Form 10-300

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Typed all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME
COMMON:
St. Louis Union Station

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER:
Eleventh and Market streets

CITY OR TOWN:
St. Louis

3. CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY
(District) [ ] Building [X] Site
(Site) [ ] Structure [ ] Object

OWNERSHIP
Public [ ] Private [X] Both [ ]

STATUS
Occupied [X] Unoccupied [ ]
Public Acquisition: [X] In Process [ ]
Being Considered [ ]

ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
Yes [X] No [ ]

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
Agicultural [ ] Government [X] Park [ ]
Commercial [X] Industrial [ ] Private Residence [ ]
Educational [ ] Military [ ] Religious [ ]
Entertainment [ ] Museum [ ] Scientific [ ]

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
OWNERS NAME:
Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis

STREET AND NUMBER:
Eleventh and Market streets

CITY OR TOWN:
St. Louis

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REPOSITORY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Office of Recorder of Deeds, St. Louis City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:
Twelfth and Market streets

CITY OR TOWN:
St. Louis

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 20.5

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE OF SURVEY:
Missouri Historic Sites Catalogue

DATE OF SURVEY: 1963

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
State Historical Society of Missouri

STREET AND NUMBER:
Compton, Witt and Loury streets

CITY OR TOWN:
Columbia

STATE:
Missouri

CODE:
65201

FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER:
DATE:
6. Building Art in St. Louis, Two Centuries (local)
   1964 and 1967
   George McCue
   St. Louis Chapter, American Institute of Architects
   107 North Seventh Street
   St. Louis, Missouri 63101
   Code: 24

   "Significant Historic Buildings and Sites of the City of St. Louis" (local)
   1964 and 1967
   Committee for Preservation of Historic Buildings, St. Louis Chapter, American Institute of Architects
   107 North Seventh Street
   St. Louis, Missouri 63101
   Code: 24

   Missouri State Historical Survey (state)
   1968
   Missouri State Park Board
   P.O. Box 176
   120th Jefferson Building
   Jefferson City, Missouri 65101
   Code: 24
The St. Louis Union Station is a significant example of a large, late nineteenth century railroad depot designed in 1891 and opened to the public in September, 1894.

The extensive depot complex being nominated to the National Register is composed of two major sections, the headhouse and the train shed.

I. HEADHOUSE

This large building is approximately 550' x 100' with a 175' extension to the west. A 60' wide midway extends the length of the building on its south side. The station has a partial basement, ground floor, and four stories above. The headhouse faces north.

The headhouse is composed of five major blocks:

1) An east-west axis under a ridge roof extending the length of the building. The axis houses primarily circulation elements.

2) A massive east pavilion, square in plan, under a peaked roof, housing offices and waiting rooms.

3) A pavilion slightly east of the center of the east-west axis, rectangular in plan, with a hipped roof and flanking stair towers at its northeast and northwest corners, housing waiting rooms.

4) A hotel block under a ridge roof oriented at right angles to the ridge roof of the axis, and rising slightly above the axis roof, at the western end of the original building.

5) An addition to the west end of the original building, which provides additional space for handling non-passenger services.

Exterior

The building is a late nineteenth railroad structure showing primarily the influences of H. H. Richardson and the so-called "Richardsonian Romanesque," Richardson's reinterpretation and popularization of Romanesque architectural forms; and the contemporary Francis I revival, as well as a considerable degree of invention on the part of the architect. The east, north and west walls are constructed of ashlar masonry in grey Bedford limestone. The massive stone blocks are heavily rusticated at the foundation level through the first floor level of the building and rise in alternating broad and narrow courses.
From second floor level to roof line, the broad courses are smooth-faced and the narrow courses rusticated. In the highest element of the building, the tower, the rustication of the narrow courses becomes progressively smoother toward the top at which both broad and narrow courses are smooth. The total effect is organic and can be compared to a tree, rough-barked at the base and smooth at the terminal twigs. The south wall serves to partition the headhouse from the midway and is constructed of brick.

The roof is presently red tile and replaces the original grey tile which matched the color of the walls.

