

# SITE FILE COPY

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Missouri	
COUNTY: Jackson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

### 1. NAME

COMMON:  
Emery, Bird and Thayer Building

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Bullene, Moore and Emery Store

### 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1016 - 18 Grand Avenue \*

CITY OR TOWN:  
Kansas City

STATE Missouri	CODE 64100	COUNTY: Jackson	CODE 095
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### 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) None	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments Vacant

### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
City National Bank and Trust Company of Kansas City

STREET AND NUMBER:  
928 Grand Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:  
Kansas City

STATE: Missouri	CODE 64100
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### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Office of Recorder of Deeds, Jackson County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
12th and Oak Streets

CITY OR TOWN:  
Kansas City

STATE: Missouri	CODE 64100
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### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
The Need for the Preservation of Kansas City's Architectural Heritage

DATE OF SURVEY: 1969  
 Federal    State    County    Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Kansas City Chapter, The American Institute of Architects

STREET AND NUMBER:  
John Hancock Building, Suite 215, 800 West 47th Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Kansas City

STATE: Missouri	CODE 64112
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\*Congressional District #5 The Hon. Richard Bolling,  
House of Representatives

## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Emery, Bird and Thayer Building, extending one block along 11th Street from Walnut Street to Grand Avenue in Kansas City, Missouri, is a large cream and gold painted sandstone and pressed brick department store building of the style originally described as "Free Romanesque." Situated on the steep slope of 11th Street, it is six stories high on the lower Walnut Street side and five stories high on the higher Grand Avenue side. The building is basically rectangular in plan, with a short "L" on the eastern half. It is 242.5 feet long on the 11th Street side, 128 feet on the Walnut Street side and 144 feet on the Grand Street side, as shown on the annexed site plan map. Built in 1889-90, it faces south onto 11th Street.

## EXTERIOR

The south front facade of the structure is five stories high and eleven bays wide. It is visually divided into four horizontal levels. The first level covers the area of the basement and first floor and consists of 242 linear feet of showcase windows recessed behind arcades. The arcades are made up of handsome segmental arches supported by heavy, pressed brick, rectangular columns, each capped with an ornate terra cotta capital. Five such arches flank either side of the central doorway.

The second to fourth floors of the structure constitute the next horizontal section. They are cut by nine, three-story arches, each of which encloses the fenestration of one of the nine central bays. The window design of each is identical. The second and third stories of each bay are characterized by three, recessed, straight-topped windows divided by masonry mullions and crowned with ornate terra cotta panels. The fourth story of each bay supports three more windows again divided by mullions, but here rounded to fit the curve of the arch. The two end bays of the facade are narrower than those of the interior and lack their arch design. Each story of the end bays includes two windows separated by a heavy brick mullion and topped by a rusticated sandstone lintel. These windows are smaller than those of the central bays and more recessed to give a greater feeling of mass, strength and stability to the ends of the structure. Each floor of this section is carefully marked. The second and third stories are distinguished by a double band of rusticated sandstone, while the third and fourth are separated by a wide band of ornate terra cotta.

The third horizontal section of the design consists of a one-story band of small, deeply recessed straight-topped windows separated by

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7. #1

EMERY, BIRD AND THAYER BUILDING

pressed brick colonnettes supporting a continuous rusticated sandstone lintel. The fenestration is again according to bays, for each of the nine central bays maintains four windows, while the end bays support only two. The division of bays is distinguished by slightly wider colonnettes. The final section is made up of a plainly treated cornice decorated with a series of small ornaments evenly spaced at the division of each bay.

The west side of the building repeats this design, but modifies it to fit a facade six stories high and five bays wide. The arcade is stretched vertically to include two full stories, the end bays are expanded to the same width as the interior bays, and the interior bays are reduced to three in number. Similar modifications are made on the east side of the building where the design is repeated again. Here, however, an extra three bays are added to the north, repeating the design of the end bays.

The corners of the building are decorated with clusters of Romanesque Revival columns. A column cluster rises, at each corner, from the top of the arcade to the terra cotta band at the top of the third floor. The southwest and southeast columns are now covered with metal signs identifying the store. A second series of columns extends directly above these to the top of the fourth story, visually relating the second and third horizontal zones of the facade. The roof is flat.

INTERIOR

The interior of the building is irregularly divided into areas for both selling and office work. The partitions are of wood and plaster with some iron framing and iron grille-like enclosures. The woodwork is a heavy design typical of the era in which the building was built. The store has high ceilings and floors of wood. Stairways are open stairs with wood construction.

