

**Dallas Landmark Commission  
Landmark Nomination Form**

**1. Name**

historic: Masonic Blue Lodge Temple

and/or common: Western Union Telegraph Company Building

date: 1913

**2. Location**

address: 2028-34 Main Street

location/neighborhood: Dallas Central Business District

block: 32/126

land survey: Railroad Addn.

tract size: .24 acres

**3. Current Zoning** PD

**4. Classification**

**Category**

district  
 building(s)  
 structure  
 site  
 object

**Ownership**

public  
 private  
 both

**Public Acquisition**

in progress  
 being considered

**Status**

occupied  
 unoccupied  
 work in progress

**Accessibility**

yes:restricted  
 yes:unrestricted  
 no

**Present Use**

agricultural  
 commercial  
 educational  
 entertainment  
 government  
 industrial  
 military

museum  
 park  
 residence  
 religious  
 scientific  
 transportation  
 other,specify \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Ownership**

Current Owner: Dallas Lodge No. 760 & Tannehill Lodge No. 52, Special Trustees

Contact: Mr. Donnie Swango, Trustee

Phone: 214.747.6200

Address: 507 South Harwood Street, Dallas, Texas 75201

**6. Form Preparation**

Date: 04.21.95

Name & Title: Stan Solamillo, Research Consultant

Organization: Research & Media Group

Contact: Stan Solamillo

Phone: 214.609.6904

**7. Representation on Existing Surveys**

Alexander Survey (citywide)  local  state  national   National Register  
H.P.L. Survey (CBD)  A  B  C  D  Recorded TX Historic Ldmk  
Oak Cliff   TX Archaeological Ldmk  
Victorian Survey   
Dallas Historic Resources Survey, Phase   high  medium  low

*For Office Use Only*

Date Rec'd: \_\_\_\_\_ Survey Verified: YN by: \_\_\_\_\_ Field Check by: \_\_\_\_\_ Petitions Needed: YN

Nomination: Archaeological Site Structure(s) Structure & Site District

## 8. Historic Ownership

original owner: Dallas Lodge No. 760, A.F. & A.M./Tannehill Lodge No. 52, A.F. & A.M.  
significant later owner(s): N/A

## 9. Construction Dates

original: 1913  
alterations/additions: 1919, 1970

## 10. Architect

original construction: Lang & Witchell  
alterations/additions: Unknown

## 11. Site Features

natural: N/A  
urban design: N/A

## 12. Physical Description

Condition, check one:

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

unaltered  
 altered

Check one:

original site  
 moved (date \_\_\_\_\_)

*Describe present and original (if known) physical appearance. Include style(s) of architecture, current condition and relationship to surrounding fabric (structures, objects, etc.) elaborate on pertinent materials used and style(s) of architectural detailing, embellishments and site details.*

### Western Union Telegraph Company Building

The Western Union Telegraph Company Building is a six-story commercial building, located at the southwest corner of Main and Pearl Streets, in the Railroad Addition in Dallas' Central Business District. The Railroad Addition was apportioned from land that was originally platted by John Grigsby in an instrument dated January 28, 1842 and granted by Sam Houston on behalf of the Republic of Texas.

The Western Union Building is a commercial example of the Progressive Mode and uses Egyptian details as its principle decorative elements (Henry 1993:7). Clad in Indiana grey limestone on two primary facades and brick on two secondary facades, the building also features Masonic and a few Prairie elements. It is six stories in height and includes a full basement.

The facades of the building are assymetrical. They are divided into six bays on the north side fronting Main Street and on the south side facing an alley. The facades which face east, fronting Pearl Street, and west, have been divided into five bays. The original storefront at street level included three-lite transoms in each bay, along with large plate glass windows and rusticated marble. Altered during the 1970s, it now consists of anodized metal frames and ceramic tile which have been inserted into the bays facing north, with one bay of similar construction on the east. The remaining bays on the east have been infilled with either glass block and ceramic tile or two types of ceramic tile.

