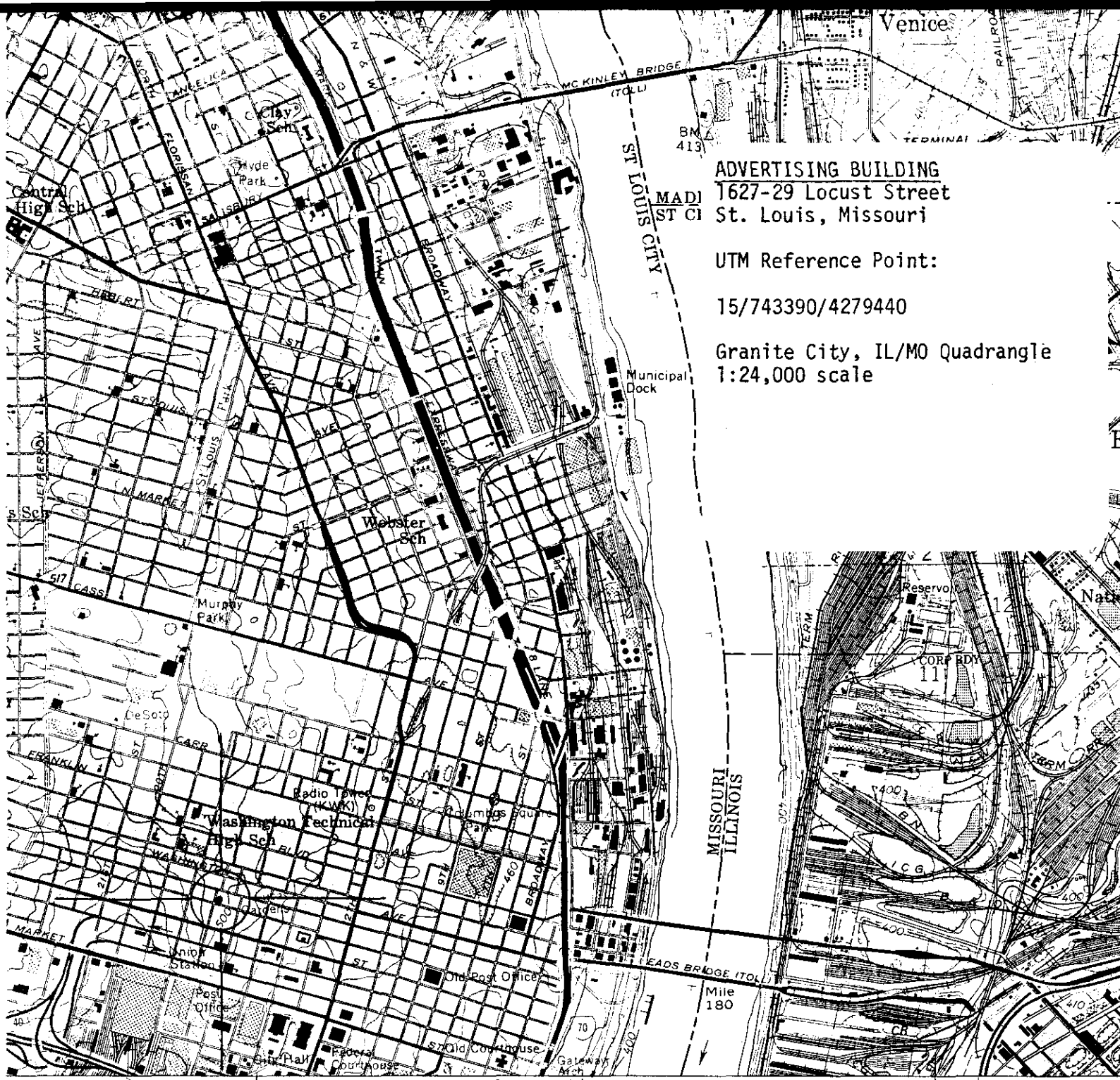
Item number 11

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2. James M. Denny, Chief of Survey and  
Registration Section and State  
Contact Person

Historic Preservation Program  
Department of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 176  
1915 Southridge Drive  
Jefferson City

November 15, 1984  
(314) 751-4096  
Missouri 65201



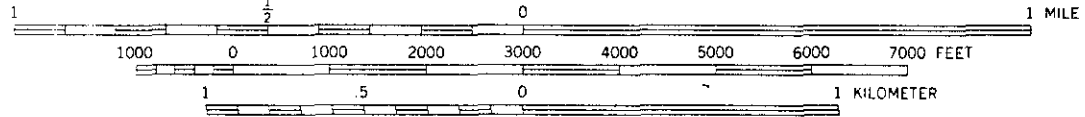
ADVERTISING BUILDING  
 1627-29 Locust Street  
 St. Louis, Missouri

UTM Reference Point:  
 15/743390/4279440

Granite City, IL/MO Quadrangle  
 1:24,000 scale

12'30" (1 MI. TO E 70) 744 (CAHOKIA) 0.3 MI. TO I 55 2961 II SW 746 10' 55' 40' 1.8 MI. TO JUNC. I-55 & 70 50'

SCALE 1:24 000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
 DASHED LINES REPRESENT 5-FOOT CONTOURS  
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092,  
 STATE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, URBANA, ILLINOIS 61801,  
 AND THE DIVISION OF GEOLOGY AND LAND SURVEY  
 MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, ROLLA, MISSOURI 65401  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

2 1/2° MILS  
 MAGNETIC NORTH  
 OF SHEET  
 Holdings within  
 national or  
 on this map

Revisions shown in purple compiled  
 from aerial photographs taken 1979  
 Map edited 1982. This informatio  
 Purple tint indicates extension of ur

ILLINOIS  
 QUADRANGLE

ADVERTISING BUILDING

St. Louis, MO

#1 of 4 1627-29 Locust St.

