

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Virginia Building

other names/site number Montgomery Ward Building, Strollway Center

## 2. Location

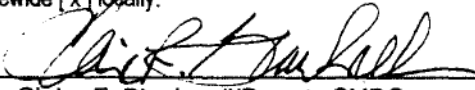
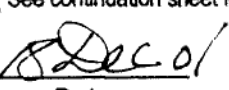
street & number 111 South Ninth Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Columbia [N/A] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Boone code 019 zip code 65203

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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/Title Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
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 the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
See continuation sheet .
- determined eligible for the National Register.  
See continuation sheet .
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Virginia Building  
Boone County, Missouri**

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources Within Property		
		Contributing	Non-contributing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	1	0	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	0	0	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0	structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0	objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

COMMERCE/TRADE/department store  
COMMERCE/TRADE/business  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty  
COMMERCE/TRADE/business  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

Other/ Two-part commercial block  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

foundation Stone  
 walls Brick  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 roof Metal  
 other Terra Cotta  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description** See continuation sheet [ x].

See continuation sheet [ ]

**Virginia Building**  
**Boone County, Missouri**

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

**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**

Property is:

**A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

**B** removed from its original location.

**C** a birthplace or 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.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

See continuation sheet [x].

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**Bibliography**

See continuation sheet [x].

**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

# \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

# \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

COMMERCE

**Period of Significance**

1911-1951

**Significant Dates**

1911

**Significant Person(s)**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository:

**Virginia Building**  
**Boone County, Missouri**

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

**UTM References**

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	558260	4311260			
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing

[ ] See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

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

**Boundary Justification**

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

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Debbie Sheals

organization Independent contractor date August, 2001

street & number 406 West Broadway telephone 573-874-3779

city or town Columbia state Missouri zip code 65203

**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 FOP for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

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

name Atkins Investments, Inc. (Contact: Scott Atkins)

street & number 1115 Wilkes Blvd. telephone 573-874-4000

city or town Columbia state MO zip code 65203

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Virginia Building  
Boone County, Missouri

**Summary:** The Virginia Building is a two-story commercial building which is located at 111 South Ninth Street, in downtown Columbia, Missouri. It sits directly on the sidewalk, at the intersection of two busy streets. It covers half of a city block and is one of the largest historic two-part commercial blocks in the downtown area. The building has a flat roof, gold brick walls, a narrow molded cornice at the first floor line, and a larger bracketed cornice at the roofline. The facade faces east, to South Ninth Street, and the north wall, which has similar architectural detailing, faces Cherry Street. Tall storefront and transom units line the facade, and wrap a few yards around each side wall. The storefront units are separated by heavy cast iron piers. The wide entrance bay of the facade is accented by terra cotta quoins which continue the line of the ground floor piers up to the second floor and which also surround the second floor windows above the main entrance. Green-glazed tile medallions are set into the wall above those windows. The building has always served a commercial function, and the ground floor plan today is much as it was when the first tenants moved into the building in 1911. The ground floor shops are long and narrow, with storefront display windows along their front walls. The retail spaces feature original ornamental pressed metal ceilings, and several of the original interior cast iron support columns are also exposed. The building occupies almost all of its lot, and is the only resource on the property. Although it was subjected to an extensive remodeling in the 1960s, which involved, among other things, replacing most original windows and wrapping the second story in ribbed metal sheathing, a significant amount of historic material was left in place. Surviving exterior ornamentation of note includes the distinctive gold face brick, a good deal of the original white terra cotta, and all of the second floor entrance-bay ornamentation described above. The building today is in the final stages of an extensive rehabilitation; the sheathing is gone, most of the 1960s changes have been reversed, and it again looks very much as it did the day the first shop opened for business in 1911.

**Elaboration:** The Virginia building is located in downtown Columbia, a block south of Broadway, which is the main commercial artery in town. It is a relatively large building, two stories tall, and 142 feet wide by 90 feet deep. There is a church complex to the south, and an early 20<sup>th</sup> century theater across the street; the other buildings in the area are one- and two-story commercial buildings. Most of those are relatively small, with only one or two front bays. (See photo 3.)

The Virginia Building occupies a prominent corner lot, with busy streets along both the east-facing facade and the north side wall. (See Figure One.) The back, or west wall, faces other buildings across a narrow pedestrian alley, and the south wall adjoins a wider alley which is open to vehicular traffic. The lot slopes down to the west, away from Ninth Street, and part of the basement level is above ground along the rear and side elevations.

The first and second floor walls of the main elevations of the building are faced with lightly glazed bricks which are a deep gold color. The foundation of the building is of rock-faced limestone

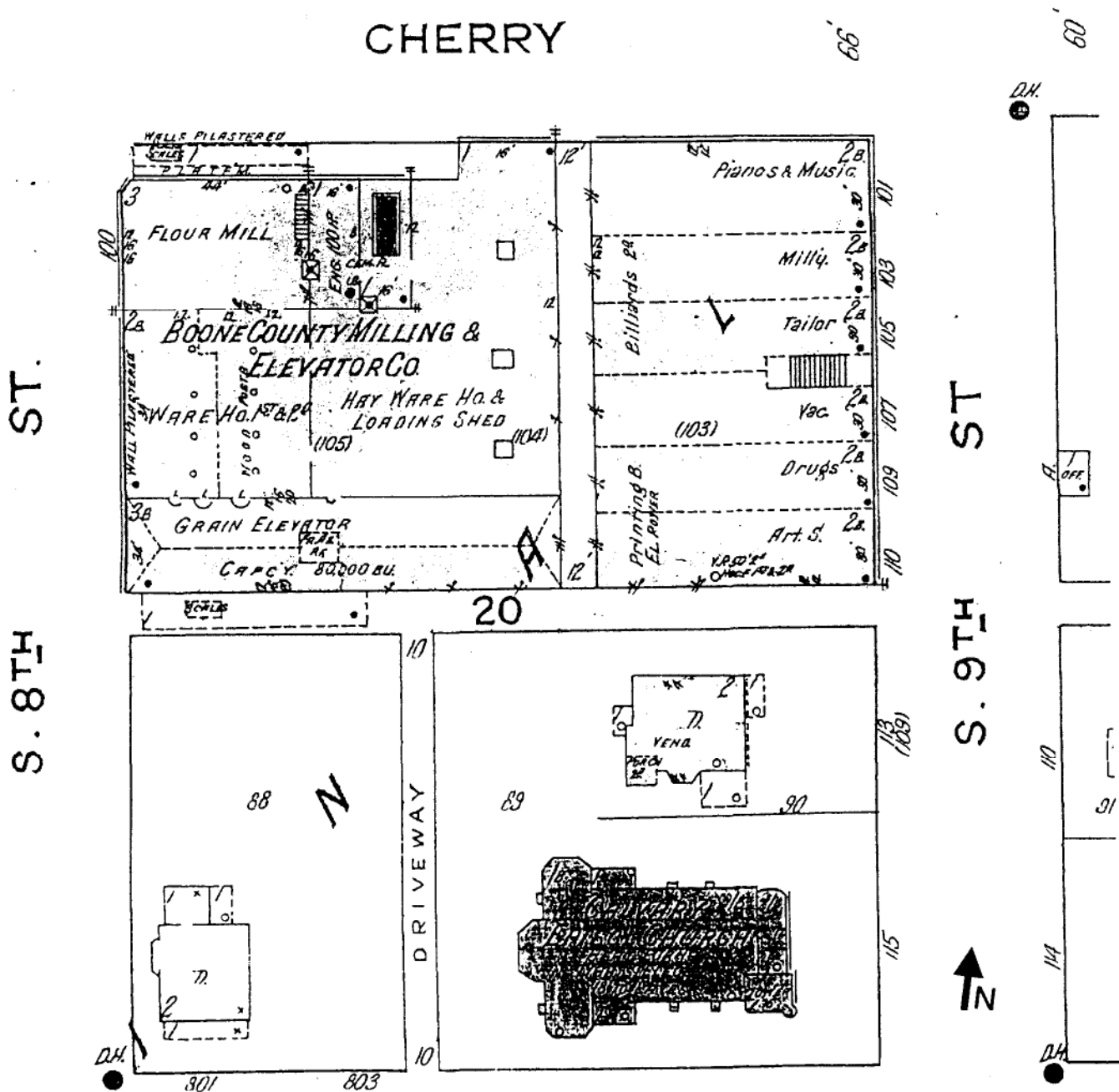
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Virginia Building  
Boone County, Missouri

Figure One. 1914 Sanborn Map of the Virginia Building.