The five major blocks may be further described as follows:

1) The axis is a connecting element between the other three main blocks of the building. The eastern segment of the axis appears deeply recessed on the facade (north wall) between the east and central pavilions.

Fenestration in this section includes round arched windows at the first floor level, and rectangular windows arranged in groups of three at the levels of the second and third floors. A stone balustrade rims a terrace at the second floor level.

The western segment of the axis, connecting the central pavilion and the hotel, has four dormer windows on the northern slope of its ridge roof. The dormers are ornamented with pinnacles, finials, and ornamental stone carvings. This segment is longer than the eastern segment of the axis. The fenestration pattern, balustrade and terrace of the eastern segment are carried over and repeated in this segment of the axis.

The Market Street grade drops about 14 feet from 18th Street to 20th Street allowing the ground floor level to be viewed on the western half of the building. The ground floor level of the western segment of the axis has three round arched entranceways opening onto a "U" shaped concourse, presently used as a taxicab stand.
ST. LOUIS UNION STATION

Immediately west of these entranceways on the same level are two segment arched openings which formerly gave access to shops adjoining the Terminal Hotel.

2) The eastern pavilion is a massive element, especially when viewed from the northeast to southwest. It is square in plan, under a peaked roof which slopes in eight planes. Three of the four corners of the pavilion have corner bays under separate smaller peaked roofs. The fourth (northwest) corner of the east pavilion is extended vertically into a 230 foot clock tower with a four-planed peaked roof.

A subsidiary tower buttresses the northwest corner of the main tower and extends slightly above it. This smaller tower serves as an air intake shaft for the ventilation system.

Fenestration in this section of the building includes a) round arched openings at the first floor level, b) rectangular windows at second through fourth floor levels, arranged compactly near the central portion of the wall surface on the north, east and south sides, and c) various other openings including an oriel window and slit windows in the tower.

3) The central pavilion is located immediately east of the midpoint of the building. It has a high hipped roof. Matching cylindrical stair towers with conical roofs abut the northeast and northwest corners.

Fenestration and doorway openings on this portion of the building are symmetrically arranged with respect to the vertical midline of the facade as follows:

a) The main entrance to the station is on the street level. b) An art glass window, flanked by two secondary entrances, is located slightly above this main entrance. The window and entrance openings are of the same form and size having segment arch caps. The pictorial art glass window, a travel allegory, has female figures seated together on one bench representing the cities of New York, St. Louis and San Francisco. The window was manufactured by a local firm, Davis and Chambers, which used a design supplied by the architect.
7. #3

ST. LOUIS UNION STATION

c) A row of seven matching round-arch windows with art glass panels extends through second and third floor levels.
d) Three dormer windows ornamented with pinnacles, finials and stone carving, which includes a crest bearing the date 1893 when that portion of the building was completed, are located on the northern slope of the hipped roof.
e) The stair towers have slit windows arranged diagonally following the upward curve of the stairs. This portion of the building is further distinguished by two monumental ramp approaches from the street giving access to the first floor (above ground floor).

4) The hotel block originally terminated the building at the west end. The hotel entrance and lobby are housed in a block that forms a "T" with the main axis of the Union Station building. Hotel guest rooms are also included in the western end of the long axis of the building.

The ground floor Hotel entrance is emphasized by a round arch with a diameter that approaches the width of the hotel block. Above this arch, at the first floor level, are small rectangular windows arranged in pairs. Second and third story windows are grouped together on the facade by what appear to be three, large, two story, round arched windows. These are actually ornamented groupings of 12 normal-sized windows. Round arch-capped windows are also situated on the fourth floor of the hotel facade, and a single circular window is located in the gable above. Dormer windows are ornamented where visible in primary views of the building, (from the north and northeast). Dormer windows, on the west and south sides, are unornamented and have jerkinhead roofs.

