

Lithgow Building
(Board of Trade Building)
301 Main Street
Louisville
Jefferson County
Kentucky

HABS No. KY-141

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Architectural and Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

LITHGOW BUILDING
(Board of Trade Building)

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Location: 301 Main Street, Louisville, Jefferson County, Kentucky.

USGS New Albany, Indiana-Kentucky Quadrangle, Universal
Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 16/608920/4234820

Present Owner: Louisville Urban Renewal Agency.

Present Occupant: Abandoned.

Present Use: Demolished in 1975 after this report was prepared.

Significance: Constructed in 1872 and 1873, the Lithgow Building was the most magnificent building in Louisville on its opening. Designed by Henry Whitestone, it demonstrates a hitherto unknown late period of design work.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: Commenced February 15, 1872, opened June 26, 1873.
2. Architect: Henry Whitestone. Henry Whitestone was one of the most prominent Louisville architects of the Civil War period. He was born in July of 1819 at Cloudegad House, Ballynacally, County Clare, Ireland. Following training in Ireland in the field of architecture he emigrated to America. Following his arrival in 1852 he became associated with Isaiah Rogers, working with him on the Capital Hotel in Frankfort, Kentucky and on the first Galt House Hotel in Louisville. He chose to remain in Louisville and maintained an office in the city as well as one in Cincinnati, which he closed in 1858. He retired from active practice ten years before his death in 1893.

The bulk of his practice was comprised of residences for many of the prominent citizens of Louisville. He was especially proud of these residences and boasted that virtually all the houses in Louisville designed in the Italian Renaissance style were by his hand. Those residences by him which have been documented are as follow:

- Hunt-Hite Residence.....1858
- J.C. Ford Residence.....1860
- W.R. Ford Residence.....1861
- H.D. Newcomb Residence.....1859
- G. Baurman Residence.....1866
- J. Bridgeford Residence.....1869-70
- White-Carley Residence.....1869
- Joseph Tompkins Residence.....1869
- Silas B. Miller Residence.....1872

J. Breed Residence.....	pre-1870
H.V. Newcomb Residence.....	1872
E.D. Standiford Residence.....	1879-1880
Barbour-Graff Residence.....	n.d.
"Rosewell" (Barbour-Middleton-Blodgett Residence).....	n.d.
"Ivywood" (Allen Richardson Residence).....	1859
R.T. Ford Cottage.....	n.d.
"Bashford Manor"... (J.B. Wilder Residence).....	1871
"Landward House"... (Stuart Robinson Residence).....	1872
Engelhard Residence.....	n.d.

Other buildings designed by Henry Whitestone are as follow:

Second Galt House.....	1869
Whitestone Architectural Office.....	1864
Smith Building.....	1865
Tompkins Store.....	ca. 1872
Louisville Board of Trade.....	1872-1873
Louisville and Nashville Railroad Office.....	1875
Louisville Medical Institute.....	1857
House of Refuge.....	1860-1865
Tompkins Mausoleum, Cave Hill Cemetery.....	1863
Irvin Mausoleum, Cave Hill Cemetery.....	1870

3. Original and subsequent owners:

The Lithgow Building is located on lot 100 of block 15-E. The following references tracing the title of this lot are found in the Jefferson County, Kentucky Deed Books:

1865 Deed, June 19, 1865, recorded in Deed Book 122, page 328. James S. Lithgow bought a lot from Samuel Cassidy, beginning on the north side of Main Street at a point 23 feet from the northwest corner of the intersection of Third and Main Streets, thence running westward 22 feet and 4 inches, thence running northward 145 feet, thence running westward 7 feet and 2 inches, thence running northward 33 feet and 2 inches, thence running eastward 52 feet and 6 inches, thence running southward 29 feet and 2 inches, thence running westward 23 feet, thence running southward 149 feet to the point of beginning, for the sum of \$25,000.

1870 Deed, July 21, 1870, recorded in Deed Book 150, page 567. J.S. Lithgow bought a lot from William T. Wallace and Mary E. Wallace, located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Third and Main Streets, fronting 23 feet on Main Street and 149 feet on Third Street, for \$27,000.