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Virginia Building  
Boone County, Missouri

blocks. Prominent smooth limestone water tables ornament the tops of the foundations on the side elevations. The back wall is much plainer than the others, and was never highly finished.

The distinctive gold face bricks and general massing of the building sets it apart from its contemporaries. Most brick buildings in the area are of common red brick, with a few later buildings utilizing darker wire-cut brick or blond bricks. No other buildings in Columbia have bricks the color and finish of those found on the Virginia Building. Also, most of the commercial buildings in the downtown area, then and now, have narrow, rectangular footprints, with a small slice of street frontage. The Virginia Building, by contract, is wider than it is deep, with massing more horizontal than vertical.

The building was built in 1911, and extensively remodeled in 1965. Notable changes in the 1960s included replacing the second floor windows with massive concrete-framed units, and wrapping most of the second story with vertical metal siding. (See Figure Two, appearance before rehabilitation.) Also, the main entrance was moved to one side, and the interior layout was greatly altered. The ground floor plan was changed from storefront shops to a "mini-mall" layout, with squared shop spaces and a central hallway running parallel to the facade. Ceilings were dropped throughout the building, and new partitions were installed in both the basement and the second floor as well.

Although the remodeling had an extreme affect upon the appearance of the building, much original fabric was left in place. The basic form and patterns of fenestration were intact beneath the sheathing, as was most of the original face brick, the cast iron piers between the storefronts, and much of the original terra cotta ornamentation. Inside, the ornamental ceilings of the ground floor shop spaces remained in place beneath modern suspended ceiling panels. A recent rehabilitation project, done to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and guided by historic photos, reversed most of those later changes, and the building today looks much as it did when it was new. (Compare photos 1 and 2.)

The gold brick walls of the facade and north wall are accented by white glazed cornices, and a parapet wall of similar brick runs along the roofline, above the top cornice. The parapet wall is topped by white glazed coping which matches the cornices, and there are wide ornamental corner posts at the main corners of the roof. The corner posts, which are replications of the originals, also have white glazed tiles which match the cornices.

The facade of the building is the most highly ornamented elevation. There are two prominent cornices; a bracketed one at the roof line and a smaller, flatter one at the tops of the storefronts. The upper cornice has small molded brackets, and a band of dentil molding along its bottom edge. That cornice is a replication, based upon historic photos and surviving fragments; the original was removed during the 1960s remodeling.<sup>1</sup> The first floor cornice, however, survived intact, and is in very good

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<sup>1</sup> All new units which were used to replicate the original white glazed terra cotta are of Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete (GFRC), custom fabricated for this project.

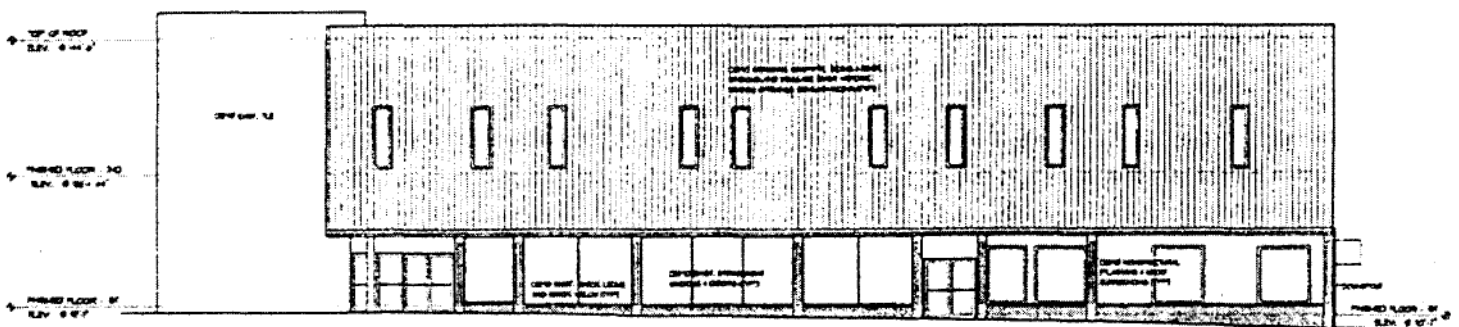
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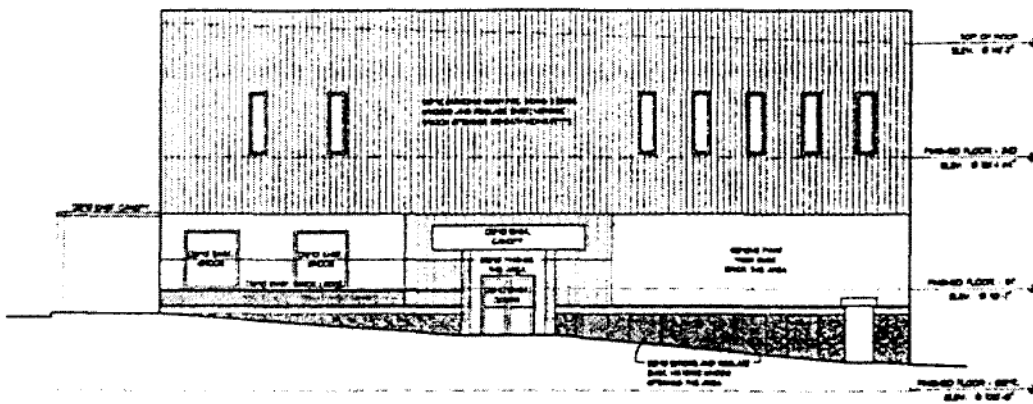
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Virginia Building  
Boone County, Missouri

Figure Two. Appearance Before the Recent Rehabilitation. (Drawings by Simon and Associates, Inc., Architecture, Columbia, MO.)



EXISTING EAST ELEVATION  
SCALE 1/4\"/>



EXISTING NORTH ELEVATION  
SCALE 1/4\"/>



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Virginia Building  
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condition. It is made of terra cotta blocks, glazed white, and has horizontal banding and a simple molded top. The lower cornice creates a strong horizontal division between the upper and lower sections of the walls, an effect that is balanced by the solid vertical lines of the piers between the storefront bays. Those cast iron piers, which are original and in very good condition, have recessed rectilinear panels, the tops of which have ornamental reliefs. (See photo 5.)

The facade has five main bays. The bays are delineated by the vertical piers on the ground floor, and groupings of large double-hung windows on the second. The first floor of each bay features storefront display windows and a recessed entrance. Large transom windows top each storefront, and wooden bulkheads run beneath the storefront units. The storefronts and transoms are modern wood and metal units which were custom fabricated to match those shown in early photographs; none of the original storefronts had survived to modern times. The front bays are of varying widths. The narrow entrance is flanked by small secondary bays, and the northernmost storefront, which occupies the most prominent corner, is slightly wider than the others.

The second floor windows are very large; each opening measures roughly 3 feet wide by almost 8 feet tall. Each second floor window opening is topped by an original soldier-course header, and groups of two and three windows share continuous smooth limestone sills. (See photo 4.) Many of the sills are original, some are modern precast replacements. The one-over-one window sash are modern wood units which have exterior aluminum cladding and brick molding. The brick mold is very similar in profile to a scrap of the original which was found early in the rehabilitation project. The new window sash are of the same size and configuration as the originals, which were lost to the 1960s remodeling. The openings themselves are original.

The upper portion of the entrance bay is the most highly decorated part of the facade. White terra cotta quoins continue the vertical line of the storefront piers upward, and also accent the edges of the second floor window openings. A secondary cornice which matches that at the first floor runs along the tops of the second floor window openings, and large brackets are set at the roofline. The top cornice does not run between the brackets; the wall there continues up to the top of the parapet wall which rises a few feet above the top cornice. The quoins and secondary cornice are original, the brackets are replications. The tall area above the second floor windows is ornamented with original diamond-shaped medallions which are composed of green ceramic tile. The medallions have been recently restored and are in excellent condition.

The north elevation, which faces Cherry Street, has similar detailing. Both cornices of the facade continue along the entire length of the wall. As on the facade, the lower cornice is original and the upper one is a replication. There is one wide storefront with transom windows at the front corner; it wraps around from the facade and is part of the northernmost retail space. The second floor windows on that wall are almost exactly like those found on the facade. The second floor windows above the storefront are paired, with shared sills, while those towards the back of the wall are single units. The part of the first floor that does not have storefronts has smaller double hung windows which are set high in the wall, just beneath the lower cornice. They also have smooth straight sills and one-over-one sash which replicate those shown in historic photos.