5) The 175' western addition dates from the late 1920's. The design repeats the lower two stories of the east-west axis including the stone balustrade atop the second floor level. The roof is flat.
The station's interior is best discussed in terms of its original and present functions. The railroad depot uses were divided into categories and placed on separate floors with the areas of highest public circulation on the lower floors, near the tracks. The more private areas were on the upper stories for use by the railroad company offices. Fireproof materials and construction methods were used in the basement, ground floor and first floor. Slow combustion materials were used on the floors above.

The most outstanding interior feature of the building is the Grand Hall waiting room on the first floor in the central pavilion. This room is shaped in an enormous hemicylindrical form with a floor area of 125' x 75' and a barrel-vaulted ceiling 65' high at the apex. The original finish of this room included: a) ornamental plasterwork (architectural mouldings and sculpture). b) Fresco work in designs derived from botanical shapes applied in a band at the top of the upright walls and on the soffits of the arches between the ribs of the barrel vaulted ceiling. These designs, now faded, were the work of Healy and Millet, a local company. c) Ornate light fixtures. d) Art glass windows, including the previously mentioned allegorical window, by Davis and Chambers.

Although the ornamentation of this room has become dingy through the years, the major part of the original ornament survives intact. The primary alteration of the room has been the sealing-off of an original ceiling skylight, the removal of the 20 foot wide, 4,500 lb. electrolier that held 350 lightbulbs and hung from the center of the ceiling, and the removal of various other light fixtures including four standards that were female sculptures with outstretched arms, each suspending a globe light. Two of these sculptures stood at each end of the room atop the balustrade of the fourth floor overlook. (See old view of Grand Hall interior.) Rooms on either end of Grand Hall at the first floor level were for lengthy waiting periods. The east room was for women and children, and the west room served as a smoking chamber for men. These rooms are now partitioned for use as offices.
ST. LOUIS UNION STATION

The "Midway"

Between the headhouse and the train shed south of it, is a circulation area, the "Midway." This area is enclosed and presently serves as the main waiting area. Originally its south side was open giving access to the tracks through iron gates.

II. THE TRAIN SHED

George H. Pegram designed the train shed. It is built of structural steel with engineering features expressed directly and left exposed. The shed originally covered an area of 424,000 square feet enclosing the terminal ends of 31 tracks. (Architects and Officers of the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis, St. Louis Union Station - A Monograph, 1895, p. 49.) It presently covers 11.45 acres, of 498,762 square feet. The umbrella ceiling rests on six rows of supports. The ceiling is broadly ribbed crosswise with alternating depressed and elevated sections permitting entrance of light and fresh air while screening out precipitation.

III. ALTERATIONS

Although the exterior of the headhouse survives with little alteration from original, the interior has been reworked several times since 1894. General upkeep and maintenance has been carried on throughout the history of the building. However, more extensive alteration projects were undertaken when necessary to update the large, heavily-used building. Notable periods of renovation include one just preceding the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis in 1904. (Chief Engineer, "Report on Improvements Made in 1902-04," Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis.) The architectural drawings for the project show additional stairways connecting the midway with Grand Hall and other alterations to increase the efficiency of station operation.
ST. LOUIS UNION STATION

Major interior renovation carried out in the early 1940's included the refurbishing of the track level waiting rooms, installation of new waiting benches, and the reorganization of the ticket window and ticket office space. The floor of Grand Hall was retiled and the room was furnished with contemporary settees and writing desks. The original iron gates connecting the Midway with the tracks were taken down and replaced with a plate glass and hollow gypsum tile partition. Period light fixtures were removed and contemporary lighting installed. (Freeman H. Hubbard, "Union Station," Railroad Magazine, 1947, pp. 22-28.)

Iron and steel fixtures of various types including the iron chandelier in the Grand Hall were removed in this renovation project and were sold for scrap during World War II. (St. Louis Post-Dispatch, May 31, 1942.)

The station and shed are presently well maintained and in sound structural condition.
The St. Louis Union Station, built 1891-1894, has outstanding significance among examples of its building type in the world and nation. It also has major importance to the city in which it was built. At the time of its construction, the station was the largest in the world which had tracks and passenger service areas all on one level. ("New Union Station Open," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, September 2, 1894, pp. 14-15.) The station is a relatively rare example of monumental late nineteenth century railroad terminal architecture in the United States.

