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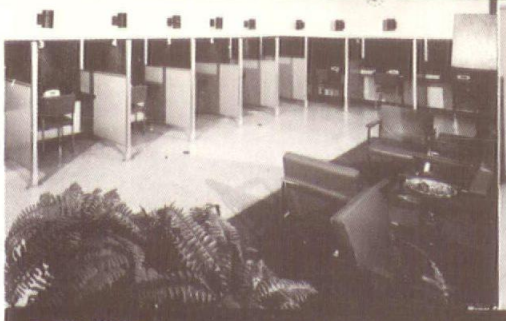

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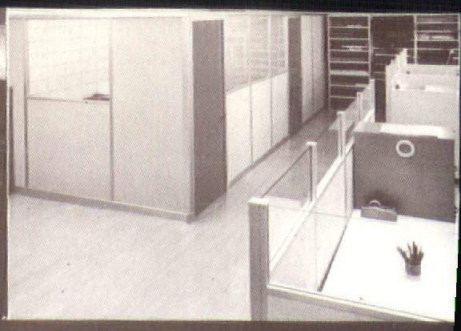

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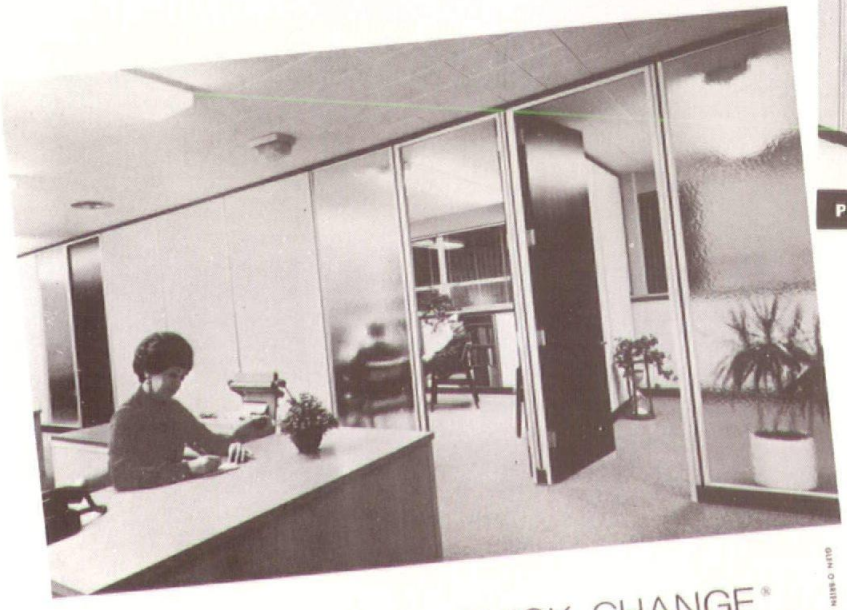

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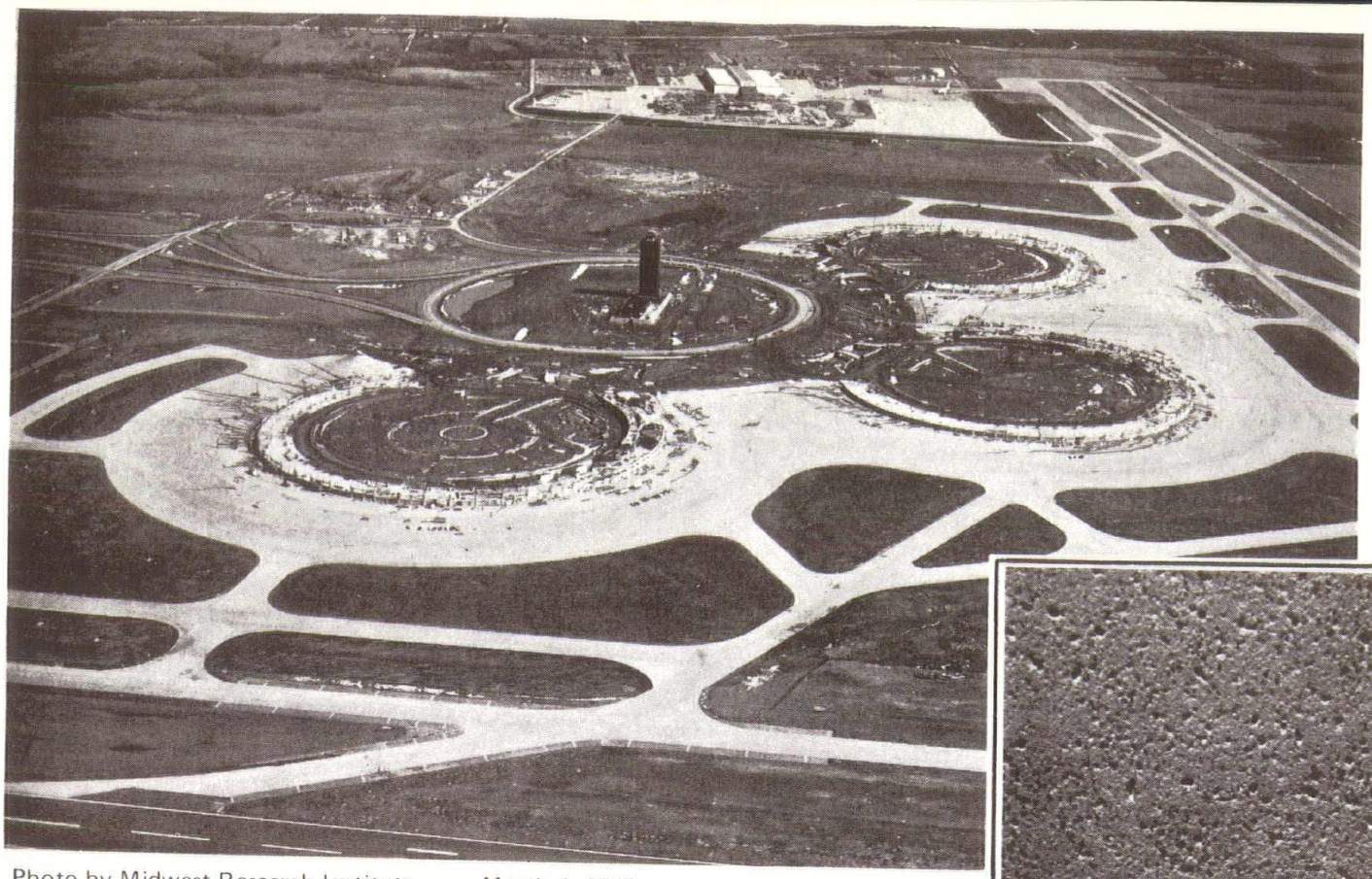
THIS ISSUE:
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION