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Boone County, Missouri

The south and west elevations, which are much less public, are also less highly ornamented. The south elevation, which faces the widest alley, has a little more detailing than does the west. As on the north side, there is one wide storefront with transom windows at the front corner; it too connects with the storefront on the facade. The upper and lower cornices of the facade also wrap around to the south side, but continue only as far as the storefront, about thirty feet. The ground floor, which has no window openings, is faced with new brick, which is painted. (There were originally a few windows on that level; all but one was filled in at a very early date.) That part of the wall was refaced during the rehabilitation project, and salvageable face bricks from that area were used for repairs on more public parts of the building.

The second floor of the south wall has the same types of large window openings found on the facade, with soldier course headers and smooth straight sills. As elsewhere, the openings are original and the sash themselves are new. The second floor of the south wall is faced with the same type of glazed gold brick used on the facade; all of the brick is original.

The west wall has always been the plainest of the four, and never had any cornices or other types of ornamentation. Nearly all of the window openings on that wall had been bricked in over the years. Several of those original openings were recently restored to their original size, and given new one-over-one sash which match those of the front walls. A modern basement entrance and one new first floor window constitute the only recent changes to fenestration patterns on the back wall.

Although rehabilitation work on the exterior of the building is largely complete, the interior work is still in progress. Most of the 1960s materials have been removed throughout the building, and much of the first floor work is finished. The basement and second floors are less complete, but will be done by the early part of 2002.

The first floor plan of the building today is very much like it was when it was mapped by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Company in 1914, with rectangular retail spaces lighted by the storefront and transom units, and the main building entrance just off-center on the facade. (See Figure One, Sanborn Map of the building from 1914, and Figure Three, Current First Floor Plan.) There are fewer shops today than there were originally, but the general configuration is the same, and the storefront openings are identical. The shops all have, or will have, open retail space near the front, and service areas along the back wall. Almost all of the interior partitions are new, as the original walls were torn out during the 1960s remodeling.

The first floor ceilings are very high, almost 16 feet in some places. The ground floor shops all feature highly intact original embossed metal ceilings. (See photos 8, 9, and 10.) The metal ceiling panels are accented by ornate cornices and borders at each support beam, and each original shop space features a different ceiling panel and cornice design. The ceilings were notably intact (beneath suspended ceilings) before the rehabilitation project, and only a few panels in the shop spaces had to be replaced. The panels are highly intact and in excellent condition today.

The original ornamental support columns are also exposed in several areas of the interior. They are round and slender, with simple molded capitals and bases. (See photos 9 and 11.) The columns reflect their structural load; they are thickest in the basement level, and thinnest at the second floor.

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**Virginia Building  
Boone County, Missouri**

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When the rehab is complete, the main entrance to the building will open to a small lobby, which will provide access to the second floor and basement, via stairs and an elevator. Although new, the lobby will be in nearly the same location as were the original entrance and stairs. When finished, the second floor will contain offices, a function it had for much of the period of significance. The finishes of that area will be modern; little original fabric was in place there prior to the rehab project.

The basement is also only partially finished. There are some original elements in place there, including several of the heavy support columns, and a small amount of embossed metal ceiling sheathing. (See photo 11.) The basement ceiling covering, which is in the southernmost room, is much more heavy-duty than the panels found on the first floor, and consists of large sheets rather than individual panels with separate borders and cornices. The original boiler/mechanical room is still in place in the southwest corner of the basement; it has rock-faced stone walls and a concrete floor. Other basement rooms include newly finished storage rooms, and a nightclub space which has been in the northwest part of the basement for decades.

The Virginia Building today looks and functions much as it did in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although the 1960s remodeling did result in some loss of original fabric, the basic form and patterns of fenestration survived, as did a notable amount of original finish material. The current rehabilitation project has uncovered and renewed much of that early building fabric, and reversed most modern interior and exterior changes. The building is immediately recognizable to the period of significance, and strongly reflects its long, continual use as a commercial building in Downtown Columbia. ☺

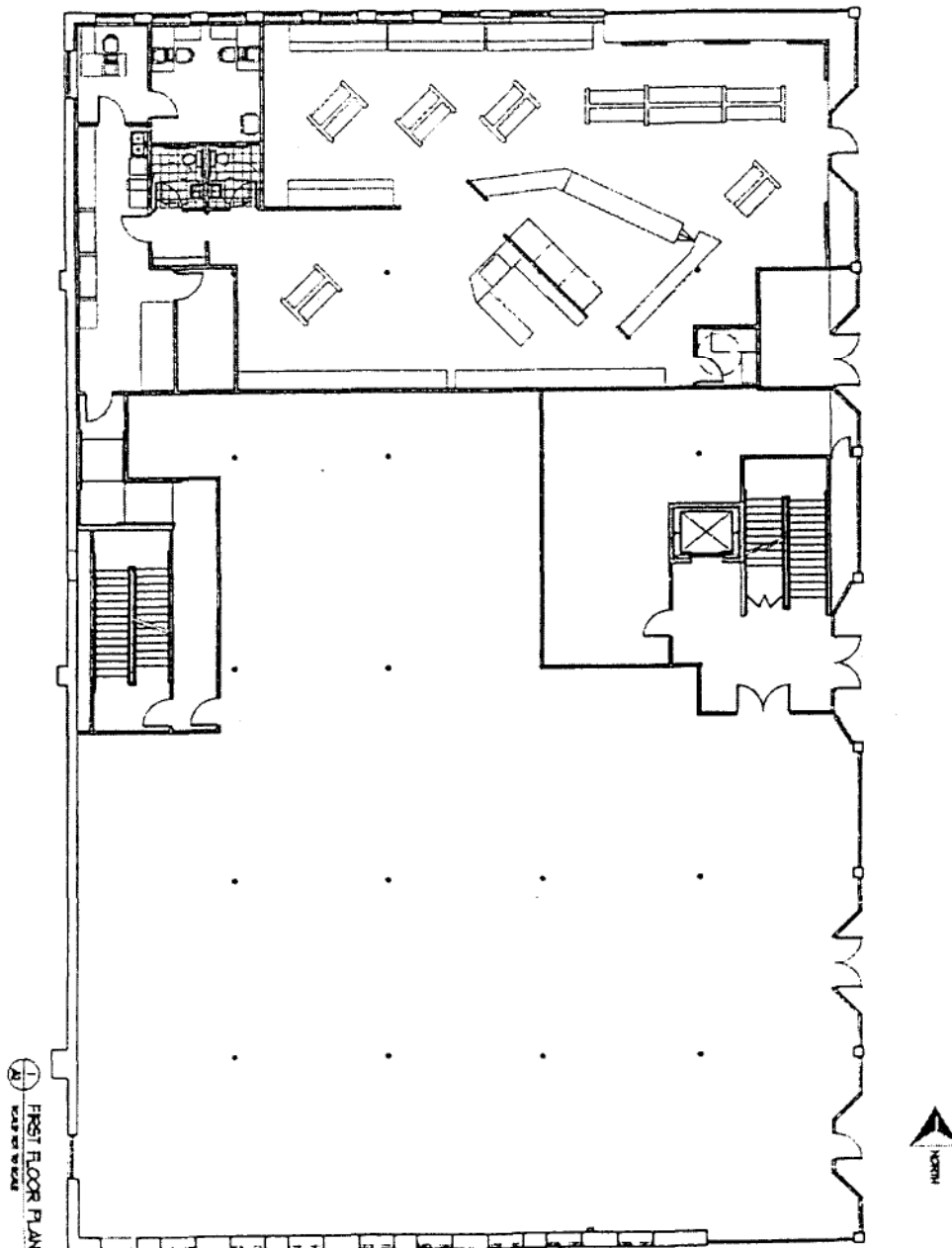
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Virginia Building  
Boone County, Missouri

Figure Three. First Floor Plan. Drawn by Simon Associates, Inc. Architecture, Columbia, MO.



