

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name First National Bank Building

other names/site number Lincoln Building NeHBS# LC13:C8-299

2. Location

street & number 1001 "O" Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Lincoln [N/A] vicinity

state Nebraska code NE county Lancaster code 109 zip code 68508

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)


Signature of certifying official

1/26/98
Date

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. [] See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register [] See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

First National Bank Building

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE: Financial

COMMERCE: Business

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT: Not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS

Commercial Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Reinforced concrete

walls Brick

roof Built-up tar and gravel

other Terra cotta

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheets.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1911-1947

Significant Dates

1911
1945
1947

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Hyland and Green, Architects
Selden-Breck Construction Company, Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department

First National Bank Building

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

County and State

10. Geographical DataAcreage of Property Less than one acre**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1.	14	693610	4520250	3.			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2.				4.			

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

See Continuation Sheet.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) See Continuation Sheet

11. Form Prepared Byname/title Matthew G. Hansen, Preservation Internorganization Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department date September 1997street & number 555 S. 10th telephone (402) 441-7491city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68508**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name M.E. Group, Inc.street & number 6830 Northfork Drive telephone (402) 432-1633city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68516**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

First National Bank Building

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

County and State

DESCRIPTION

The First National Bank Building in downtown Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska, is an eight-story office structure at 10th and O Streets. The building is a flat-roofed, brick-over-steel frame structure built in the Commercial Style of tall office construction. Its primary facades (north and west) are faced in a light-buff colored brick with terra-cotta ornament, while the secondary sides (south and east) are sheathed mainly in a red-orange brick. The bank building was the product of the Chicago architecture firm of Hyland and Green, and was constructed in 1910-1911.

The First National Bank Building, later known as the Lincoln Building, is an eight-story, brick-over-steel frame, Commercial Style office building located on the southeast corner of 10th and O Streets in downtown Lincoln, Nebraska. The remainder of the block is largely occupied by a complex of buildings which were once a part of Gold's department store (NRHP, 1982). Directly west across 10th Street is the Terminal Building (NRHP 1986). The block containing Lincoln's Old City Hall (NRHP, 1969, built as the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse) and the Old Federal Building is situated northwest across the 10th and O intersection from the First National Bank Building.

The building was designed by the Chicago-based architecture firm of Hyland and Green. Construction for the new bank commenced in August of 1910, and was completed in time for the June 10, 1911, official opening of the building. The flat-roofed structure features the typical Commercial Style three-part composition of base, shaft, and cornice. It has primary facades on the north and west, and secondary facades on the south and east. Although rectangular in plan on the basement and first floor levels, the building assumes a "C"-shaped plan above the second story in order to provide a light and air shaft in the center of the east facade.

The west primary facade is 142 feet in length, and features polished Woodbury granite from the sidewalk grade to the base of the first story windowsills. There are seven steel-framed, arched windows on the first story, each containing six panes of glass. There originally was a sidewalk stairway near the southern end of this facade of the building which descended to two basement-level retail shop spaces. Holes remain in the granite to show where the handrails for this stairway were affixed. Immediately south of the stairway was a street-level entrance in the location of the southern-most arched window which once allowed access to a shop space in the southwest corner of the first floor. The City of Lincoln building permit #7229 indicates that both the stairway and street-level shop entrance were removed in a 1917 remodeling by the original architect Paul V. Hyland.

The second story of the building is visually distinguished from the first by the application of decorative terra-cotta molding. The second through seventh stories are faced in a light-buff, impervious brick, and have seven groups of double-hung windows edged with terra-cotta trim. The windows on the north and south ends of the west facade are paired, while all others are slightly separated. Window treatment on the eighth story differs in that each window has a transom above it, and a decorative iron railing at its sill. Replacing the decorative terra-cotta cornice of 1911 is a ribbed-limestone cornice installed in 1950.

Since the First National Bank Building occupies a prominent southeast corner lot, its northern facade is also primary. This 50-foot long facade contains two arched windows and the main entry to the building. The current bronze-clad entryway was a 1945 replacement of the original terra-cotta entry. The two bronze light fixtures flanking the door were a part of that original entry. The window treatment and position on the upper levels is similar to the west, except that there are three joined windows flanked by two sets of paired windows on the east and west ends of the facade.

Largely hidden from street-level view by the adjacent building to the east, the east secondary facade is constructed of red-orange brick. The windows on all levels are trimmed in terra-cotta, and painted on the wall above the eighth story windows on the north end is a black and white sign which reads "First National Bank". Centrally positioned on this side of the building is an air and light shaft, typical of early high-rise office structures. The walls of this shaft are surfaced in the same light-buff brick present of the west and north facades.