ALTERATIONS

The building is as original except for the painted exterior. Originally the exterior was unpainted red brick and pink sandstone. It was painted gray in 1955 and painted again in 1964, but this time the color was

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EMERY, BIRD AND THAYER BUILDING

changed to the current cream and gold. The Emery, Bird and Thayer Building was vacated in 1968.

This summary description of the physical appearance of the building is based on data included in the field report by Logan O. McKibbin, Architect, received May, 1970. The report is on file at the central office of the Missouri State Park Board, P.O. Box 176, 1204 Jefferson Building, Jefferson City, Missouri 65101.

**2. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1889-1890

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Military		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

EMERY, BIRD AND THAYER BUILDING

The Emery, Bird and Thayer Building is primarily significant as an outstanding example of the Free Romanesque style of architecture of the 1890's, designed by the nationally prominent architect, Henry Van Brunt, of the Kansas City firm Van Brunt and Howe. Secondary significance derives from the structure's arcade design, and also from the stylistic influence the structure exerted on surrounding buildings.

The building possesses many fine characteristics of the Romanesque style. It is a wholly masonry structure with its capitals and lintels emphasized by being of a different masonry material than the walls. This results in a sense of heaviness and mass that is reinforced by the recessed windows and general largeness and simplicity of the form.<sup>1</sup> Also characteristic of the style is the division of window lights by stone mullions and transoms, and the use of the arcade.

The arcade of the Emery, Bird and Thayer Building is of special interest because there is no other early example of the use of an arcade, as is done in this building, in the Kansas City area. Recently, however, the arcade seems to have influenced the design of a high-rise parking garage immediately to the east, and the Kansas City bus terminal, both of which have arcades.

The building is surrounded by several smaller, late nineteenth century, commercial buildings. A number of these, especially along Walnut Street, reveal the influence of the Emery, Bird and Thayer Building in their architectural design and detail.

The building's designer, Henry Van Brunt, was the first major architect in residence west of the Mississippi,<sup>2</sup> and one of the most distinguished architects ever to have practiced in Kansas City. He was a graduate of Harvard and an early partner of William Robert Ware, the founder of the architectural schools in the United States at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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8. #1 EMERY, BIRD AND THAYER BUILDING

(the first in the nation, 1868) and at Columbia School of Mines.<sup>3</sup> Van Brunt translated in 1857 the first ten of Viollet le Duc's seminal Discourses on Architecture, which deeply influenced, among others, Frank Lloyd Wright. Van Brunt was national president of the A.I.A. in 1899 and was a frequent essayist. Among Van Brunt's other works are such buildings as Harvard's Memorial Hall, and the Episcopal Theological Seminary at Cambridge, Massachusetts. In Kansas City his firm also designed the New Coates House Hotel 1887-1891, another current nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

PRESENT STATUS

The Emery, Bird and Thayer Building is presently scheduled for public land acquisition in Phase 1 (1970-1975) of a 3-phase development program (1970-1985). This program was published as the "Kansas City Missouri Downtown Plan," January 1971, prepared for the Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority of Kansas City, Missouri, in a project partially financed with funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This plan proposes new development of the site as office and retail space.

It should be noted, however, that the plan is presently being re-considered with a view to previously unrecognized historical and architectural merits of the Kansas City Downtown area.

EXPERT OPINION ON THE BUILDING

Donald Hoffmann has offered for the following comment on the Emery, Bird and Thayer Building:

I think it could be stressed that, of the surviving buildings of Van Brunt's, perhaps only Memorial Hall at Harvard (its tower unhappily truncated by fire) is more important than Emery, Bird and Thayer. Finally, there is the fact that the facades of EBT [sic], presumably, could be readily sandblasted and thus the building returned to its original condition.<sup>4</sup>

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8. #2

EMERY, BIRD AND THAYER BUILDING

Mr. Hoffman is the art critic for The Kansas City Star; assistant editor of the Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians; board member of the Society of Architectural Historians, 1968-1970; editor, The Meanings of Architecture: Buildings and Writings of John Wellborn Root, (New York: Horizon Press, 1967); contributor of articles and book reviews to the Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Architectural Forum, The Prairie School Review; younger humanist fellow, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1970-1971; recipient of grant-in-aid, American Council of Learned Societies, 1968; and a member of the journalism advisory committee, Fulbright-Hays Scholarship program, 1968-1970.

