

# September 9, 2024

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## NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION REVIEW HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT

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ADDRESS:           **530 Walnut Street**  
PARCELS:           078-0001-0005; 078-0001-0006  
COMMUNITY:       Downtown  
REPORT DATE:      August 16, 2024  
STAFF REVIEW:     Douglas Owen, Urban Conservator

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### **Summary of National Register Nomination:**

The Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board (OHSPAB) will be considering a National Register Historic District nomination for the property at 530 Walnut Street (Atlas National Bank Building) in the Downtown neighborhood at their September 20, 2024 meeting. As a Certified Local Government (CLG), the City of Cincinnati is invited to submit a letter of support or opposition to the proposed nomination.

The proposed building is being nominated under Criteria A and C for its association with the development of banking in Cincinnati and its Italian Renaissance Revival architecture. The Period of Significance is 1923 to 1971, which includes its original construction and subsequent renovations during the bank's ownership and occupancy.

Banking in Cincinnati began in 1803 with a charter granted to the Miami Exporting Company to serve as a bank and river boat builder and operator. By 1880, the year the Atlas National Bank was founded, Cincinnati had six national banks, five state banks, one savings bank, eight private banks and two "particularized institutions" related to banking. All the banking institutions in the city were located along Third Street. In 1895, the Atlas Bank became the first financial institution to move from the Third Street corridor, purchasing a building on Walnut Street at its current location. By 1919, bank president Albert Lackman, who was also the president of the Herman Lackman Brewing Company, purchased the three-story building to the north of their existing building with plans to design a new 10-story skyscraper. The existing buildings were demolished and in 1924 the new Atlas Bank Building, designed by the local architectural firm of Tietig & Lee, held its Open House. The Atlas National Bank would continue to operate from the building until 1954 when it was purchased by First National Bank of Cincinnati. First National maintained a branch in the building until the building was sold to the Western & Southern Life Insurance Company in 1971. Western & Southern maintained a lease for the branch until 1981 when it was officially closed.

The building's architecture is significant as an example of an early-twentieth century high-rise bank building downtown designed by the firm of Tietig & Lee. Early skyscrapers in Cincinnati developed between 1903-1930, beginning with Daniel Burnham's Union Savings Bank at 36 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, and were primarily built by financial institutions, gradually transforming the area between 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets from a low-scale mixed commercial and

residential district to a commercial core of skyscrapers surrounding Fountain Square. Following a slowdown in construction during WWI, six new skyscrapers were built in the 1920s, with the Atlas National Bank building being the only downtown bank high-rise built in this decade. The building is one of only two surviving high-rise buildings built by the prominent local architectural firm of Tietig & Lee and reflects the evolution of an Italian Renaissance building modernized in 1968 in response to trends in bank architecture. The 1960s renovations primarily included interior alterations, though some work was also done to the exterior, specifically the storefront and cornice alterations. These changes were in response to the new wave of skyscraper construction that began in the 1960s. Modernization efforts were intended to help the bank compete with new modern high-rise buildings focusing on large open spaces and glass and steel construction.

The property retains good historic integrity, including location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and association. Staff's review finds that the building meets eligibility requirements under Criteria A and C for its association with the banking industry in Cincinnati and its Italian Renaissance Revival architecture.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends the Historic Conservation Board take the following action:

- I. **APPROVE** the submission of a Letter of Support to the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board for the inclusion of the proposed Atlas National Bank Building.
- II. **FINDING:**
  - a. That the application has demonstrated by credible evidence that the subject property meets Criterion A for the evolution of banking in Cincinnati and Criterion C for skyscraper construction in Cincinnati's central business district in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
  - b. The property demonstrates a sufficient level of historic integrity.

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

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Atlas National Bank Building

Other names/site number: Atlas Bank Building, Atlas Building

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

## 2. Location

Street & number: 530 Walnut Street

City or town: Cincinnati State: OH County: Hamilton

Not For Publication:

Vicinity:

## 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

    national          statewide          local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

    A          B          C          D

<p>_____</p> <p><b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	<p>_____</p> <p><b>Date</b></p>
<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p><b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Title :</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object



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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Italian Renaissance

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: STONE/Limestone; BRICK; METAL

## Narrative Description

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### Summary Paragraph

Constructed in 1923-24, the Atlas National Bank Building is a ten-story former bank/office building at 530 Walnut Street, east of Fountain Square in downtown Cincinnati. Rectangular in plan, the building has a reinforced concrete frame, floors, and roof. Typical of the Italian Renaissance style, the smooth limestone street elevations feature a two-story base with storefronts, a six-story shaft, and a two-story “capital” with colossal Corinthian pilasters and decorative spandrels. On the interior, the northernmost bay is devoted to a corridor, elevators, stairway, and restrooms. The first floor retains a former two-level banking hall, now a coffee shop, with marble-clad, square columns, a polished marble floor, and coffered plaster ceiling. Other elements reflecting the building’s design as a bank are a marble stairway linking the banking hall to the basement and bank vault located there. The upper floors are mostly open-plan office space. The building displays significant integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association as a 1920s urban bank building.

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### Narrative Description

The Atlas National Bank Building is a ten-story office building with a four-bay-wide facade facing west on Walnut Street east of Fountain Square (Photos 1-5, Figure 1). It was built in stages—first the base of the building consisting of a two-story bank was completed and opened in 1923; then the upper floors 3 through 10 were added and occupied by the end of 1924.

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The five-bay south elevation abuts Government Place, while the other two elevations abut another building (Figure 2). Rectangular in plan, the Atlas Building has a reinforced concrete frame, floors, and roof, and brick and tile interior walls. The exterior is wrapped in a smooth Bedford limestone façade articulated with a two-story base with two entrances, storefronts (Photos 2,6,7,8), a six-story shaft and a two-story section at the top with colossal Corinthian pilasters dividing the windows (Photo 5).

When originally built, the building's style was described as Italian Renaissance. Distinctive features of that style, besides the limestone facing and three-part composition mimicking a classical column, include decorative molded bronze spandrels with garlands and putti above the storefronts (Photos 6-10), urns, circular shields, and egg-and-dart molding in the cast-stone mullions at the second floor (Photo 9), a denticulated cornice at the eighth floor, and two-story Corinthian pilasters at the top two floors, with circular shields in the spandrels (Photo 5).

The interior plan is divided by columns into four longitudinal bays (Figures 3-8). The northernmost bay is occupied by the main lobby for access to the upper floors, which includes a corridor, elevator bank (Photo 11), restrooms, mail chute (Photo 12), and secondary rear exit stair (Photo 13). The main lobby has an original marble floor, vertical stained wood slat acoustical panels on the walls, a denticulated wood cornice and plaster ceiling. The first floor has two entrances, one on the north (Photo 7), for access to the upper floors, and one on the south (Photo 8), for access to the former two-level banking hall, now occupied by a coffee shop (Photos 14-18). The former banking hall has exposed square columns, a polished marble floor and painted coffered plaster ceiling. A monumental marble stair with a heavy balustrade (Photos 19,20), also a Renaissance feature, is located between the two entrances and leads from the former banking hall to the bank vault in the basement. The basement vault lobby has a marble-tile floor, marble walls with a dentil cornice mold, and a painted plaster ceiling. The vault retains its geometric steel surround and heavy steel door. From the southern entrance foyer into the banking hall, a narrow, enclosed stair with marble treads, risers and wainscot leads to the mezzanine. On the upper floors, including the mezzanine, the elevators are in their original location, but the lobbies have all been renovated with wood-and-glass or gypsum-board partitions. Space not devoted to circulation on these floors is now mostly open-plan office space. (Photos 24-25) The exit stairway to the east of the elevators has plaster walls, concrete landings, and a steel stair with a wood handrailing dating from original construction (Photo 13).

### **Setting**

The building is in an urban setting in downtown Cincinnati. It is built to the sidewalk on Walnut Street, at the corner of Government Place (previously Patterson Alley), an alley that runs east-west between the south elevation of the Atlas Building and the rear (north) elevation of the US Post Office & Courthouse. The Atlas Building is adjoined on the north side by the 580 Building and on the east (rear) by an airshaft. Directly to the west is Fountain Square, the central hub of downtown, bounded by Fifth, Sixth, Vine, and Walnut streets. The Atlas Building's relationship to its setting is unchanged except for a skywalk at the second-floor level that spans Walnut Street and continues in the alley on the south side of the building before entering the 580 Building. The

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skywalk abuts the Atlas National Bank Building but has no public access into the building, except for a narrow corridor and doorway to the rear (east side) of the second floor.

### **Building Evolution - Alterations**

Articles from 1949-1950 convey that the banking hall was widened, and the building modernized with “an architecturally designed front, automatic doors, renovated interior” and air conditioning. A 1949 article reported that the “main banking room of the Atlas National Bank will be completely remodeled, and the entrance will be given a new façade at an estimated cost of \$150,000.” The bookkeeping and accounting departments were moved to the mezzanine floor, which was closed off from the banking hall. The main lobby was extended six feet in length and 5½ feet in width.<sup>1</sup>

A feature in the *Times-Star* dated 7/5/1950 showed the completed banking hall, with a mural on the east wall copied from the famous panoramic daguerreotype of the Cincinnati riverfront in 1840 from the collection of the public library (Figures 15,16).<sup>2</sup> The renovation included new exterior doors that opened automatically. Tellers’ cages lined the north and east walls. Officers’ desks were on the south side of the lobby.<sup>3</sup>

A 1968 renovation by the First National Bank made several changes to the exterior (Figure 17) to give it a more modern look, thereby making it competitive with new skyscrapers being constructed in the downtown. Exterior alterations included the removal of the heavy copper cornice and modernization of the limestone at the base that streamlined the pilasters and eliminated the cornice above the second floor. A new granite base was applied, and new glass and stainless-steel entrance doors and storefronts were installed.

Sometime between 1971 and 1987, the skywalk was built in the alley abutting the building on the south side. In 1974, a mural was painted on the rear (east) wall of the building. The mural was designed by Wayne C. Dunn, an architect with Western-Southern Life Insurance and painted by Holthaus Signs and Stegman Brothers, both Cincinnati firms.<sup>4</sup> However, this mural seems to have weathered off the building entirely. The 3/3 steel windows were replaced with aluminum windows in the 2010s, but they match the 3/3 configuration of the original steel windows. A decorative metal gate leading to the vault was removed at an unknown date.

530 Walnut LLC, a subsidiary of Urban Sites, minimally renovated the building in 2021. The work included new aluminum storefronts and exterior doors with a brass finish and a new marquee above the former banking hall entrance with the name “Atlas Building” in black dimensional metal letters. Existing windows and spandrels at the mezzanine and second floor were painted to match the brass-finished doors. On the interior, the lobby was renovated with vertical stained wood slat acoustical panels on the walls and new lighting. The banking hall was converted to a coffee shop, while retaining the historic columns, coffered ceiling, and marble

<sup>1</sup> “Atlas Bank to Spend \$150,000 on Improvements,” *Times-Star*, 1/11/1949, Scrapbook, p8.

<sup>2</sup> This mural was painted over or removed at an unknown date prior to 2021.

<sup>3</sup> (Scrapbook, p 9. Bernard Boer, Business News, TS, 7/5/1950.)

<sup>4</sup> “Slow Worker: *Cincinnati Post*, 9/5/1974, Scrapbook, Cincinnati History Library & Archive.

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floor. The volume of the space was slightly reduced by enclosing the teller's cage area on the east side to create a meeting room. A new mural and banquettes were installed on the new east wall (Photo 14), and an oval banquettes was inserted on the north side of the space. Doorways from the banking hall to the elevator lobby and the stairway to the basement were widened. The 1950-era mezzanine walls overlooking the banking hall were covered with vertical stained wood slat acoustical panels and mirrored glass (Photo 21). Other work in the building included fresh paint, new wood baseboards, refurbished restrooms, and new acoustic tile ceilings in the elevator lobbies and office spaces (Photos 21-25).<sup>5</sup>

### Historic Integrity

The building retains its historic footprint, rectangular shape, and original volume. The volumes of the original lobby and the two-story banking hall have been preserved. The layout of the office floors 2 through 10 has been altered over the years as various tenants adapted spaces for their use.

Historic materials remain throughout the building. On the exterior, the street elevations retain smooth Bedford limestone facing; decorative molded spandrels with garlands and putti above the storefronts; urns, shields, and egg-and-dart molding in the cast-stone mullions at the second floor; a denticulated cornice at the eighth floor; and two-story Corinthian pilasters at the top two floors, with circular shields in the spandrels. Modernization of the exterior in 1968, including removal of the heavy copper cornice, streamlining the masonry above the second floor, and installing a new granite base and stainless-steel doors reflect the bank's need for an updated image and are within the Period of Significance.

Inside, the former two-story banking hall is mostly intact (now a coffee shop). While the teller counters have been removed and the space shortened one bay on the east side, the room retains marble-clad square columns, polished marble floor, and coffered plaster ceiling. The elevators remain in their original locations and three original exit stairs are intact. A grand marble staircase connects the former banking hall with the vault in the basement. In the sub-basement, the original stone foundation is exposed, along with massive reinforced concrete columns and footers. A brass letter box and mail chute remain. The steel exit stair, though repainted, is original from the 1920s.

The building retains sufficient integrity to represent its significance as an early to mid-twentieth-century bank building reflecting the period of 1923 through 1971. Its location is the same, and its setting is similar. All the abutting buildings around the Atlas National Bank Building have been replaced, but they are built to the sidewalk in a continued urban setting. In terms of design, materials, and workmanship, the building reflects an Italian Renaissance exterior that was modernized for an evolving financial institution. The skywalk added in the 1970s affected only the south side elevation on the second floor and has been painted to match the beige color of the

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<sup>5</sup> The current mural was a stock image on wallpaper applied in three sections.

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limestone. The replacement windows, with three-over-three anodized aluminum sashes, do not substantially alter the appearance of the façade because they fill the original openings, match the original configuration and are a dark color. The building also retains the feeling and association of a downtown office building built and occupied by a bank for nearly fifty years.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

### Criteria Considerations

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

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

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

**Period of Significance**

1923-1971

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

**Significant Dates**

1923, 1924, 1954, 1968

1971

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

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

**Cultural Affiliation**

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

**Architect/Builder**

Tietig & Lee

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

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### Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

Built in 1923-24, the Atlas National Bank Building is significant under Criterion A at the local level in the area of Commerce for its association with the development of banking in Cincinnati. The building is also significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an example of an early-twentieth century high-rise bank building in downtown Cincinnati and for its design by the firm of Tietig & Lee. The Atlas Building is one of only two high-rise buildings by the firm. The Period of Significance is 1923 to 1971. This includes the years from initial completion to the year when the building passed out of bank ownership. The building retains sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance as an urban bank building built during the early to mid-twentieth century.

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### Narrative Statement of Significance

#### Criterion A

##### Commerce: Banking in Cincinnati

Completed in 1924, the Atlas National Bank Building is significant under Criterion A at the local level in the area of Commerce for its association with the development of banking in Cincinnati. The history of Cincinnati's banking industry through 1938 was documented in *They Built a City: 150 Years of Industrial Cincinnati* by the Ohio Federal Writer's Project. Cincinnati's first bank was chartered in 1803, the same year that Ohio became a state and a year after Cincinnati was incorporated. The first general assembly of the new State of Ohio gave a 40-year charter to the Miami Exporting Company to serve as a bank and build and operate river boats—probably with the idea that, should the shipping business go under, the capital could then be used in banking. Capital was hard to get. Four years after its charter, the Miami Exporting Company had paid-in capital of \$150,000, part of which was cash, the rest produce and merchandise. The company soon quit the shipping business and went fully into banking.

As Cincinnati grew to more than 2,500 people in 1810, more banks were needed. The Farmers' and Mechanics' Bank was formed in 1811, with Nicholas Longworth as secretary. Samuel Vance, one of the incorporators of the Miami Exporting Company was named its first cashier. The Bank of Cincinnati, with Lot Pugh as cashier, opened in 1814. The first private bank west of the Alleghenies came in 1816 when John H. Piatt and Company established a banking house on Lower Market Street, east of Main Street.

In 1817, the Second Bank of the United States opened on the east side of Main Street between Third and Fourth Streets. Among its directors were Jacob Burnet, John H. Piatt, William Henry Harrison, Martin Baum of the Miami Exporting company, and Daniel Drake, historian. With its

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opening, some specie (coinage) was brought into the community, and in July of the same year other banks resumed specie payments.

Financial panics and problems occurred periodically (in 1819, 1837, 1841-42 and 1857), sometimes erupting in violence when creditors could not recover their claims in coinage, as happened in 1842. A long depression began in 1857 that lingered through the Civil War.

In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln signed the National Bank Act, which implemented regulations governing banking and credit to make banks more stable. The Act also established national banks throughout the country, including four in Cincinnati--the First National Bank, with capitalization of \$1,000,000; the Second National Bank, with capital stock of \$200,000; Third National, with \$500,000; and Fourth National, also with \$500,000.<sup>6</sup> Cincinnatians supported the new banking laws, and every bank in the city agreed to form a Cincinnati Clearing House Association to facilitate collections.

A financial depression in 1873 was precipitated in September by the suspension in New York of the banking firm of Jay Cooke & Company. Widespread hoarding of currency threatened the stability of the banking system. In response, the Cincinnati Clearing House followed the lead of the similar New York body and passed resolutions restricting members from paying out large amounts of currency except in the case of payrolls. It was several years before business recovered and local trade was paltry until 1877.<sup>7</sup>

In 1880 Cincinnati had six national banks, five state banks, one savings bank, eight private banks, and two "particularized institutions—the Real Estate Bank and the Safe Deposit Company. Failure of the Fidelity National Bank in June 1887 because of unfortunate loans on wheat and merchandise disturbed local trade and resulted in considerable loss to stockholders."<sup>8</sup> This was the year the Atlas National Bank was founded.

Another panic occurred in 1893 due to general overexpansion in business. Stores were overstocked and credit inflated but Cincinnati banks and industrial concerns were able to survive without extreme hardship, including the Atlas National Bank.

In 1900, Cincinnati had thirteen national banks, one savings society, one private bank, two trust companies, and five state banks. In 1907, a "money panic," arising from hoarding, swept the country. The Cincinnati Clearing House Association arranged for the issuance of cashier's checks by its fourteen member banks, in denominations of two, five, ten, and twenty dollars, payable through the Clearing House. The first scrip appeared in Cincinnati on November 4.

Merchants cooperated by advertising that they would accept scrip for purchase. Because the scrip passed freely as currency, many industrial firms met their payrolls by issuing the cashier's

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<sup>6</sup> Ohio Federal Writers' Project, *They Built a City: 150 Years of Industrial Cincinnati*, 63..

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 64.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

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checks. Within a few weeks, when more actual currency was to be had, the Clearing House called for retirement of 25 percent of the issue.

In June 1908, the Fifth and Third National Banks were consolidated as the Fifth-Third National Bank, with capital of \$2,500,000. In November, Fifth-Third absorbed the American National Bank, increasing the capital to \$2.7 million. S. Kuhn & Sons, Cincinnati's last private bank, was absorbed by Fifth-Third in 1910. Though much smaller than Fifth-Third, Atlas National Bank was described as "one of the solid banking houses of Cincinnati," with capital of \$400,000; its surplus and profits were \$750,000 in 1914.<sup>9</sup>

The Atlas National Bank was among six smaller downtown Cincinnati banks, including the Guardian Bank and Savings Company, 117 East Sixth Street; Southern Ohio Savings Bank and Trust Company, organized in 1903, 515 Main Street; Columbia Bank and Savings Company, established in 1902 as the Helvetia Savings and Banking Company, 929 Vine Street; Lincoln National Bank, chartered in 1881, Fourth and Vine streets; and Peoples Bank and Savings Company, 1906, Fourth and Elm Streets. There were also a few small banks, with Cincinnatians as directors, in the county outside the Cincinnati corporate limits in places such as Westwood and Northside.<sup>10</sup>

Records of the Cincinnati Clearing House Association show the growth of banking in Cincinnati. Clearings in 1887 were \$562 million; in 1907, \$1.36 billion; in 1927, \$2.03 billion; in 1929, \$3.9 billion. By 1937, clearings were at \$3.229 billion, reflecting a recovery from the stock market crash, but not to the level in 1929. In 1931, the Williams Cincinnati Directory listed 30 banks, but by 1938, there were 15, and by 1954, there were 12. This most likely reflects the consolidations that took place during and after the Great Depression. 1954 was the year that Atlas National Bank was acquired by First National Bank after 67 years in business, proving its durability.<sup>11</sup>

### Atlas National Bank history

The Atlas National Bank was organized in March 1887 and initially located at the corner of Ninth and Vine streets. It was reorganized in January 1891 and moved to the northwest corner of Third and Walnut streets. The business was described in 1895 as doing general banking business, as well as "acting as an agent for Transatlantic steamship lines and in selling letters of credit available in all parts of the world. At the time, its capital stock was \$400,000 and its surplus fund, \$150,000. Its officers were George Guckenberger, president (Figure 9); Albert Lackman, VP; William Guckenberger, cashier; and C. J. Ziegler, assistant cashier."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> The Cuvier Press Club, *The Queen City, Newspaper Reference Book*, 54.