Construction materials on the south secondary facade are also of red-orange brick with terra-cotta trim. The positioning of the upper story windows mirrors that on the north. This side of the building contains the steel fire escape, which reaches from the roof to street level.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2

First National Bank Building

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

County and State

The First National Bank Building has been subject to numerous interior alterations over the years. The spacious grand lobby space has been partitioned off with cubicle walls and paneling. The mezzanine level, which originally existed only at the southern end of the lobby, was extended further north along the east and west walls. A steel and glass mezzanine and stair along the building's north wall were January 1947 additions by the William J. Assenmacher Company as evidenced by building permit #44201. As a result of this alteration, the upper portions of the first story arched windows on the building's north wall were covered over. Much of the ornate plaster ceiling molding in the lobby space has survived, but the plaster capitals which surmounted the columns were removed in a 1960 remodeling along with the white marble which decorated the column bases. It appears that at least some of the marble and tile bank lobby floor may still be extant underneath several layers of carpet and flooring.

The basement of the First National Bank Building has had many of its original spaces divided into panel-walled rooms. Centrally located on this level is the main bank vault with its impressive 30-ton circular door. Below-sidewalk vault spaces protrude out to the curb line on the north and west sides of the basement. Portions of the reinforced-concrete ceiling in these vaulted areas show signs of significant deterioration.

The upper levels of the building have the general form of a double-loaded corridor. The original cast-iron stair with its marble treads is located on the east side of the building just north of the air shaft, and adjacent to the elevators. A second stairway on the west side of the building near the southern end was added in 1977 (Building permits #s 120169, 120250, and 120777). Like the lower levels, the upper stories also have been somewhat altered, although some spaces retain many original features including the 1911 wood and glass office doors. Some, like floors 2, 3, and 4, have had most of their original wall surfaces removed and replaced with paneling. Floors 6, 7, and 8 remain more or less in their original configuration and appearance. The eighth level of the building is the best preserved, retaining the original marble paneling in the corridor and its decorative hexagonal-tiled floor.

As a whole, the First National Bank Building maintains a high degree of historical integrity on the exterior and several significant interior spaces and features. Apart from the very early removal of the sidewalk stair and south entrance on the west, the removal of the original cornice, and the modifications to the main entry on the north, the building's facades remain largely unaltered from its 1911 construction. Although the interior has been modified to a greater extent, the voluminous grand lobby and basement bank vault remain. The integrity of the spaces and configurations on the upper stories has been preserved along with many of the original construction materials on several floors.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 3

First National Bank Building
Name of Property
Lancaster County, Nebraska
County and State

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The First National Bank Building is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of commerce for its association with First National Bank, a financial institution which was influential in the development of the city of Lincoln. It also has local architectural significance under Criterion C as a representative example of high-rise Commercial Style architecture in Lincoln.

Organized by former Civil War colonel Amasa Cobb with a capital of \$35,000, First National Bank became Lincoln's first nationally-chartered bank with the official granting of its charter on February 24, 1871. The bank opened its doors for the first time on March 23, 1871, on the northwest corner of 10th and "P" Streets in the building formerly occupied by the private banking firm of Cobb and Sudduth. The bank's first statement, published on April 25, 1871, listed its total assets at \$128,830.11, and deposits at \$70,412.34. First National remained at the 10th and "P" site until 1873 when it moved one block south into a new red-brick banking structure on the site of the present building.

The growth of the bank paralleled and aided the city of Lincoln's rapid growth and development by helping to finance building projects while providing the citizens with a stable financial institution. First National had built such a reputation by the 1880s that it was selected as the repository for city, county, and state funds. During the "boom days" of that decade, deposits topped one million dollars for the first time. By 1890, less than two decades after opening its doors, First National's capital had grown to \$270,000. The bank weathered the national financial crises of the 1870s, 1890s, and 1930s to emerge as Lincoln's largest and most respected financial institution.

First National also managed to survive the turn-of-the-century mergers which swallowed up many other local banks. It joined in 1899 with the American Exchange Bank, with the result being a stronger First National Bank whose deposits exceeded two million dollars. In 1907, it acquired Columbia National Bank, the only other Lincoln bank besides First National to survive the financial panic of the 1890s.

By 1910, when capital topped \$3,375,000, the bank decided to demolish its 1870s building and construct a new one to accommodate its growth. The eight-story structure was the first steel-framed "skyscraper" constructed in Lincoln. When the bank moved into the building in June of 1911, it occupied the entire first floor. The basement level of the building was home to First Savings Bank, a subsidiary of First National, which managed its savings deposits. The building's upper stories were rented out, providing offices for numerous insurance companies, lawyers, and physicians, just to name a few.

The bank became a member of the newly formed Federal Reserve System in 1913, and continued to grow. 1923 brought the end to yet another Lincoln bank, City National, when it was absorbed by First National. This was repeated in 1929 as well with the Central National Bank. Following this merger, First National became the only major Lincoln bank from the nineteenth century to still be in operation.