COVER:

Downtown Kansas City, Missouri
From 3rd & Main Street, Circa 1850

Credit: Missouri Valley Room
Kansas City, Missouri Public Library



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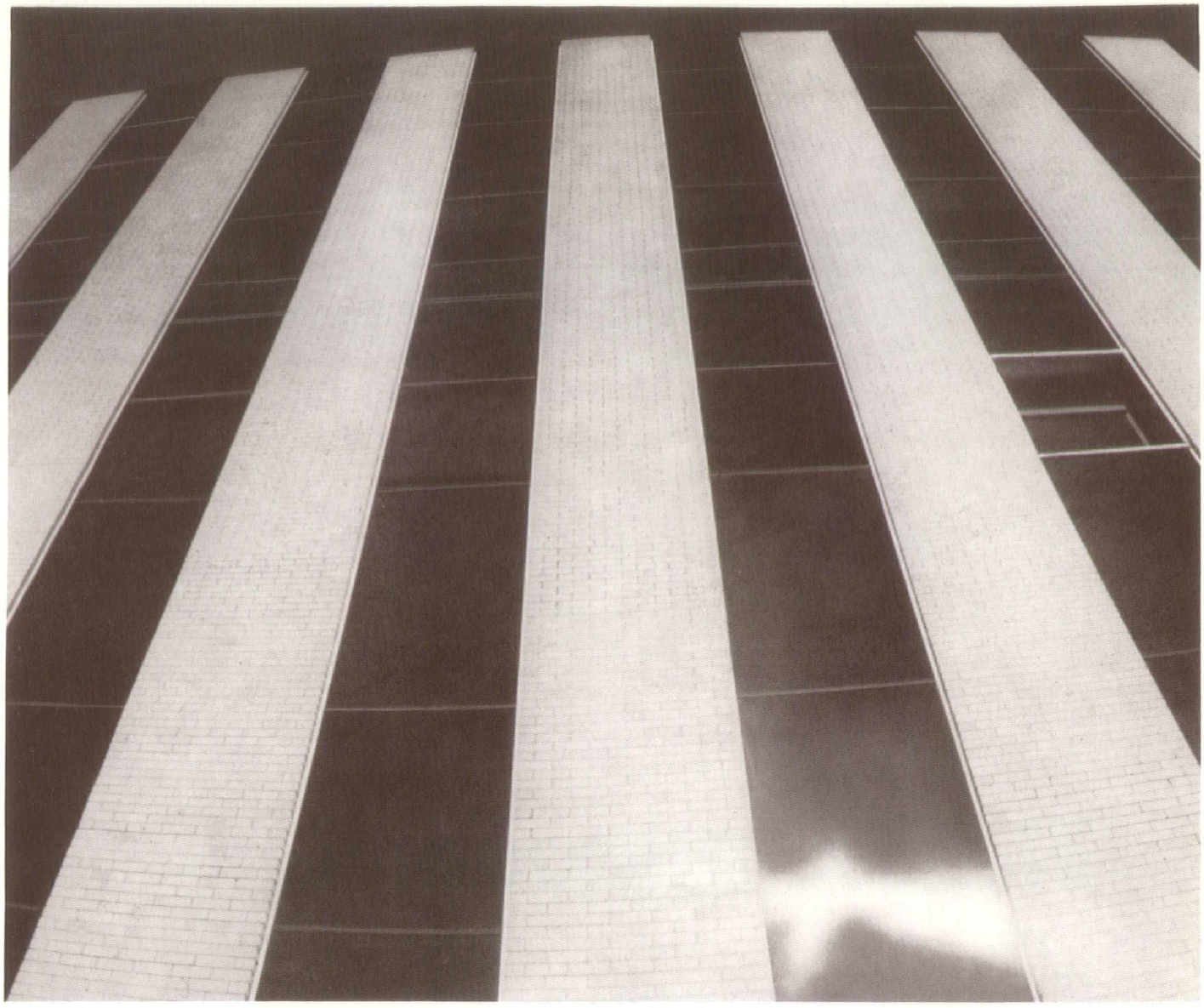

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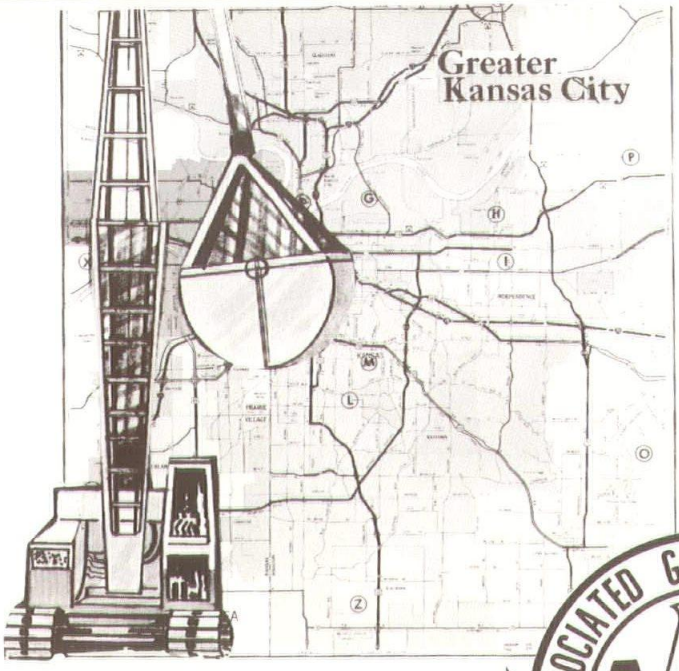