The first floor features a stone entablature that is supported by stone piers. The entablature includes a frieze which is adorned with winged solar disks or *ferohers*. The *ferohers* have been further embellished with the Masonic symbols of the compass and square, are flanked by two asps and surmounted by winged scarabs. Below the frieze, the piers were decorated by angular cartouches. They are not visible, but appear to be intact beneath metal signage panels. The panels were surface-mounted to the building's facades when the storefront was altered during the 1970s.

## Continuation Sheet

Item #12. Physical Description

(Page 3 of 20 )

The second and third floors are relatively simple and unadorned and are fenestrated with one-over-one wood sash. The fourth and fifth floors have a greater floor-to-floor height than the two floors below. They feature one-over-one wood sash beneath single-light, fixed wood transoms. Four bays on the north facade and three bays on the east facade feature stone piers that have been adorned with a saddle, formed by three projecting courses, which resembles "masonry strapwork" (Henry 1993:52). The piers support a stone entablature which is embellished with simple square medallions.

The sixth floor includes a double-volume mezzanine, which originally functioned as the Masonic Hall. Its piers are adorned with pharonic busts, supported by "naturalistic foliage over a geometric armature" (Henry 1993:56). The piers support a restrained cavetto molding which has been adorned with foliated papyri blooms. A broken cornice, formed by projecting the roof plate beyond the wall surface, is located above the cavetto molding. The sixth floor is fenestrated with multi-light glass transoms and one-over-one wood sash.

The building's corners feature broken pediments which are raised above a simple stone parapet, suggesting pyramidal towers. They are embellished with paired versions of the Masonic symbols, the compass and the square.

The south and west facades of the building repeat the six and five-bay rhythm, respectively, of the other two facades. However, unlike the principal facades fronting Main and Pearl Streets, they are constructed of light red brick, laid in a running bond. They are fenestrated with a variety of wood sash.

The rear or south elevation faces an alley. It includes at street level, service doors and windows which have segmented, arched transoms. The second and third floors are fenestrated with two-over-two light wood sash. This window type continues to be used in the fourth and fifth floors, but it is surmounted by a two-light wood transom. The sixth floor includes two-over-two and three-over-three light wood sash. Four-light wood transoms are located in four of the six bays. The fifth and sixth bays feature two-over-two light wood sash in two sizes. A metal fire escape as well as four metal flues have been surface-mounted to the facade, and a brick wing wall projects above the roof of the building, at the southwest corner.

The west elevation has been left unfenestrated on the first two floors, where a smaller, two-story commercial building was located. The two-story building's original form is suggested by a coating of exterior plaster. Above the plaster line is located a recess, two stories in height, which provides light for an interior stair through small, two-over-two wood sash. The third through sixth floors are fenestrated with windows of identical size and configuration. A brick elevator penthouse extends above the roof, at the building's second and third bays.

The *Progressive Mode* has been used to define a broad collection of period commercial and institutional buildings which were designed by Lang & Witchell as well as other Texas architects from 1900-1930 (Henry 1993:7). It was based principally on the design conventions of the Prairie School, which consisted of the respective contributions of either Frank Lloyd Wright or Louis Sullivan, or both. The *Progressive Mode* also incorporated the stylistic elements of other periods such as Beaux-Arts Classicist or in the case of the Masonic Blue Lodge Temple, Egyptian Revival (Henry 1993:55).

Egyptian Revival or the Egyptian Mode was commonly used for public buildings and edifices such as libraries, prisons, courthouses, city halls, and railroad stations. It also was used for churches and

## Continuation Sheet

Item #12. Physical Description

(Page 4 of 20 )

synagogues, as well as fraternal lodges and Masonic temples. The mode first became popular in America in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Its use peaked between 1830 and 1840, although some examples continued to be built well into the 1870s (Maxwell and Massey 1994:44).

The architectural forms of ancient Egypt suggested to both Europeans and Americans a sense of permanence and immortality, heavily laden with both eighteenth and nineteenth century romantic notions of Egypt as a "Land of Mystery". Egypt was also identified as the principal source of the hermetic mysteries by two European Masons in particular, Cagliostro and Carl Frederich Koppen, in the late eighteenth century. They were responsible for initiating the use of Egyptian symbolism, iconography and ritual by the Free-Masons (Carrott 1978:109).