Footnotes

1. Marcus Whiffen, American Architecture Since 1780 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1969), p. 133.
2. William A. Coles, "Richard Morris Hunt and His Library as Revealed in the Studio Sketchbooks of Henry Van Brunt," Art Quarterly, Fall-Winter, 1967, Vol. XXX, Nos. 3-4, p. 226.
3. William A. Coles, ed., Architecture and Society, Selected Essays of Henry Van Brunt (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1969) p. 10.
4. Donald Hoffman, information in a letter to the Missouri State Historical Survey and Planning Office, November 2, 1971.

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

1. Coles, William A., ed. Architecture and Society, Selected Essays of Henry Van Brunt. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1969.
2. \_\_\_\_\_. "Richard Morris Hunt and His Library as Revealed in the Studio Sketchbooks of Henry Van Brunt," Art Quarterly, Fall-Winter, 1967, Vol. XXX, No.s 3-4, pp. 224 ff.
3. Hoffmann, Donald. Information in a letter to the State Historical

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		39° 06' 04"	94° 34' 52"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one (32,888 sq. ft.)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: M. Patricia Holmes, Chief Architectural Historian and Shelia M. Hannah, Research Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION: Missouri State Park Board      DATE: November 12, 1971  
Historical Survey and Planning Office

STREET AND NUMBER:  
P.O. Box 176, 1204 Jefferson Building

CITY OR TOWN: Jefferson City      STATE: Missouri 65101      CODE: 29

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National       State       Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph Jaeger, Jr.

Title Director, Missouri State Park Board, and Missouri State Liaison Officer

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Keeper of The National Register*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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9. #1 EMERY, BIRD AND THAYER BUILDING

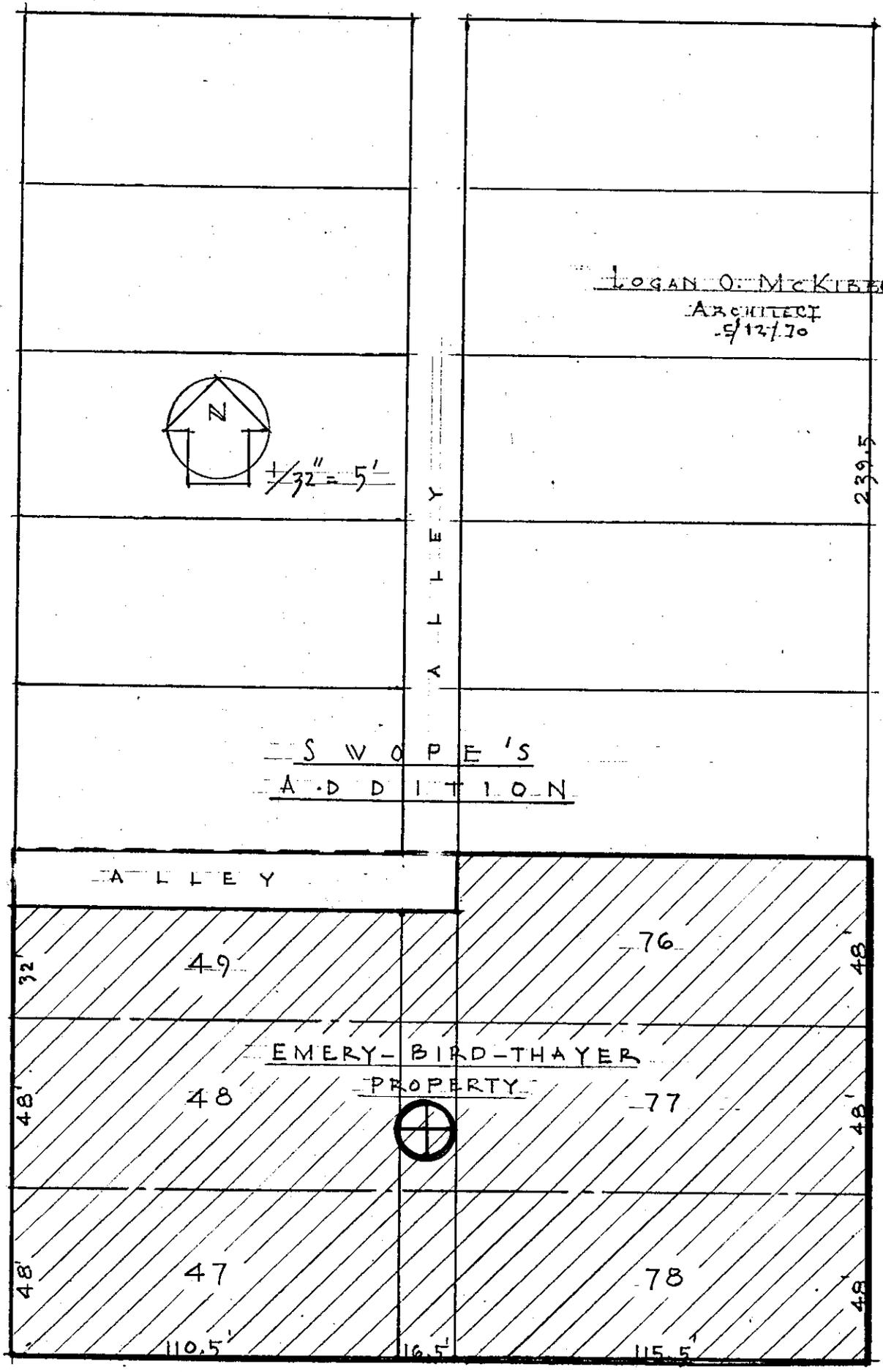
Survey and Planning Office, November 2, 1971. On file at the Missouri State Park Board, P.O. Box 176, 1204 Jefferson Building, Jefferson City, Missouri 65101.