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Restoration of Other Building Types Needed

e Wornall House and the Alexander Majors House, both in Kansas City, e each approximately one hundred ten years old, and both are hand- me, nationally recognized historic landmarks.

cent grants by the National Park Service, United States Department the Interior, for the preservation of these two buildings bear witness their national prominence.

eservation of historic and archeological sites and buildings has come national policy, supported by congress through legislation to otect structures significant in our heritage with funds appropriated m the general revenue.

t is the national program all that it should be considering the two ent grants in Kansas City?

s noteworthy that:

1. No grant was made for preservation of a structure within the Central Business District.
2. No grant was made for preservation of a structure of other than residential use.
3. No grant was made for preservation of a structure built later than 1860.

ese facts point up a general weakness in present preservation orts, commendable though they may be. To be specific, our preserva- n efforts to date are not comprehensive!

one has set out the necessary chronological framework for preserva- n in Kansas City, and thinking with regard to the overall historic vironment is woefully inadequate. What has become of—or what will come of—that portion of our architectural heritage which predates ante bellum Wornall and Majors houses, and what of the magnificent mmercial structures built by our first industrial giants in the last cades of the nineteenth century or those institutional buildings of s century which mark Kansas City as a mature metropolitan center?

at of the barns, the blacksmiths' and the trading post—what of the ly office block, the retail store or the railroad station?

emingly nowhere have we in Kansas City allowed for or encouraged preservation of other than a few isolated historic buildings, and n this has been the effort of separate individuals or organizations. tle thought has been given to periods stylistically variant from the ek Revival, and less thought given to the preservation of non- idential structures.

A few noteworthy exceptions to the above enhance our present environment far beyond their immediate economic worth. Watkins Mill, Missouri Town, the Shawnee Mission and Fort Osage are examples of such exceptions, and recent work by Kansas City's new Landmarks Commission may coalesce many local organzations for a more comprehensive preservation effort.

Certainly the Commission's near complete cataloguing of all significant sites and buildings of all periods within the city is a noteworthy beginning.

On the other hand, the recently published Comprehensive Plan for Kansas City's Central Business Districit takes a firm step backward in the march for adequate preservation planning. Completed at a cost in excess of $250,000, this plan ignores the timely entreaties of the Landmarks Commission, the Society of Architectural Historians and the American Institute of Architects to designate certain buildings as historically significant and provide for their preservation as a part of the urban fabric.

In fact, the Plan manifests such a blackout of information concerning preservation that it does not even mention that the New York Life Building is included in the National Register of Historic Places maintained by the U. S. Department of the Interior.

Surely the omission of such data by the local Land Clearance for Renewal Authority constitues a breach with national policy. This breach must be rectified hastily! (Note: since publication of the Plan, the Boley Building at 12th and Walnut, and the Scarritt Building and Arcade, 9th Street, Walnut to Grand, have been added to the National Register.)

The following four articles included in this 5th Annual Restoration Issue of Skylines are intended to highlight four periods in the history, and consequent architectural heritage, of Kansas City. In general, these periods are:

1780 - 1860
1860 - 1885
1885 - 1913
1913 - 1933

It is hoped that these articles will help stimulate the local preservation effort—to envigorate the effort and help make it comprehensive. For surely one thing is more certain for architectural preservation than for any other effort of man. Time is against it!

Dwight C. Horner

Dwight C. Horner, President
Kansas City Chapter AIA

Early Buildings of the Kansas City Area

Jack B. Henry
Associate Historical Curator
Jackson County Park Dept.

It is probable that there were no permanent dwellings in the vicinity of Kansas City Ca. 1776, but assuredly they soon followed in the new French settlements at the mouth of the Big Blue River, Kaw River, Randolph Bluffs, and Chouteau's Landing. These structures were either of fieldstone, with thatched roofs, or of the French Colonial style found in St. Genevieve, Missouri. The buildings not being heavy duty structurally, some fell to progress, some to natural disasters, and others to time and decay. Buildings of this early period are nonextant now.

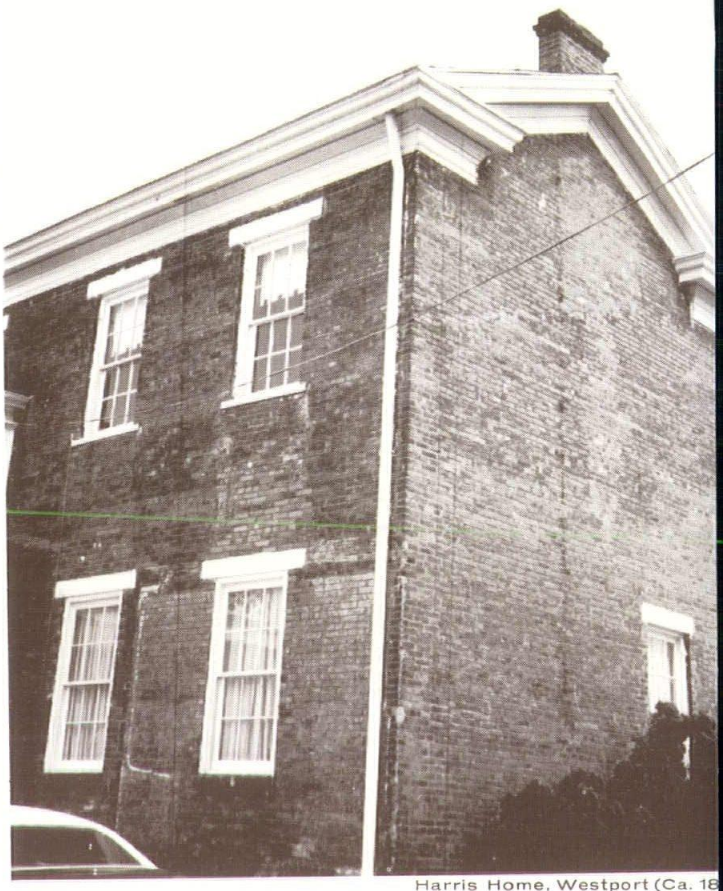
The Fort Osage (Ca. 1808-1820) restoration at Sibley, Missouri, by the Native Sons of Kansas City, comes closest to depicting the French period. The Fort, an excellent reconstruction and a registered national historic landmark, is now a part of the Jackson County Park system.