In 1835 John Fellows, an American Mason, continued on the theme when he penned an account which identified the rites of ancient Egypt as the antecedents for all Free-Masonic rituals. Although Fellows' work has been described at best as romantic and at worst as entirely fictitious, the publication solidified for the Masonic memberships in America a relationship between Free-Masonry and the imagery and architecture of ancient Egypt. Despite the inferences by Cagliostro, Koppen and Fellows however, the construction of Masonic Temples in the Egyptian Mode did not occur in Europe or America before the mid-1800s (Carrott 1978:110).

Architects, Lang & Witchell, appear to have been aware of the Egyptian-Masonic relationship and designed the Masonic Blue Lodge Temple as a commercial building in the Progressive Mode, overlaid with Egyptian and to a lesser degree, Prairie details. The building's date of construction and the lack of some of the principal elements associated with the Egyptian Mode including battered walls, battered fenestrations, and heavy cavetto cornices preclude its identification as such (Roos 1940:220). It is of the Progressive Mode, whose primary means of decoration is provided by the application of Egyptian elements.

## 13. Historical Significance

*Statement of historical and cultural significance. Include: cultural influences, special events and important personages, influences on neighborhood, on the city, etc.*

### **Statement of Significance:**

The Western Union Telegraph Company Building was designed by the local architectural firm of Lang and Witchell and erected in Dallas from 1913-1914. Constructed at the corner of Main and Pearl Streets, it was originally built and known as the Masonic Blue Lodge Temple by the memberships of Tannehill Lodge No. 52 and Dallas Lodge No. 760 of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons (A.F. & A.M.). Used primarily for Masonic purposes from 1914 until 1919, it was proposed as the location for Dallas' Federal Reserve Bank in 1914--an idea which did not come to fruition. After five years' function as a Masonic Temple, it was finally leased to the Western Union Telegraph Company. That tenant occupied the building from 1919 until 1991.

Chartered in 1852 as Lodge No. 52, A.F. & A.M., Tannehill was Dallas' first and oldest Masonic Lodge. The Dallas Lodge was established later, but was also one of the city's oldest Masonic Lodges. It was chartered in 1895 as Lodge No. 760, A.F. & A.M. The memberships of both, as well as a third Masonic lodge, known as Trinity Valley Lodge No. 1048, A.F. & A.M., included some of the most prominent and influential men in the City of Dallas (Swango 1995: personal communication).

Two of the many prominent Masons associated with the Masonic Blue Lodge Temple included Louis Blaylock and Sam P. Cochran. Blaylock was a 33rd degree member of the Scottish Rite, Past Master of the Dallas Lodge, Mayor of Dallas for two successive terms between 1923 and 1927, owner of Blaylock Publishing Company and member of the Board of Directors of one of Dallas' major banks, American Exchange National Bank. Sam P. Cochran was a 33rd degree member of the Scottish Rite, Past Master of Dallas Lodge, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Texas and President of the Dallas Scottish Rite Cathedral Association. He became an outspoken member of the Dallas Citizen's League (precursor of the Citizen's Council) and also sat on the Board of Directors for the American Exchange National Bank.

They were among many other masons who are closely affiliated with the history of this building and the early history of Dallas. All played pivotal roles in the economic, social and political development of the city in the early twentieth century. Western Union's seventy-two year lease of the building made it a local landmark. During that time, the company became a principle employer in Dallas' Central Business District.

Lang & Witchell was a very prominent, Dallas architectural firm during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Established by structural engineer, Otto H. Lang, and architect, Frank O. Witchell in 1907, the firm was responsible for many outstanding buildings throughout the State of Texas. Lang & Witchell also designed a number of commercial buildings in downtown Dallas during the same period. However, the Western Union Telegraph Company Building is one of a few remaining examples of the firm's work which survive in the Central Business District and it is the only building of this genre which is present in the City.

The Western Union Building's original function as the Masonic Blue Lodge Temple implies significant associations with two other important Masonic buildings in Dallas: Scottish Rite Cathedral (1907) and

## Continuation Sheet

Item #13. Historical Significance

(Page 6 of 20 )

the Masonic Temple (1941). Both are contributing buildings to the Harwood Historic District.