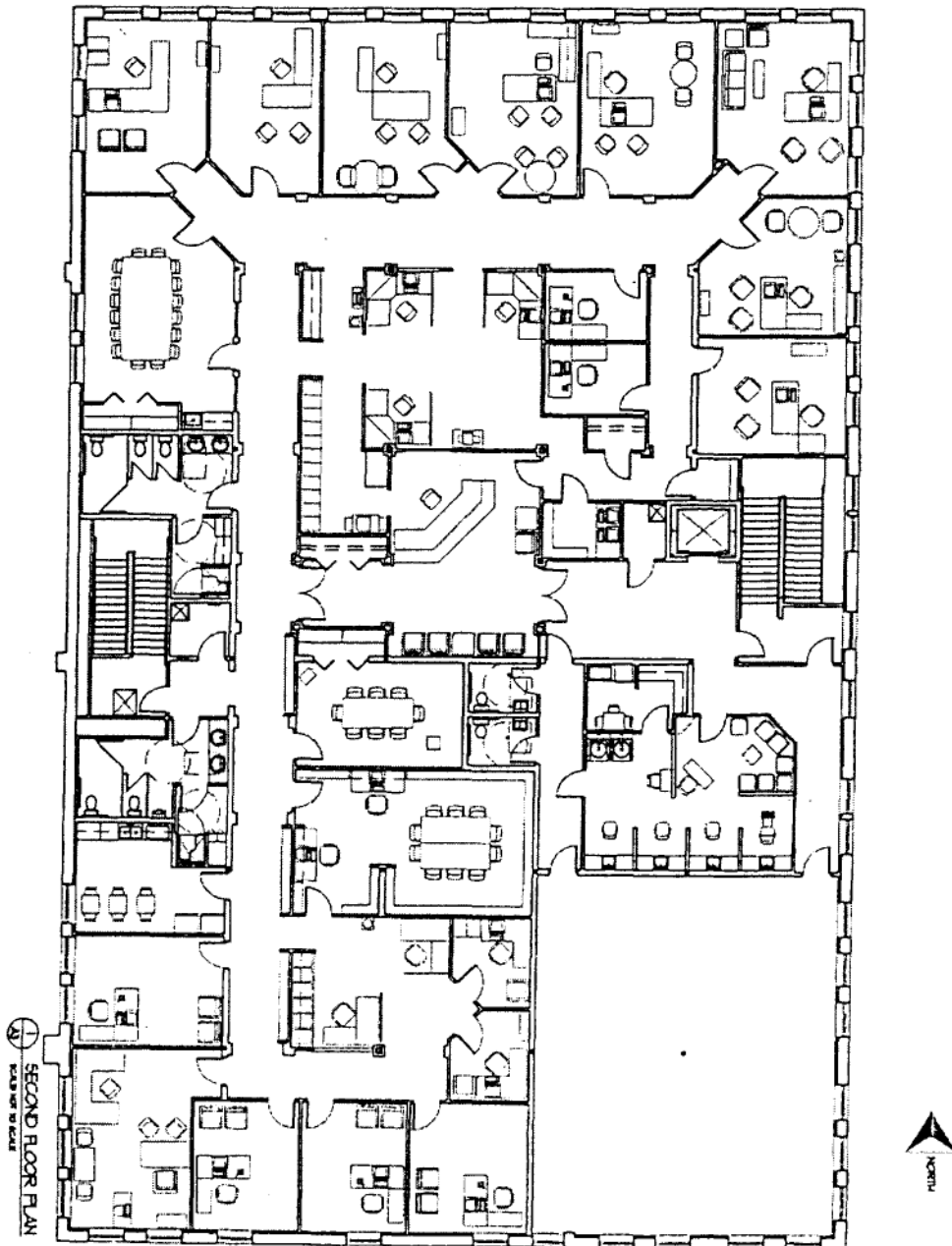
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Boone County, Missouri

Figure Four. Second Floor Plan. Drawn by Simon Associates, Inc. Architecture, Columbia, MO.



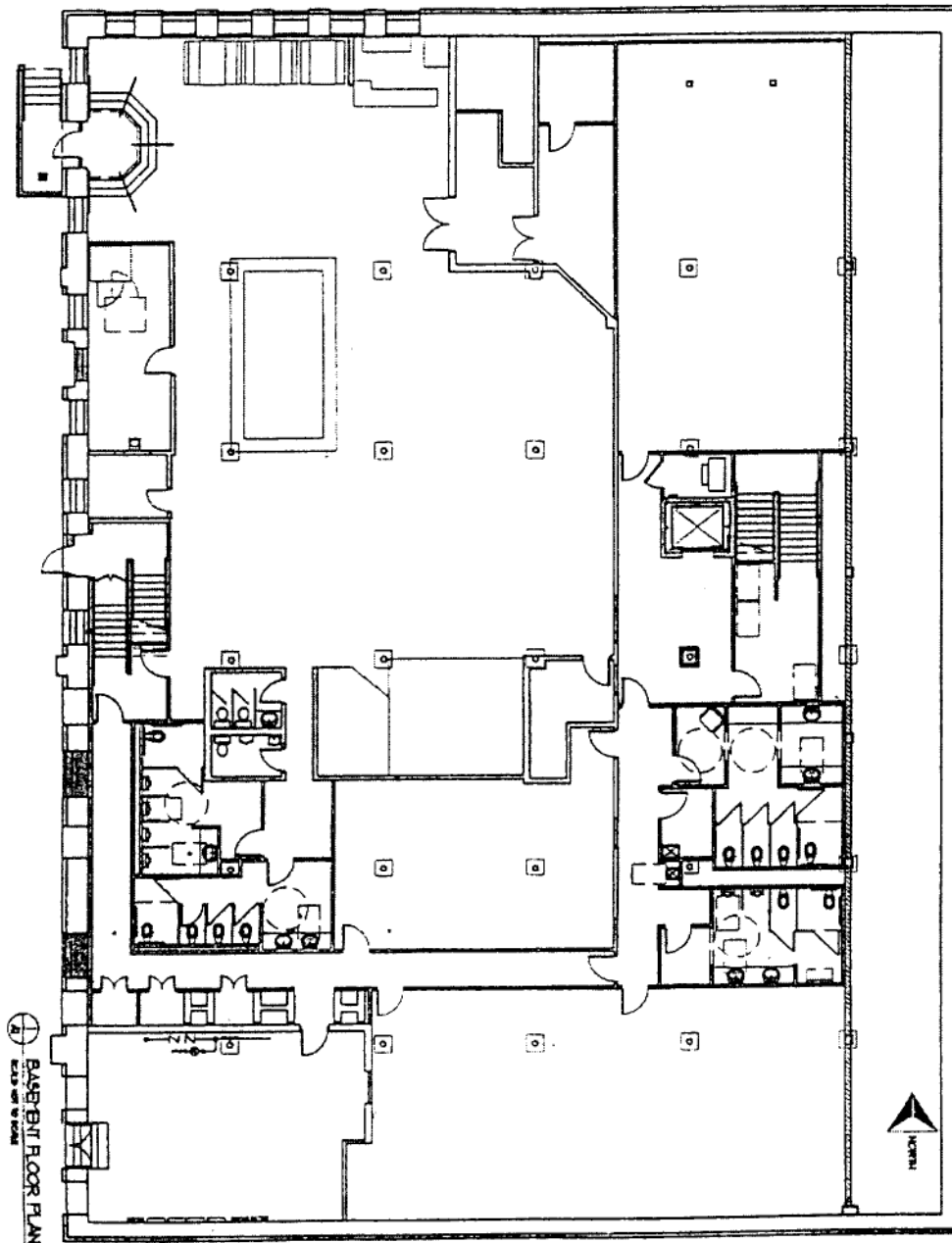
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Figure Five. Basement Plan. Drawn by Simon Associates, Inc. Architecture, Columbia, MO.