<sup>10</sup> Ohio Federal Writers' Project, 71.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> George Mortimer Roe, *Cincinnati: The Queen City of the West, Her Principal Men and Institutions. Biographical Sketches and Portraits of Leading Citizens*, 79.

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Born in Cincinnati in 1857, George Guckenberger (1857-1911) found employment in banking at age 15, doing various jobs from messenger to head bookkeeper. In 1880, he joined the German Banking Company, later known as the German National Bank, as teller and assistant cashier. In 1887, he was hired as the cashier of the new Atlas National Bank. An 1893 article described him as “one of the most popular and youngest banking officers on Third Street,” and he rose quickly to vice president in 1894 and president in 1895.<sup>13</sup>

Guckenberger was credited in a Cincinnati history as having lifted the Atlas National Bank “from a small financial institution to a position of commanding influence in the community. No bank of the years of the Atlas takes any higher rank in Ohio.” He was also a leader in the community—he served as treasurer of the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce for 1893-1894 and a Councilman in the Village of Westwood before its annexation [to Cincinnati]. He was a member of the German Protestant Orphan Asylum Board, the Young Men’s Blaine Club, a director of the German Protestant Hospital and the Hanselmann Lodge of Masons.<sup>14</sup> In 1908, he was appointed by then mayor Leopold Markbreit as a Trustee of the University of Cincinnati.<sup>15</sup>

Almost immediately after becoming president of the bank, Guckenberger boldly committed the company to purchase the 8-story red brick c.1888 Smith Building on Walnut Street, just north of the post office, as its permanent new location (Figures 10, 11).<sup>16</sup> The Atlas National Bank purchased the property from the Smith heirs at a sheriff’s sale for \$120,000 after it had been offered initially at \$175,000 and offered again at \$150,000 when it didn’t sell at the higher price. It was clearly a shrewd acquisition.<sup>17</sup> In 1895, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* noted that the Atlas National Bank was the initial institution to vacate the Third Street financial district, stating that “it was about 1886 that the bank was moved from the Third-street banking district to its present position on Walnut Street. The Atlas Bank was the first one in the city to move from that district.”<sup>18</sup>

After Guckenberger’s death in 1911, Albert Lackman – president and treasurer of the Herman Lackman Brewing Company – was elected president of the Atlas National Bank.<sup>19</sup> Similar to Guckenberger, he was born in Cincinnati (in 1855) to German-born parents. It was under Lackman’s leadership that in 1919, the Atlas Bank acquired a three-story building to the north of the Smith Building with 40 feet of frontage to create a larger footprint for a new building.

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<sup>13</sup> “Local Wall Street Men,” *Cincinnati Enquirer*; April 9, 1893; p17, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, accessed 4/5/2024.

<sup>14</sup> Roe, *Cincinnati: The Queen City of the West*, 79-80.

<sup>15</sup> “George Guckenberger, Self-made Man, Banker and University Trustee, Succumbs to Long Illness,” *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 10/24/1911, 18.

<sup>16</sup> George A. Smith was President of the Mt. Auburn Street Railway Company and built the first inclined plane in the city.

<sup>17</sup> “That Sale No Longer A Mystery. Atlas National Bank Buys the Smith Building,” *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 10/8/1895, 8.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Cuvier Press Club. *Cincinnati, the Queen City: Newspaper Reference Book.*

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Plans drawn by the prominent Cincinnati firm of Tietig & Lee for a new 10-story skyscraper costing \$500,000 were filed with the city building commissioner in May 1922.<sup>20</sup> In July, the bank moved into temporary quarters next door. By August 1923, the Smith building was undergoing demolition. The bank celebrated the completion of its handsome new building with an open house on December 30, 1924 (Figures 12-14). By then, the president of the bank was William Guckenberger, brother of the deceased former bank president, and vice president under Lackman. William Guckenberger continued as president until ill health caused him to step down in 1932 in favor of Charles J. Ziegler. Joseph Partl was named vice president.<sup>21</sup>

In 1949, Fred A. Dowd was elected President of Atlas National Bank. He succeeded Joseph Partl who retired December 31st, after 59 years of service.<sup>22</sup> In 1950, Atlas National Bank purchased the assets of the Peoples Bank & Savings Co., which involved the transfer of more than \$13 million in assets. The deal was “one of the largest of its kind in recent years in Cincinnati.”<sup>23</sup> As a result that same year, the bank enlarged the banking hall and modernized its quarters in the Atlas Building with air-conditioning and automatic doors (Figures 15,16).

The Atlas National Bank continued to operate at 530 Walnut Street until 1954 when it was purchased by First National Bank of Cincinnati for \$5,200,000, becoming the fourth largest bank in Ohio.<sup>24</sup> First National maintained a branch in what was known as the “Atlas Office” and renovated the building in 1968 (Figure 17), before selling it to the Western & Southern Life Insurance Company in 1971. The building continued to be known as the Atlas Bank Building after that sale and as the Atlas Building since 1996.

In 1981, First National Bank left its 1902 tower on E. Fourth Street and moved to a new building at 21 East Fifth Street on the south side of Fountain Square, and the branch in the Atlas Bank Building was also closed. In 1988, First National was renamed Star Bank.<sup>25</sup> The former bank space in the Atlas Building remained vacant from 1981 until 1987, when a Sharonville computer retailer, Businessland, leased the first floor and mezzanine.<sup>26</sup> In 1993, Fifth Third Bank bought the Atlas Building for \$2.9 million as an adjunct to its building on Fountain Square and renovated it to make room for its customer service and commercial lending divisions. Fifth Third sold the building in 2020, however, when personnel in their downtown offices declined, possibly due to the COVID epidemic.

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<sup>20</sup> “Real Estate and Building, *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 5/23/1922, 9, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, accessed online 1/15/2024.

<sup>21</sup> “President Named by Atlas Bank,” *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 8/4/1932, 1:4.

<sup>22</sup> “Atlas Bank President Appointed,” *Times Star*, 1/11/1949, Cincinnati Buildings Scrapbook, Banks, S&L p 6.

<sup>23</sup> Bernard Boer, Business News, *Times-Star*, 6/24/1950, scrapbook, 8.

<sup>24</sup> “Deal is Set for Vote,” *Enquirer*, 9/15/1954, 3.

<sup>25</sup> “Atlas Bank Sold,” *Enquirer*, 7/31/1971, p48, Cincinnati Buildings Scrapbook, Cincinnati History Library.

<sup>26</sup> “Businessland Moving,” *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 11/10/1987, C5.

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## Criterion C

The Atlas National Bank Building is significant under Criterion C at the local level in the area of Architecture as an example of an early-to mid-twentieth century high-rise bank building in downtown Cincinnati and for its design by the firm of Tietig & Lee. The construction of skyscrapers in downtown Cincinnati between 1903 and 1930 was led by commercial establishments especially financial institutions, including banks, brokerages, and insurance companies, who sought to relocate to higher ground from flood-prone areas between Second and Third streets. The area between Fourth and Seventh streets, Vine and Walnut streets, evolved from a low-scale mixed commercial and residential district to a commercial core of tall buildings around Fountain Square.

The process began in the late 1890s when Jacob Schmidlapp, president of the Union Savings Bank & Trust Company, saw the work of renowned Chicago architect Daniel Burnham, one of the Chicago School of architects who had first developed skyscrapers in the late 1880s, creating a distinctively American style of Commercial architecture. Schmidlapp brought Burnham and his revolutionary ideas about the scale and design of tall buildings to Cincinnati. The Union Savings Bank that Burnham designed for Schmidlapp opened in 1901 at the northwest corner of Fourth and Walnut.<sup>27</sup>

This led to three more skyscrapers by Burnham's firm—the Traction Company (AKA Tri-State) and First National Bank buildings in 1902 and the Fourth National Bank in 1905, all on Fourth and Fifth streets. Other Cincinnati high-rises included the Ingalls Building (1903) at Fourth and Vine; the Mercantile Library Building, across Walnut Street from the Union Savings Bank building, was among the handful of Cincinnati's first skyscrapers built in the first decade of the twentieth century; and the Provident Savings Bank (1909) at Seventh and Vine. By 1920, these were joined by even taller commercial and banking buildings, including the 29-story Union Central Life Insurance Building (1913), also at Fourth and Vine, which was the tallest building outside New York City.<sup>28</sup>

After slowing during World War I, downtown construction resumed in the 1920s. Six new high-rise office buildings were erected during that decade. In 1921, architects Garber & Woodward, who had worked with Gilbert on the Union Central Building, completed the 9-story Dixie Terminal, which combined a bus terminal with offices. In 1923, the Doctor's Building, 9-27 Garfield Place, a 12-story building with a Gothic-style terra cotta exterior, was built according to a design by Tietig & Lee. On Vine Street, above Sixth Street, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* erected its 12-story Art Deco building in 1926. At the corner of Fifth and Walnut, the Fountain Square Office Building, a 16-story brick building by Hake and Hake was built in 1928 (demolished 1970s). About the same time, the B. F. Keith Office Building & Theatre, a 13-story brick office building, was completed just north of it (demolished 1970s). The Atlas National Bank Building, across the street from the Keith building, was completed in 1924, and it was the only downtown bank building built in the 1920s.

<sup>27</sup> Giglierano & Overmyer, p. 32-33.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

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The decade also produced the Rollman & Sons 12-story department store (1923), at 501-509 Vine Street, on the west side of Fountain Square (demolished in 1991); the 12-story Grand Opera House (1925), at 516-526 Race Street (demolished); and farther from Fountain Square, the four-story Queen City Club (1927) and the Cincinnati Masonic Temple (1928), at 317 East Fifth Street. The last of downtown Cincinnati's early-twentieth-century skyscrapers were the Cincinnati Gas & Electric Building, a collaboration of Garber & Woodward with nationally known architect John Russell Pope, and the Carew Tower, both of which opened in 1930.

Over the next three decades—an era of economic depression, war, and suburban growth—the only major construction between Fourth and Seventh Streets was the Terrace Plaza Hotel, completed in 1948, and parking garages. However, as interest in city centers began to revive in the late 1960s, Cincinnati's downtown core became the focus for new construction. The City Planning Commission prepared a bold plan to redevelop and reshape what it regarded as the outmoded and blighted areas of downtown. The 1957-1958 Central Business District Plan called for a new enlarged Fountain Square Plaza that would extend over Fifth Street, underground garages, pedestrian malls, moving elevated sidewalks, and the block-by-block rebuilding of the core.<sup>29</sup>

Because of a lack of broad support for this plan, another plan, the 1964 Plan for Downtown Cincinnati sought to redevelop the CBD in order to slow the rate at which business and commerce were leaving. The plan called for tearing down older buildings and replacing them with new office blocks, redesigning Fountain Square, and creating a system of second-story skywalks to link downtown stores, hotels, and offices.<sup>30</sup>

By the mid-1970s, the first skywalks had opened around Fountain Square. Three major buildings, the Provident Tower (1967) and the Fifth-Third Center/DuBois Tower (1968) and the Formica Building (1970) were up, and Fountain Square had been redesigned. New buildings, including Fountain Square South (1981), the 580 Building (1973) at 580 Walnut Street, and the Central Trust Center (1979, renamed PNC Tower in 1988) at 201 East Fifth Street were built. Atrium One (1980) at 201 East Fourth Street and the Federated Building (later Macy's headquarters) at 7 West Seventh Street were planned in the late 1970s and completed in 1980 and 1982 respectively. By the early 1980s, there was a temporary glut in downtown office space for the first time in the city's history.<sup>31</sup>

This construction of new high rises came at the expense of some significant historic buildings, such as the Albee Theater and Gibson Hotel, but since the passage of Cincinnati's historic preservation ordinance in 1980 and federal tax credits for historic rehabilitation in 1986, a number of early-twentieth-century buildings benefited from downtown growth. The Dixie Terminal, Cincinnati Enquirer Building, Cincinnati Hotel, and Netherland Plaza Hotel have all

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<sup>29</sup> Geoffrey J. Giglierano, and Deborah A. Overmyer. *The Bicentennial Guide to Greater Cincinnati: A Portrait of Two Hundred Years*, 33.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

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been restored and redeveloped rather than demolished. So have the early skyscrapers, including the Atlas National Bank Building.

### Bank buildings in downtown Cincinnati

Downtown Cincinnati still retains all of its 20th century bank buildings, although, like the Atlas National Bank Building, none of them are in use as a bank. Most of them are among the skyscrapers built in the first decade of the 20th century, as aforementioned. They include:

- Union Savings Bank (1901), 36 East Fourth St: Designed by Daniel Burnham, this 18-story building is now known as the Renaissance Hotel. Ornamented with marble and bronze, the building was promoted as completely fireproof. The Union Savings Bank later became Union Trust, and in 1927, merged with the Fifth Third Bank, itself a product of the merger of two banks. Four years later, the central offices of the new bank were moved here, where they remained until 1971. The building was expanded twice along Fourth Street and restored in 1986.<sup>32</sup>
- First National Bank Building (1902), 105 East Fourth St: Also by Burnham, this 19-story structure is now the Fourth & Walnut Centre Building. After a series of bank mergers, the First National Bank moved to a new building on Fountain Square in 1981 and became Star Bank in 1988.<sup>33</sup>
- German National Bank (1903), 2 West Fourth Street: This 4-story Beaux Arts building was designed by Rapp Zettel & Rapp. Its name was changed to the Lincoln Bank during WWI. It merged with Fifth Third in 1955, and the building was acquired by Eagle Savings Bank. In the late 1980s, it became a branch of AmeriTrust.<sup>34</sup>
- Fourth National Bank (1905), 18 East Fourth Street: This 11-story building was designed by Daniel Burnham. After this bank merged with Central Trust in 1923, it left the building, and the Shaffer Rubber Company occupied the first floor.<sup>35</sup>
- Second National Bank Building (1908), 930-832 Main Street: This 12-story Neoclassical-style building was designed by Werner & Adkins. This bank was the first to settle on Main Street between Sixth and Ninth Streets in the early twentieth century.<sup>36</sup>
- Provident Bank (1909), 642 Vine Street: Designed by Harry Hake, this 10-story Italian Renaissance Revival building received additions in 1916 and 1923. The bank vacated the building in 1967 when a new tower was built on Fourth Street. The old banking hall was

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<sup>32</sup> Giglierano & Overmyer, 39.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 41.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 39.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 65.

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remodelled for retail use in the late 1960s, and the office floors were converted to apartments in 2014. It was listed in the National Register in 2018.

- **Provident Tower (1967), 1 East Fourth Street:** Opened in 1967, this was the first downtown high-rise office building to be built in over thirty years. Provident Bank was the lead tenant. Salmon P. Wallace, a Dallas architect, designed a rectilinear 19-story steel structure with a sheer facade clad in blue glass with projecting vertical steel mullions. The building was purchased in 1968 by the Cincinnati-based American Financial Corporation, a banking business founded in 1955.<sup>37</sup>

The Atlas National Bank was the only high-rise bank building built in downtown Cincinnati during the 1920s. The only other bank built during that decade was Eagle Savings Bank, which remodelled an 1855 building from four stories to five; thus, not a high-rise. The modernization of the Atlas National Bank Building in 1968 was likely in response to the opening of Provident Tower in 1967. In addition, the then-owner First National Bank acquired the adjacent property to the north and created a parking lot to compete with the convenience of new suburban banks. A 1968 photo (Figure 17) shows a painted mural on the north side of the building advertising the ability to “Park while you bank.”

### **Architecture**

The Atlas National Bank Building is also significant under Criterion C at the local level in the area of Architecture for its design by the firm of Tietig & Lee. The Atlas Building is one of only two surviving high-rise buildings by the firm. The building began as an example of the Italian Renaissance style and was modernized in 1968, possibly in response to trends in mid-twentieth century bank design and specifically construction of the modern steel-and-glass Provident Tower on Fourth Street in 1967.

#### **The Italian Renaissance Style**

The Renaissance was a revival of ancient Greek and Roman thought and material culture that originated in Italy in the early fifteenth century. Developed first in Florence, with Filippo Brunelleschi as one of its innovators, the Renaissance style of architecture valued symmetry, proportion, geometry, and the regularity of composition, as demonstrated in the architecture of classical antiquity and in particular ancient Roman architecture, of which many examples remained. Orderly arrangements of columns, pilasters, and lintels, as well as the use of semicircular arches, hemispherical domes, and niches replaced the more complex proportional systems and irregular profiles of Gothic-style medieval buildings.

In the United States in the mid-19th century, Renaissance forms inspired the Italianate and early Renaissance Revival styles, which were popularized through pattern books rather than any first-hand knowledge. By the late 19th century, however, a great many American architects and their

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<sup>37</sup> <https://library.artstor.org/#/public/31710132>; accessed 6/18/24; Giglierano & Overmyer, 41.

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clients had visited Italy and studied the original models.<sup>38</sup> Among these architects, were the partners of the illustrious New York firm of McKim Mead & White, who introduced a more archeologically correct version of the Italian Renaissance style in 1883 with the Villard Houses, a grouping of town houses resembling an Italian Palazzo. Along with Neo-classicism, the Italian Renaissance became a dominant style for commercial, governmental, and institutional buildings through 1935. The association of the Italian Renaissance with the Medici of Florence, the chief bankers to the princes of Europe, made the style eminently suitable for bank buildings.

The Italian Renaissance style was adapted to the design of early skyscrapers through the use of the tripartite composition resembling a classical column with a base, shaft, and capital. As mentioned in the earlier description, the Atlas National Bank Building displays this characteristic with its two-story base with storefronts, six-story shaft, and two-story “capital” with colossal Corinthian pilasters. Other Italian Renaissance features present on the building include decorative molded bronze spandrels with garlands and putti above the storefronts, urns, circular shields, and egg-and-dart molding in the cast-stone mullions at the second floor, and a denticulated cornice at the eighth floor.

#### Architects - Tietig & Lee

The partnership of Tietig & Lee was a prominent and long-lived Cincinnati firm active from 1903 to 1956. As documented by Walter E. Langsam in his “Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Cincinnati, 1788 to 1940,” partners Rudolph Tietig (Cincinnati, 1877-1958) and Walter E. Lee (1877-1952) both attended the Cincinnati Technical School and M.I.T. (1898). While Lee returned immediately to Cincinnati, Tietig gained experience in New York with Robert Maynicke and G. K. Thompson.

While only a limited amount of the firm’s work has been documented, Langsam attests the firm was prolific. They mostly favored the Beaux-Arts Classical and other Traditional styles for institutional, commercial, and residential buildings, although sometimes reflecting an Arts & Crafts aesthetic. Among Tietig & Lee’s better-known works in the Cincinnati area are several buildings for the University of Cincinnati campus—Baldwin Hall (1911), with Garber & Woodward, and Old Chemistry (1917); the former Rockdale Temple (K.K. Bene Israel) in Avondale (demolished); the former Jewish Synagogue (1910), (now New Friendship Baptist Church) at 3212 Reading Road in Avondale; a number of public schools, including Stowe, Sands, and Sayler Park, several of them in an Arts & Crafts manner and later in American Colonial Revival; and the Beaux-Arts-style Northside (Cumminsville) Public Library (1908) at 4219 Hamilton Avenue in Cincinnati.