### Historical Context

In 1905 a Masonic Temple, built in the nineteenth century and located at 1115 Main Street, provided shared facilities for the memberships of the Tannehill and Dallas Lodges. The lodges staggered their respective meeting dates and times to accommodate each other. Tannehill Lodge held *Stated* meetings on the second and fourth Thursday of each month while the Dallas Lodge met on the last Thursday of each month (Worley's City Directory 1912:1043). *Called* meetings were held weekly. Presumably by that year, the memberships had voted to purchase land in the Central Business District as the site for a new Masonic Temple.

On April 5, 1905 Lot Nos. 17 and 18 in Block No. 32/126 of the Railroad Addition were purchased by the Tannehill and Dallas Lodges. Located on the Southwest corner of Main and Pearl Streets, the 50 x 90 foot area was acquired from A.W. Campbell, a member of the Dallas Lodge for the sum of \$10,500 (Dallas County Deed Records, Vol. 330:535).

Twelve days later, adjacent Lots 15 and 16 in the same block were purchased from Thomas W. and A.E. Griffith. The 50 x 100 foot area fronting Main Street was acquired for the sum of \$9,625 (Dallas County Deed Records, Vol. 330:560).

Within three years, a joint Building Committee had been appointed and was actively working to erect a new Masonic edifice in Dallas. Representing the Dallas Lodge were members W.M. Holland, Chairman, Louis Blaylock, Alex Cockrell, H.B. Robertson, Edward Titcher and Sam P. Cochran, then Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Texas and President of the Dallas Scottish Rite Cathedral Association. The Tannehill Lodge members included A.W. Campbell, Chairman, with W.D. Blaylock and Doctor William Folsetter (The Scottish Rite Herald, March 1919:2).

Masonic architects from the Dallas Lodge were asked by the Building Committee to guide the memberships in making their decision on what type of building should be constructed on the site at Main and Pearl. The architects prepared cost estimates and made their recommendations. Following numerous meetings and detailed briefings by two member-architects in particular, C.A. Gill and H.M. Greene, the Building Committee concluded that:

a new building. . .constructed of brick walls, fire-proof in character, three stories high, with [a] basement would cost approximately \$105,000; a building of steel frame construction, three stories [high] and [a] basement, approximately \$100,000; four stories and [a] basement [of] similar construction, \$120,000 or \$125,000, [with] the steel frame. . .to be built with sufficient strength to support three more floors when needed (Building Committee Minutes, December 21, 1909:1).

Of the three choices, the Building Committee's recommendation to the memberships of the Tannehill and Dallas Lodges was that they build a "steel frame building, four stories in height [that would be] capable of taking on three more stories" (Building Committee Minutes, December 21, 1909:2).

Little activity occurred between December 21, 1909 and November 14, 1910. Finally in frustration, the Building Committee appointed a "Committee of Two," A.W. Campbell and W.M. Holland. In

## Continuation Sheet

Item #13. Historical Significance

(Page 7 of 20 )

December of that year, they urged the memberships of both lodges to ". . .move at once with the erection of a suitable fire-proof building and authorize [the Building Committee] to make the necessary loan or loans to proceed without further delay (Building Committee Minutes, December 15, 1910:n.p.).

Progress during the next twelve months appears to have remained slow because a "Committee of Three" was appointed the following Winter. Presumably, this was necessary to provide the additional impetus to move the project forward. Sometime during this period, if not earlier, the Building Committee also made a decision to expand the project, from its original recommendation of a four-story building to one of six-stories. The Dallas Lodge appointees to the "Committee of Three" included J.A Dorsey, J.W. Phelps and L.B. Davis (Building Committee Minutes, December 21, 1911:n.p.).

The memberships of both lodges had voted to accept the Building Committee's recommendation of 1909 and erect a four-story building with a full basement. But there was a desire to contain construction costs, so much so, that the decision was made to clad two and not four sides of the building in limestone. Limestone would be used only on the facades facing Main and Pearl. Brick, a less expensive building material, would be used for the facade facing an alley to the south and one facing the interior of the block to the west.

