UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK 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

AND/OR COMMON
Flatiron Hotel

2. LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
1722 St. Mary's Avenue

CITY, TOWN
Omaha

STATE
Nebraska

3. CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY

DISTRICT
BUILDINGS
STRUCTURE
SITE
OBJECT

OWNERSHIP
PUBLIC
PRIVATE
BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
IN PROCESS
BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

X OCCUPIED
UNOCCUPIED
WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
YES: RESTRICTED
YES: UNRESTRICTED
NO

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE
MUSEUM
COMMERCIAL
PARK
EDUCATIONAL
PRIVATE RESIDENCE
ENTERTAINMENT
RELIGIOUS
GOVERNMENT
SCIENTIFIC
INDUSTRIAL
TRANSPORTATION
MILITARY
OTHER:

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME
Union Casualty Underwriters

STREET & NUMBER
100 Aquila Court

CITY, TOWN
Omaha

STATE
Nebraska

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Register of Deeds, Omaha/Douglas Civic Center

STREET & NUMBER
1819 Farnam Street

CITY, TOWN
Omaha

STATE
Nebraska

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
Omaha City Architecture

DATE
1977

FEDERAL
STATE
COUNTY
LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Cynthia Schneider, 314 North 67 Street

CITY, TOWN
Omaha

STATE
Nebraska
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<th>CONDITION</th>
<th>CHECK ONE</th>
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<td><em>EXCELLENT</em></td>
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<td>XGOOD</td>
<td><em>RUINS</em></td>
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<td><em>FAIR</em></td>
<td><em>UNEXPOSED</em></td>
<td>ORIGINAL SITE</td>
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**DESCRIPTION**

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The triangular-shaped Flatiron Hotel is located in downtown Omaha on a block bounded by 18th Street, Howard Street, and St. Mary's Avenue, prominently displayed to the westbound traffic on the arterial St. Mary's Avenue (see photo #6). Augustus F. Kountze, prominent local banker and land-owner, had the building erected in 1911-12 for commercial/office use. Within two years it was adapted into a hotel by Payne & Slater, local realtors.

The steel frame structure faced with brick and limestone trim was designed in the Georgian Revival style with symmetrical facades and simple detailing. The main entrance is placed in the center of the St. Mary's Avenue side. The wall above the entrance projects slightly as was typical of the style and topped by a wall cornice, frieze, and metal railing. The cut-stone lintels, keystones, and skewbacks and corbelled brick and metal cornice are prominent features of the facades. The circular corner tower is strategically placed at the apex of the triangle and is highlighted by elongated brick chaînes and the stone antepagment around the second story window with its iron balustrade above the console-supported sill.

The main floor plan, divided into several rental units, is presently rather complicated in internal arrangement. The original condition is not presently known. The original entrance from St. Mary's Avenue presently leads to a small lobby with access to a finely detailed curved stairway which occupies a triangular-shaped space at the center of the building. Above, the plan becomes more coherent. Suites and rooms occupy the perimeter of the building. Access is via the triangularly arranged hallway which surrounds the triangular stairway, adjacent light-court and three interior rooms. A double-loaded hallway extends from the apex of the triangular hall to provide access to the acute corner of the building.

The first floor frontage originally had large glass windows with transoms separated by piers; however, it has been remodeled several times. The main entrance has also been altered and the Howard Street entrance was added in 1948 (see photo #2).

The Flatiron has been operated as a hotel to the present day by several different owners. Rehabilitation as an apartment house is currently being planned.
The major significance of the Flatiron Hotel lies in its unique contours in the Omaha streetscape. The Flatiron took advantage of the unusual-shaped site to create a three-sided landmark in downtown Omaha. A triangular block is most unusual in Omaha which was platted on a grid plan and no other building in the city has used a triangular site as dramatically as this. St. Mary’s Avenue is the only street which cuts diagonally through downtown. For several blocks east of the hotel, the Flatiron dominates the two street views.

Architect George B. Prinz has more or less applied the Georgian Revival style to the exterior with the symmetrical facade on the St. Mary's Avenue facade, slightly projecting wall surface at the entrance and the trim. An Ohio native, George B. Prinz (1864-1946) was educated at M.I.T., possibly where he met Thomas R. Kimball of Omaha as a fellow student, and studied for two years in Europe. Prinz moved to Omaha in 1891 to work for Kimball who was starting an architectural practice. Thomas R. Kimball was Omaha's most prominent architect (see Omaha Public Library, Douglas County and Hall County Courthouse, NRHP). Prinz began his own firm in 1909 and practiced until 1940.

Augustus F. Kountze, the original owner of the building, was a member of one of the most prominent banking families in Omaha. Kountze Brothers banking office was opened in 1857 by his father Herman and his four brothers. The banking office is now First National Bank. The Kountze Brothers were extensive land owners in the city, Nebraska, Iowa, and Minnesota. The land on which the hotel stands was platted by Augustus Kountze, his uncle. The Kountze Brothers also organized banks in Denver, Cheyenne and New York and Augustus F. and his two brothers were the owners and managers of the New York bank after the death of the first generation.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one acre

QUADRANGLE NAME: Omaha North, Nebr. -- Iowa

UTM REFERENCES

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

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FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Penelope Chatfield, Preservation Historian; D. Murphy, Architect

ORGANIZATION

Nebraska State Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

1500 R Street

CITY OR TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

DATE

July, 1978

TELEPHONE

(402) 432-2793

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL X ___

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

Maurice E. Knecht

DATE

8/1/78

TITLE

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

GPO 921-303
Landmarks, Inc. file on Flatiron Hotel. MS. filed with Cynthia Schneider 314 N. 67 Street, Omaha, Nebraska.


Sanborn-Perris Map Co., Insurance Maps of Omaha, Nebraska, New York, 1887, 1890, 1905.


The following 6 photos by James Abdo, Omaha, 1978. Negatives filed with Benjamin A. Votava, AIA, Barker Building, Omaha, Nebraska.

Photo 1. view to the northwest

Photo 2. view to the southwest

Photo 3. view to the northeast

Photo 4. detail of southeast corner, view to the north

Photo 5. detail of south wall, view to the north

Photo 6. view to the west
1983 photos. Photographer unknown.

View looking west

View looking northwest

West facade

Storefronts, west end

South facade
Historic view from the Nebraska State Historical Society Dewell Collection—uncat. June 1983.