Examples of their work in downtown Cincinnati, in addition to the Atlas National Bank Building, include the Neo-Gothic, terra-cotta-clad Doctors’ Building (1923), 9 Garfield Place; the Garfield Hotel (demolished); and the Strand Theatre (1913) at 529-535 Walnut Street (demolished). Tietig & Lee also collaborated with Harry Hake on the design of the massive

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<sup>38</sup> McAlester & McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 400.

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Beaux-Arts former Chamber of Commerce Building (1927), a 15-story office building at 105 West Fourth Street.

### **Conclusion**

The Atlas National Bank Building is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Commerce at the local level for its association with the banking industry in Cincinnati. It was the first bank to move from the late-nineteenth-century banking hub at Third and Vine streets to the vicinity of Fountain Square between Fifth and Sixth Streets and endured for 67 years. The Atlas National Bank Building is also eligible under Criterion C at the local level in the area Architecture. It exemplifies skyscraper construction in Cincinnati's central business district in the first three decades of the twentieth century. It is one of the few high-rise buildings from the 1920s and the only bank building from that period remaining in downtown Cincinnati.

In the area of Architecture, the Atlas National Bank Building is significant for its design by the firm of Tietig & Lee. The Atlas Building is one of only two extant high-rise buildings by the firm, and it contributes to the understanding of the firm's body of work. Stylistically, it reflects the evolution of an Italian Renaissance building that was modernized in the late 1960s in response to trends in bank architecture. The Period of Significance is from 1923, the year of initial construction to 1971, when the building ceased to be owned by a bank. Although the Atlas National Bank built and occupied the building only from 1924 to 1954, it has continued to be known as the Atlas Bank Building or Atlas Building to the present day. The building retains sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance as an urban bank building built during the early to mid-twentieth century.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** HAM-06840-44

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 0.174

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 39.102224 Longitude: -84.511352
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

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### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries coincide with those of Parcel 078-0001-0005-00 consolidating lots 5 and 6, with dimensions of 76 feet x 100.09 feet, as recorded by the Hamilton County Auditor, State of Ohio. See Figure 2 for boundary map. Auditor site accessed 3/27/2024.

### Boundary Justification

The boundaries conform with those of the entire parcel the building occupies, currently and historically.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Beth Sullebarger  
organization: Sullebarger Associates  
street & number: 960 Laurel Avenue  
city or town: Glendale state: OH zip code: 45246-4523  
e-mail sullebarger@fuse.net  
telephone: (513) 703-0877  
date: June 19, 2024

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Figure 1. Location map

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- Figure 2. Boundary map
- Figure 3. First Floor Plan and Photo Key
- Figure 4. Basement First Floor Plan and Photo Key
- Figure 5. Mezzanine Floor Plan and Photo Key
- Figure 6. Second Floor Plan and Photo Key
- Figure 7. Fifth Floor Plan and Photo Key
- Figure 8. Tenth Floor Plan and Photo Key
- Figure 9. Photograph of George Guckenberger, President of Atlas National Bank, 1895 to 1911, in *Cincinnati: The Queen City of the West, Her Principal Men and Institutions*, 80
- Figure 10. Smith Building/Atlas Bank Building, demolished for present building, Lawrence Brand Collection, Kenton County Library
- Figure 11. 1891 Sanborn map, Smith Building outlined in red
- Figure 12. 1930 Sanborn map, showing Atlas National Bank Building outlined in red
- Figure 13. Advertisement for opening of the Atlas National Bank, *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 12/28/1924, 27.
- Figure 14. Atlas National Bank, circa 1928, Lawrence Brand Collection, Kenton County Library
- Figure 15. Postcard of the Atlas National Bank, circa 1950
- Figure 16. *Times-Star* 7/5/1950, Scrapbook, 9
- Figure 17. Atlas Bank Building, 1968

## Photographs

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Atlas National Bank Building

City or Vicinity: Cincinnati

County: Hamilton State: OH

Photographer: Beth Sullebarger

Date Photographed: January 15, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 25. Exterior view looking southeast

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- 2 of 25. Front elevation looking east
- 3 of 25. Exterior view looking northeast
- 4 of 25. Exterior view looking northeast
- 5 of 25. Detail of the top floors looking northeast
- 6 of 25. Detail of the bottom floors looking northeast
- 7 of 25. Detail of north entrance looking northeast
- 8 of 25. Detail of south entrance looking northeast
- 9 of 25. Detail of windows, looking northeast
- 10 of 25. Detail of storefront, looking northeast
- 11 of 25. View of lobby, looking east
- 12 of 25. Detail of mail chute, looking southeast
- 13 of 25. View of exit stairway, looking east
- 14 of 25. View of former banking hall, looking northeast
- 15 of 25. View of former banking hall, looking southwest
- 16 of 25. View of former banking hall, looking southeast
- 17 of 25. View of former banking hall, looking north
- 18 of 25. View of former banking hall, looking northeast
- 19 of 25. View of stair to basement, looking southwest
- 20 of 25. View of stair to basement, looking southwest
- 21 of 25. View of mezzanine, looking southeast
- 22 of 25. View of elevator lobby, second floor, looking northeast
- 23 of 25. View of elevator lobby, fifth floor, looking northeast
- 24 of 25. View of office space, fifth floor, looking southwest
- 25 of 25. View of office space, tenth floor, looking northwest

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
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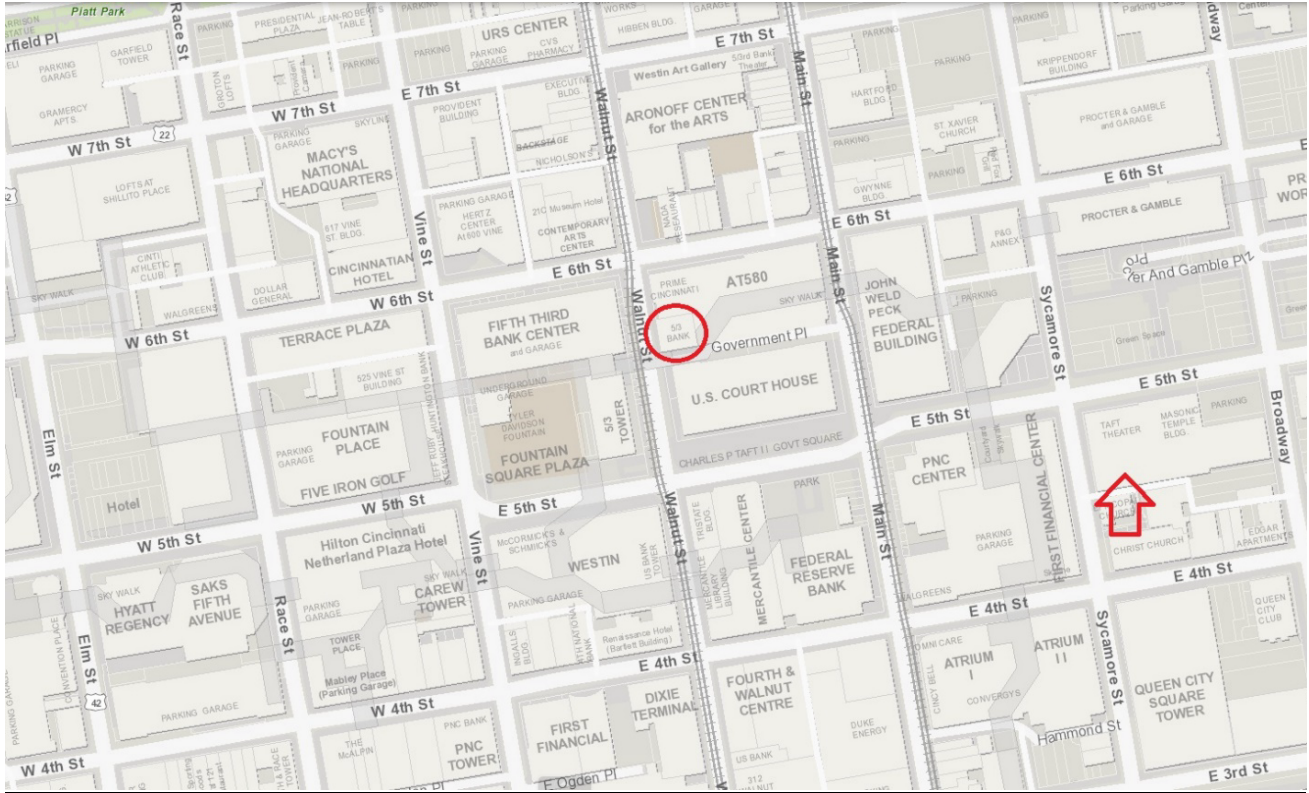


Figure 1. Map showing location of the Atlas National Bank Building in the heart of downtown Cincinnati, east of Fountain Square

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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
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Figure 2. Boundary map, showing location of 530 Walnut Street, lots 5 and 6 consolidated in Parcel 078-0001-0005-00

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
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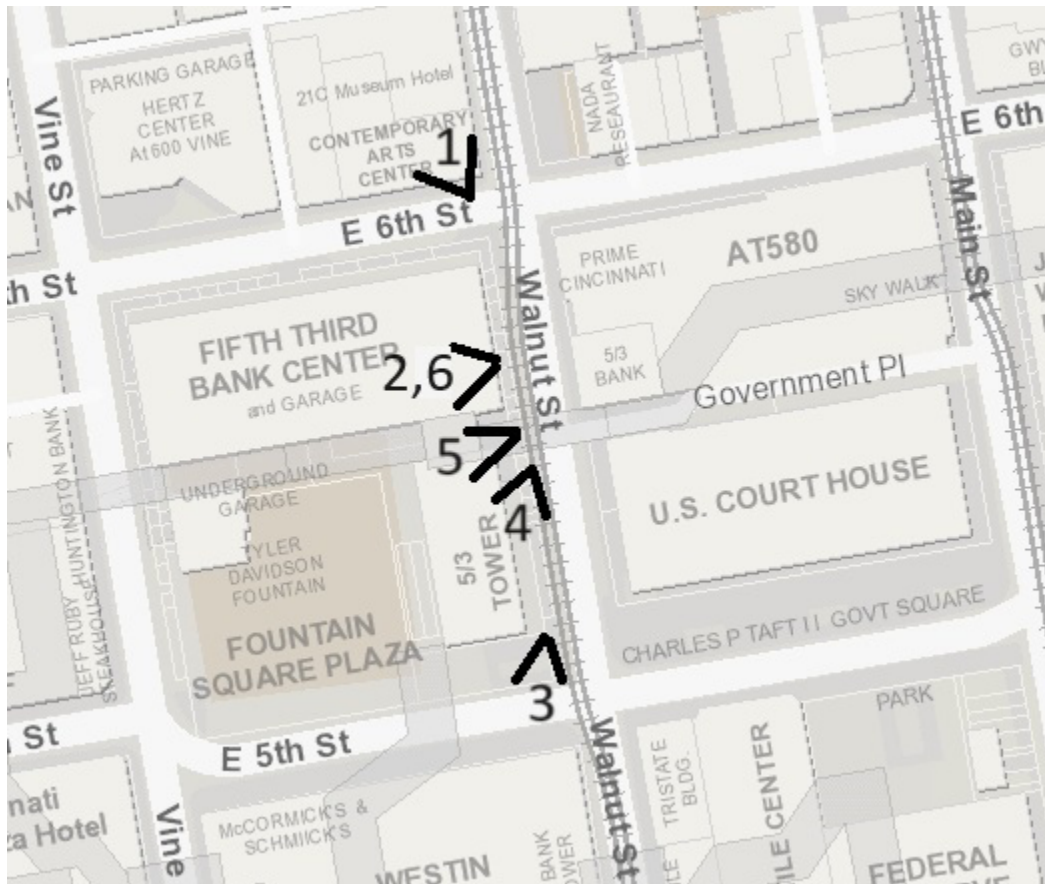


Figure 2a. Exterior Photo Key

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
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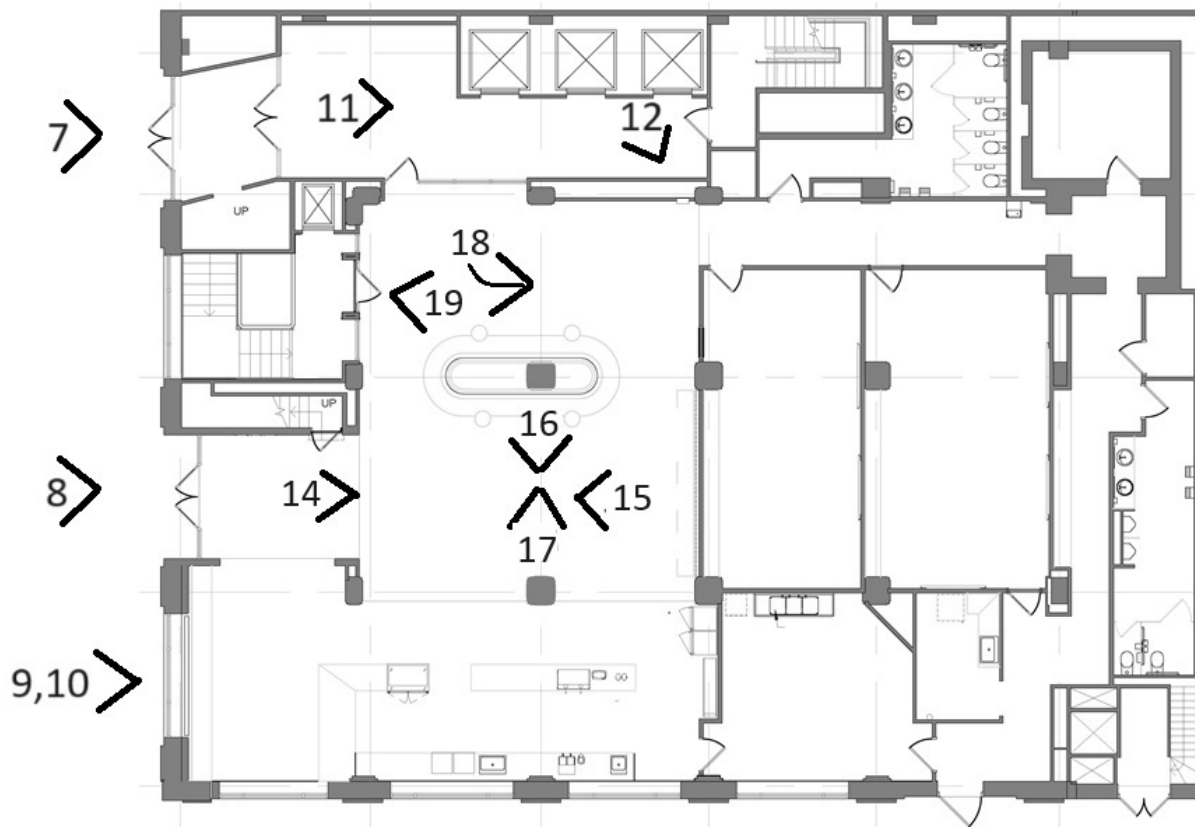


Figure 3. First Floor Plan and Photo Key

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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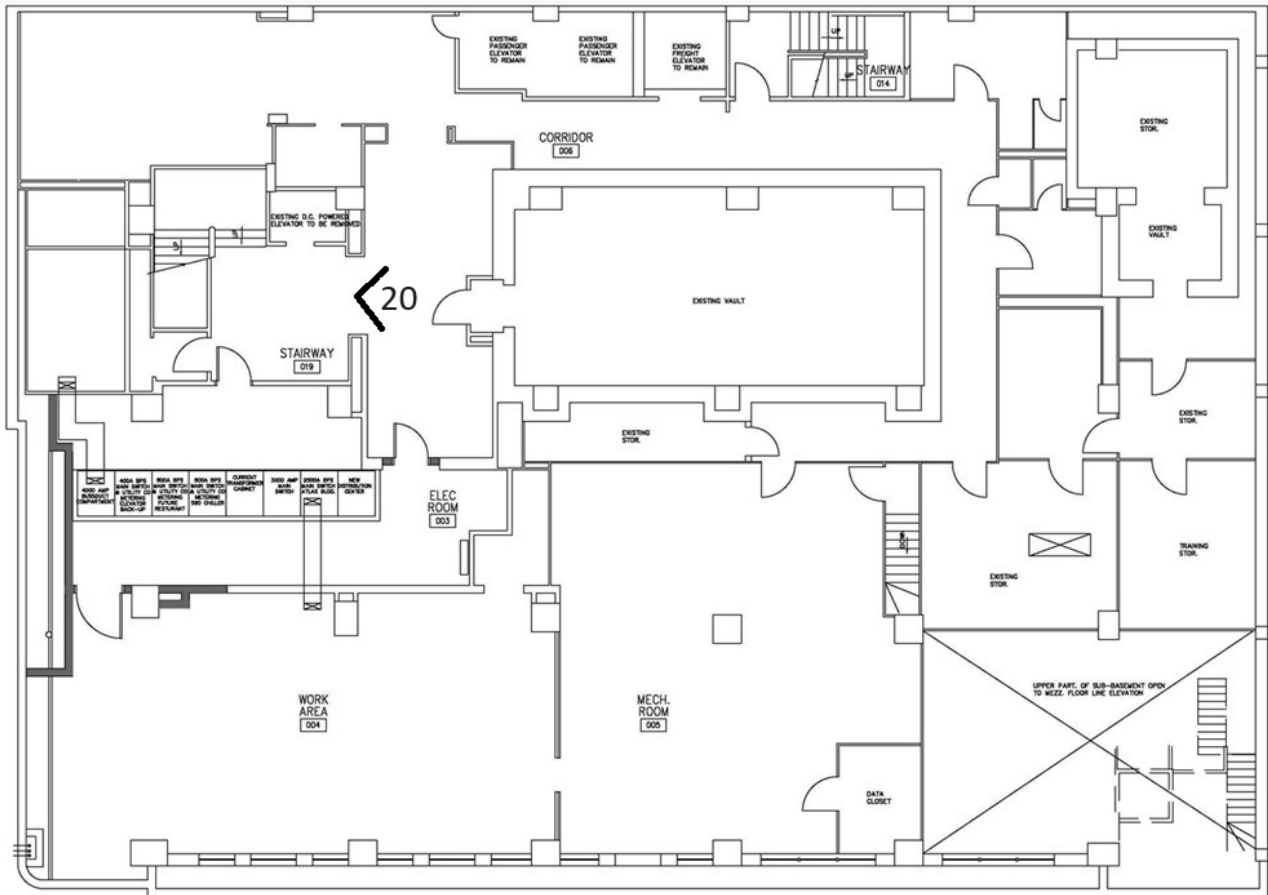