Because it was for 50 years, since 1894, the nucleus of transportation activity within the city of St. Louis, the Union Station has been the scene of significant events in the life of the city. The history of alterations and renovations of the station is closely related to concurrent events in the city and nation. Alterations to the Union Station were made prior to 1904 in anticipation of the large influx of visitors and new residents coming to the city to visit the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. A major renovation of the headhouse interior was carried out in the early 1940's, a period during which heavy demands on the station facilities were created by World War II.

The station is of further importance to St. Louis both for the role it has had in the development of the city's commercial and trade operations, and for the part the building has played in the lives of St. Louisans. This building has witnessed farewells, reunions, and stopovers by dignitaries too numerous to list. However, beyond its purely utilitarian functions, the Union Station has supreme value as a contributor to the visual impact of the heart of the St. Louis metropolitan area.

The United States' authority on railroad architecture as a building type, the late Carroll L. W. Meeks, described the Union Station in his survey of the development of the railroad station. (The Railroad Station an Architectural History, 1964.) Meeks characterized
the station as belonging both to the late nineteenth century and to the first decade of the twentieth century. The picturesque qualities of its tower and complex roofline silhouette establish its nineteenth century flavor and its monumental proportions are typical of the twentieth century. Meeks' study relates the two-block long facade stylistically to the work of H. H. Richardson 10-15 years previously.

The thorough documentation of the planning and design of the Union Station is made possible because of the preservation of documentary records by the Terminal Railroad Association. These records are from the earliest period of planning and development to the present. The Union Station replaced a depot built only 20 years earlier which had undergone rapid obsolescence during the post-Civil War period of rail traffic expansion in the Midwest. The Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis, which owned and built the Union Station, was founded when seven railroad companies consolidated their operations within the St. Louis metropolitan area. One of the first orders of business of this association was to plan a railroad facility which would serve the city for a long period of time. The size of the building is indicative of the new company's vision of future St. Louis. On opening night, the station was described as so large that it would not be used to capacity in a century. Ten years later it was expanded. (Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis, Board of Directors and Executive Committee Minute Book, Vol. I, July 30, 1889 ff. and Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis, Engineering Department, set of 165 original design and working drawings for the building.)

The design for the building was presented in 1891 by the office of the St. Louis architectural firm, Link (Theodore C.) and Cameron (Edward A.). This firm received the commission in a closed competition which included 10 invited architects.

Construction began in 1892 and continued through 1895. The station was opened for service September 1, 1894. Only the Terminal Hotel at the western end was uncompleted at that time. Initial completion cost for the building complex, announced on opening night, was $6,500,000. ("New Union Station Open," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, September 2, 1894, pp. 14-15.)
ST. LOUIS UNION STATION

The terminal was in heavy use from the time of its construction. The volume increased through the years and reached a capacity of 100,000 persons daily during the 1940's. (Freeman H. Hubbard, "Union Station," Railroad Magazine, 1947, p. 28.)

The peak year for ticket volume was 1920 with 2,109,377 sales. On December 22, 1945, the first peace-time Christmas after World War II, the largest crowd in the station's history gathered there. (Schwarz & Van Hoefen, architects, A Study for a Union Station Convention Center, 1966, p. 2.)

During the 1950's the volume of railroad passenger traffic entered a decline. This was caused, in part, by the increasing popularity of air travel. Today, the arrival and departure of an average of six trains per day represents only a minuscule percentage of the station's operating capacity.

Conscious of the need to utilize the spacious station more fully, the Terminal Railroad Association in 1966 began a study to seek an adaptive use for the building. Schwarz and Van Hoefen, the local architectural firm hired for the purpose, proposed that the station be converted to an extensive convention center. The National Museum of Transport, now located in St. Louis County proposed that the station become a transportation museum.

On December 22, 1968, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch published a notice that the proposed convention center plan was being advanced.

Future development of the station property is presently a foremost preservation and planning consideration in St. Louis.