4. "Kansas City Missouri Downtown Plan." Prepared for the Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority of Kansas City, Missouri, January 1971.

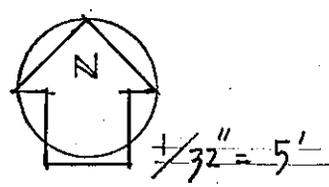
5. McKibbin, Logan O. Architect. Architectural consultant field report, received May 1970. The report is on file at the central office of the Missouri State Park Board, P.O. Box 176, 1204 Jefferson Building, Jefferson City, Missouri 65101.

6. Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1969.

W A L N U T S T.



~~LOGAN O. MCKIBBIN~~  
ARCHITECT  
5/12/70



S W O P E ' S  
A D D I T I O N

A L L E Y

EMERY-BIRD-THAYER  
PROPERTY



11 TH ST.



Denotes area being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places

G R A N D A V E

BRUNN  
KIRKVILLE

UNITED STATES

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

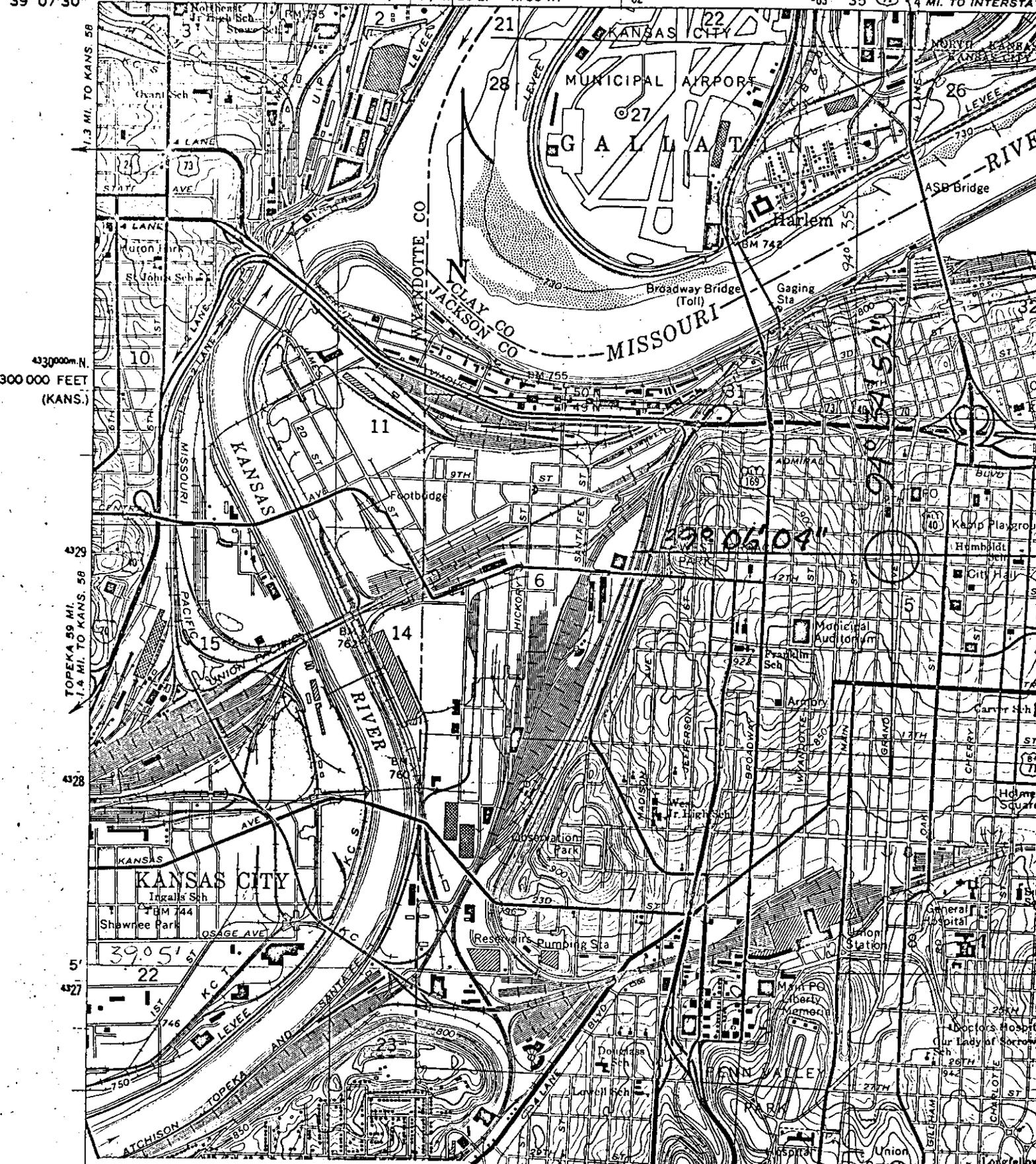
94°37'30"  
39°07'30"

360000m E 2 960 000 FEET (KANS.) R. 25 E. R. 33 W. 362

363 35'



ST. JOSEPH 50 MI.  
4 MI. TO INTERSTA



433000m N  
300 000 FEET  
(KANS.)

TOPEKA 59 MI.  
1.4 MI. TO KANS. 58

39°06'04"

U.S.G.S. 7.5' Quadrangle  
"Kansas City" (1964)  
Scale 1:24,000  
Emery, Bird and Thayer Building  
Lat. 39°06'04" Long. 94°34' 52"

426

## Photo Log:

Name of Property: **Emery, Bird and Thayer Building**  
City or Vicinity: **Kansas City**  
County: **Jackson County** State: **MO**  
Photographer: **Ron L. Walker**  
Date  
Photographed: **April, 1970**

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 6. The south façade of the Emery, Bird and Thayer Building; view from the southeast facing northwest.