Building Permit No. 435 was issued to the "Masonic Temple Ass'n." on March 30, 1912 by the City of Dallas. However, it was for a "6 Story Reinforced Concrete Bldg." With an estimated cost of construction valued at \$150,000, it appears that the memberships may not have been fully informed about the Building Committee's plans for the new temple nor what the real cost of the undertaking was. (Building Official's Record, 1910-1912:109).

On August 20, 1912 they voted to secure a loan for \$80,000 and raise only an additional \$35,000 - \$40,000 from members for the construction of the Masonic Blue Lodge Temple. This produced an initial shortfall of some \$30,000. \$70,000 of the loan amount was provided by a Mrs. C.C. Arnold (Dallas Lodge Minutes, August 1912:3).

Sometime in 1913 however, the memberships were presumably offered the proposal of constructing two additional stories by the Building Committee. Reassured by the fact that the additional cost could be offset by leasing out the three lower floors to a commercial tenant, the members were requested to approve and provide the necessary funds to finance the expanded project--a challenge which they accepted.

A resolution was also presented to the memberships of the Dallas and Tannehill Lodges to authorize the "signing of a contract for the paving of Pearl Street, adjacent to the property owned by the two lodges [in addition] to contract[ing] for the plac[ement] of electrical lamps in front of said property" (Dallas Lodge Minutes, June 1913:41). It passed unanimously and the paving contractor hired was Klein Bros. Company, Inc.

Hughes-O'Rourke Construction Company, Inc. was selected as the General Contractor for the building. The company was officed on the fourteenth floor in the Praetorian Building at 1501 Main Street. Its officers included Owen Hughes, President, A. O'Rourke, Vice-President, and W.E. Weatherford, Secretary. By April 1913, Hughes-O'Rourke had completed excavating and pouring the foundations and was raising the steel frame.

## Continuation Sheet

Item #13. Historical Significance

(Page 8 of 20 )

Hughes-O'Rourke's subcontractors and suppliers included such companies as Federal Plate Glass Company, Beilharz Stone Yard, G.W. Owens Lumber Company, Southern States Steel Company (lath and channel iron), Southern Wire and Iron (elevator enclosures), Vilbig Brothers (sand and gravel), and Mosher Manufacturing Company (Lang & Witchell, Requests for Payment 1914:n.p.).

The Masonic Blue Lodge Temple's cornerstone was laid on August 23, 1913 (The Scottish Rite Herald, Vol. 4, No. 6:n.p.). It contained a copper box in which were deposited:

a copy of the 1912 proceedings of the Grande Lodge of Texas, A.F. & A.M.; proceedings of the Grand Commandery of Texas; proceedings of the Grand Chapter of Texas; proceedings of the Grand Council of Texas; roster and by-laws of Tannehill Lodge No. 52; roster and by-laws of Dallas Lodge No. 760; roster and by-laws of Trinity Valley Lodge No 1048;. . .copies of the daily newspapers of August 22, [1914]; roster of Dallas Chapter No. 1, Order of the Eastern Star; catalogue of Baylor University and [the] College of Pharmacy; [a] lecture on Christian Science by Kimball. . .a silver plate by Hughes & O'Rourke [sic], the builders; coins and [business] cards from W.D. Blaylock (son of Louis Blaylock) and others (The Scottish Rite Herald, Vol. 4, No. 6:n.p.)

The building's final price tag was in excess of \$185,000, or \$65,000 over the original estimate of 1909. Despite the increased cost, it was described by a local member-journalist as "one of the most beautiful and pretentious Masonic structures in the Southern States" (The Scottish Rite Herald, Vol. 5, No. 5:3).

A commercial tenant, Lone Star Insurance Company, finally agreed to occupy the building's lower floors and a three-year lease was signed on August 1, 1913 before the corner stone had even been laid. Regrettably, it was only for the token sum of \$100 a month (Dallas Lodge Minutes August 1913:183).

In the Winter of 1913 there appears to have been a growing concern on the part of the Masonic memberships that the project's costs were becoming excessive. At the same time, there were rumors of pending legislation in Washington which would create Regional Reserve Banks and the City's officials had begun scrambling in an attempt to get one of the banks to locate to Dallas. There was some hope among the memberships that they could possibly lease the entire building to offset the cost overruns.