Figure 4. Basement Floor Plan and Photo Key

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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
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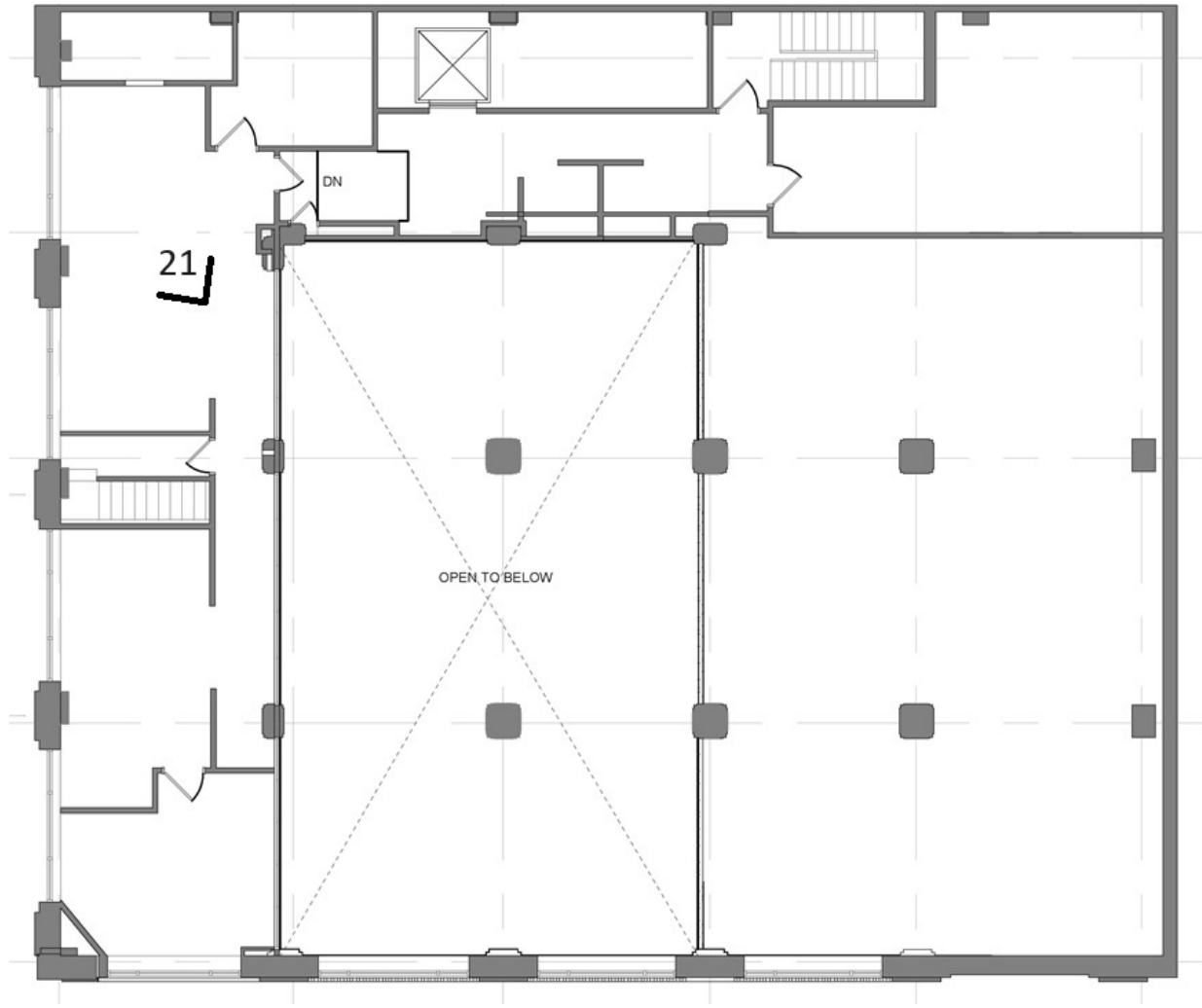


Figure 5. Mezzanine Floor Plan and Photo Key

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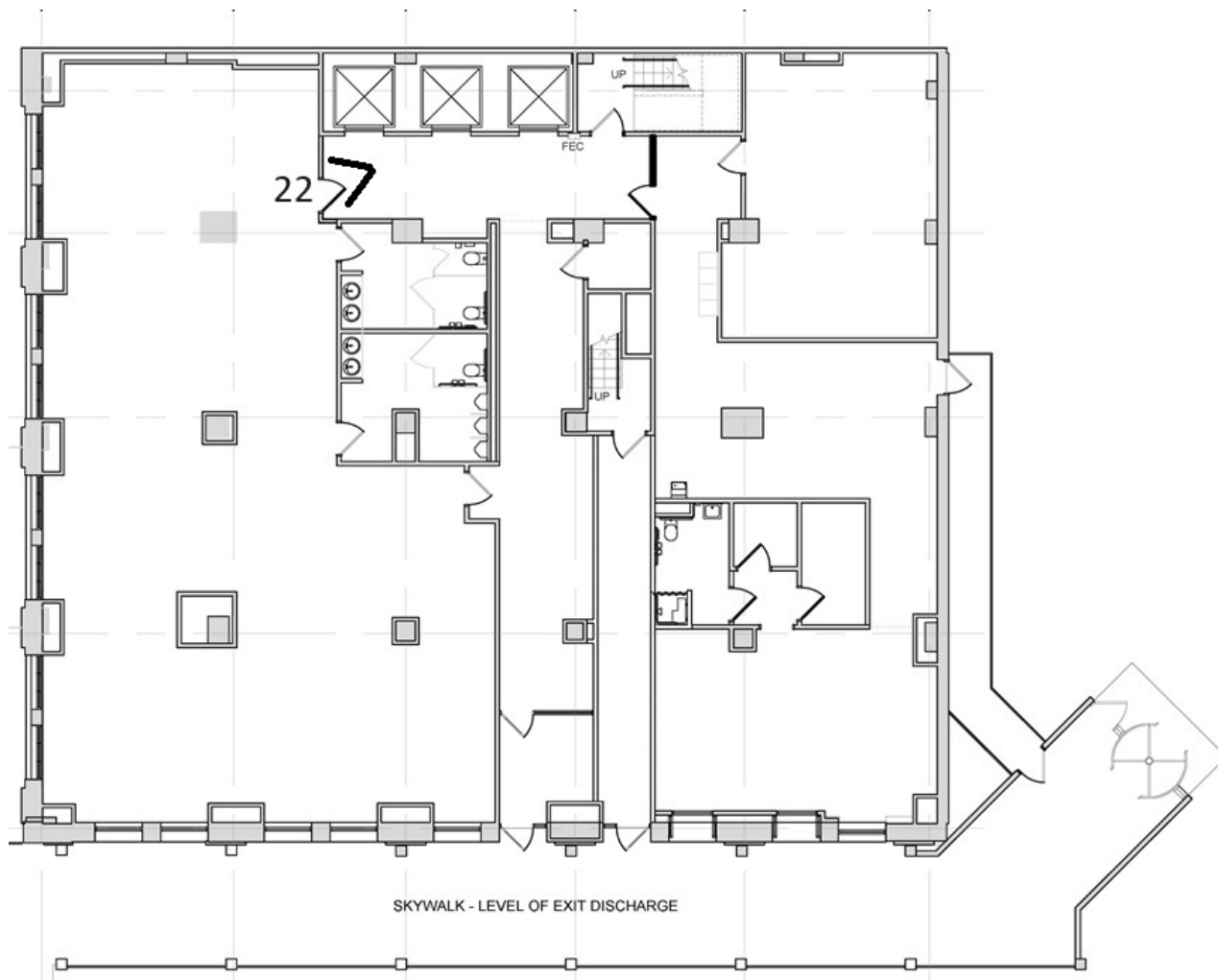


Figure 6. Second Floor Plan and Photo Key

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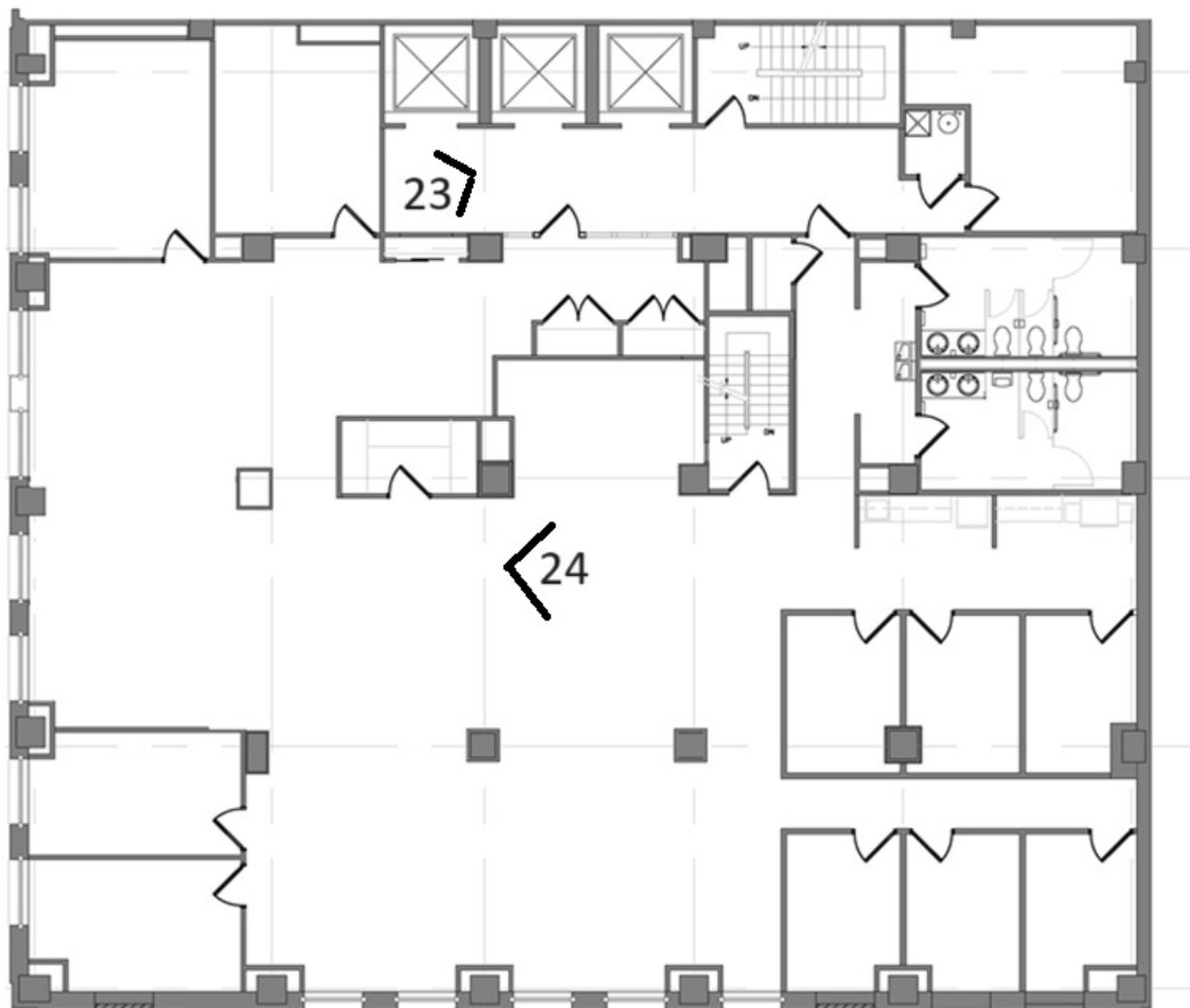


Figure 7. Fifth Floor Plan and Photo Key

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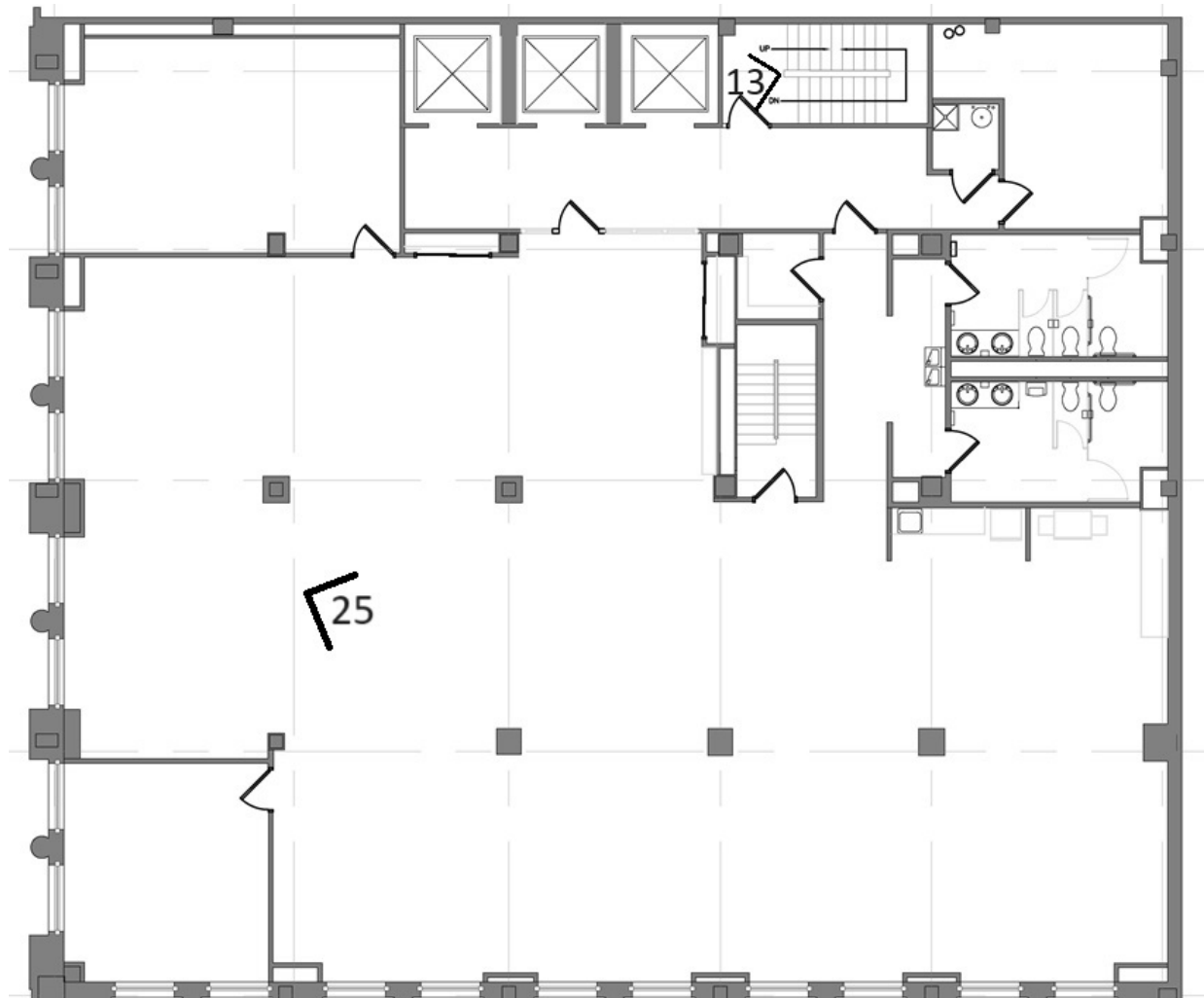


Figure 8. Tenth Floor Plan and Photo Key

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Figure 9. Photograph of George Guckenberger, President of Atlas National Bank, 1895 to 1911, in *Cincinnati: The Queen City of the West, Her Principal Men and Institutions*, 80

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Figure 10. Smith Building/Atlas Bank Building, demolished for present building  
Lawrence Brand Collection, Kenton County Library

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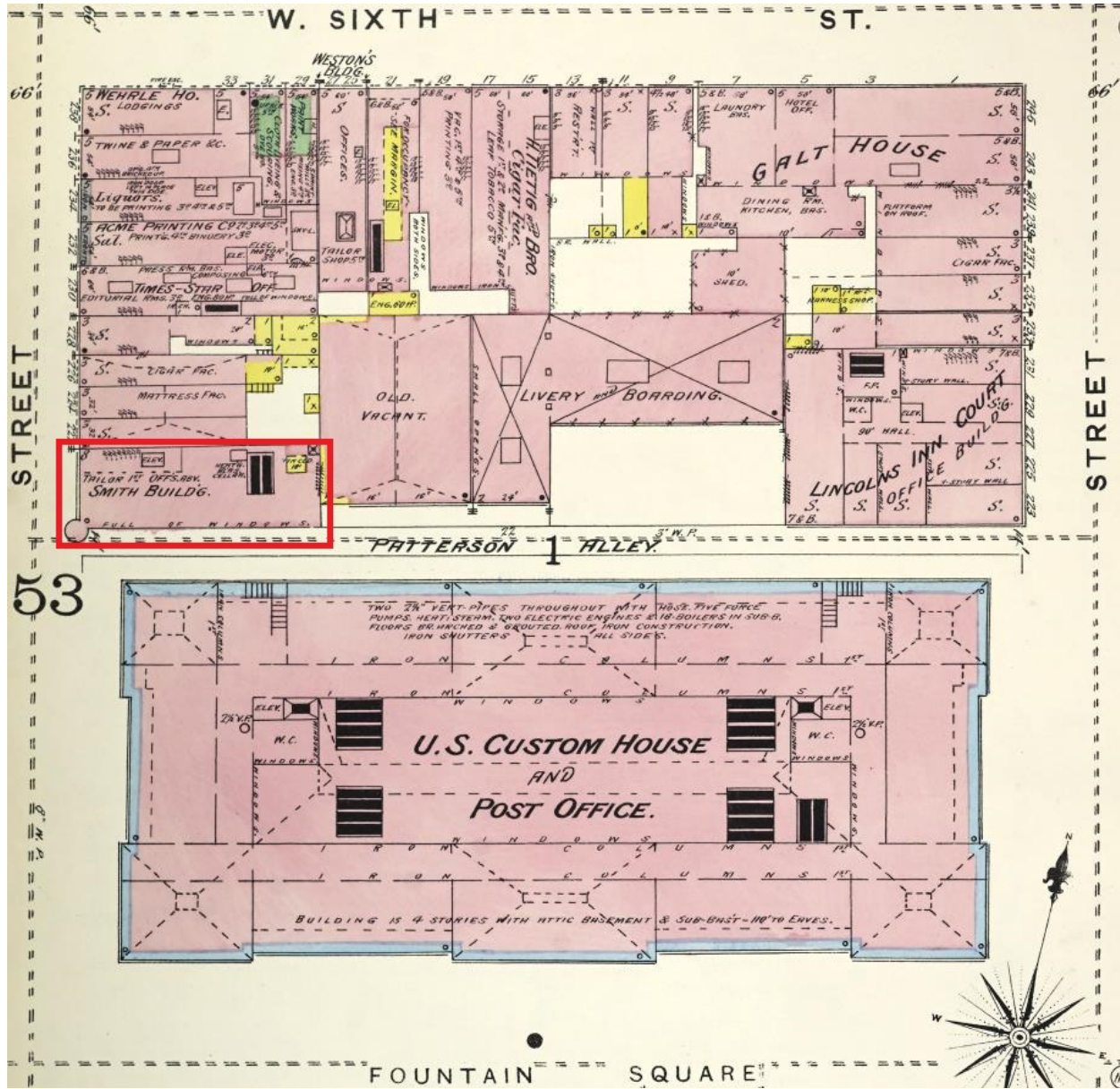