Several later buildings fortunately still extant, can be associated with the opening of the "Blue Country" by settlers who supplanted the French. These buildings are the Jackson County "log Court House" (Ca. 1827) located at 107 W. Kansas Avenue, Independence, Missouri and maintained by the Community Welfare Program, and the Weston Wagon & Blacksmith Shop (Ca. 1830) and the Boone Cabin (Ca. 1842), both now located in the Kansas City Museum in settings indigenous to the period.

Also associated with this early period is the Samuel Chavis Tavern (Ca. 1821) originally located in Berry, Missouri, but now at Missouri Town 1855, Lake Jacomo, at Jackson County Park. This is a 1½-story log structure with a "dog trot."

Another unusual log structure at Missouri Town is the Flintlock Church (Ca. 1848) of hewn logs, with a ground plan in the form of a cross. Other buildings in the complex are the clapboard dwelling units, the Withers House (Ca. 1840) and the Riffie House (Ca. 1830) both reminiscent of New England influence.

Fort Osage



Harris Home, Westport (Ca. 18

The two-story frame Scarritt Home (Ca. 1847) at 305 Lawrence, Kan City, Missouri, is also of clapboard. Other buildings of note in Westport area are the two-story brick Harris Home (Ca. 1855) at 4(Baltimore, recently restored for professional offices, and the Bo Store (Ca. 1853) at 500 Westport Road, a brick two-story commer structure, built for trading purposes on the Santa Fe Trail. The Bo store is one of the few commercial structures remaining in Kansas C

Both the Wornall House (Ca. 1858) at 61st Street & Wornall Road a the Webb House (Mo. Town 1855) are excellent examples of the tra tion from fireplaces to heating stoves. The Wornall House is a Kentu Greek revival style brick house being restored by the Jackson Cou Historical Society. An L-shaped structure with 12-inch walls, a t story gabled portico supported by four square pillars and a wrou iron balcony over front door, the Wornall House will be the only ho museum in the Kansas City area.

A brick and stone building of the period is the "Old Jail" in In pendence, built in 1859 and associated with many Civil War eve The jail consists of 12 cells made of two-foot thick stone slabs, dou iron doors, and iron grills. The front section is an office and dwell quarters built of brick. The jail has been restored and is maintai by the Jackson County Historical Society.

Shawnee Mission

Majors Home

Another fine institutional structure is the Shawnee Mission (Ca. 1839 at 3403 W. 53rd Street. The Mission is one of the most complete found in the midwest. It consists of superintendent's residence and two othe buildings once used for students. These buildings are brick, and are furnished as to their original use representing classrooms, living quar ters and shop quarters. The Kansas State Historical Society owns and maintains this historic site.

Thus we have the pre-1860 buildings which are being preserved. But what of buildings such as the Pacific House (Ca. 1860) at 304 Delaware Kansas City, Mo., and the Lykins House (Ca. 1857), 12th & Washington Kansas City, Missouri. Both of these buildings are associated with George Caleb Bingham.

Also to be considered is the Majors Home (Ca. 1855) at 8145 State Line, Kansas City, Mo. This house shows unique design features, such as a double recessed entrance portico, but the recent Dept. of the Interior grant cannot begin to provide the preservation work required

With these noted structures are a host of rural dwellings dating from the 1850-60 period, and a few prior to this period. Many are in a state of decay or have been altered beyond recognition. Preservation and/o restoration of the building mentioned, plus others, before they are los forever would be of great benefit to the community.

Cast Iron Store Fronts

M. Patricia Holmes
Architectural Historian
State Historical Survey and Planning Office
Missouri State Park Board

Row buildings dating from the third quarter of the nineteenth century still predominate in the commercial districts of numerous outstate Missouri towns, and in the older, undisturbed sections of the state's metropolitan areas. A high proportion of the facades were constructed wholly or in part of cast iron. Stamped sheet metal used in conjunction with cast iron frequently provided enrichment of the street facades.

Cast iron had rapidly come into favor as a construction material in the United States after the Civil War. Its use as a major construction material began in the 1770s with the Coalbrookdale Bridge in England.

Cast iron lent itself to architectural use for a number of reasons. Cast iron pillars of small diameter could be used as structural support in store fronts, allowing more surface area for windows than masonry or wood frame construction would permit. In days preceding extensive use of interior artificial lighting, larger windows brought more daylight illumination inside and provided a more generous window display space.

Front, Chillicothe, Mo. Photograph by M. P. Holmes

Manufacturers of architectural cast iron published catalogues fr which prefabricated store fronts could be selected part by part assembly in a wide variety of combinations.

Being adaptable to mass production methods, cast iron parts could economically produced in quantity. The casting process facilitat application of ornamental detail. Elaborate ornament thus beca available to many who could not previously afford it. The prevale taste for ornament encouraged wide-spread demand. Small towns und going rapid development, as Moberly, Missouri did, for example, in t 1880s and 1890s, could almost instantly have the appearance of established place, its prefabricated store fronts signaling a connecti with traditional architectural forms. Largely by virtue of this outwa appearance the new towns took on the aspect of permanence a urbanity—strong selling points to potential residents and prospecti business interests.

Cast iron architecture was well regarded further because of its resi ance to fire at a time when whole towns were occasionally destroy by conflagration. The Chicago fire of 1871 had spurred developme of fireproof construction methods.

Another characteristic of the plastic medium is that it tends to lo identity as a discrete material and lends itself to masquerade. C tainly in the case of cast iron that property was exploited. Cast ir and sheet metal were moulded to resemble stone and even wood. T attempt was so successful that it is sometimes difficult to ident cast iron fronts without tapping on the surfaces.