The Federal Reserve Act was finally passed by Congress on December 23, 1913. On April 2, 1914, Dallas was announced as the site of one of the nation's twelve Federal Reserve Banks. This culminated months of intense campaigning by the Chamber of Commerce, the Dallas Cotton Exchange, and the *Dallas Morning News*, in addition to the efforts of politicians, bankers and prominent businessmen representing the commercial interests of the entire city (Payne 1994:52).

Following the announcement, the *Dallas Morning News* and the *Scottish Rite Herald* proposed the Masonic Blue Lodge Temple as the best possible location for the new Federal Reserve Bank:

It will be offered as headquarters for the Regional [Federal] Reserve Bank. . .[It] is strictly fireproof, located on two of the widest streets in the city, [and has a] twenty-foot alley in the rear. [The building also has] plate glass windows throughout, and [an] ample vault room. From these standpoints. . .it has superior advantages [over] any other building in the City (The Scottish Rite Herald, June 1914:3).

## Continuation Sheet

Item #13. Historical Significance

(Page 9 of 20 )

However, to the disappointment of those involved in attempting to make the deal happen, Federal banking officials instead opted for another site. The Federal Reserve Bank purchased and located its facilities in the old Linz Building at 1101 Commerce Street, in offices formerly occupied by Shuttles Brothers & Lewis, Inc., Wholesale Jewelers (Worley 1912:950). Hubbell & Green were chosen as the architects for the Linz's \$60,000 renovation (Dallas Morning News, July 4, 1915:8).

With much fanfare, the Tannehill and Dallas Lodge memberships dedicated and moved into the Blue Masonic Lodge Temple in the Summer of 1914. Formal motions were presented to and passed by the memberships:

allowing [the] lodge[s] to install [their] officers in the new building. . .and also appoint[ing] someone to inspect the quarters. . .in regard to its being a proper place to hold Masonic meetings [so that the lodges could] move into [those] quarters on or about July 1 (Dallas Lodge Minutes, June 1914:183).

Their exuberance about the new building appears to have been tempered however, because of the high cost of the undertaking. There had been a flurry of financial transactions which were made from the Summer of 1913 through the Summer of the following year. Motions had been passed by both lodges, authorizing the transfer of "all funds on hand" to the building committee (Dallas Lodge Minutes, August 3, 1913:41).

These were in addition to numerous short-term notes in amounts ranging from \$1,000 to \$80,000 which were drawn on American Exchange National Bank and signed by Blaylock and Cochran (AENB Notes: 1914). Individual members typically contributed in smaller sums, from \$50 to \$250 (List of Contributors to the Building Fund 1914:n.p.). The larger amounts necessary to keep the project going were provided by the notes from American Exchange National Bank. Many of these notes were extended and over the course of the following four years, the memberships of the two lodges found themselves increasingly burdened by the debts incurred by the project.

Finally in 1918, Western Union Telegraph Company indicated an interest in occupying not only the three lower floors of the Dallas Blue Lodge Temple, but the entire building. The corporate offices for what it called "the Gulf Region" were at the time, located in the Trust Building at 801-03 Main Street. Western Union had been experiencing unprecedented growth since 1910 and needed a substantial increase in office space.

This could not have been more timely because it brought a sorely needed cash infusion into the treasuries of both lodges. A sum of \$480,000 was received from Western Union in exchange for a twenty-year lease. Following the agreement with Western Union Telegraph Company in 1919, the memberships of the Tannehill and Dallas Lodges formed another committee to search for a building site. After some consideration, the memberships voted instead to purchase Turner Hall, an aging property that had been built and occupied by the Dallas Turnverein Association since 1887. With a major financial burden finally removed and their treasuries replenished, the memberships were not at all eager to erect another edifice. Turner Hall was located at the corner of Harwood, Young and Canton Streets, directly across from the Scottish Rite Cathedral.

## Continuation Sheet

Item #13. Historical Significance

(Page 10 of 20 )

Having purchased the building, they were able to still hold regular meetings and the political turmoil which overtook the City of Dallas between 1920 and 1927 precluded any other undertaking. As a result, they waited almost twenty years before constructing another building--the Masonic Temple at 507 South Harwood in 1941.