Although the station's design was produced in the office of Link and Cameron, the station headhouse far surpasses the previous and subsequent work of that firm. It is highly possible that the building was designed by another member of the office. Several persons engaged in studies of midwestern architecture of the late nineteenth century have pointed out that the man who originated the design for the headhouse was the designer-draftsman, Harvey Ellis. Ellis worked for a number of architectural firms in Missouri during the 1890's and was in St. Louis during the time
that the station was being designed. Stylistic similarities between the signed work of Ellis and the station headhouse tend to confirm the possibility of his involvement in the project. (1. The Prairie School Review, Vol. V, Nos. 1-2, 1st-2nd Quarter, 1968. 2. Eileen Phyllis Manning, now Mrs. Joseph E. Michels, "The Architectural Designs of Harvey Ellis," Unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1953.)
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

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<th>LONGITUDE</th>
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LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

<table>
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<th>STATE:</th>
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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: M. Patricia Holmes, Research Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION: Missouri State Park Board

St. Louis Union Station State Historical Survey and Planning Office

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

CITY OR TOWN: Jefferson City

STATE: Missouri 65101

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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 [X] State [ ] Local [ ]

Name: Joseph Jaeger, Jr.

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

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

________________________________________
Chief, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Date __________________________

ATTEST:

________________________________________
Keeper of The National Register

Date __________________________
ST. LOUIS UNION STATION


ST. LOUIS UNION STATION


15. ________, Original Tracings, St. Louis Union Station, Engineering Department files.
1. **NAME**
   - **COMMON:** St. Louis Union Station
   - **AND/OR HISTORIC:**

2. **LOCATION**
   - **STREET AND NUMBER:** Eighteenth and Market streets
   - **CITY OR TOWN:** St. Louis
   - **STATE:** Missouri
   - **CODE:** 63103
   - **COUNTY:** St. Louis City
   - **CODE:** 510

3. **MAP REFERENCE**
   - **SOURCE:** U.S.G.S. 7.5' quadrangle: Granite City and Cahokia, Ill. - No.
   - **SCALE:** 1:24,000
   - **DATE:** 1951

4. **REQUIREMENTS**
   - **TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS**
     1. Property boundaries where required.
     2. North arrow.
     3. Latitude and longitude reference.
Market Street Elevation
St. Louis Union Station
Overlay to show primary masses.

R.R. Morse 7-9-69
Name of Site: St. Louis Union Station
Site Number: 
Photographer: M. P. (McLure) Holmes
Date of Photo: May 62
View of Photo: NE 3 SW
Neg. Size: 35 mm.
Name of Site: Union Station det. of wall + tower
Site Number
Photographer: M.J. (MS 5m) Holmes
Date of Photo: May '69
View of Photo: NE 3 SW
Angle, ENE
Name of Site: Union Station (St. Louis)

M. P. (McGuire) Holmes
49 Oct '66
May '67

View of Plate: E → W
Reg. Size: 35 mm.
"Grand Halle"

**Name of Site:** St. Louis Union Station

**Site Number**

**Photographer:** M.P. (McCoy) Holmes

**Date of Photo:** ca. 1895

**View of Photo:** E-W

**Neg. Size:** 35 mm

St. Louis City

Old view in collection of St. Louis Central Public Library Art Department

Union Station material
Midway

Name of Site: St. Louis Union Station

Site Number

Photographer: M.F. (MCW) Holmes

Date of Photo: 27 Oct '66

View of Photo: SW > NE

Neg. Size: 35mm
Name of Site: St. Louis Union Station
Location: Corridor & arches overlooking "Grand Hall"

Site Number: 18
Photographer: W. P. (Assoc. Holmes)
Date of Photo: 27 Oct 66
View of Photo: Toward South, West corridor at 3rd floor level
Mag. Size: 35 mm
Shed Interior

Name of Site: St. Louis Union Station
Site Number: [Blank]
Photographer: M.P. (McCoy) Holmes
Date of Photo: 27 Oct '66
View of Photo: S → N
Neg. Size: 35 mm.