Although there is capacity for wide variation of form and detail in ca iron architecture, mass production of parts and general agreement uniformity of building heights, window sizes and spacing give definiti to the street as a **corridor** with articulated walls rather than as a ser of narrow buildings. The repetition of similar parts gives an expressi of visual unity in a positive way that is not at all monotonous. W. Knig Sturges discusses this effect in an article, "Cast Iron in New Yor published in **Architectural Review,** October, 1953. He relates the visu form to that also seen in amphitheaters, viaducts and aquaducts.

At present the potential for a positive visual environment in many Missouri's small towns where the best examples of cast iron rema is being eroded by a drastic and rapid rate of alteration and destructi

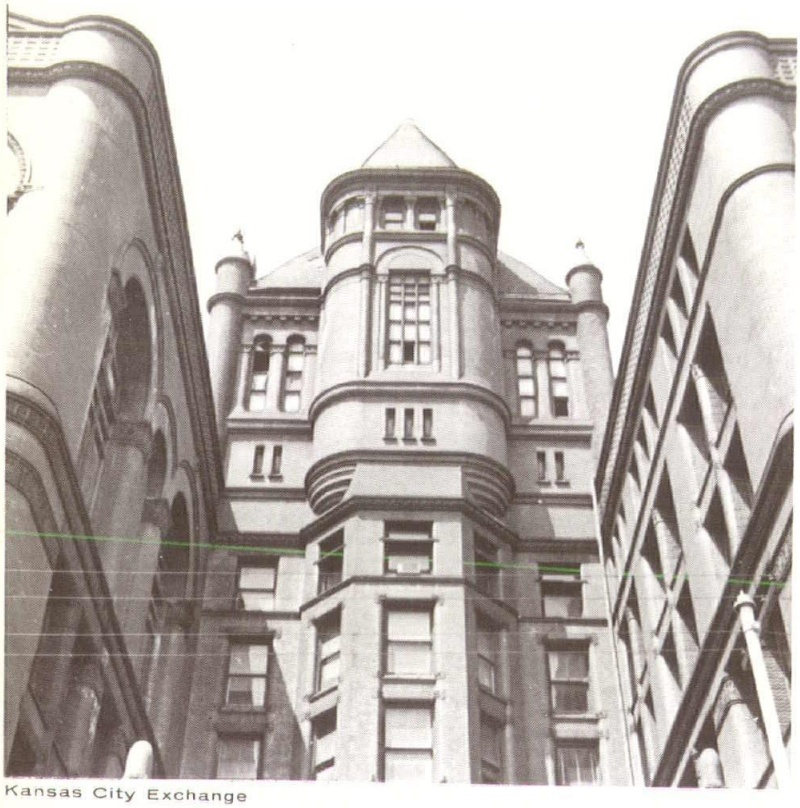
The shiny black glass front obliterates cognizance of underlying str ture and is tastelessly applied to the street level only of cast iron fro and other honest forms of architectural expression. The result is discordant clutter of surfaces, materials and graphics far remov from the early integrity of the commercial districts.

naltered Building, Chillicothe, Missouri

Photograph by M. P. Holmes

Architecture in Kansas City: 1885-1913

Donald Hoffman, SAH



Kansas City Exchange

By 1885, not only was Kansas City fully recovered from the Depression of the 1870s, but it was growing so fast that it was fertile territory for out-of-town architects. Notable work by outsiders has more or less characterized the architecture of Kansas City ever since.

It is true that the Bank of Commerce, at Sixth and Delaware streets, was finished early in 1885 from plans by Asa B. Cross (1828-1894), who had been in the city since about 1858; but the plans were drawn only after Cross and his clients had studied bank buildings elsewhere—particularly, those aggressively idiosyncratic buildings by Frank Furness, in Philadelphia. At the same time, Henry Van Brunt (1832-1903), of Boston—not to be confused with the brothers Adriance and John Van Brunt, who arrived here earlier, from New Jersey, and did a great deal of work for the Park Commissioners—sent his partner, Frank Maynard Howe, here to watch over a number of railroad commissions in the West. Van Brunt moved his own family to Kansas City in 1887; but Burnham & Root, of Chicago, already had gathered half a dozen commissions here. Always the gentleman, Van Brunt seemed not resentful. Howe, in writing in 1904 that "It was a rather curious coincidence that the first three of the large, important and fire-proof buildings should have fallen all at once into the hands of one firm," referred to the Board of Trade Building at 210 West Eigth Street, the American National Bank Building at 728 Delaware Street, and the Midland Hotel at 705 Walnut Street, all of which were built in 1886-1888 from plans by Burnham & Root. All, lamentably, have been destroyed only in the last decade. The Board of Trade Building, resulting from a national competition refereed by Van Brunt's former partner, Prof. William R. Ware, was as important for the articulation of its plan as the American National Bank Building was for the clarity of its outward expression.

Also working here in the 1880s was Willis Jefferson Polk, who lat designed a great many buildings in San Francisco, including the cel brated Hallidie Building on Sutter Street. In 1888, even Bernard Ma beck was here. Between 1887 and 1889, Van Brunt & Howe gaine important commissions—such as those for the old Kansas City Club Twelfth and Wyandotte streets, the Gibralter Building at 818 Wyandot Street, the Coates House, and the arcaded Bullene, Moore & Eme Store. But more outsiders continued to flourish. The Boston firm Bradlee, Winslow & Wetherell was engaged by a Boston insurance cor pany to design the New England Building of 1887-1888, at Ninth ar Wyandotte Streets. The New York Life Insurance Building of 1888-189 at 20 West Ninth Street, went to McKim, Mead & White, with the junior member, Joseph Morrill Wells, evidently re-designing the elev tions. Stanford White designed a chateâuesque house for T. H. Masti at 3500 Main Street. Peabody & Stearns, of Boston, designed son houses here; and the Episcopalian Church of the Society of St. Ma built in 1886-1888 at Thirteenth and Holmes streets, was designed William Halsey Wood, of Newark.