Figure 11. 1891 Sanborn map, Smith Building outlined in red

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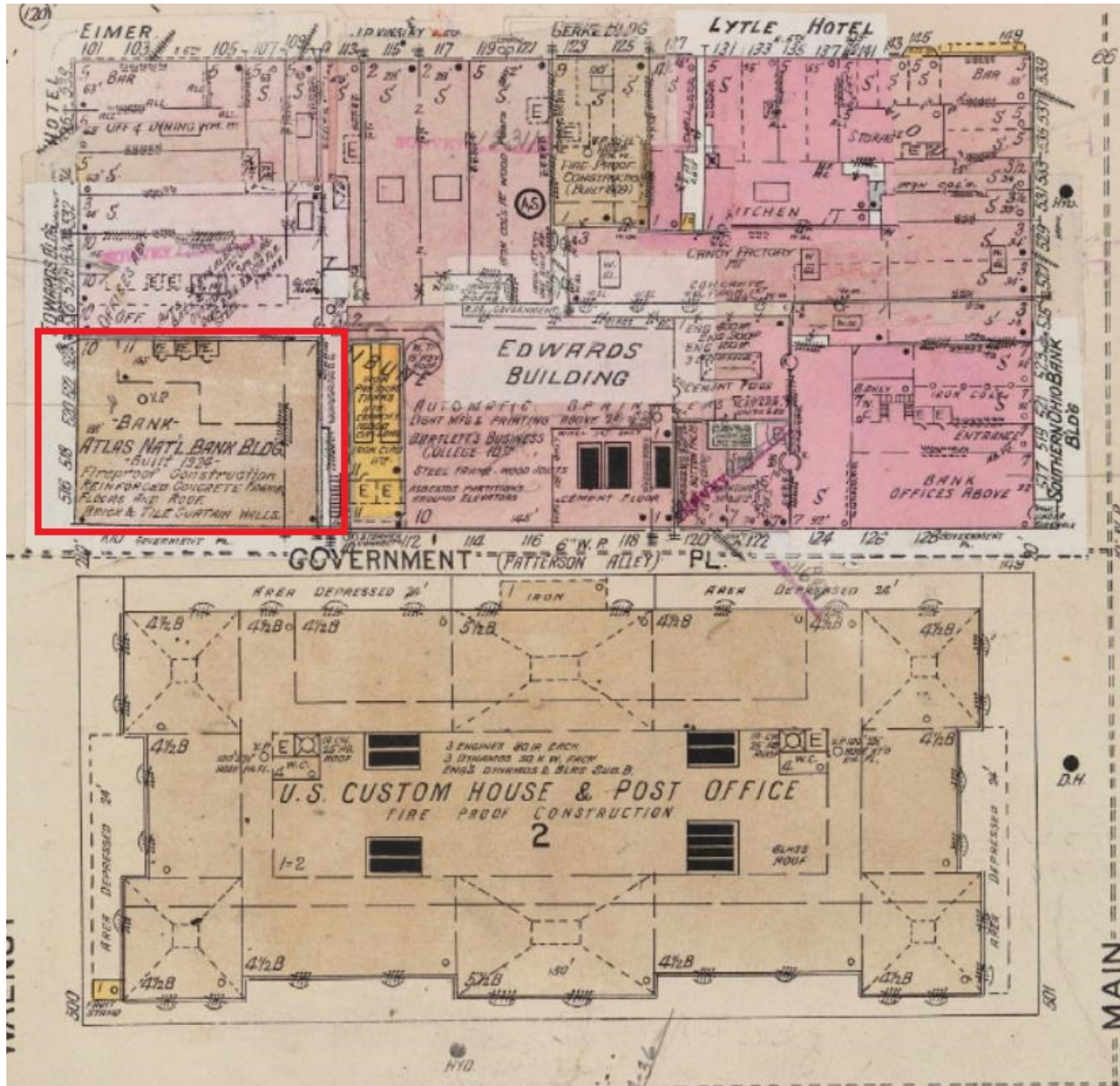


Figure 12. 1930 Sanborn map, showing Atlas National Bank Building outlined in red

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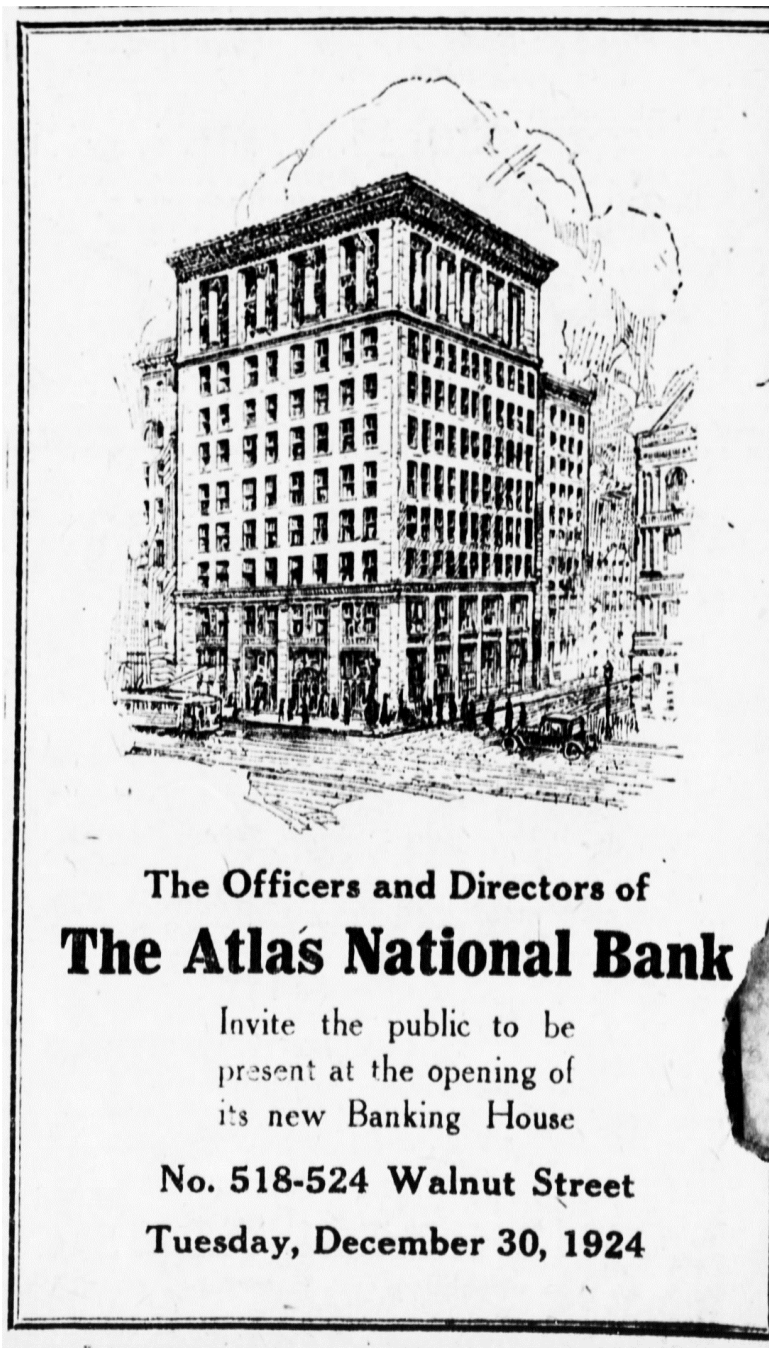


Figure 13. Advertisement for opening of the Atlas National Bank, *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 12/28/1924, 27.

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Figure 14. Atlas National Bank, circa 1928  
Lawrence Brand Collection, Kenton County Library

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Figure 15. Postcard of the Atlas National Bank, circa 1950.

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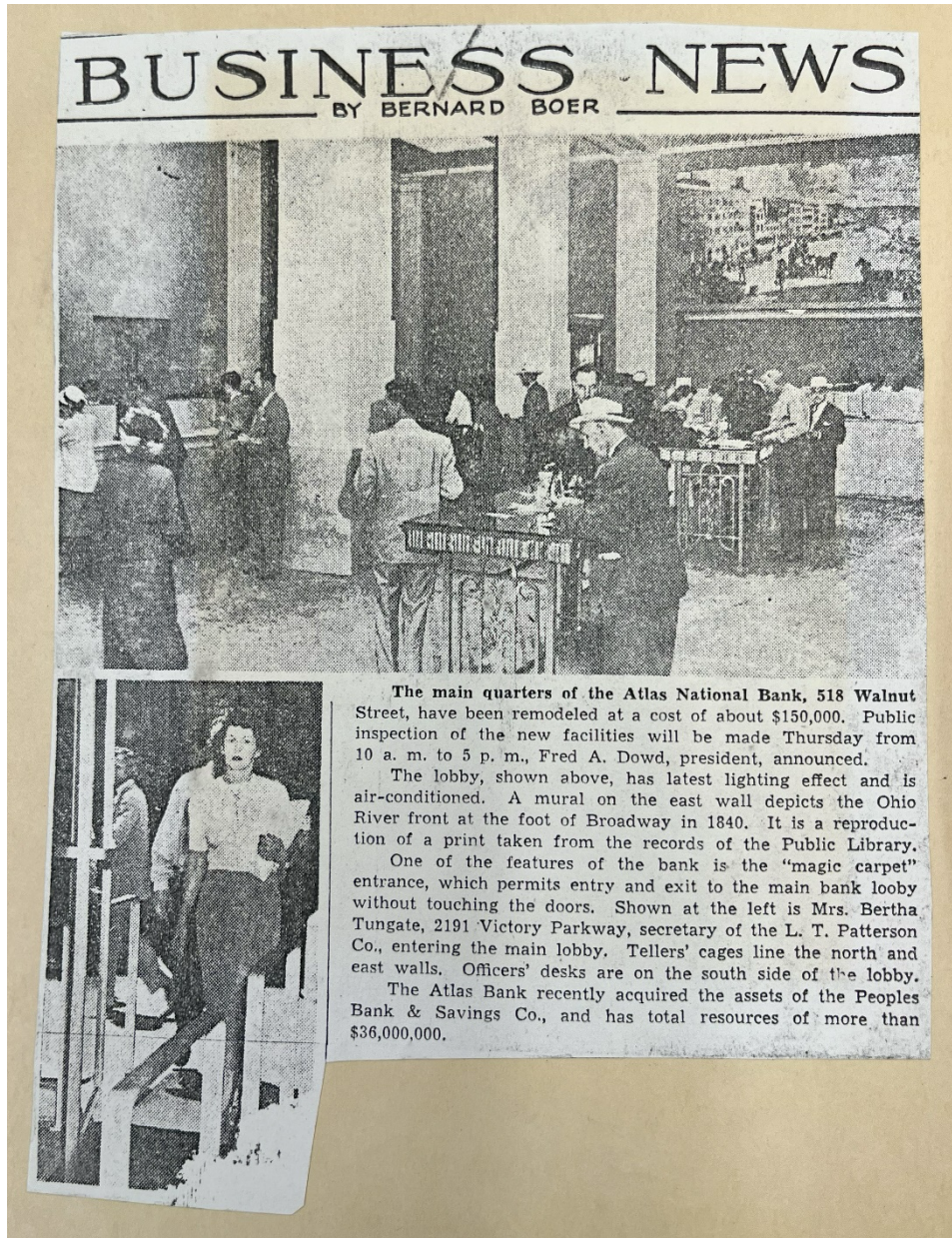


Figure 16. *Times-Star* 7/5/1950, Scrapbook, p 9

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Figure 17. Atlas Bank Building undergoing renovation, 1968

# September 9, 2024

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## NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION REVIEW HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT

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ADDRESS:           **3168 Victoria Avenue**  
PARCELS:           078-0001-0005; 078-0001-0006  
COMMUNITY:       Walnut Hills  
REPORT DATE:      August 16, 2024  
STAFF REVIEW:     Douglas Owen, Urban Conservator

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### **Summary of National Register Nomination:**

The Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board (OHSPAB) will be considering a National Register Historic District nomination for the property at 3168 Victoria Avenue (Robert F. Schulkers House) in the Hyde Park neighborhood at their September 20, 2024 meeting. As a Certified Local Government (CLG), the City of Cincinnati is invited to submit a letter of support or opposition to the proposed nomination.

The proposed building is being nominated under Criterion B for its association with Robert F. Schulkers, a writer, radio personality and creator of “Seckatary Hawkins” series of short stories and, later, silent movies and advertisements from 1918-1942.

Robert Schulkers began writing short stories featuring the main character of Seckatary Hawkins in 1918 which were published in the Cincinnati Enquirer. By the 1930s, the popularity of the stories lead to syndication in hundreds of newspapers throughout the country, reaching an audience of over 10 million households. At the height of its popularity, the series resulted in a collection of 11 books and adaptations in magazines, comic strips, radio scripts and three movies. The “Seckatary Hawkins Club” was established in 1923 and quickly grew to over one million members by 1930, rivaling the size and popularity of later clubs such as the Mickey Mouse Club and the Boy Scouts.

Schulkers was born in 1890 in Covington, Kentucky and many of his short stories were influenced by his childhood adventures along the banks of the Licking and Ohio Rivers. His first short story published in a local Covington newspaper in 1903 at the age of 13. By 1911, Schulkers secured a job at the Cincinnati Enquirer as the secretary and stenographer of the managing editor, William F. Wiley. Working in this capacity, Schulkers also produced short stories for the children’s section of the paper. By 1918, the first Seckatary Hawkins short story appeared in the Enquirer, beginning a remarkable run of over 1200 stories published from 1918-1942.

By 1923, the series began syndication in nine additional newspapers, growing to over 100 papers by 1930. The nationwide success led to the establishment of Seckatary Hawkins Clubs around the country, as well as chapters in Canada, South America, Cuba, Africa, Ireland, Egypt, Japan and China. Schulkers attended many club meetings himself

and performed readings of his stories. The clubs promoted moral values with a required pledge to always be fair and tell the truth.

Schulkers lived at 3029 Harvey Avenue in Cincinnati from 1920-1931 during the creation and initial explosion in popularity. The house was demolished in the 1970s for the construction of Martin Luther King Boulevard. Schulkers lived at 3168 Victoria Avenue from 1931-1934 when he achieved national and worldwide success through the popularity of his radio show and when the Seckatary Hawkins Club reached its peak. In 1932, Schulkers began his radio career when Powell Crosley hired him to produce Hawkins stories on WLW. Schulkers read adapted versions of his stories and created 17 different voices for the different characters. Hearing the broadcast, the Ralston Whole Wheat Company offered to sponsor the series on national radio broadcasts on NBC in Chicago, which Schulkers performed three times a week. This success led to a daily comic strip in the Cincinnati Enquirer from 1928-1934. Silent movies followed beginning in 1928, often utilizing members of the Seckatary Hawkins Club.

While the original Cincinnati home of Schulkers has been lost, the house at 3168 Victoria Avenue is best associated with his significance as it was his residence during the most productive period of his career. The property retains excellent historic integrity, including location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and association. Staff's review finds that the building at 3168 Victoria Avenue meets eligibility requirements under Criterion B for its association with Robert F. Schulkers and his impact on popular culture.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends the Historic Conservation Board take the following action:

- I. **APPROVE** the submission of a Letter of Support to the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board for the inclusion of the proposed Robert F. Schulkers House.
- II. **FINDING:**
  - a. That the application has demonstrated by credible evidence that the subject property meets Criterion B for its association with Robert F. Schulkers, a nationally known author and radio personality.
  - b. The property demonstrates an excellent level of historic integrity.

United States Department of the Interior  
 National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Schulkers, Robert F., House

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

## 2. Location

Street & number: 3168 Victoria Avenue (originally Boulevard)

City or town: Cincinnati State: OH County: Hamilton

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

## 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national       statewide       local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A       B       C       D

<p>_____  <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
<p>_____  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	

Robert F. Schulkers House  
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In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

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**Signature of commenting official:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Title :** \_\_\_\_\_ **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government** \_\_\_\_\_

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:  
\_\_\_ entered in the National Register  
\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_ removed from the National Register  
\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District

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Site	<input type="checkbox"/>
Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Object	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

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**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

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Robert F. Schulkers House  
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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Tudor Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation: concrete block and poured concrete on poured concrete footers; Exterior walls, dormers, and chimneys: Brick, stone, stucco, with terra cotta accents and half-timber; Trim and gables: Wood siding; Roof: Slate

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Robert F. Schulkers house was built in 1929 and is a private, occupied, single-family, 3-story home in excellent condition situated in its original location on a ½ acre lot located in the historic Hyde Park neighborhood of Cincinnati. It reflects Tudor Revival architecture with over 4300 square feet of living space. Its interior walls are of wood and plaster, and contains primarily concrete floors. It has a steep pitch roof of natural slate on wood trusses. It has 6 bedrooms and 4 ½ baths on three living levels, as well as a small basement. Befitting to the national prominence and success of Robert F. Schulkers, the home was originally configured to accommodate live-in servants. The servants maintained residency on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, and ran household functions of cooking, laundry, cleaning, maintenance and other chores from the kitchen and utility rooms located in the rear of the house. The rear of the house was separated from the front by interior doors. Staircases in the rear of the house allowed access to all floors without disturbing the Schulkers' activities in the front of the house. With the exception of modern kitchen, baths and utilities, the home has retained its historic integrity over its lifetime (Photo 001).

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## Narrative Description

### Setting

Located in the eastern part of the historic Hyde Park neighborhood of Cincinnati, the home was built in 1929 by Myers Y. Cooper (he was also the Governor of Ohio from 1929-1931). The property is located in the Kilgour Farms subdivision in Hyde Park. Charles Kilgour brought the telegraph and telephone to Cincinnati, and he formed the Cincinnati Bell Telephone Company. The vast majority of the other homes in Kilgore Farms were built around the same time as the Robert F Schulkers house. They remain predominantly residential and have all been maintained. The Schulkers House, and other homes in the neighborhood, are surrounded by mature trees, grassy lawns, and well-maintained hardscapes and landscapes.

### Exterior

The home is 3-story Tudor Revival, with complex steep roof gradients covered with slate and multiple exterior masonry textures. The house continues to feature Tudor Revival style points: steeply pitched roofs, multiple front-facing gables, an overhanging gable, half-timbering, decorative front chimney, diamond shaped casement windows, boarded front entry door, and masonry of stucco, stone and ornamental brickwork. Paint colors consist of primary cream color, with taupe trim and a deep-purple/red front door (Photos 002 - 005).

The front elevation of the house faces south and features all masonry textures of stone, brick and stucco. The chimney is a main feature and includes stucco with terra cotta accents. The chimney serves a fireplace on the main floor living room and also a fireplace in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor primary bedroom. There is a third flue extending to the crawlspace – its purpose is unknown (Photo 002).

The west elevation features painted brickwork and sunroom windows on the first level, and a stucco and a half-timber dormer permitting light into the second level primary bathroom and the third level playroom (Photo 004).

The rear elevation faces north and features painted brickwork, stucco w/ half-timbers and ample windows for all four levels of the home. Access is available to the lower level workshop, the main level garage and main level utility room. There is a small deck on the main level and a storage room on the lower level (Photo 005).

The east elevation features painted brickwork and windows serving all four levels of the home (Photo 003).

The roof is approximately 39 squares (3900 sq ft). The original slate roof consisted of approximately 70% soft Pennsylvania slate and 30% hard Vermont slate with copper ridges and flatwork laid over tarpaper covering wood underlayment. The colors were primarily grey/green with purple accents. The roof reached end-of life in 2023 after requiring high maintenance in its final years. Many of the soft Pennsylvania slates were breaking off and creating water ingress paths. Most of the Pennsylvania slates had crumbling edges and splotchy chalky-white surfaces. Some of the hard slates had oxidized to a light brown color.

In 2023, the roof was replaced with 100% Vermont hard slate with random widths and fasten with copper nails. The roof was laid over a modern water/ice barrier instead of traditional tarpaper. Colors consist of primary green/grey hues with purple slate accents matching as close as possible to the original roof colors. It is laid with an even 6 ½ inch overlap with copper ridges and copper raised seam flatwork in line

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with original construction. The only exception was conversion of slate to copper raised seam on a low-slope dormer that had a long history of maintenance and leaks (Photos 002, 003, 004 and 005).

The chimney for the incinerator is visible in the center of the roof. The incinerator is no longer used (Photos 002 and 003).

### **Interior**

The original basement consists of a small 12 feet x 20 feet storage area and 12 feet x 60 feet crawlspace all accessible only from the outside through a half-height door (Photos 020 and 021). A room addition completed in 2019 added 400 square feet of living space to the basement level and allowed access to all old and new basement areas via an internal oak staircase (Photos 018 and 022). The room addition also added the storage area below the rear hall and accessible from the outside (Photo 019).

The original main level living areas consists of a sunroom (Photo 009), living room with an original fireplace (Photo 008), entry hallway (Photo 006), dining room (Photo 011), kitchen (Photo 010) and half-bath (Photo 012). There is a main staircase (Photo 007) as well as a rear staircase to the second level (Photo 015). In 2009, the kitchen and dining room were modernized and combined. The utility room originally housed the gas-fired boiler, hot water heater, laundry equipment and laundry chute. In 2009, the gas-fired boiler was removed with the conversion to forced-air HVAC equipment. The laundry chute remains in the utility room (Photo 016). In 2018, the laundry equipment was moved from the utility room to the primary closet on the second level (Photo 025). In 2019, a family room, rear hall and small deck were added (Photos 013 and 014). The 2-car garage has been modernized with an overhead door, permanent shelving and a smooth concrete floor (Photo 017).

The 2<sup>nd</sup> level consists of a primary bedroom with a fireplace (Photo 023), primary bathroom (Photo 024), primary closet and laundry (Photo 025), three other bedrooms, including one with a full en-suite bathroom (Photos 026, 027, 028 and 029), and a hallway (Photo 030) with a full bathroom (Photo 031). There is a rear staircase to the third level (Photos 032 and 036). In 2009 and again in 2019, the primary bedroom and primary bathroom were upgraded.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> level consisted of living quarters for Birdie and James, the live-in servants for Robert F. Schulkers. There is a bedroom (Photo 034), en-suite full bathroom (Photo 035), a separate room serving as a living area (Photo 033) and a small cedar-lined storage room (Photo 037). In 2009, renovations were completed to modernize the full bath, and expand the storage area to add a forced-air HVAC unit.