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Virginia Building  
Boone County, Missouri

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**Summary:** The Virginia Building, at 111 South Ninth Street, in Columbia, Missouri, is significant under Criterion A, in the area of Commerce, for its long association with commercial activities in Columbia. It is one of the largest historic commercial buildings in the downtown area, and the last intact historic department store anywhere in the community. The building is located on one of the busiest corners of the downtown commercial center, and has been used for office and retail space since its construction in 1911. The period of significance for the property thus runs from 1911, to 1951, the arbitrary fifty year cut-off point. The building had a variety of prominent business tenants and other commercial associations throughout the period of significance. It was strongly associated with the Columbia Commercial Club when it was new; three of the original owners and one of the first tenants of the property were founding members of that organization, and the Club rented space in the building shortly after it was completed. The Commercial Club, which was the precursor of the modern Chamber of Commerce, had a major impact upon community development in Columbia in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Commercial Club was devoted to advancing commercial and civic interests in Columbia, and the group successfully promoted the development of such public amenities as paved streets and electric lighting in the downtown area, as well as the construction of a municipal water and light plant, and a new county courthouse. Commercial Club members have also been credited with ensuring that the new cross-state highway (now Interstate 70) came through their community. In 1928, the Virginia building got a new tenant—one of the first urban Montgomery Ward and Co. retail outlets in Missouri. That company eventually occupied most of the building, and remained there until 1961. Although there were at one time several major department stores in downtown Columbia, none remain today, and those early sites now contain either modern or greatly altered early buildings. It appears therefore, that the Virginia building is the only surviving historic department store building in downtown Columbia. Today, thanks to a recent rehabilitation project, the building looks and functions today much as it did for the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is a significant survivor of the days when downtown Columbia was the commercial heart of the city.

**Elaboration** Columbia is the seat of Boone County, and the largest town in Mid-Missouri. It was officially established in 1821, the same year Missouri became a state. The town was soon after designated as the seat of government for the new county of Boone, which had separated from Howard County in 1820. The original plat for the city included nearly 400 lots, laid out in a standard grid pattern, with generously scaled streets, and land set aside for public use. Broadway, which was the main road through town, was the widest street in the plat; it maintains that impressive width in the downtown area yet today and continues to be the main commercial artery in the central business district.

Columbia became home to the state University in 1842, an event which firmly established the community and spurred additional development. The University campus was established at the

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Virginia Building  
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southern edge of the original town plat, just a few blocks south of Broadway. The community grew steadily for the rest of the century; the population increased from 600 in 1850 to over 5,000 in 1900.<sup>2</sup> The physical size expanded with the population growth, and the city limits spread outward as regular additions to the town were platted and developed. Most of those additions became residential areas, with the original town plat serving as the commercial center of the community.

The early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a period of significant growth in the community; the population of Columbia nearly doubled between 1900 and 1910.<sup>3</sup> That population growth was accompanied by an expansion of the commercial district. During the first quarter of the century, many of the early residences located in the town center were replaced with new commercial buildings. South Ninth Street, for example, contained only widely spaced houses and a church in the late 1890s. By the early 1920s, almost all of those houses had been replaced with side-by-side commercial buildings, many of which are still there today.<sup>4</sup>

Like its neighbors, the Virginia Building was constructed on property which had been residential. The local paper in 1910 noted that "Dr. G. A. Bradford last week sold his residence property to a company....The company expects to convert it to business property....The lots are one block south of Broadway and the business houses are already crowding it."<sup>5</sup> It is interesting to note that the building there now is not quite as large as it was first expected to be; the same article observed that the company planned to erect "a handsome block of buildings, four or five stories high." Although the final product was not quite as large as they had initially planned, it was of an impressive size, and one of the largest commercial buildings erected on South Ninth during that period of expansion.

In form and function, the Virginia Building can be classified as a "two-part commercial block."<sup>6</sup> Architectural historian Richard Longstreth describes the two-part commercial block as "the most common type of composition used for small and moderate sized commercial buildings throughout the country...this type is characterized by a horizontal division into two distinct zones."<sup>7</sup> As is the case for

<sup>2</sup> Census figures, cited in Columbia, the Heart of America, (Columbia, MO: Columbia Commercial Club, ca. 1922.) n.p.

<sup>3</sup> Columbia, the Heart of America.

<sup>4</sup> Sanborn Maps for Columbia, 1889-1925.

<sup>5</sup> "\$150 a Front Foot," Columbia Missouri Herald, March 11, 1910, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Longstreth, The Buildings of Main Street, (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1987) p. 24.

<sup>7</sup> Longstreth, p. 24.

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Virginia Building  
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the Virginia Building, the single story lower zones of such buildings were generally designed to be used as public or commercial spaces, while the upper floors were used for more private functions, such as offices, residences or meeting halls. The Virginia Building is one of the largest intact two-part commercial blocks in the community today.

The restrained styling of the building is also typical of two-part commercial blocks of the period. Longstreth noted that "By the turn of the century, a sense of unity and order prevailed...Many examples have a classical sense of order but contain few, if any, references to past periods."<sup>8</sup> The Virginia Building fits that description well; the design of the building is based more upon careful composition and the use of contrasting materials than upon the types of applied ornamentation common to earlier buildings.

Another aspect of Columbia's early twentieth century commercial growth resulted in the formation of the Columbia Commercial Club. The Commercial Club was, as its name implies, dedicated to promoting commercial development in the community. It was founded by a group of local businessmen in March of 1906, with an initial membership of about 100 men. (Women were not included until around 1919.) By the time the Virginia Building was erected, membership had almost tripled. The membership consistently included the most prominent businessmen in Columbia, and the club was very active in promoting community development throughout the first quarter of the century.

A Commercial Club publication boasted in 1912 that the club was "the most effective organization of its kind in any city of four times Columbia's size in the state, and it has accomplished things little short of wonderful."<sup>9</sup> In the same publication, the Club claimed credit for major roles in paving many streets in town, building a municipal water and light plant, and enticing several new factories to start operations in the community. The largest such factory was run by the Hamilton Brown Shoe Company, which became one of the city's major employers when their plant opened in the first decade of the new century.<sup>10</sup>

Those claims were not idle boasts; several newspaper articles from the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century repeat those credits, and include information about other Commercial Club projects, many of which were to have very long-lasting impacts upon the town. The paper reported several times on the club's successful efforts to ensure that the new cross-state highway would come through Columbia in the 1910s. The Columbia Missourian reported in 1918 that it was largely due to the efforts of the

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<sup>8</sup> Longstreth, p. 39.

<sup>9</sup> Columbia Commercial Club. "We Are Building a City in Columbia," (Columbia, MO: Statesman Publishing Company, ca. 1912.) n.p.

<sup>10</sup> Ironically, both the Virginia Building and the Shoe Factory building are now owned by the same person, Thomas Atkins, III.

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Club's members that "the State Highway follows the Old Trails Road, passing directly through the center of Columbia."<sup>11</sup> That highway is now Interstate 70.

Other notable Club achievements in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century included getting downtown railroad stations built for the MKT and Wabash Railroads, and promoting the construction of a new county courthouse and a large new downtown hotel. Both of those early train stations and the courthouse have survived, and are among the most intact historic resources in the downtown area today. The hotel, which opened in 1917 as the Daniel Boone Tavern, remained in operation until the 1970s, and the building is now the headquarters for the City of Columbia.

A study of commercial organizations in the country which was published in 1915 shows that the Columbia Commercial Club was one of thousands of such organizations in existence at the time, and that it operated in a typical manner.<sup>12</sup> The club was established near the end of a period of explosive growth in the number of such groups. Although the first commercial organization in the nation was started in New York City in 1768, it was not until the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that such groups became common. Nationally, the number of local commercial organizations jumped from around 30 in the mid 1800s to nearly 3,000 in 1898. The growth apparently leveled off at the turn of the century, as a 1913 study identified about the same number of groups in operation then.<sup>13</sup>

Like the Columbia Commercial Club, most local commercial organizations spent a good deal of time working for community betterment. A description of the movement which was written in 1915 noted that "evolution has produced a new organization, conducted by the best types of citizens and business men, and interested not only in the upbuilding of commerce but also in the betterment of community life....By constantly enlarging their field of usefulness and by taking an active part in the solution of civic problems, modern trade bodies have made themselves invaluable to their cities."<sup>14</sup> Figures compiled by the U. S. Department of Commerce and Labor in 1913 show that the vast majority of commercial organizations at that time included civic improvement in their activities. That study identified 2,930 local organizations in the country, 2,274 of which were "interested in civic and industrial development."<sup>15</sup> The same study included figures for each state; Missouri had a total of 132 local groups, 84 of which were involved with civic development.

The 1915 study also noted that at that time, the terms "Board of Trade," "Chamber of Commerce," and "Commercial Club" were used nearly interchangeably, with preferred use seeming to

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<sup>11</sup> "Columbia Commercial Club Gives Aid," Columbia Missourian, May 6, 1918, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> Kenneth Sturges, American Chambers of Commerce, (New York: Williams College, 1915.)

<sup>13</sup> Sturges, pp. 44-48.