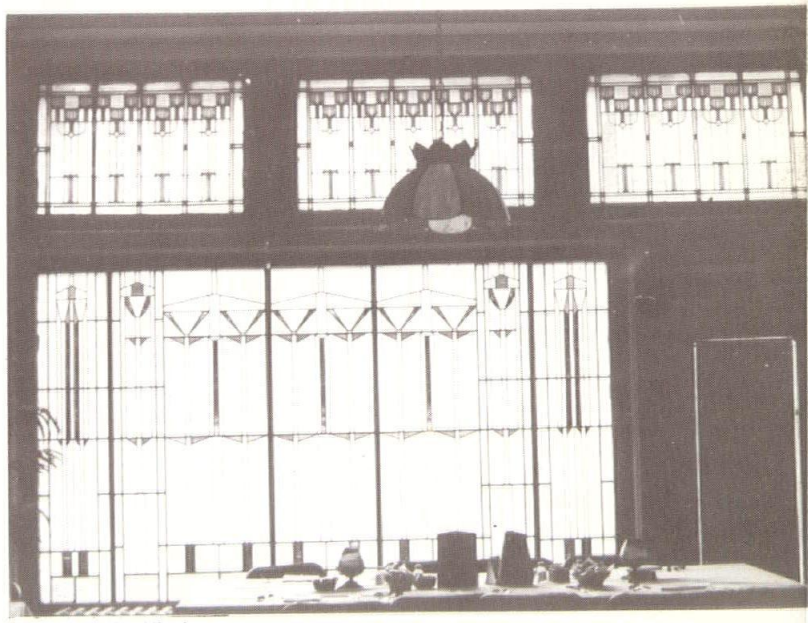
The eccentric Louis S. Curtiss (1865-1924), born in Canada, had settle here by 1887; and in 1890, under the Old City Hall, he devised the fir use of caisson foundation piers under a building. In partnership wi Frederick C. Gunn (1865-1959), Curtiss designed the chateauesqu Progress Club of 1893, at 1017 Washington Street, a building ve much like the work that the boozy draftsman Harvey Ellis had done St. Joseph, Mo. George M. Siemens came down from St. Joseph ar formed a partnership with Walter C. Root (1859-1925), the young brother of John Root. Their work usually was rather too tame, althoug the All Souls' Unitarian Church of 1905, at 3431 Baltimore Avenu showed some attention to the Arts and Crafts movement, and the Scarritt Building and Scarritt Arcade, both of 1905-1907, were strong Sullivanian. (In June 1906, when Sullivan was passing through Kans City, Walter Root gave him a tour of the town.)

Scarritt Arcade

urtiss Studio

umbel

In 1906, the commission for the new Union Station went to Jarvis Hunt, of Chicago, a nephew of Richard Morris Hunt. The station was built in 1911-1914, following the fashion of the imperial civic gateway. Colonel Nelson had Louis Curtiss at work on plans for the Kansas City Star Building in 1908, but soon turned instead to Hunt. At the turn of the century, the Art Nouveau episode made little impression on Kansas City: the exceptions were the splendid windows of the Savoy Grill, of 1903, designed by Frank Anderson, and the curious doorway of the residence called Mineral Hall, at 4340 Oak Street, built about 1905 and designed, possibly, by Curtiss, who had been in Paris around 1900. Curtiss's best commercial building, the important Boley Clothing Store of 1908-1909, at the northwest corner of Twelfth and Walnut streets, showed Art Nouveau influences; more important, its glass curtain-wall was pushed about 6 feet beyond the line of perimeter columns. His own studio and store building, built in 1909 at 1118 McGee Street, was a much simplified version, with a reinforced concrete frame.



Savoy Grill Window

The first major building of reinforced concrete in the city was the Gumbel Building of 1904, at 801 Walnut Street, by John W. McKecknie (1862-1934). The concrete Terminal Warehouse Building of 1905, at 2422 Broadway, was designed by A. O. Elzner of Cincinnati, whose Ingalls Building of 1902-1903 was the first reinforced concrete skyscraper anywhere. McKecknie's concrete building for Montgomery Ward, built in 1906-1908 at Nineteenth and Campbell streets, followed close on the heels of the huge Montgomery Ward warehouse in Chicago.

The best of the Prairie School architects working here were Ernest Olaf Brostrom (1888-1969) and Clarence E. Shepard (1870-1949), both of whom began their practices here in 1907, and Russell Barr Williamson. George Maher, of Chicago, had designed the Velie house, at 4500 Warwick Boulevard, about 1904; and his ponderous sense of massing was widely imitated here. So much is evident in Louis Curtiss's finest residence, the Bernard Corrigan house of 1913-1914, at 1200 West Fifty-fifth Street.

Scarritt Building (Ca. 1907)

Architecture 1913-1933

A METAMORPHIS IN TWENTY YEARS

Kenneth Coombs AIA
City Architect

A lot of things began to change as the 20th century moved into its second decade. The automobile was with us though not, as yet, in very great numbers. The Wright brothers had put a machine into the air. Technology was moving ahead, gathering momentum with each passing year. It was a time of the "good life". The present was comfortable. The future looked sublime.

It was in this period that some notable building took place in Kansas City. Union Station at Main Street in Pershing Road bespoke the times. Commenced by the George W. Fuller Company in 1913 and completed the following year, the $5,000,000.00 structure exhibited the growing influence of technical consideration. Designed by Jarvis Hunt of Chicago, the plan employed the "through train principle". Trains on any of the 18 station tracks could pass in either direction. It was not necessary to back out of the terminal. This considerable functional advantage was gained by placing the Concourse above and perpendicular to the tracks. Stairs, later replaced by escalators, were used to carry passengers from Concourse to the trains below.

Union Station was an important building. It reflected the progress and prosperity, not only of Kansas City but of the nation. It was conceived to look its part. Neo-classic styling, the accepted architectural vocabulary of the day for buildings of considerable stature and import was fittingly employed in executing the colossal scale of space needed to serve vast numbers of travelers in comfort. Even today with rail passengers but at a trickle, the grandeur of Hunt's design still impresses.