- 2 of 6. The east side of the Emery, Bird and Thayer Building; view from the southeast facing the northwest.
- 3 of 6. The west side of the Emery, Bird and Thayer Building; view from the southwest facing northeast.
- 4 of 6. From southeast, looking northwest. View of south facades of the Emery, Bird and Thayer Building (left of center) and parking structure (at right). The parking structure design mimics the Emery, Bird and Thayer design in the spacing of piers, height and proportions.
- 5 of 6. From northwest, looking southeast. East side of Walnut St., between 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Sts. Emery, Bird and Thayer Building is located just right of center. Several of the building facades along this side of Walnut St. have a design kinship with the Emery, Bird and Thayer Building, in the use of arched windows and ornament.
- 6 of 6. From east, looking west toward the arcade of the Emery, Bird and Thayer Building. Foreground arcade belongs to the high rise parking structure located east (across Grand Ave) from the Emery, Bird and Thayer Building. This view illustrates the suitability of an arcade to the temperate zone.
- 7 of 7. Detail of a terra cotta capital on the Emery, Bird and Thayer building; view from the south facing north.





Vertical sign on the corner building, likely advertising a business or product, with stylized text.

NO  
TURNING  
RIGHT





MEYER'S

JACCORD'S

Emory  
Bird  
&  
Trayer





10th St

WAL..

ONE WAY

45 HAL

DEPOSIT  
HERE

L. M. Bryant

MEYER  
JEWELRY

DODGE

50