Despite the woes which befell financial institutions during the Great Depression of the 1930s, First National managed to hang on, and by 1940, deposits had reached \$21 million. This growth continued throughout the 1940s, and 1950s under the leadership of bank president George W. Holmes, and later, Burnham Yates. On March 12, 1960, a merger with the Continental National Bank resulted in First National vacating its long-held site at 10th and "O" and moving into a three-story structure on the southeast corner of 12th and "M" Streets. With the demolition of the adjacent Lincoln Theater in 1964, First National was able to construct a new eight-story bank building. However, the bank was not to remain there long. Six years later, on March 20, 1970, the bank made its final move, into the new 20-story First National Bank Building on the northwest corner of 13th and "M".

The story of First National Bank in Lincoln came to an end over one-hundred years from its beginnings when it was purchased by the FirstTier Bank company in the mid-1980s. That institution was in turn purchased by the Minneapolis-based First Bank company which continues to operate the 13th and "M" facility at the present time.

Although First National occupied other banking structures over the years of its existence, there are no other buildings which serve as better historical representations of the bank than the First National Bank Building at 10th and "O" Streets .

In addition to playing a leading role in the financial growth of Lincoln, Nebraska, First National Bank also had an important part in the evolution of downtown office buildings in the city.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 4

First National Bank Building

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

County and State

The history of high-rise office structures in the city of Lincoln began in 1889 with the construction of the six-story Burr Block building on the northeast corner of 12th and "O" Streets. This rusticated-stone office building had a combination bearing-wall and timber structural system, and held the title of the tallest office building in Lincoln from the time of its construction until 1910 when it was succeeded by the new First National Bank Building. Burr Block stood in its original form until 1915 when it was almost completely reconstructed as the ten-story Security Mutual Life Insurance Building.

In 1899, the five-story structure known as the Richards Block on the northeast corner of 11th and "O" was severely damaged in a fire. It was rebuilt in the Commercial Style around 1900, but retained a timber structural system. Directly across 11th Street to the west of Richards Block was the Little Building (NRHP 1987), another five-story Commercial Style structure built in 1907-1908. It was remodeled in 1936 in the Art Deco Style, and a sixth floor added to its height.

It was into this context of downtown office structures which the First National Bank Building would enter with the commencement of its construction in 1910. It was the first steel-framed building in the city of Lincoln to exceed five stories in height, and it was this height, in combination with the sheer massiveness of the building, which gave it such a significant presence on the Lincoln skyline in the years following its completion.

Early views of "O" Street following First National's construction, especially those looking east from the "O" Street viaduct, show the way in which the new bank building had an important part in the skyline of Lincoln. The building lost some of its visual dominance with the rise of the ten-story Terminal Building, but it remains a familiar element in the streetscape of downtown.

The Chicago-based architecture firm of Hyland and Green was selected to design the new structure for the bank, and this was to be the first Lincoln building designed by Paul V. Hyland. Although obscure in the history of architecture in Chicago, Hyland played an important role in the development of high-rise Commercial Style architecture in Lincoln by designing both the First National Bank Building in 1910, and the Terminal Building (NRHP 1986) just west across 10th Street from the bank in 1916. His work in Lincoln was not limited to just office buildings, for while he was working on the Terminal Building, Hyland also designed two prominent Lincoln homes: the Frank H. Woods House at 2501 Sheridan Boulevard (NRHP 1995), and the McAfee House at 1801 "C" Street (NRHP 1980, a contributing structure within the Mount Emerald and Capitol Additions Historic District).

The new bank was designed in the Commercial Style of tall office structures which were characterized by straight facades, flat roofs, numerous large windows, and restrained ornamentation. The First National Bank Building was Lincoln's leading example of that style of architecture until the ten-story Terminal Building was constructed just across the street in 1916.

The period of significance for First National Bank extends from its 1911 completion date up through the 1945 remodeling of the original entrance with an Art Deco Style bronze-clad entry, and the 1947 steel and glass stairway and mezzanine on the interior. Both of these projects were executed in a manner befitting of a major bank, and as a result, became significant parts of the building. These were the last major alterations to occur to the building prior to fifty years ago.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 5

First National Bank Building
Name of Property
Lancaster County, Nebraska
County and State

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 6

First National Bank Building

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

County and State

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

This property is described as Lots 11 and 12, Block 55, Original Plat, Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

These boundaries include all the property historically associated with the First National Bank Building.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

PHOTOGRAPHS

First National Bank Building

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

County and State

The following information applies to all photographs:

First National Bank Building

Lincoln, Nebraska

All negatives at Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department

Photo 1 of 4

Photo by Matt Hansen, August 1997

View looking southeast of north facade (left) and of west facade (right), First National Bank Building

Photo 2 of 4

Photo by Matt Hansen, August 1997

View from ground level looking southeast of north facade (left) and of west facade (right), First National Bank Building

Photo 3 of 4

Photo by Matt Hansen, August 1997

View looking southwest of north facade (right) and east side (left), First National Bank Building

Photo 4 of 4

Photo by Ed Zimmer, December 1997

View looking northeast of west facade (left) and rear (right), First National Bank Building

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 4



Photo 3