<sup>14</sup> Sturges, p. 43-44.

<sup>15</sup> Sturges, p. 46.

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be based more upon geography than function.<sup>16</sup> The use of the original term "Chamber of Commerce," for example was much more popular in the eastern states than in the Midwest, where "Commercial Club" (or a near variation) was favored. Overall, though, the latter was more popular, with nearly half of the surveyed clubs using some variation of Commercial Club.

That trend apparently changed over time, however, possibly in response to the formation of the United States Chamber of Commerce in 1912.<sup>17</sup> The idea of a unifying national commercial organization had been under consideration since the mid-1800s, but things did not really start coming together on that front until about the time the Columbia Commercial Club was founded. In 1905, the first successful national commercial association, the American Association of Commercial Executives, was founded, followed just a few years later by two large regional groups, the Southern and Central Associations of Commercial Secretaries. (The two regional groups merged in 1914.) The large groups all saw a need for what one source described as "a central sounding board" for businessmen from all parts of the country, and a "closer liaison between business and government."<sup>18</sup> Finally, at the National Commercial Conference which was held in Washington, D. C. in April of 1912, the U. S. Chamber was created, and immediately became the umbrella organization and political hub for local commercial groups throughout the country.

By the late 1920s, at least in Missouri, the name "Chamber of Commerce" was being favored by local organizations, and had also come to be associated with groups operating in larger towns. The Secretary of the Columbia Commercial Club found, for example, that there were only 33 "commercial clubs" in the state in 1927, compared to 107 "chambers." Of that group, the commercial clubs existed primarily in smaller communities, most with less than 5,000 inhabitants.<sup>19</sup> It was that research, paired with the desire to join the national organization, that led the Columbia group to vote for a name change in 1927. The vote carried 122 to 6, and the Columbia Chamber of Commerce continues in operation yet today.<sup>20</sup>

The Virginia building had many early ties with the Columbia Commercial Club. At least three of the four original owners, and one of the first tenants, were active in that organization, and the Commercial Club opened offices in the building shortly after it was completed. The Virginia Grill, an early and long-term tenant of the basement area, was the site for many Commercial Club meetings,

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<sup>16</sup> Sturges, pp. xi and 47.

<sup>17</sup> Earl O. Shreve, "The Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America," (New York: Newcomen Society, 1949) pp. 13-14.

<sup>18</sup> Shreve, p. 12.

<sup>19</sup> "Commercial Club to Vote on new Name," Columbia Missourian, Feb. 26, 1927, p. 1

<sup>20</sup> "122 Members Vote in Favor: Revision of Name," Columbia Missourian, March 3, 1927, p. 1

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and at least two of their large annual banquets. The earliest known photograph of the building, in fact, was published in the program for the 1913 banquet, with the title "Virginia Building: Home of the Columbia Commercial Club." (See photo 2.)

The company which formed to develop the land on South Ninth Street into a commercial property consisted of Sanford Conley Hunt, Sanford F. Conley, J. Alex Hudson, and T. C. Hall.<sup>21</sup> Of those men, at least three were founding members of the Commercial Club, and were active in the group at the time the Virginia Building was erected. In 1912, S. C. Hunt and J. A. Hudson were on the board of directors, and S. F. Conley was the vice-president.<sup>22</sup> (T. C. Hall, the only partner not known to have been active in the Commercial Club, was probably Thomas Calvin Hall, a resident of Moberly who built the Hall Theater across the street in 1916.<sup>23</sup>) The partners' Commercial Club connections no doubt helped them find retail tenants for the building as well. J. N. Taylor, who owned and operated the music shop which first occupied the largest ground floor retail space, was also a member of the board of directors in 1912.

Sanford Conley Hunt (1867-1934, vice president of the Club in 1912) had the strongest association with the property; the building was named after his daughter, Mrs. Virginia Robinson, and he and his family retained ownership of it into the 1960s.<sup>24</sup> Hunt was the son of a prominent Boone County farmer, and was active in the banking business most of his life. He was a co-founder of the Boone County Trust, and served for more than thirty years on that bank's board of directors.<sup>25</sup> Hunt was very active in community development; a memorial pamphlet published by the bank just after his death proclaimed that "his contribution to the development of every phase of Columbia will stand as a monument to his good citizenship."<sup>26</sup> He was also related to his business partner, Sanford F. Conley. Hunt's mother's maiden name was Mary Ann Conley.

Sanford F. Conley, Jr. was born in Columbia in 1871, and, with the exception of five years teaching in California, spent most of his life in Boone County. He was active in a number of civic

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<sup>21</sup> "\$150 a Front Foot," p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Columbia Commercial Club. "6<sup>th</sup> Annual Banquet: Program," (Columbia: Columbia Commercial Club, 1912.)

<sup>23</sup> Laura Sparks, "Columbia's Early Theater Architecture," UMC 1987, (Typescript in the Collections of the State Historical Society of Missouri.)

<sup>24</sup> "The Strollway Center," Columbia Missourian, March 31, 1996, p. 1, and the Sanford Conley Hunt Papers, Collection 3629, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri-Columbia.

<sup>25</sup> Boone County Trust Company, "Sanford Conley Hunt," (Pamphlet in the collections of the State Historical Society of Missouri.)

<sup>26</sup> "Sanford Conley Hunt 1867-1934," (Columbia: Boone County Trust Co., 1934.) p. 6.

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ventures, and spent many years on the Columbia Board of Education. He was also described in the local paper in 1914 as being "engaged in the real estate business."<sup>27</sup> A short history of the Commercial Club which was published in 1912 included S. F. Conley, and J. A. Hudson, in a list of the Club's founders, describing them as men who "conceived the idea of a local civic club that would have as its purpose the promotion of the material prosperity of Columbia."<sup>28</sup> Conley was actually S. F. Conley, Jr., although he was never referred to as such in contemporary newspapers or other printed media.

Sanford Conley, Sr. (1838-1890) had been a prominent businessman as well; his business ventures in town included banking and the founding the Boone County Milling and Elevator Company.<sup>29</sup> The mill occupied the property across the alley to the west of the Virginia Building from the late 1800s into the 1930s or later. The senior Conley was also the co-founder of the Edwards-Conley Brick and Tile Company in 1896. It is likely that Conley family connections with the brick and tile company influenced the choice to use the unusual gold glazed bricks on the public elevations of the Virginia Building.

J. Alex Hudson, a native of Macon, Missouri, was the very first president of the Commercial Club. Early in his business career, Hudson served as the editor of the Macon Times, a job he gave up to move to Columbia. Once in Columbia, he went into the telephone business, and is said to have "put in one of the best exchanges found anywhere." He served as president of the Columbia Telephone Company from before 1912 until his death in 1922, and his farm outside Columbia was frequently hailed as one of the most progressive in the region. He became well-known enough to merit a small editorial in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat in 1917, which the local paper reprinted under the headline "Editorial Praises J. A. Hudson."<sup>30</sup> Hudson no doubt had a major role in the Commercial Club's work to promote better roads in Columbia. He was appointed chairman of the National Old Trails Association in 1912, and was described in his obituary as having been "very active in the good roads campaign in Missouri."<sup>31</sup>

Hudson's role as co-founder and first president of the Commercial Club was formally recognized 1912, when portraits of Hudson and fellow former president E. W. Stephens were presented to the Club by friends and supporters. William Hirth, who presented the portrait of

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<sup>27</sup> "S. F. Conley's School Work," Columbia Missourian, February 10, 1914, p. 4, and the Columbia Brick and Tile Company Papers. Collection 3854, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri-Columbia.

<sup>28</sup> "Six Years of City Building," University Missourian, February 2, 1912, p. 1.

<sup>29</sup> Walter Williams, ed., History of Northeast Missouri, Vol II. (New York and Chicago: Lewis Publ. Co, 1913.)

<sup>30</sup> "Editorial Praises J. A. Hudson," Columbia Missourian, August 10, 1917, p.2.

<sup>31</sup> "J. A. Hudson Dead at Kirksville, Mo.," Jefferson City Democrat Tribune, July 24, 1922, p. 1., and University Missourian, May 5, 1912, p. 1.