Photographer: Cynthia Longwisch

Date: September 1984

Negative: Landmarks Association  
of St. Louis, Inc.

Camera facing northeast



ADVERTISING BUILDING

St. Louis, MO

#2 of 4 1627-29 Locust St.

Photographer: Cynthia Longwisch

Date: September 1984

Negative: Landmarks Association  
of St. Louis, Inc.

Camera facing southwest



ADVERTISING BUILDING

St. Louis, MO

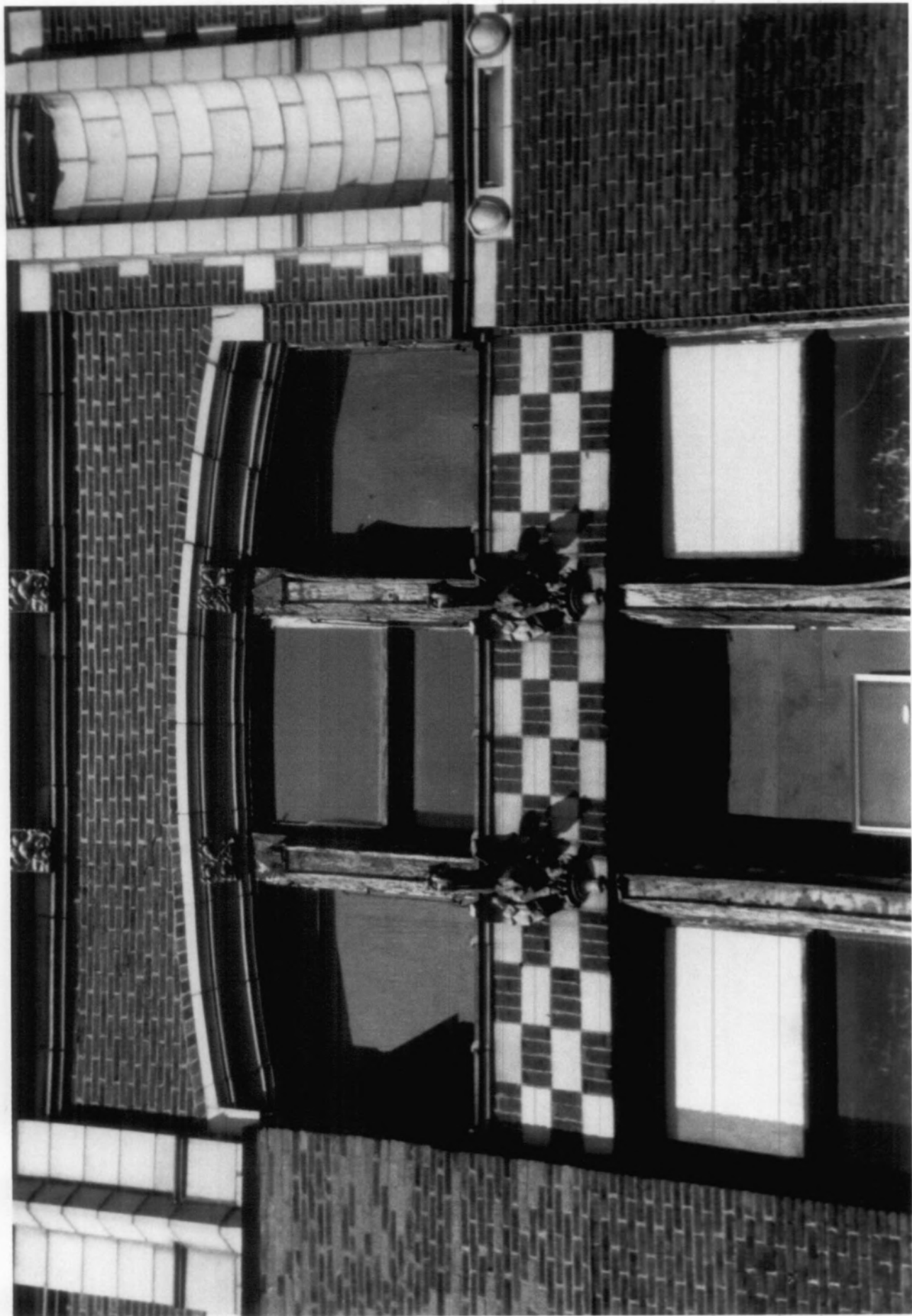
#3 of 4 1627-29 Locust St.

Photographer: Cynthia Longwisch

Date: September 1984

Negative: Landmarks Association  
of St. Louis, Inc.

Camera facing north





ADVERTISING BUILDING

St. Louis, MO

#4 of 4 1627-29 Locust St.

Photo: Beatrice Adams, Let's Not  
Mince Any Bones, St. Louis, 1972,  
p.41.

Date: 1927

Negative: Landmarks Association  
of St. Louis, Inc.

Photocopy: Camralab, Oct. 1984