Not every building could have such glamorous antecedents as Union Station. The railroads were our "fair-haired" child. But other industries were growing. Many a lesser concern needed new quarters to house its developing commerce. At 520 West 21st Street, the Jensen-Salisbery laboratories, designed by Kansas City architect, Ernest O. Bostrom in 1918 exhibits a new feeling, a new awareness, that was now manifest in architecture. The style known as the "Chicago School", where emphasis was placed more on the need and function of the building and less on the academic adaptation of copy-book detail, is admirably and skillfully displayed. This design bespoke a company well-founded, prosperous, and geared for growth. That it continues to function to this day eloquently speaks its excellence.

Liberty Memorial

Jensen-Salisbery

On November 11, 1926, another sort of architectural masterwork was dedicated in Kansas City. This structure, the Liberty Memorial, atop the hill in Penn Valley Park across Pershing Road from Union Station, has long since become an identifying landmark as well as an important museum of military history.

Its beginnings came at the close of World War I when the City Council called a mass meeting of the citizens of Kansas City "for the purpose of arranging for an appropriate memorial expressing the appreciation of the soldiers, sailors and citizens during the European War which just ended. This assemblage was held on November 29, 1918.

A successful fund drive followed. And after that, a search for an Architect whose talents would meet the challenge. H. Van Buren Magonigle of New York was selected. At a final cost approximating $2,500,000.00, Magonigle's inspiring design graces Kansas City's southern skyline in distinguished solemn dignity.

Strongly symmetrical, gracefully ornamental, this edifice provides a clue of architectural taste and style aborning. Its plan and detail have roots in a classic past. Its concept and form presage the functionalism that is to come.

Union Station Waiting Room

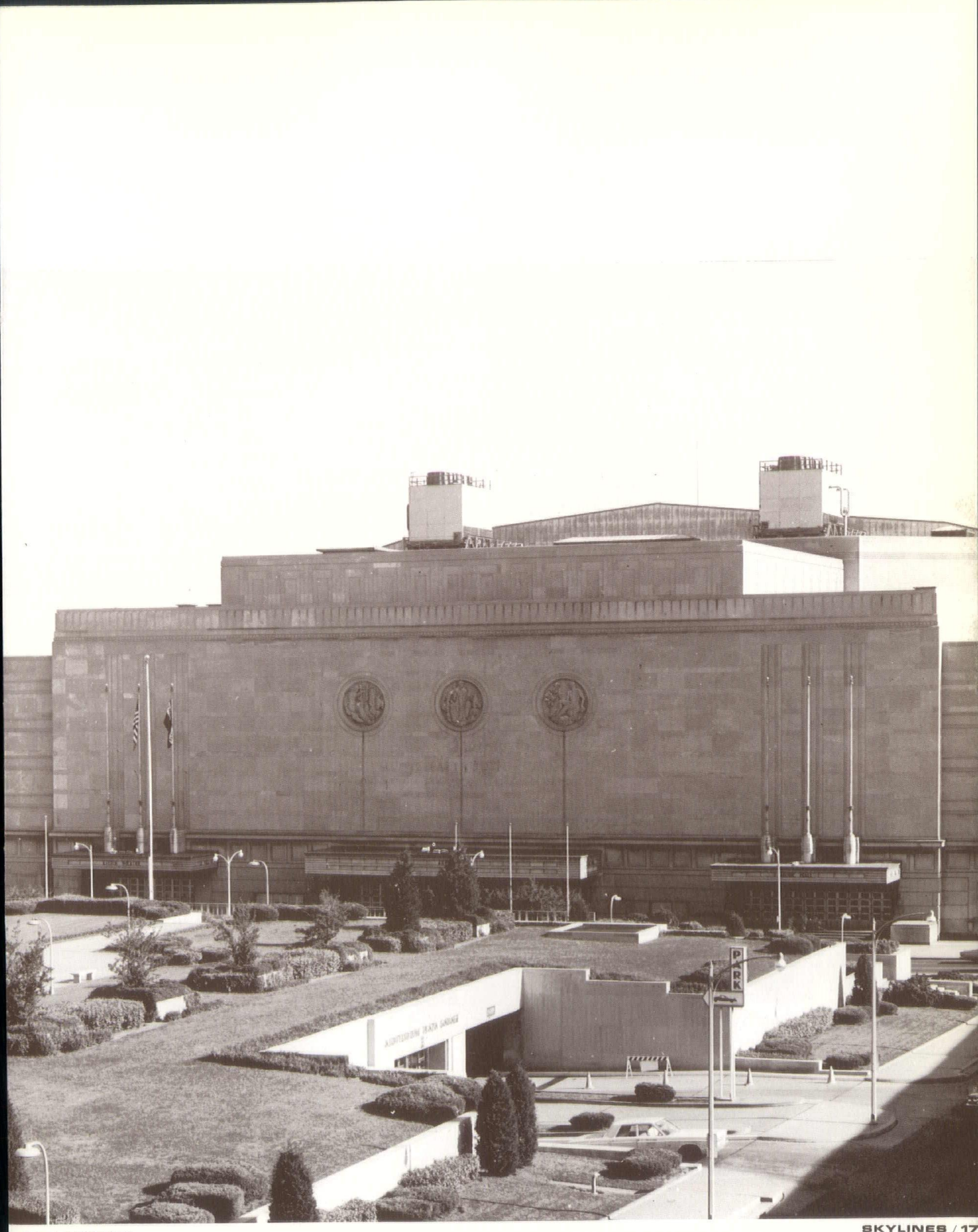
Perhaps, it was the collapse of our financial structure in the la twenties. Or maybe, it was the gradual acceptance of European tas in new buildings, or it could have been nothing more than the trad tional American desire for change. Most likely it was some combinatio of all. In any event, in the 1930's, a new taste and architectural e pression emerged. It is strongly mechanical, exhibiting all the chara teristics that technology engineered to mass production and progre would expect to show. Classic ornament, derived from natural form gave way to the marks of manufacturing technique. The measure excellence became related to the efficiency with which a factory cou produce. Nonessentials were stripped away. The emphasis was on fun tional use; the best the day and age could muster. It was "modern And the word "moderne"—made artistic by the addition of the fin "e"—has come to describe it.