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Hudson, gave him great credit for getting the organization started. In his words "Seven or eight years ago, the men here know little of the proper workings of such a club...it was Colonel Hudson who gave it strength."<sup>32</sup> The portraits were happily accepted by then-president N. Todd Gentry, who proclaimed that "it is indeed appropriate on the occasion of moving into our new quarters" that the portraits be given to the club. The paper noted that they would be used as decorations for "the new Commercial Club rooms in the basement of the Virginia Building."<sup>33</sup>

That presentation was made at a promotional dinner given by the Club to kick off their "Buy-in Columbia" campaign. That dinner, like many other meetings and formal affairs hosted by the club in the early 1910s, was held in the Virginia Grill. The Virginia Grill was the first of several restaurants to be located in the Virginia Building. The Grill, which was sometimes also referred to as a "Tea Room," was apparently quite spacious. One newspaper account noted that 234 people were served there for the Commercial Club's Annual Banquet in 1914.<sup>34</sup>

The building owners' good standing in the business community, combined with the modern design and large size of the Virginia Building, apparently made it a location of choice for established business when it was completed in 1911. Most of the first tenants there moved to the Virginia Building from other downtown locations. Early tenants represented a mix of retail and other business establishments; the ground floor storefront units housed retail operations, while the basement and second floor were used for offices and other business uses. Notable original tenants included the John N. Taylor Music Company, Booche's Billiards Hall, and the Daily Brothers Tailors, all of which were established businesses when they moved to the South Ninth Street location.

The largest storefront on the ground floor was also one of the first to be occupied. That space became home to the Taylor Music Company late in March of 1911.<sup>35</sup> (The 1913 photo of the building shows one of Taylor's crated pianos sitting in front of his shop. See Photo 2.) Taylor was on the Commercial Club board of directors with Hunt and his partners at the time, and it is even possible that the north corner retail space was designed especially for him. Taylor moved only a short distance; his "Moving Sale" ad in the local paper a week before the move listed the shop address as 18 S. Ninth St, just a block north of the new building. The music store remained in that location through 1927, and apparently prospered. Sanborn maps show that by 1925, Taylor had expanded southward, to occupy at least two of the original storefronts.

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<sup>32</sup> "Gets Two Pictures," University Missourian, January 3, 1912, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> It is not clear just what those new rooms were used for, as other advertisements over the years note that the offices of the Club were in a building on Broadway.

<sup>34</sup> "Businessmen Held Strongest Chain of Fealty to Columbia," University Missourian, Feb. 27, 1914, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup> "Taylor Music House Moving," Columbia Herald, March 31, 1911, p. 1.

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Booche's Billiards Hall, which had also moved to the building from another downtown location, occupied the northern half of the second floor for at least twenty years. The 1913 photo of the building shows a sign that reads "Booches" outside the northernmost set of second floor windows on the facade of the building. It was the only attached sign on the building. Booche's is the only original tenant of the Virginia Building which is still in business in Columbia. The billiard business moved from the Virginia Building to a space directly across the street in the early 1930s, and it remains in business at that location today.

The first tenant for one of the center storefronts was the Daily Brother's Tailoring Company, which had been in business in Columbia since 1905. A profile of the business which was written in 1915 explained that the tailoring shop had opened when Wallace E. and Herley S. Daily, described as "farmer boys, from near Brunswick," came to Columbia to attend the University. The boys started the tailoring shop to pay their way through school, and over the years, supported two other Daily brothers in their college careers. The firm was doing quite well in 1915, they had seven employees, annual sales of \$16,000, and 3000 square feet of shop space.<sup>36</sup>

In the late 1920s, the Taylor Music company was replaced by what was to become the Virginia Building's largest retail tenant. Montgomery Ward took over the north corner storefront early in 1928, and remained in the building for the next three decades. Business was apparently good, as they steadily expanded into other parts of the building. By the early 1950s, Montgomery Ward occupied half of the ground floor, and almost all of the basement and the second floor.<sup>37</sup>

The opening of the Columbia Wards store happened very early in that company's venture into retail sales. Although Wards had been in the catalogue business since 1872, the company did not expand into retail sales until the late 1920s. The first Wards retail store ever opened in Kansas in 1926, and the company did not initiate a serious retail program until 1928, the same year they opened the store in Columbia.<sup>38</sup>

Montgomery Ward and Co. was founded by Aaron Montgomery Ward in 1872. Ward has been credited with originating the mail order catalogue business in America. In 1946, the Grolier Club of New York included a Wards catalogue in their list of 100 books chosen for their influence on American life, and praised Ward for coming up with "the concept, original to America, of direct selling by mail,

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<sup>36</sup> Columbia Herald-Statesman, "Centennial Souvenir Issue," (Columbia, MO: Columbia Herald-Statesman, 1915) p 32.

<sup>37</sup> A 1952 floorplan sketch of the store is part of the Sanford Conley Hunt Papers, (Collection 3629, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri-Columbia) File 109.

<sup>38</sup> Frank B. Latham, 1872-1972: A Century of Serving Consumers, The Story of Montgomery Ward, (Chicago: Montgomery Ward and Co, Inc., 1972.) pp 70-71.

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for cash.”<sup>39</sup>

Ward began his business career selling goods manufactured in Chicago to rural country stores, traveling by train and wagon to small towns for his sales calls. Seeing the limited selection and high prices offer to rural shoppers inspired him to set up a system by which rural residents could buy merchandise directly from big-city distributors, a move which eliminated various middle-men and allowed him to sell at low prices. The concept was an immediate hit, and the company grew by leaps and bounds into the twentieth century. By 1913, their assets were worth more than 13 million dollars.<sup>40</sup>

The mail order business was slowing down by the 1920s, however, as good roads and the growing use of the automobile made rural residents much more mobile, a change which “caused small towns to blossom with new and bigger stores.”<sup>41</sup> Increasingly, customers wanted to see what they were buying, and most also wanted to get the merchandise immediately, instead of waiting for a shipment. In 1926, Wards executives tried to address that issue by opening “display stores,” where customers could see examples of merchandise available by catalogue, but were still required to wait for the items they wanted to be shipped to them. A company history noted that many visitors to the display stores “grumbled because they could see and buy but not take home their purchases.”<sup>42</sup>

The same company history noted that, even with that type of customer feedback, “Wards did jump into retailing, but was pushed by a combative carpenter who refused to take ‘no’ for an answer.”<sup>43</sup> In late 1926, soon after the company opened a display store in Plymouth, Indiana, the carpenter in question found a saw on display that he needed, and stubbornly refused to wait for the company to mail him one like it, insisting instead on buying the display model. The manager finally relented, and when word got around town, the store was mobbed with others who wanted cash and carry sales. The store sold out of display merchandise in a matter of days, and Montgomery Ward and Co. was in the retail business.

The board of directors of Montgomery Ward and Co. soon after approved “a cautious expansion” into the retail market. In 1928, they set up a program which created three types of retail stores. Small town display units, called “chain stores,” had limited inventory. The second group, “attached stores” were former factory outlets next to the Wards plants. The attached stores had a larger inventory that did the chain stores. The stores in the third category, “detached stores” were the

<sup>39</sup> Grolier Club, quoted in Latham, p. 2.

<sup>40</sup> Latham, pp. 3. and 50.

<sup>41</sup> Latham, p. 66.

<sup>42</sup> Latham, p. 70.

<sup>43</sup> Latham p. 71.

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largest, serving "bigger communities with a broader assortment of goods."<sup>44</sup>

The Wards store in the Virginia Building was in the latter category, and was one of 212 such stores to open across the country that year. The Columbia store must have opened right after the expansion program was approved, as Montgomery Ward and Co. was listed as a tenant of the Virginia Building in a Columbia phone book published in June of 1928.

The Columbia store is notable as one of the first Montgomery Ward and Co. retail outlets anywhere in Missouri, and the first to locate in a major town outside of Kansas City or St. Louis. A review of 1928 and 1929 city directories for six of the largest cities in the state revealed that only Kansas City and Columbia had Montgomery Ward and Co. department stores by 1929. (There had been a Wards shipping facility in Kansas City since 1904.) The scarcity of Wards stores in larger towns reflects the company's early hesitancy to stray far from their rural clients. As the company history explained, "Wards took the middle road. Not believing that the company was ready yet to challenge the well-established department stores in big cities, Wards stayed in the small towns and middle-sized cities."<sup>45</sup> They did continue to expand into the retail market however, and by 1929 there were just over 500 Montgomery Ward retail stores in America. In 1930, Montgomery Ward's retail sales took a permanent lead over their mail-order income.