The home is fitted throughout with Russel & Erwin Mfg. Co. (Russwin) mortise door hardware mounted on 8 panel interior doors and on the extra-wide front entry door (Photos 006, 007 and 030). The main level features white bronze "Warden" model hardware. The second level features glass knobs and the third level features brass knobs. In 2024, the front door reached its end-of-life due to rotting wood at its base. It was replaced by a new door having the same architectural characteristics of the original door and utilizing the original Russwin Warden lockset (Photo 006).

The home had modernization of windows, HVAC, electric, plumbing, kitchen and baths in 2009 and 2018-19. Additionally, a stone courtyard was added in 2018, a family room addition in 2019, and a new slate roof installed in 2023.

### **Historic Integrity Assessment**

The Robert F Schulkers House maintains historic integrity through its location in the distinguished neighborhood of Hyde Park in Cincinnati, its setting among well-maintained homes of similar character,

Robert F. Schulkers House

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and its well-preserved Tudor Revival design highlighting the workmanship skill of its era of construction. The home's association with Robert F. Schulkers is most significant as it is the residence he occupied while his newspaper and radio broadcasts of Seckatary Hawkins' stories reached national and international prominence.

Hyde Park is located roughly 5 miles from downtown Cincinnati and is one of its first suburbs. The development of streetcars and the telephone in the early 1900's allowed successful people to move to quieter and more spacious accommodations, while remaining physically and communicatively connected to downtown businesses. Robert F. Schulkers success, as Seckatary Hawkins reached its peak audiences, provided the resources for him to move into a stately home among other successful people.

Victoria Avenue continues to reflect an era of distinguished homes built in the 1920s. The Schulkers House setting is situated among other well-maintained homes built in the same era with a high level of workmanship and design consistent with fine homes of the time (Photos 038 and 039).

The Schulkers House maintains integrity of Tudor Revival design and workmanship. The house continues to feature Tudor Revival style points: steeply pitched roofs, multiple front-facing gables, an overhanging gable, half-timbering, decorative front chimney, diamond shaped casement windows, boarded front entry door, and masonry of stucco, stone and ornamental brickwork. The workmanship of constructing the home reflects skill not commonly found today. The laying of the whimsical brickwork requires the ability to create a field of bricks, randomly orientated in 2 axes, while maintaining perfect plumb and level corners, sills, and window and door openings (Photos 002, 003, 004 and 005).

Lastly, the feeling and association of the house is evident throughout. It still maintains the feeling and association of a high style, twentieth century tudor revival house in a prominent neighborhood outside of Cincinnati. While some modern changes and upgrades have been made, the house maintains historic integrity.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

### Criteria Considerations

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

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Literature and Entertainment/Recreation

**Period of Significance**

1931-1934

**Significant Dates**

1931, 1932, 1934

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Schulkers, Robert F.

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Myers Y. Cooper – Builder/Architect

Charles Kilgour – Developer

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Robert F. Schulkers House is eligible for nomination at the local level under Criteria B for its relation to Robert F. Schulkers. Robert Schulkers was a writer, radio personality, and the creator of “Seckatary Hawkins”, a series that began as short stories and would evolve into other mediums that became nationally known. “Seck” Hawkins was a fictional character and leader of a group of boys who met regularly in their clubhouse on the bank of the Licking River where it meets the Ohio River, based off of Robert Schulkers’ childhood experiences. From its beginnings in 1918 to the last story in 1942, they appeared in 11 books, hundreds of newspapers, 2 silent movies, and even department store advertising brochures (to name a few). At its peak in the late 1920s/early 1930s, there were millions of children all over the world following Seckatary Hawkins’ stories and joining fan clubs for the series. The period of significance is 1931 to 1934, representing the years that Schulkers lived at 3168 Victoria Avenue when the series achieved national recognition at the peak of Schulkers’ career.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

As a writer for *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, Robert F. Schulkers created one of the most beloved and enduring fictional characters of the era. It was a time when children’s sections in local newspapers were the social media of the day and “Seck” (as he came to be called) was a famed character. Schulkers began writing the Seck stories in 1918 as weekly installments in *The Cincinnati Enquirer*. The series rapidly grew in popularity and, by the early 1930’s, were distributed by Metropolitan Newspaper Syndicate to 100’s of newspapers throughout the country reaching more than 10 million households. The stories were collected into books—11 in all—and adapted as magazines, comic strips, radio scripts and three movies (including one that was shot in Cincinnati in which Schulkers and his children took parts as the characters). Fan clubs began popping up across the country, attracting hundreds of thousands of followers who celebrated Seck with parties, picnics, and galas. The Seckatary Hawkins Club was established in 1923, and by 1930 had enrolled more than a million members, equal in scale to the more contemporary Mickey Mouse Club and Boy Scouts.

### **Background Context and Beginning of Robert Schulkers’ Career**

In the early twentieth century, entertainment and news were easily and often obtained through the large circulation of newspapers in America, with over 19,000 weekly and daily papers published by 1900.<sup>1</sup> Businesses and households received weekly and daily newspapers in circulation to get local and national news. Additionally, they provided a way of entertainment. Print media was utilized to provide stories and other types of writing for both children and adults. During this time, there was a shift in the types of writings tailored towards children. Up

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Johanningsmeier, *Fiction and the American Literary Marketplace: The Role of Newspaper Syndicates, 1860-1900* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1-12.

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until the turn of the century, many writings and stories for children were aimed to prepare them for adulthood – teaching them morality, rules, and how to conduct themselves. Whereas, once the end of the nineteenth century and turn of the twentieth, a shift occurred. More adventurous and romanticized stories emerged. Stories such as *Treasure Island* (1883) and *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900) provided stories of adventure for children to lean into their imagination rather than focus on the hardships of preparing for adulthood.<sup>2</sup> It was this context of adventure media that provided the perfect formula for the introduction of Robert F. Schulkers' writing career. In a time period when new children's stories were emerging at a high rate, 13-year-old Robert Schulkers wrote his first short story for a contest that was sponsored by the *Commercial Tribune* (eventually bought and combined into the *Cincinnati Enquirer*) in his hometown of Coventry, Kentucky.<sup>3</sup>

Born in 1890 in Covington, Kentucky, Robert Schulkers grew up along the banks of the Licking River and Banklick Creek building camps and clubhouses with his friends. An adventurous child, Robert spent his childhood and adolescence exploring the outdoors which would go on to influence his writings. As mentioned above, Robert's first short story was submitted at the age of 13 to the local newspaper in Covington, Kentucky for their children's section – published on Sundays.<sup>4</sup> Titled "First Capture", it centered around a detective who helped to stop counterfeit bills that were being used in the community. Following this short story, a series of additional adventure and detective themed publications in the *Commercial Tribune* followed. By the age of sixteen, Robert Schulkers had begun to hone his skills as a writer – appealing to the imagination and adventure themes popularized in young adult literature at the turn of the twentieth century.

Robert Schulkers' Cincinnati connections began in 1911 with the beginning of his career with Cincinnati based newspaper, the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. James Harry Pence, a staff librarian with the newspaper and friend of Robert Shulkers' father was familiar with his writings and stories that had been published in Covington. Although young compared to most staff or newspaper writers at the time, Robert had the ability to produce stories that appealed to a wide generation of readers. His wide range of themes appealed to Pence who provided an introduction between Robert and the *Cincinnati Enquirer's* managing editor, William F. Wiley who offered him a job as his secretary and stenographer.<sup>5</sup> While working for Wiley, Robert wrote in a section of the newspaper called the "Little Corner for Little People".<sup>6</sup> This section of the paper was published every Sunday, featuring short stories for young adults and adolescents. Within a year at the paper – Robert had published sixteen stories for this section of the newspaper, gaining success and admiration by the young readers in Cincinnati.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Anne S. MacLeod, *American Childhood: Essays on Children's Literature of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1994, 72, 13-14, 23-24, 74, 89-90, 144-156.

<sup>3</sup> Robert F. Schulkers (hereafter RFS), untitled typescript (1936), Schulkers Papers. The Schulkers Papers are a loosely organized collection of documents and papers curated by the author's grandson, Charles R. Schulkers, in Powhatan, Virginia.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Graydon DeCamp, *The Grand Old Lady of Vine Street: A History of the Cincinnati Enquirer* (Cincinnati, 1991); RFS, resume dated Sept. 1918, Schulkers Papers.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

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### Seckatary Hawkins

While Robert Schulkers' career grew in southeast Ohio, he would go on to become most well-known for his creation of the series "Seckatary Hawkins" which would go on to inspire numerous writings, movies, radio shows, and more. Drawing from his childhood experiences growing up along the Ohio River – Robert created the Seckatary Hawkins series based on his adventures as a boy growing up in rural northern Kentucky and southern Ohio.

"The wooded west bank of the Licking River, south of Covington, had been a favorite playtime locale for Robert Schulkers and his boyhood pals. One day, he recalled, he suggested to his friends that they should form a club and hold regular meetings every day on the riverbank, an idea that was met with enthusiasm. Along the waterfront nearby was an old sunken houseboat that would make an ideal clubhouse. The father of one of the boys, who owned a team of horses, raised the waterlogged boat from the water and settled it on a sturdy foundation of logs, a safe distance from the water's edge. Once the boat had dried out, the boys were able to hold their meetings like the big men did at their big clubs. At their very first meeting, the boys selected Schulkers to write down the minutes of their doings, and, being very young and a bit uncertain in his spelling, he became the club Seckatary."<sup>8</sup>

In 1918, in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, marked the beginnings of this series. Based on his club growing up, the main character and narrator – Gregory Hawkins – would lead his friends in a series of adventures on the banks of the Ohio river. The fictional Fair and Square Club in the series mirrored many of Robert and his friend's experiences growing up along the Ohio River. Seckatary Gregory Hawkins or "Seck" became the secretary of the Fair and Square Club, which met in a similarly fictional clubhouse on the banks of an unnamed river in the Midwest. Within the series, locations such as the town of Watertown (based on Cincinnati), were based on actual locations related to Robert's geographical locales growing up in southern Ohio and northern Kentucky. His talent could be seen in his writings and ability to paint pictures of the landscapes and settings to the reader. Additionally, Schulkers' had a great talent in developing characters that readers could connect with, teaching the children and young adults reading ethics and morals.

The series appealed to young boys especially at this time, as they were able to imagine themselves rafting down the rivers, hiking in the woods, and spending leisure time out in the wilderness. While all children were able to read the stories, this was still in a time period when young boys and girls were steered towards different gendered stereotypes as children. Publications for girls focused on domestic and family ideologies, while young boys were supplied with adventure books. This was natural as it was still common for girls to be taught that they would mature to be wives and mothers. Nonetheless, the series did cross gender norms eventually and would later explode into a series that was popular amongst all groups and ages. Success with the short story publications in the newspaper resulted in a long running installment of the Seckatary Hawkins story in the *Cincinnati Enquirer* from 1918-1942 with over 1,200 published works in the series' run.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> RFS, Johnny's Snow Fortress, *Enquirer*, Feb. 3, 1918; reprinted in *Seckatary Hawkins Stories From 1918* (Richmond, VA, 2011).

<sup>9</sup> Artist's Brush is Laid Aside: Carll Williams Called by Death, *Enquirer*, Feb. 11, 1928; RFS, *The Story of Seckatary Hawkins*, n.d., Schulkers Papers.

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In 1923, the series expanded with Schulkers selling the series to an additional nine newspapers across multiple states and signing with the Metropolitan Newspaper Syndicate to assist in marketing. As it grew, over one hundred newspapers across the country would pick up the series over the 1920s and 1930s, delivering to more than ten million households.<sup>10</sup> Within the success of the series in the 1920s and 1930s, Seckatary Hawkins developed into different mediums. In 1921, Robert was living in Cincinnati with his wife Julia and had travelled on a family vacation to Cuba. Using experiences from the trip, he wrote a series of chapters with Seckatary Hawkins set in Cuba – going on to be published in November 1921 by the Stewart Kidd Company of Cincinnati.<sup>11</sup> This would be the first long publication of the Seckatary Hawkins series. Between 1921 and 1932, Robert Schulkers would go on to write eleven books.

- *Seckatary Hawkins in Cuba (Cincinnati, 1921)*
- *The Red Runners (1922)*
- *Stormie the Dog Stealer (1925)*
- *Stoner's Boy (1926)*
- *The Gray Ghost (1926)*
- *Knights of the Square Table (1926)*
- *Ching Toy (1926)*
- *The Chinese Coin (1926)*
- *The Yellow Y (1926)*
- *Herman the Fiddler (1930)*
- *The Ghost of Lake Tapaho (1932)*

### **Seckatary Hawkins Club**

In 1923, the editor of the *Cincinnati Enquirer* suggested the creation of an actual Hawkins Club, mirroring the one featured in the books. This became a huge success, with children joining the club and filling out membership applications at staggering numbers. Different newspapers across the country would enroll their own members, sponsoring different branches and hosting gatherings and events.

By August 1930, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* alone had enrolled more than 150,000 children; the *Pittsburgh Press* reported an enrollment of 50,000; and the *Milwaukee Journal* had nearly 200,000 children on the club roster. Regional newspapers sponsored most of the clubs, with local chapters led by adult volunteers. At the peak of its popularity, the Seckatary Hawkins club boasted more than a million members with branches in all forty-eight states of the Union as well as international chapters in every Canadian province and in South America, Cuba, British West Africa, Ireland, Egypt, Japan, and China.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Kay Hamilton, interview with Robert F. Schulkers, WSAI Cincinnati, May 25, 1949, audio tape, Schulkers Papers; Foreword to first edition of *Seckatary Hawkins in Cuba (Cincinnati, 1921)*.

<sup>12</sup> Gary A. O'Dell and Gregg Bogosian, "Fair and Square: Robert F. Schulkers, Seckatary Hawkins and the Literature of an Ohio Valley Childhood", University of Cincinnati, 2015.

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Robert Schulkers was very involved with the club and would travel around making appearances and doing readings for fans. To sign up, fans would send in an inquiry and registration, signing a pledge to follow general rules such as being fair, telling the truth, and other moral values (Figure 9). Some of these clubs would grow to the thousands, with the largest being the Wisconsin Club with over 200,000 members. In 1932, a picnic was held at Waukesha Beach for the members of this club to gather and over 24,000 children attended.<sup>13</sup> The club would continue to grow and by 1955 there were more than 125,000 active members in three states: Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio with almost 500,000 alumni.<sup>14</sup>

### 3168 Victoria Avenue

Robert F. Schulkers lived in two main residences while creating Seckatary Hawkins professionally. From 1920-1931, he resided at 3029 Harvey Ave in Cincinnati. The work accomplished here was foundational in the development of Seckatary Hawkins articles and his initial books, but its reach remained local to Cincinnati and a few other Midwest cities. The home at 3029 Harvey Ave was razed in the 1970's with the creation of Martin Luther King Boulevard and its site is now commercial property.

His home located at 3168 Victoria Ave (the nominated property) is where Robert lived from 1931-1934 when he achieved national and worldwide success through his radio show and when the Seckatary Hawkins Club was at its peak. He and his wife Julia purchased his home for \$42,500 during the heightened success of Robert's career as a writer.<sup>15</sup> While residing there, he published more articles and four more books, the print material reached national circulation, and he produced and broadcast a national radio show 3 times per week from the NBC studios in Chicago.

In addition to partnering with local and national media, Robert Schulkers found success with sponsorships as well. In 1932, Cincinnati communications pioneer Powell Crosley invited Schulkers to produce Seckatary Hawkins stories for a show to air on WLW. Schulkers adapted the stories, did on-air readings of them, and adopted 17 different voices to verbalize the dialog of the different characters.<sup>16</sup> This proved to be a huge shift in Robert Schulkers' career. The Ralston Whole Wheat Company heard the show and wanted to be involved, offering to sponsor the series nationally on NBC from Chicago. Seckatary Hawkins was now reaching households nation-wide when RF Schulkers initiated a 3 times a week, national radio broadcast from the NBC studios in Chicago. The program aired on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday with Ralston Cereal Company as its sponsor. This sponsorship partnered with the release of one of his books, *The Ghost of Lake Tapaho* (1932). Readers of the Seckatary Hawkins series could send in two Ralston box tops for a free copy of the book.<sup>17</sup>

Naturally, with Seckatary Hawkins being popularized by newspaper print and popular with children, the series became very popular as a comic strip – appealing to children's visual senses.

<sup>13</sup> "Seck's Picnic: What a Time!", *Milwaukee Journal*, June 19, 1932.

<sup>14</sup> Hoffman, Seck and His 500,000 Good Citizens, Pittsburgh Press, March 4, 1956.

<sup>15</sup> Carol Ellison, "A mansion and memories in Kilgour Park", *Hyde Park Living*, Vol. 42 No. 7, August 2023.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

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Comic strips became popular in the early twentieth century, providing illustration along with short stories. These often leaned towards a more humorous genre. Beginning in 1928 with the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, illustrator Joe Ebertz partnered with Robert Schulkers to create a Seckratary Hawkins comic strip. This series would go on to appear every day in the newspaper except on Sundays from 1928 until 1934.<sup>18</sup>

### Additional Cincinnati Connections

With Robert Schulkers roots in the Cincinnati area and the initial and subsequent success of his media with the city, additional ties to the community can be noted within his works. It was decided in 1929 that Seckratary Hawkins would be making a movie named *Homerun Hawkins*. It was to be a two-reel movie that will be shown in big Milwaukee theaters with a baseball theme. However, following its success, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* announced in 1930 that they were going to partner with a local theater (RKO Theaters) to remake the movie with a different cast – holding auditions at Cincinnati’s Palace Theater.<sup>19</sup> Local children auditioned for the movie to act alongside Robert Schulkers, his son Robert Jr. and Cincinnati City Manager Clarence A. Dykstra (among other Cincinnati residents). Scenes from the movie were filmed in areas of the city including the Cincinnati Zoo, Redland Field of the Cincinnati Reds, and premiered at the Palace Theater (Figure 13).<sup>20</sup> Finally, another film was created in 1931, called *Seckratary Hawkins, Detective*. These movies were made to include club members and provide another exciting medium for Seck Hawkins fans.

Robert Schulkers’ connection to Cincinnati began with his professional career at the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. As his success progressed, he developed great ties with the city – basing many of his stories off of his experiences in Cincinnati. While living at the nominated property, Robert published 4 books, 9 comics, one movie, and became nationally famous while airing on the NBC National Radio Show.

The success of the series grew so much that it would go on to be referenced in famed works such as “To Kill a Mockingbird” by author Harper Lee. A significant part of Robert F. Schulkers’ literary importance shines through the unabashed praise and respect shown to his writing by the revered American writer, Harper Lee.

As Harper tells it, she fell in love with the Seckratary stories as a young girl, when she smuggled the books out of her brother Edwin's room and read them under the covers at night. Harper, her brother Edwin, and best friend Truman Capote used to read Seckratary story chapters and then play-act out the parts in their back yards. She later wrote of the "many happy hours" she spent with Seckratary Hawkins and his friends. The ethos and moral principles of the books seemed to stay with her into her own career as a writer. Harper not only refers to the Seckratary stories in "To Kill A Mockingbird"; but she chose to express the compelling moral heart of her classic

<sup>18</sup> Graflix Multimedia, The History of Comics, [http:// www.comic-art.com/](http://www.comic-art.com/), accessed July 11, 2024.