- 1875 Deed, April 1, 1875, recorded in Deed Book 189, page 292. Lots sold by J.S. Lithgow and Hannah Lithgow of the first part, by J.W. Henning and Joshua F. Speed, trustees of the second part, and by Stephen E. Jones, J.W. Henning, and Joshua F. Speed, assignees in bankruptcy of the third part to W. C. DePauw of the fourth part of \$35,000 plus remainder of \$100,000 mortgage.
- 1879 Deed, August 8, 1879, recorded in Deed Book 226, page 424. Lots conveyed to the Louisville Board of Trade by N.F. DePauw, W.C. DePauw, and Fannie M. DePauw.
- 1879 Deed, August 19, 1879, recorded in Deed Book 228, page 477. The Louisville Board of Trade bought a lot from W.B. Belknap at the rear of the building, fronting on Third Street 32 feet and extending westward 52 feet and six inches, at a cost of \$1,500.
- 1925 Deed, March 21, 1925, recorded in Deed Book 1139, page 75. H.S. Weinbaum and Philip Weinburg bought building from the Louisville Board of Trade for \$45,000.
- 1935 Deed, March 16, 1935, recorded in Deed Book 1572, page 109. The Louisville Board of Trade bought building from Philip and Dora Weinburg and Henry and Hattie Weinbaum.
- 1938 Deed, July 15, 1938, recorded in Deed Book 1679, page 555. The Scotch Realty Company bought the building from the Louisville Board of Trade for \$10,000.
- 1938 Deed, October 24, 1938, recorded in Deed Book 1687, page 601. The Kentucky-Indiana Realty Company bought the building from the Scotch Realty Company.
- 1965 Deed, March 16, 1965, recorded in Deed Book 3952, page 336. The Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency of Louisville bought the building from Eli Brown and Sons, Inc. (formerly Kentucky-Indiana Realty Company), for \$150,000.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Jacob Smyser was the superintendent of construction. Bowling Green White Stone Company supplied limestone for exterior covering.
5. Alterations and additions:
- 1880 Repairs made to building including new glass doors at main entrance and partitions on the third floor. New Exchange Hall at rear of building built and completed February 1, 1880,

designed by Charles J. Clarke, cost \$5,000. Shortly after completion of Exchange Hall a fire starting in the basement caused \$50,000 damage. Another fire of minor nature caused further damage. The building was repaired each time.

1889 Remodeling of building including addition of two stories on the portion north of the stairway; removing the stairway and putting it and the new elevators in the court of the northwest side of the hall, utilizing the space thus acquired for new offices; refitting the large Exchange Hall on the second floor, making it a grand meeting hall suitable for meetings of the employees, as well as the Director's rooms, and a large room to be used for a commercial library; refitting the old part of the building in such a manner as to give the whole a fresh and new appearance - the entire work costing about \$70,000 and resulting in about thirty-four new offices for rental purposes.

1958 Eli Brown III began renovation costing \$175,000 including air-conditioning and steam cleaning of the exterior. Dick Construction Company did the remodeling and Dorothy Walton did the redecorating. By November 1960 two automatic elevators were installed, a Third Street entrance lobby designed by Jaspar D. Ward was created, and a ground floor restaurant, the Sign of the Bull and the Bear, was enlarged and redecorated.

1960 A mural from a building at 420 S. Fifth Street, now demolished, was installed in the Bull and the Bear Restaurant in the Lithgow Building. Martin Shallenberger, a Louisville painter, restored the mural. He also painted scenes of corn, hemp, sugar cane and tobacco on the restaurant's lobby panels. These scenes were nostalgic reminders of exchange activities that once took place in the old Board of Trade Building. The dining room was decorated with a three-panel painting by Wayne Begley, a former University of Louisville student.