At the time the Wards store opened in Columbia, there was only one other national department store in town, J. C. Penny and Co., which had been open less than 2 years. Columbia shoppers had not been without a department store before that, however. The first downtown department store in Columbia, Fredendall's, opened in 1895. A profile of that business which was published in 1915 proclaimed that, with the founding of Fredendall's "Columbia saw the advent of the modern department store among her biggest business enterprises."<sup>46</sup> That store was for many years located just up the street from the site of the Virginia Building, at 15-21 South Ninth Street, and remained in business until at least 1940, by which time it had moved to a building on Broadway. Other department stores of note from that time period include the New York Store, which had a store on North Eighth Street for at least 25 years.<sup>47</sup>

The Virginia building is a very rare survivor from the days of downtown department stores, and may be the only intact historic department store building left in Columbia today. Of the four department store locations listed in the 1940 City directory, for example, only the Virginia building

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<sup>44</sup> Latham, p. 73.

<sup>45</sup> Latham, p. 72.

<sup>46</sup> "Centennial Souvenir Issue," p. 44.

<sup>47</sup> Department Store locations and dates of operation are based upon review of Columbia City Directories, 1909-1940.

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survives. Two of those other early store sites are now occupied by modern bank buildings, and the other location now hosts a one-story building which is either a newer building, or just the ground floor of the original three-story building.

The Wards store remained in operation in the Virginia Building until 1961. By that time, ownership of the building had transferred to S. C. Hunt's daughter, Miss Mary Francis Hunt. Her personal papers have survived, and show that her relationship with Montgomery Ward was deteriorating by the mid-1950s.<sup>48</sup> In one instance she vacated space in the basement level of the building, apparently at their request, then waited three years for them to take it over and begin paying rent on it. She was also shopping for new tenants before they left; her file includes a polite decline from Macy's in Kansas City which is dated a year before the letter from Wards notifying her that they would be moving to a spot which offered more direct access and dedicated parking.

Not long after Wards left, the building was sold to a group of investors who undertook the extensive remodeling project. They were following national trends, and attempted to turn the building into a "mini-mall." Although the slipcover treatment used at that time resulted in a big change in appearance, much original fabric remained beneath the new materials. The recent rehabilitation reversed most of those 1960s changes, and the building today looks as it did when the Commercial Cub was meeting in the Virginia Grill.

The Virginia building is an important survivor from the days when the downtown area was the retail heart of the community. When new, it was strongly associated with a civic organization which had an immense impact upon the commercial development of the town, and later, it became home to one of the first urban Montgomery Ward and Co. retail stores in the state of Missouri. The Wards store was one of the most prominent downtown department stores ever to operate in Columbia. The building today looks and functions much as it did when the Columbia Commercial Club called it "home," and it continues to reflect its long commercial history. △

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<sup>48</sup> Her papers are part of the Sanford Conley Hunt Papers.

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### Appendix: Chronology

1895 Fredenhall's Department store founded, "Columbia saw the advent of the modern department store among her biggest business enterprises."

1906 Columbia Commercial Club is founded. The first president was J. Alex. Hudson and the first secy was Ira T. G. Stone.

1910, late March. Dr. G. A. Bradford sells his property to S.F. Conley, S.C. Hunt, J.A. Hudson, T. C. Hall, for \$10,870. They were planning a "handsome block of buildings, four or five stories high."

**1911 Building completed.** One of first tenants was the J. N. Taylor Music Company, who moved in late March of 1911. J. N. Taylor was a member of the Columbia Commercial Club, as were original owners S. C. Hunt, S. F. Conley, and J. A. Hudson.

1912 The Columbia Commercial Club moves into offices in the basement of the Virginia Building.

1913 A photo of the building is published in the program for the Columbia Commercial Club's 7<sup>th</sup> annual banquet, which like the 6<sup>th</sup> annual, was held in the Virginia Grill. The photo caption reads "Virginia Building: Home of the Columbia Commercial Club".

#### 1915 Tenants, per City Directory

101 John N. Taylor

103 Hess Millinery

105 Daily Bros.

107 VA Bldg Entrance

107 Basement Col. Herald Statesman

107a American College of Dressmaking

107a Booches Billiard Parlors

107a The Missouri Farmer

107a Christian Science Society

109 Al Ferguson

111 Joe Janousek

1925 Sanborn. Two store spaces for Taylor Music, Drug Store in 109. Poolhall second, Printing and cafeteria basement.

1926 Montgomery Ward's first freestanding retail store anywhere opens in Plymouth, Indiana.

1927 Columbia Commercial Club changes its name to the Columbia Chamber of Commerce.

The Columbia Directory shows that Taylor Music is still in the north three storefronts of the Virginia building.

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Department stores in Columbia :  
Boswell Dry Goods, 1007-09 E. Bdwy  
New York Store, 8-10 N. 8<sup>th</sup>  
Penny, J.C. Co., 708-10 E. Bdwy  
Wolff-Berger Co. 818 E. Bdwy

**1928** Wards board of directors approves a cautious expansion into retail, with a goal of opening 212 "detached stores", as well as ten larger "department stores", that year. This store was called a department store in the directory, but was probably what Wards considered to be a detached store.  
→ **June Columbia Telephone Directory includes a listing for Montgomery Ward and Co., in the part of the Virginia Building formerly occupied by the Taylor Music Co.**

Directory department store listings for other cities:

1925 Kansas City, no Wards

1926 KC, yes, had a huge store there soon, big ad in the 1928 directory

1928-29 Kansas City, yes, had a huge store and prominent ad in the directory.

Neither St. Louis, Springfield, Sedalia, Marshall nor St. Joseph had Montgomery Ward department stores.

1936 Tenants, per City Directory

101-105 *Montgomery Ward & Co.*

107 *VA Café*

107-109B *Herald Statesman Pub Co.*

107A *Rehabilitation Finance Division*

109 *Mid-State Dist. Co*

111 *Tiger Electric*

**1940** Montgomery Ward leases the entire building, stays there until 1961.

City Directory has two Department store categories, one of which is just "5c to \$1."

Regular Dept. Stores are:

Fredendall's 716-18 E. Broadway (Now a modern bank. Note: Fredendall's was originally in a three-story building on 9<sup>th</sup> street; that space now holds a one story building of indeterminate age.)

New York on 8<sup>th</sup> (Now a modern bank.)

Montgomery Ward in VA bldg.

J.C. Penny 708-10 Broadway (Now a modern bank.)

**1961** Montgomery Ward moves their operations to another building in the downtown area, citing a need for more direct access and parking.

**1965, February 1st.** Building sold to Strollway Investors, Inc. and remodeled to the Strollway Center.

**2000-2001** The remodeling is reversed and the building is restored to its original appearance. △

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### Verbal Boundary Description

All of Lot One Hundred Three (103) and the east nineteen feet of Lot One Hundred Four (104) in the Original Town of Columbia, Missouri. 111 South Ninth Street in the City of Columbia, Boone County, Missouri.

### Boundary Justification

The current boundaries encompass all of the land associated with the building.

### Photographs

The following information is the same for all photographs, except Photo 2:

Virginia Building  
111 South Ninth Street, Columbia  
Boone County, Missouri  
Debbie Sheals  
August, 2001  
Negatives on file with Debbie Sheals, 406 West Broadway, Columbia MO 65203

Photo 2: From the collections of the State Historical Society of Missouri. The photo was reprinted by the Historical Society from: Columbia Commercial Club, "7<sup>th</sup> Annual Banquet Program," Columbia, MO: Columbia Commercial Club, 1913, also in their collections.

### List of Photographs

1. Street elevations, the north and east walls.
2. Historic Photo, taken ca. 1913, same view as #1.
3. Streetscape, looking north on Ninth Street
4. Southeast corner, from Ninth Street.
5. Detail of entrance bay, facade (east elevation.)
6. Northwest corner, from Cherry Street.
7. Southwest corner, rear wall, from the south alley.
8. Northernmost store space, looking east to Ninth Street.
9. Northernmost store space, detail of support column and ornamental ceiling.
10. Central store spaces, detail of different ceiling panel patterns.
11. Basement, southern end, looking west; columns and ceiling sheathing.



69 MI. TO U.S. 65  
BOONEVILLE INTERCHANGE IN MI.

VIRGINIA  
BUILDING  
111 S. 9<sup>TH</sup> ST.  
Columbia, Boone Co.  
Missouri  
TM: 15/558260/4311260

5730'  
412'  
411'

2561 IV NW  
(HUNTSDALE)