<sup>19</sup> Seckratary Hawkins Film Ready, *Enquirer*, Nov. 21, 1930; Movie advertisement for RKO Palace Theater, *Enquirer*, Nov. 22, 1930

<sup>20</sup> “Fair and Square”

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novel in the last two pages, with a direct quote lesson from Robert Schulkers' Seckatary Hawkins story, "The Gray Ghost."<sup>21</sup>

Harper remained in contact with Robert Schulkers and, later, his grandson, Randy Schulkers, her whole life, and was a beloved member of the Seckatary Hawkins Club until her death in 2016. She would occasionally send messages to the Club members, which were read at the biennial Club meetings. Harper inscribed a copy of her own classic to Robert Schulkers, "To the dear Seckatary with the best wishes of a lifelong admirer."<sup>22</sup>

### **Decline of Popularity**

The success of the radio show would unfortunately lead to the decline in success of Seckatary Hawkins in newspaper media. Along with signing with NBC, many of the newspapers cut ties with Schulkers. In 1934, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* ended its publication and work with Robert Schulkers – marking the end of a significant era for the series from its beginnings with the newspaper. However, shortly after the *Cincinnati Post* picked up the series and continued to run it locally throughout the mid-twentieth century.<sup>23</sup>

As mentioned above, Schulkers and his family lived in the nominated house at 3168 Victoria Avenue during the peak of his career, with the prior home now demolished. In line with the decline of his career – Schulkers moved houses multiple times after living on Victoria Avenue. After living on Victoria Avenue he would live in three more houses (two in Cincinnati and one in Columbus) over the next three years.<sup>24</sup>

This time period did mark the peak and subsequent decline of popularity in the series, however. The number of newspapers nationally that carried the series would continue to decrease in the latter half of the 1930s. In 1935, the run with NBC as a radio show ended. By 1942, the Seckatary Hawkins club had ended and the last new episode was published, titled "The Gang of Usher". Reprints would continue to be used in newspapers for the next decade or so, but the vast popularity of Seck had been lost.<sup>25</sup> On April 6, 1972, Robert Franc Schulkers died from a sudden heart attack at his home on Erie Avenue in Hyde Park, Cincinnati.<sup>26</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The work accomplished by Robert F. Schulkers at 3029 Harvey Ave. was foundational in the development of Seckatary Hawkins articles and his initial books, but its reach remained local to Cincinnati and a few other Midwest cities. The home at 3029 Harvey Ave was razed in the 1970's with the creation of Martin Luther King Boulevard and its site is now commercial property.

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<sup>21</sup> "Fair and Square".

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Harry C. Kloecker to RFS, June 5, 1928, Schulkers Papers.

<sup>24</sup> Robert F. Schulkers house addresses: 3693 Grovedale Avenue, Cincinnati (1934): Herschell View, Cincinnati (1935): Tremont Road, Columbus (1936-1942).

<sup>25</sup> "Fair and Square".

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

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His biggest impact on popular culture was experienced while living at 3168 Victoria Ave. While residing there, he published more articles and four more books, the print material reached national circulation, and he produced and broadcast a national radio show 3 times per week from the NBC studios in Chicago. The home at 3168 Victoria Avenue appears to be the best association with his significance.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Joan Asche Cincinnati ca 1930 <https://sites.rootsweb.com/~ohhamilt/maps.html>

Mecklenborg, Jake, Urban Cincy, *History of Martin Luther King Drive*  
<https://www.urbancincy.com/2011/03/major-projects-will-transform-mlk-drive-through-uptown-over-next-20-years/> (2011)

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 0.488

Robert F. Schulkers House  
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Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 39.142296 | Longitude: -84.425692 |
| 2. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 3. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 4. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 16 | Easting: 722483 | Northing: 4335509 |
| 2. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 3. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 4. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Boundary is the full extent of Parcel number 039-0A06-0032-00, as recorded by the Hamilton County Auditor, State of Ohio. Auditor website accessed March 19, 2024. See parcel map for boundary outline.

**Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)**

The boundaries reflect the historic parcel of the house that is associated with Robert F. Schulkers.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Mr. G. Mark Pomeroy  
organization: N/A  
street & number: 3168 Victoria Ave  
city or town: Cincinnati state: OH zip code: 45208  
e-mail gmpomeroy@alum.mit.edu  
telephone: (215) 479-2212  
date: November 2023

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

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- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Robert F. Schulkers House

City or Vicinity: Cincinnati

County: Hamilton

State: Ohio

Photographer: G. Mark Pomeroy

Date Photographed: February 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 39 Site, viewed from street looking north-northeast
- 2 of 39 Elevation, looking north-northeast
- 3 of 39 Elevation, looking north-northwest
- 4 of 39 Elevation, looking south-southeast
- 5 of 39 Elevation, looking southwest
- 6 of 39 Main Level, foyer/entry, looking northeast
- 7 of 39 Main Level, main stairs to second level, looking east-northeast
- 8 of 39 Main Level, living room, looking northwest
- 9 of 39 Main Level, sunroom, looking west-southwest
- 10 of 39 Main Level, kitchen, looking south
- 11 of 39 Main Level, dining room, looking north
- 12 of 39 Main Level, hall bathroom, looking east-northeast
- 13 of 39 Main Level, rear hall, looking east-northeast
- 14 of 39 Main Level, family room, looking north-northwest
- 15 of 39 Main Level, rear stairs to second level, looking northeast

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- 16 of 39 Main Level, utility room, looking southeast
- 17 of 39 Main Level, garage, looking southwest
- 18 of 39 Lower Level, workshop, looking south-southeast
- 19 of 39 Lower Level, new storage, looking south
- 20 of 39 Lower Level, old storage, looking southwest
- 21 of 39 Lower Level, crawl space, looking west
- 22 of 39 Lower Level, stairs to main level, looking southwest
- 23 of 39 Second Level, primary bedroom, looking west
- 24 of 39 Second Level, primary bathroom, looking north-northwest
- 25 of 39 Second Level, primary closet and laundry, looking west
- 26 of 39 Second Level, southeast bedroom, looking south-southeast
- 27 of 39 Second Level, northeast bedroom, looking east-northeast
- 28 of 39 Second Level, northeast bedroom bathroom, looking west-northwest
- 29 of 39 Second Level, northwest bedroom, looking northwest
- 30 of 39 Second Level, hall, looking north
- 31 of 39 Second Level, hall bathroom, looking west-southwest
- 32 of 39 Second Level, stairs to third level, looking northeast
- 33 of 39 Third Level, office/playroom, looking northwest
- 34 of 39 Third Level, bedroom, looking east-northeast
- 35 of 39 Third Level, bathroom, looking west-southwest
- 36 of 39 Third Level, hall, looking south
- 37 of 39 Third Level, cedar closet, looking west-southwest
- 38 of 39 Victoria Ave neighborhood, looking south
- 39 of 39 Victoria Ave neighborhood, looking northwest

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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Section number 7 Page 4

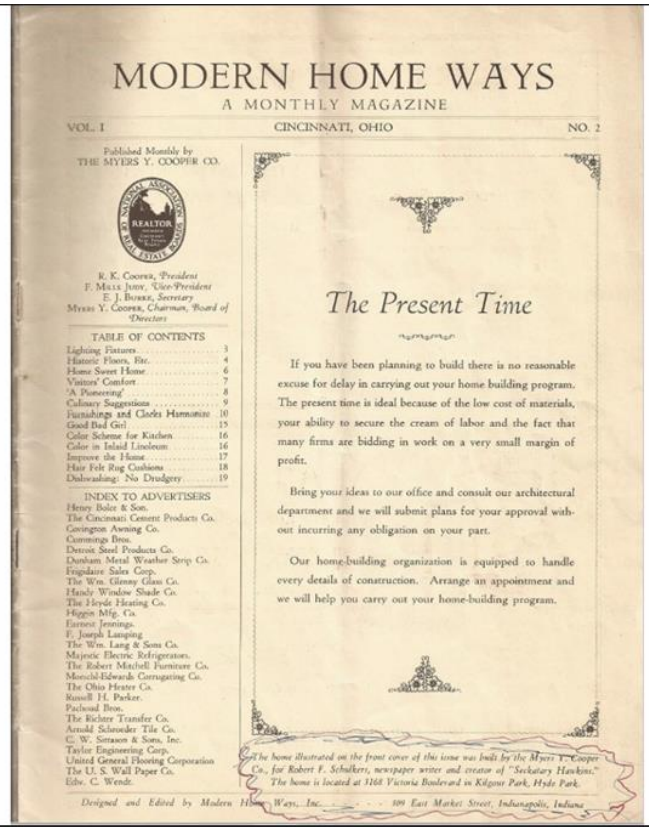
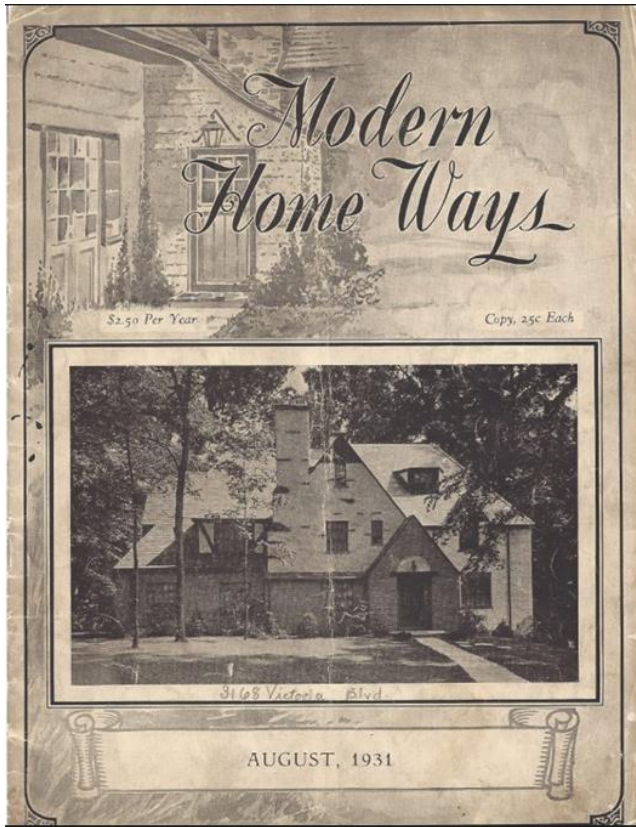


Figure 1: Myers Y Cooper, builder, sales magazine (original magazine is in possession by current owner of RF Schulkers House)

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

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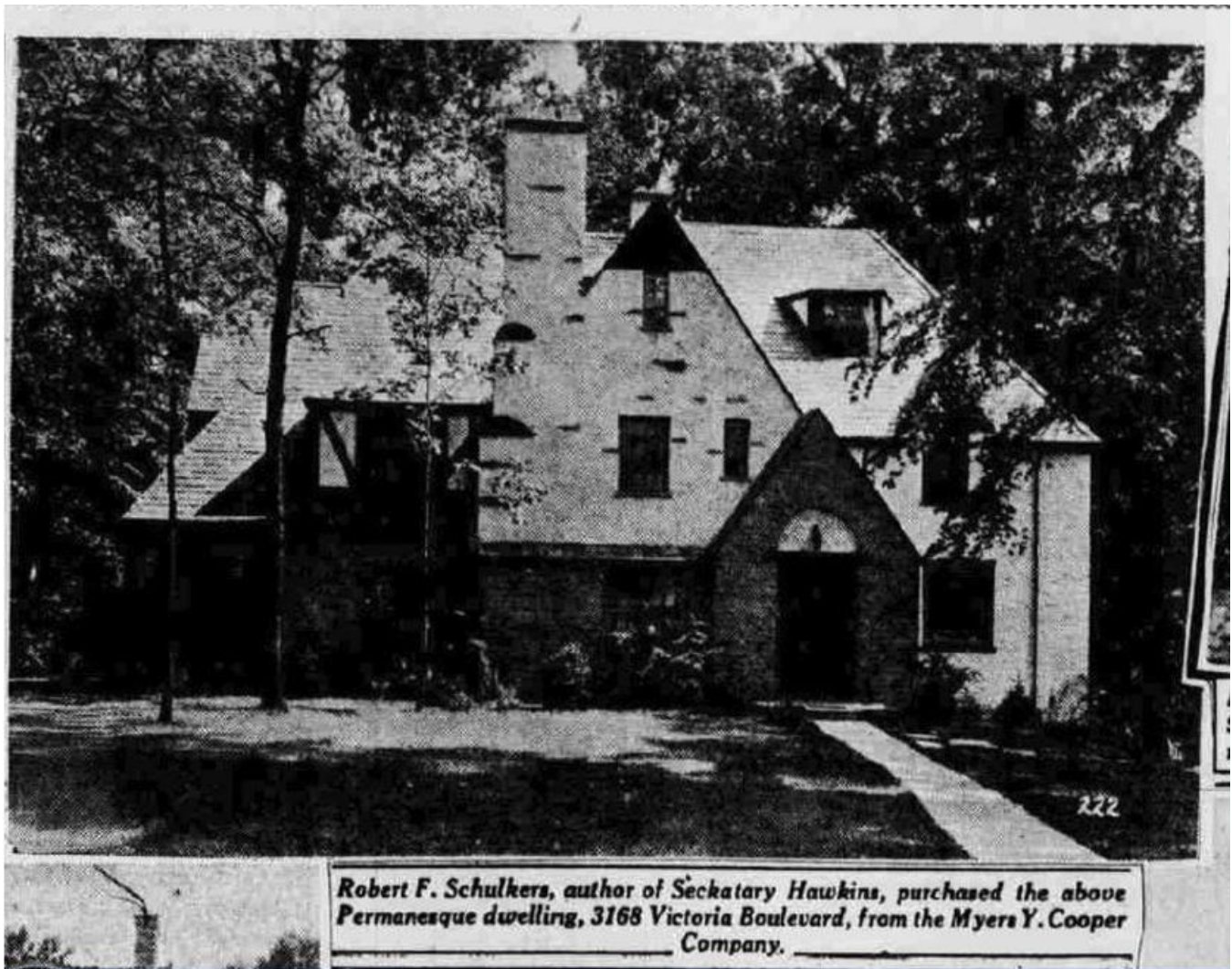


Figure 2: Newspaper announcement circa 1931 (Source: Cincinnati Enquirer)

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

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Figure 3: Framed photo of RF Schulkers House circa 1933 (original photo is in possession by RF Schulkers' grandson Randy Schulkers)

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Robert F. Schulkers House

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Figure 4: Photo of RF Schulkers House circa 1950-1980 (Source: neighboring homeowner)

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Figure 5: Photo of RF Schulkers House Circa early 2000's (Source: Hamilton County property tax assessment records)

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Figure 6: Page from Russel and Erwin Manufacturing Company catalog circa 1930

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Figure 7: Robert F Schulkers (left) with RF Schulkers Jr. on front porch of the RF Schulkers House circa 1933

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*Seckatary Hawkins*

THE AUTHOR—

*His real name is Robert Franc Schulkers, but the boys and girls call him "Seck Hawkins."*

*More than 15,000 names of boys and girls who have written him about the stories are in the author's files.*

*These letters come from all over the country, but there are some from such remote places as Cairo, Egypt; Ancon, Gatun, and Cristobal, in the Canal Zone; Havana, Cuba, and other places.*

*He has what one literary critic called the "magic gift"—of catching a youngster's interest, and—what's more—holding it indefinitely.*

*"Seckatary Hawkins" is the feature with which a newspaper can acquire the support and loyal following of the younger generation.*

Figure 8: Image of RF Schulkers introduction for newspaper syndication circa 1930s

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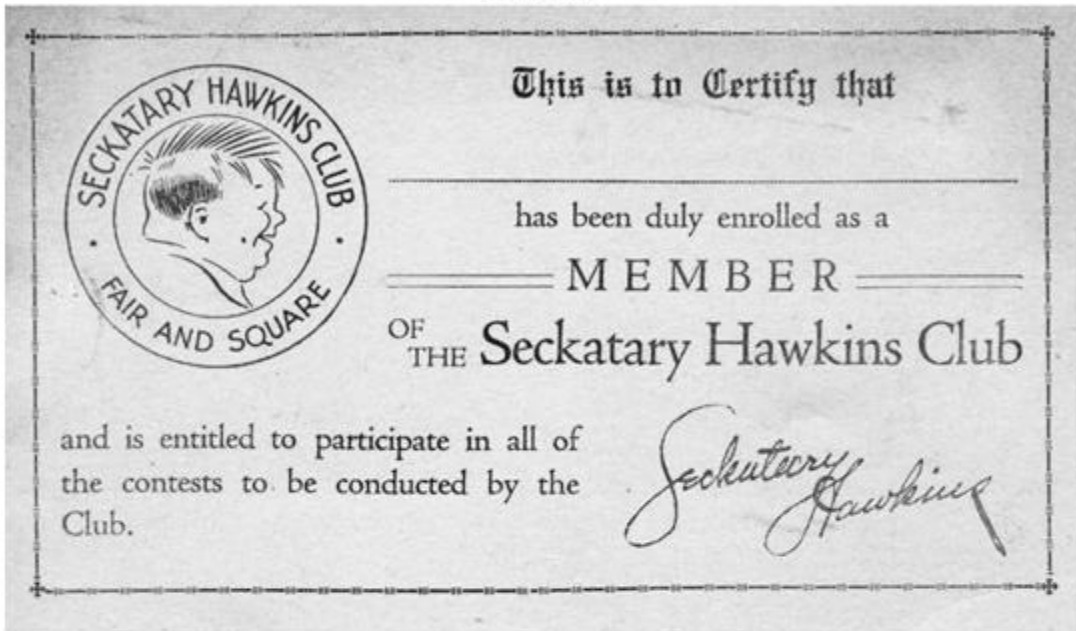
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Front



Reverse

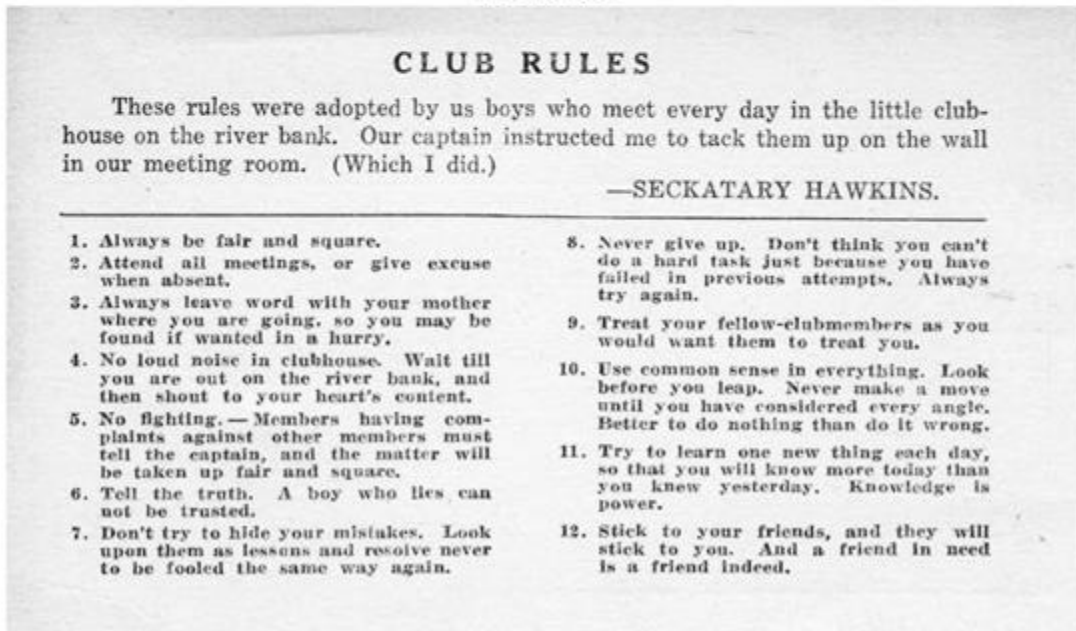


Figure 9: Image of Seckatary Hawkins Club Card circa 1930s

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Robert Schulkers and Murray McClean, who voiced Seckatary Hawkins, in publicity still for the Seckatary Hawkins Club radio show that aired nationally on NBC from 1932-33.

Figure 10: Robert Schulkers and Murray McClean recording for a radio show

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Figure 11: Robert F Schulkers (2<sup>nd</sup> from left) on the set of the national radio show with Secretary Hawkins' cast. The show aired Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays @ 5:45pm to 6:00pm September 1932-1935, for the Ralston Cereal Company from The Chicago Merchandise Mart. RFS spoke the Jeckerson parts and several other characters such as Doc Waters.