Building Permit No. 91 was issued to W.B. Jansen on behalf of Western Union "to remodel [sic] [the] interior" of the Dallas Blue Lodge Temple on January 15, 1920 (Building Official's Record, 1916-1920:131). The cost of the renovation was \$25,000 (Dallas Morning News, January 16, 1920:n.p.).

Western Union's new location was listed in the City Directories of 1920 and 1921 with "(Masonic Temple)" following the company's name and address. Within two decades however, the masonic origins of the building were all but forgotten by the general public, and the building assumed the name of its tenant.

Between 1910 and 1930, Western Union's revenues increased by 300 percent, from \$34,000,000 to \$133,000,000. Between 1920 and 1940, it led the industry in innovation and new technology. The company replaced its earlier, nineteenth century iron wire with the more efficient copper wire and laid direct trunk wire circuits between major cities to increase signal traffic (Penrose 1956:14).

It also established switching centers in cities such as Dallas and Fort Worth during the mid-1930s to serve ever larger geographic areas. Horton's reperforator System for telegraphic communication was introduced from 1933-1934 to replace the costly and time-consuming method of pasting down tape on blanks, transferring the blanks by conveyors around large floor areas, and then typing them out on Simplexes to wire to other relay offices and then onto their destinations (Penrose 1956:26).

Western Union pioneered the development of new metals for use in the manufacture of wire for telegraphic cables. A nickel-iron alloy called "permalloy", which increased signal traffic by four to six times, became the principle component for the company's transatlantic cables (Penrose 1956:17).

It acquired a competitor, Postal Telegraph in 1943, but was required by Congress to divest itself of its international networks. As a result of the divestment and recurring labor problems, the next twenty years were especially difficult for the company (Gallagher 1971:10). It rebounded slightly from 1963-1973 but by the 1980s it was obvious that it was not keeping pace with the rapid technological changes which were occurring in the telecommunications industry. As a result, the company continued to lose significant market share. Within a decade, Western Union filed for bankruptcy. It abandoned facilities all over the country, including its Dallas location at 2028-34 Main Street in 1991 (Swango 1995: personal communication).

## 14. Bibliography

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**Continuation Sheet**

Item #14. Bibliography

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## 15. Attachments

District or Site Map  
 Site Plan  
 Photos (historic & current)

Additional descriptive material  
 Footnotes  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Source(s) of Data:

### Interviews:

Swango, Donnie, Past Master and Secretary of Dallas Lodge. Interview with Stan Solamillo.  
Written notes. 21 March, 17 April, 18 April, 28 April 1995.

<b>Designation Merit</b>
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- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>A. Character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Dallas, State of Texas or the United States. <u>  X  </u></p> <p>B. Location as the site of a significant historical event. <u>          </u></p> <p>C. Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural and development of the city. <u>  X  </u></p> <p>D. Exemplification of the cultural, economic, social or historical heritage of the city. <u>  X  </u></p> <p>E. Portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style. <u>          </u></p> <p>F. Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or specimen. <u>  X  </u></p> <p>G. Identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city. <u>  X  </u></p> | <p>H. Embodiment of elements of architectural design, detail, material or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation. <u>          </u></p> <p>I. Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites or areas which are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on historic, cultural or architectural motif. <u>  X  </u></p> <p>J. Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar feature of a neighborhood, community or the city. <u>  X  </u></p> <p>K. Archaeological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories or historic or prehistoric value. <u>          </u></p> <p>L. Value as an aspect of community sentiment of public pride. <u>  X  </u></p> |
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<b>Recommendation</b>
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The Designation Task Force requests the Landmark Commission to deem this nominated landmark meritorious of designation as outlined in Chapter 51 and Chapter 51A, Dallas Development Code.

Further, the Designation Task Force endorses the Preservation Criteria, policy recommendations and landmark boundary as presented by the Department of Planning and Development.

Date:

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Kate Singleton, Chair  
Neighborhood Designation Task Force

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Jim Anderson, Urban Planner  
Historic Preservation

**Exhibit A**