B. Historical Context:

The Lithgow Building, erected in 1872-73 at the cost of \$217,000, was one of the important commercial buildings in Louisville for the use of offices. It was ideally located on Main Street, which was the heart of the thriving central business district. The building housed the growing and prosperous firm of copper, tin and sheet-iron business called James S. Lithgow and Company. Originally from Pittsburgh, Pa., the building's first owner, James S. Lithgow, later became one of the most outstanding and beloved citizens of the city of Louisville.

To pay construction costs Lithgow mortgaged the building, still uncompleted, to George Bissell, a banker and insurance man from Hartford, Connecticut, for \$100,000. Then the Spring 1873

financial crisis caused Lithgow's business to fail, and Lithgow was forced to turn over the entire property, including the unfinished building, as security to trustees Joshua Speed and James Henning. As part of the pact Lithgow agreed to assume responsibility for completion of construction of the building. When the payment was due in 1874 Lithgow failed to do so, and consequently James S. Lithgow and Company was officially declared bankruptcy. On March 30, 1875, the property was put on the public auction block. Even with the bankruptcy and the loss of his property Lithgow successfully paid his personal debts and even continued his business until he died in 1902 at the age of 90.

At the auction N.L. and W.C. DePauw Glass Company of New Albany, Indiana purchased the building for \$35,000, plus remainder of \$100,000 mortgage held by Bissell. Four years later, in 1879, the building was sold to the Louisville Board of Trade for the price of the mortgage.

The Louisville Board of Trade played a very important and active role in local commerce. The Board, organized in 1862 by leading merchants, manufacturers and businessmen, provided general public and business community daily reports of freight transactions and of the stock and produce markets, and civic and commercial projects.

With the advent of the telephone in the late 19th century, the Board of Trade Building was no longer the Exchange Hall for business transactions. It now became an assembly hall.

By the early 1900s, in the name of progress, Main Street was no longer the business center of the city. In 1916 Board of Trade merged with the Commercial Club, and a new location was sought. Because of the \$123,000 mortgage, the move to a new location was prevented until 1924, when the mortgage was lifted. In 1925 the former Board of Trade Building was sold to H.S. Weinbaum, a retired real estate dealer, and Philip Weinberg, a merchant tailor, for \$60,000. The building was used for investment purposes by leasing it for office space. In 1965 Eli Brown, III, sold the building to Louisville Urban Renewal Agency for \$150,000. The new owner planned demolition of the building for urban renewal; it was not demolished until 1975.

James S. Lithgow, the man responsible for the erection of the building, was born in Pittsburgh, Pa. November 29, 1812. In April of 1826 he was apprenticed to a copper and tin smith. In December 1832 he came to Louisville where he was employed by Messrs. Bland and Coleman. Four years later he returned to Pittsburgh to care for his ailing mother. Following her death he returned to Louisville in October 1836, where he entered into a partnership with a Mr. Wallace. They continued in the copper, tin and sheet-iron business for twenty five years. A fire in 1840 created a loss of \$25,000 and severly set the firm back. However, recovery was rapid and by 1844 a foundry was erected on the river front

at Second Street. Following its destruction by fire in 1857 a new foundry was erected in 1859 at the corner of Main and Clay Streets. Following the death of Mr. Wallace Lithgow gained full interest in the firm which prospered greatly. From 1860s until late 19th century Lithgow held various high-ranking positions: chief of the fire department; mayor of the city from 1865 to 1867; president of the Northern Bank of Kentucky; director of the Louisville Water Company; and director of the Louisville, Frankfort and Lexington Railroad and of the Elizabethtown and Paducah Railroads. He was married to the former Hannah Cragg of Ohio. Their union produced eight children, of whom six survived: Elizabeth (Mrs. Clark O. Smith), Fannie (Mrs. Jacob L. Smyser), Alice (Mrs. M. Muldoon), Hannah J. (Mrs. L.P. Kennedy), Walter (who died young), and Linnie (Mrs. W.S. Mitchell). Lithgow outlived his wife by several years.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

General description:

The building's front gray limestone facade has exquisite classical features- a row of pink marble columns between windows in all of the four floors. These windows are set back and have segmental arches, whose bases rest on the capitals of the columns. The main entryway, accessible by a stoop, projects on the first floor only and is finished with a handsome cornice. Unusual pendant drops are employed on the main cornice. A parapet resembling a balustrade is atop the flat roof. Rectangular windows on all other facades are not set back and have segmental lintels, instead of segmental arches.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Early Views

Letterhead. Lithgow Manufacturing Company, 1874. Original filed in Henning and Speed, et al vs. Lithgow, Louisville Chancery Court, Suit 29332.

Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper. New York: Frank Leslie, June 5, 1880. Drawing of interior of the busy Exchange Hall by Walter Gouter reproduced in Raymond C. Riebel's Louisville Panorama, Louisville, Liberty National Bank and Trust Co. 3rd ed. rev. 1960, p. 135.

Caron's Illustrated Business Directory of Louisville, New Albany and Jeffersonville. Louisville: Courier-Journal Job Printing, Co. and S.D. Smith, 1889, p. 62.

Illustrated Louisville: Kentucky's Metropolis. Louisville: Acme Publishing and Engraving Co., 1891, p. 60.

B. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

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Jones, Elizabeth Fitzpatrick. "Henry Whitestone, Nineteenth-Century Louisville Architect", May 1974, Master's Thesis, University of Louisville.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Johnston, J. Stoodard, Memorial History of Louisville from its First Settlement to the Year 1896. Chicago: American Biographical Publishing Co., 1896, Vol. 1, p. 249.

Williams, L. A. History of the Ohio Falls Cities and Their Counties. Cleveland: L.A. Williams, 1882, p. 549.

Louisville Board of Trade. Annual Report, Louisville Board of Trade 1880, pp. 26, 27, 33; 1890, p. 28.

Louisville Board of Trade, Journal, March 1925, vol. 10, no. 3, p. 4.

Newspaper articles:

"Local Brevities," Courier-Journal, March 5, 1872.

"Louisville Board of Trade," Louisville Daily Ledger, June 26, 1873.

"Hon. James S. Lithgow," Louisville Daily Ledger, June 26, 1873.

"Removal of Board of Trade Into Their New Quarters," Louisville Commercial, June 26, 1873.

"Board of Trade," Louisville Daily Ledger, June 27, 1873.

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"Louisville's New Departure," Courier-Journal, June 27, 1873.

"The Straitened Firms," Courier-Journal, March 27, 1873.

"Assignee's Sale," Louisville Daily and Weekly Commercial, March 19-30, 1875.

"Board of Trade, Dedication of the New Building," Courier-Journal February 6, 1880.

"End Comes," Courier-Journal, March 27, 1902.

"Trade Building Sold," Louisville Civic Opinion, April 4, 1925.

"Trade Board in New Home," Louisville Times, April 6, 1929.

"Board of Trade Building is Sold for \$60,000," Louisville Times March 3, 1925.

"Refurbishing Gives New Look to Old Home of the Board of Trade," Courier-Journal, June 8, 1958.

"Art Plays Role in the Renovation of Old Board of Trade Building," Courier-Journal, November 6, 1960.

Pardue, Leonard, "Renewal Agency Offers to Sell Old Trade Edifice," Louisville Times, April 29, 1965.

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PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in cooperation with the Preservation Alliance of Louisville and Jefferson County, Inc. Under the direction of John Poppeliers, chief of HABS, the project was completed during the summer of 1974 at the HABS Field Office in Louisville by Prof. John Haggard, (Syracuse University), Project Supervisor; David Arbogast (Columbia University), Project Historian; Mary Oehrlein, Project Foreman; Bayer Lee (City College of New York), Architect; and Mary M. Herd (University of Tennessee) and Charles Raith (University of Cincinnati), student assistant architects. Susan McCown, a HABS staff historian in the Washington, D.C. office, edited the written descriptive data in the spring of 1981, for transmittal to the Library of Congress. HABS staff photographer Jack E. Boucher took the photographs of the structures in 1979.