Radio shows were Tapaho, Ching Toy, Chinese Coin, Buried Treasure, Bob Longlegs and Herman the Fiddler.

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Child actor and Secretary Hawkins fan

Jackie Coogan with Robert Schulkers

Figure 12: Jackie Coogan and Robert Schulkers

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National Park Service

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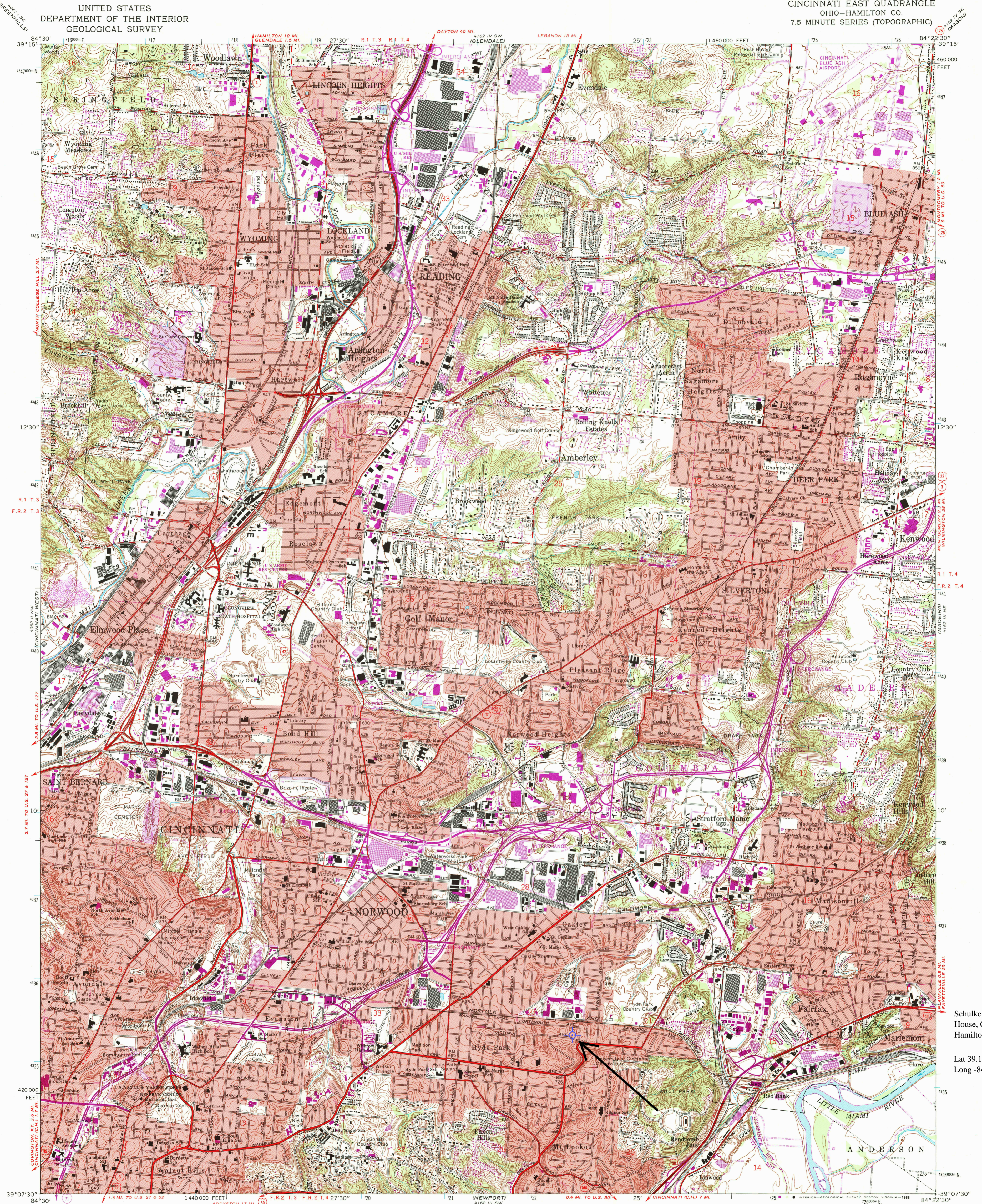
Section number \_\_\_ Page 6

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Publicity shot from Home-Run Hawkins taken at Redlands Field. Cincinnati City Manager Clarence Dykstra presents a trophy to Herbert Cohen, the boy who was chosen to play the role of Seckatary Hawkins in the film, as Robert Schulkers looks on.

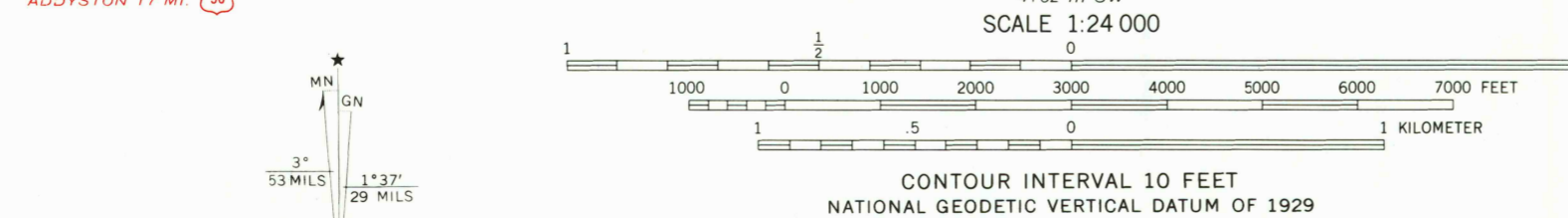
Figure 13: Historic Image from filming of Seckatary Hawkins Film



Schulkers, Robert F.,  
House, Cincinnati,  
Hamilton County, Ohio

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Long -84.425692

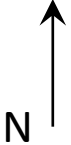
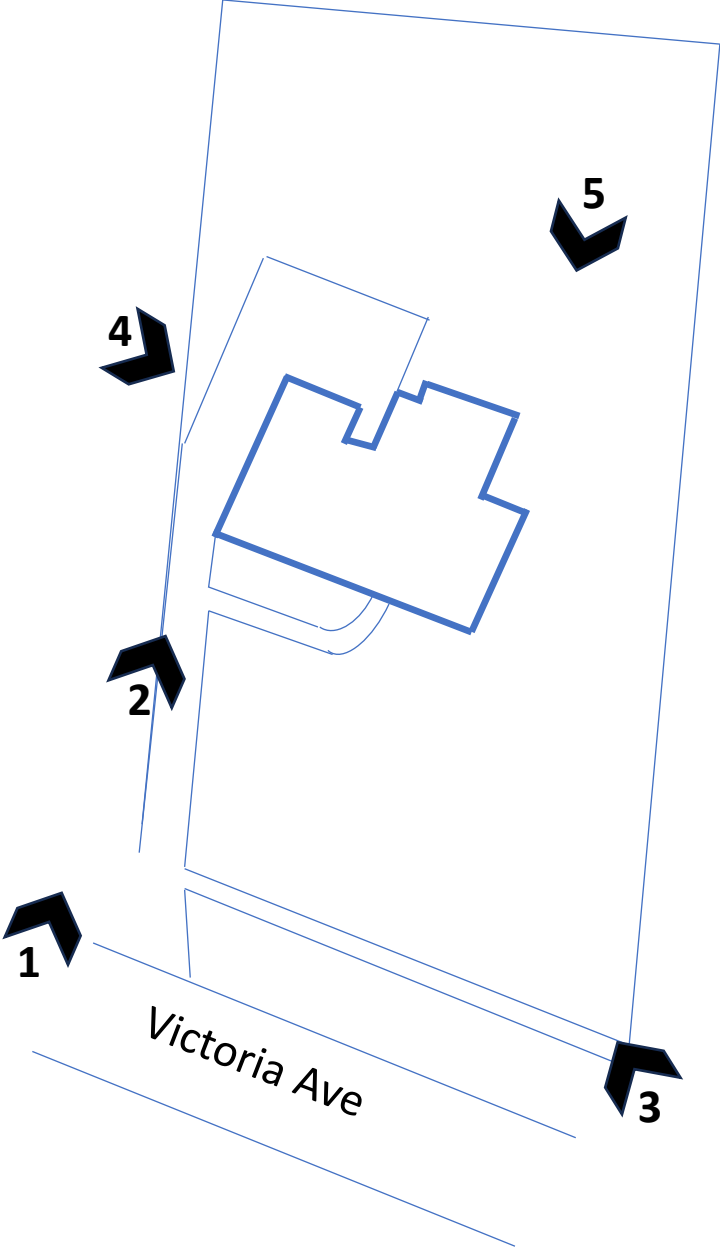
Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, USCE, and City of Cincinnati  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
taken 1949 and in part by City of Cincinnati. Field checked  
1953. Revised 1961  
Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Ohio  
coordinate system, south zone. 1000-meter Universal Transverse  
Mercator grid ticks, zone 16, shown in blue. 1927 North  
American Datum. To place on the predicted North American  
Datum 1983 move the projection lines 3 meters south and  
6 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown  
Area east of the Little Miami River lies within the Virginia Military  
District. Area west of the Little Miami River lies within the Between  
the Miamis. Land lines based on the Great Miami River Base. Dotted  
land lines established by private subdivision of the Symmes Purchase  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the  
National or State reservations shown on this map



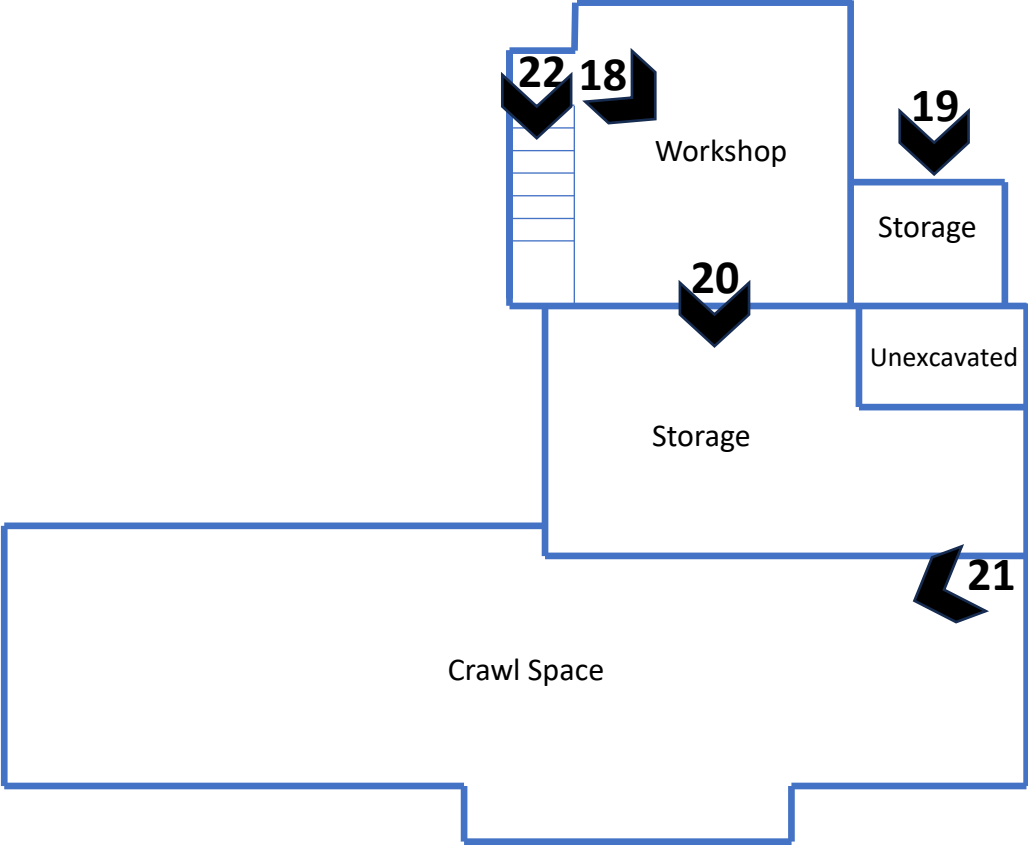
ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———  
Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route  
CINCINNATI EAST, OHIO  
39084-84-TF-024  
1961  
PHOTOREVISED 1981  
DMA 4162 III NW-SERIES V852

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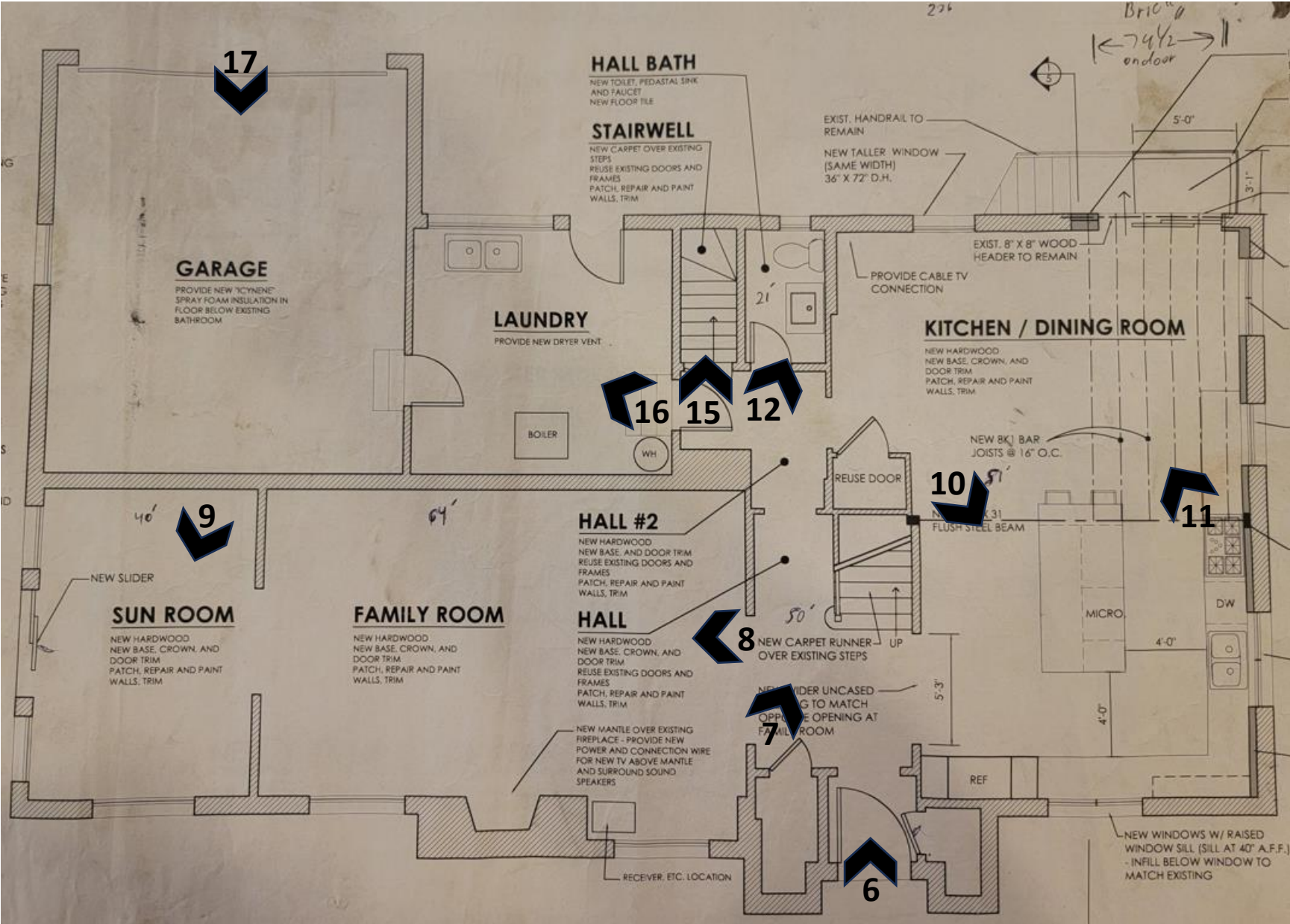
Robert F Schulkers House – Photo Key  
Exterior Photos



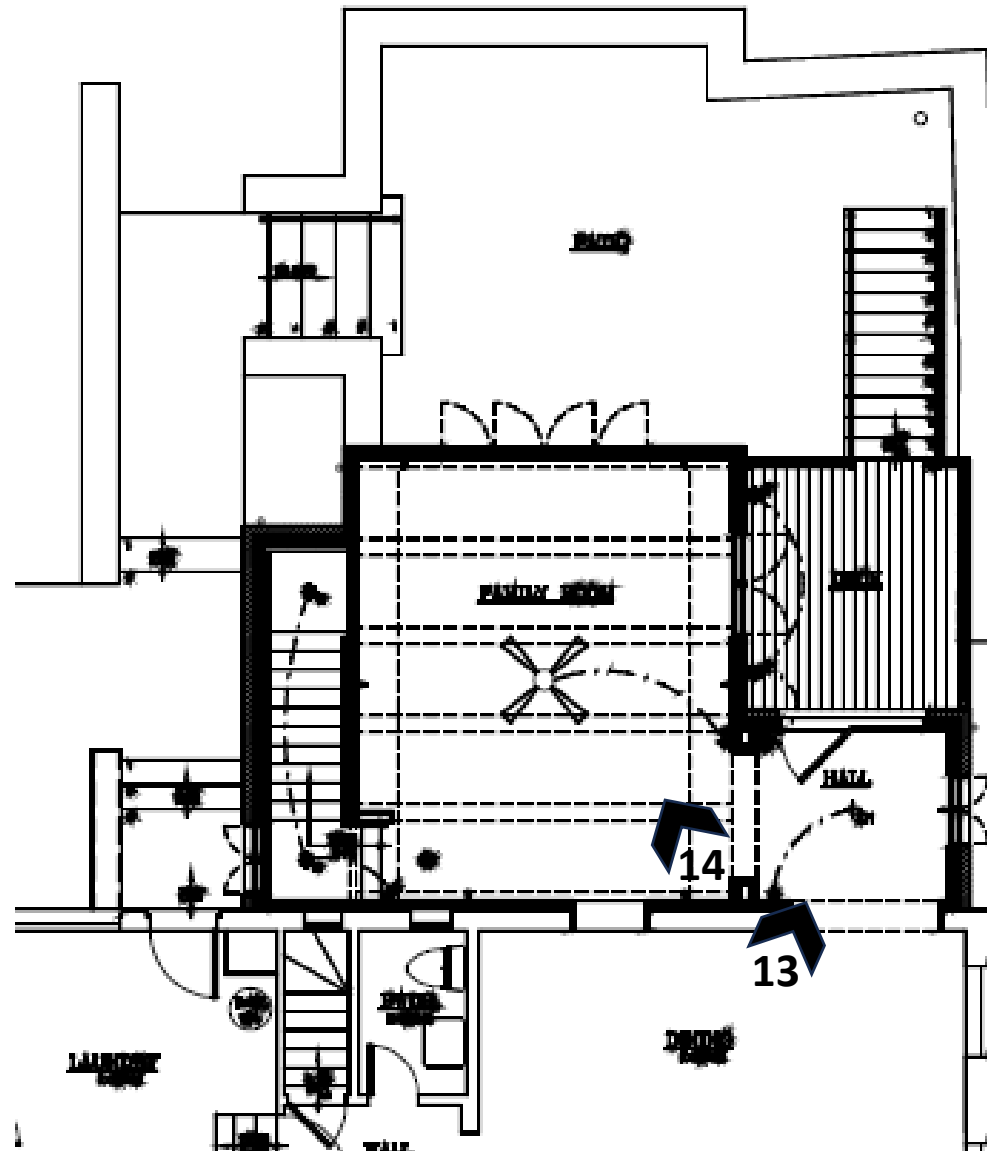
Robert F Schulkers House – Photo Key  
Interior Basement Level



# Robert F Schulkers House – Photo Key Interior First Level



Robert F Schulkers House – Photo Key  
Interior First Level Room Addition (2019)





Robert F Schulkers House – Photo Key  
Interior Third Level