A splendid, unspoiled example of this period is found in the architectu of the Municipal Auditorium. Occupying the full block between 13 and 14th Streets from Wyandotte to Central, the building was erecte at a cost of $6,500,000.00 between 1933 and 1935. The Kansas Ci architectural firms of Gentry, Voskamp and Neville and Hoit, Price ar Barnes combined to produce the design. Its complex includes an aren an exhibition hall, a theater, meeting rooms and all the ancillary space related to each.

A frame of reinforced concrete and structural steel surmounted by tru monstrous roof trusses exemplified the time's best engineering tec niques. The limestone exterior in precise and uniform cut show th application of mass production methods to the fabrication of natur building materials. Interior finishes, glistening and slick, portray th degree of perfection which machines can bring to the time honore materials of terrazzo and granite. Colors were bright and gay, ceiling and wall surfaces relieved with properly stylistic ornament (qui geometric in form) and murals, of the same idiom in painting, embellis the theater lobby. The building spoke perfectly for the period. A happ blending of technological and spiritual development.

These few buildings, which date from 1913 to the middle thirties, a a kaleidoscope of one architectural period. A period that began with strong classic direction and ended in the expression of a contempora idiom. It is not because they are, in the main, public buildings tha they have importance, but because each so perfectly displays an achiev ment in architectural development. The taste, awareness and develo ment of a period in time is captured in stone and steel. What is see from the past, may provide a glimpse of the future.

Union Station



unicipal Auditorium

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Select the temperature that's right for you . . . whether you're heating or cooling your home, preparing a gourmet meal, or drying delicate synthetic fabrics. Gas is accurate to a precise degree . . . the precise degree *you* choose.

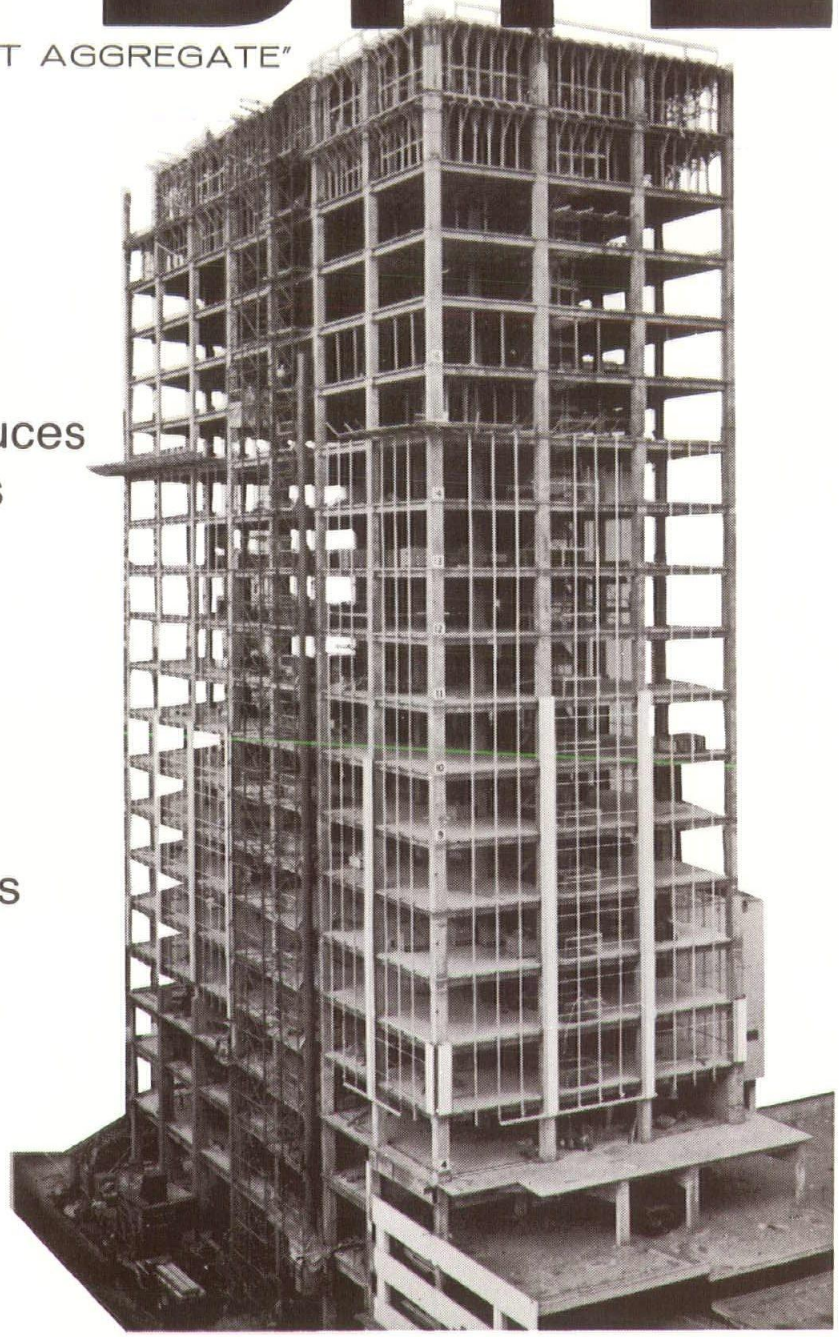
Who says you can't depend on the weather? The Gas Service Company delivers springtime . . . twelve months out of every year.

THE GAS SERVICE CO.

Natural Gas for Home, Business and Industry

HAYDITE

"THE ORIGINAL LIGHTWEIGHT AGGREGATE"



Lightweight Structural Haydite Concrete Reduces Weight and Cuts Costs Through—

- less concrete
- less labor
- longer spans
- smaller columns
- less reinforcing
- smaller foundations

plus—

- superior fire rating

Haydite aggregate is now "VITRI-COATED" for improved quality control through all phases of the job...from mix design to finishing. For detailed information, see your local Ready Mix producer, or contact us direct.

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Producers of Haydite aggregate at Centerville, Iowa, and New Market, Missouri.