

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

Northampton

Address 1 King Street

First National Bank

Present use Pioneer National Bank

Present owner Pioneer National Bank

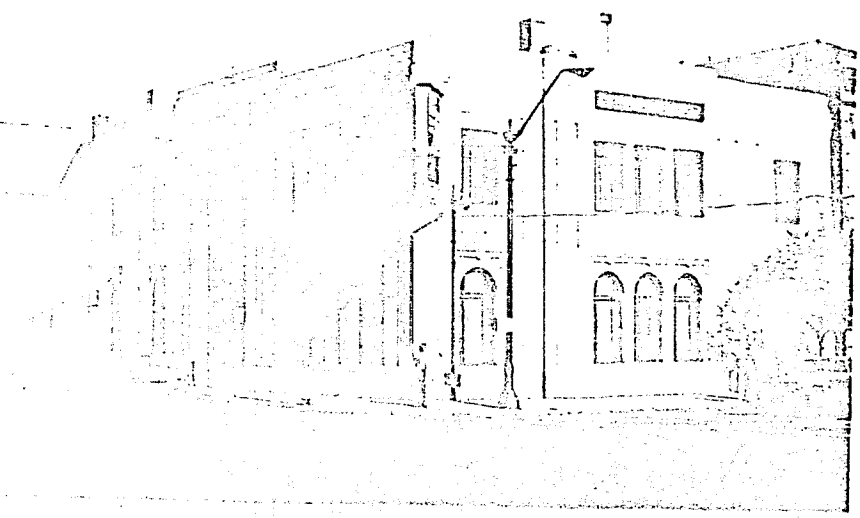
Description:

1928

Date January 7, 1928
Source Daily Hampshire Gazette

Style Art Moderne-Art Deco

Architect J. Williams Beals & Sons



Location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.

Exterior wall fabric

Outbuildings (describe) none

Other features Magnificent carving in low relief; bronze doors cast in a beautiful pattern. Interiors include many original fixtures, stained glass skylight

Altered no Date

Moved no Date

5. Lot size:

One acre or less x Over one acre

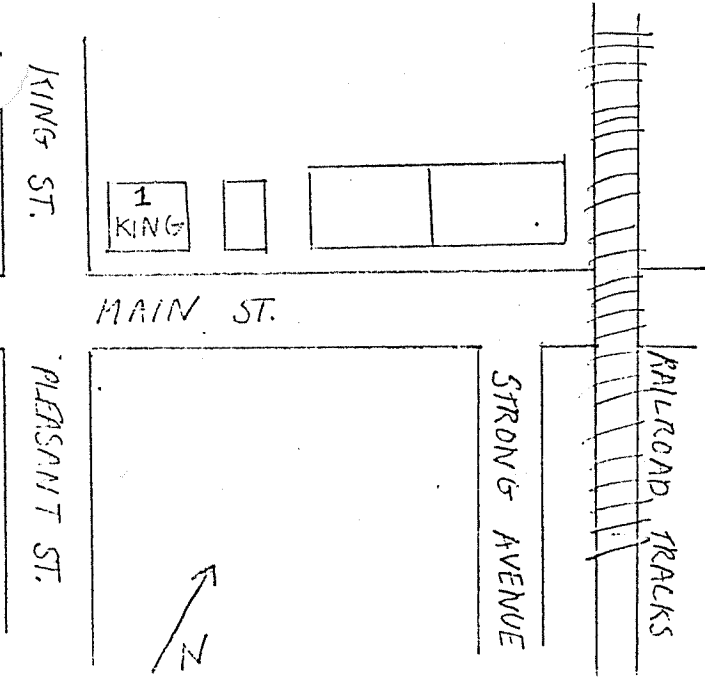
Approximate frontage 50 feet

Approximate distance of building from street borders sidewalk

6. Recorded by C. Dubie

Organization Northampton Historical Commission

Date April 1, 1975



DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
 USGS Quadrant _____
 SHC Photo no. _____

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) First National Bank

Original use Bank

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates none

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science/ invention	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social/ humanitarian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/>	Military	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	Political	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Community development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

The bank, 1928, by J. Williams Beal and Sons, is in the style which has recently become fashionable again, the so-called Art Moderne or Art Deco (a name derived from the 1925 Paris Exposition of "Arts Decoratifs"). This style was akin to the art nouveau in that the designers believed that every element of the building should correspond to bronze doors and the magnificent bronze and marble work and stained glass of the interior follows the same pattern of stylized natural forms. Typical of the Art Deco approach to design is the geometric character of the ornament and the fact that the carving does not project from the surface but rather is cut back into the stone so that one has a self-contained, rather cubic outer mass. Northampton is fortunate in having so splendid an example of this style; in such predominantly Victorian towns one seldom finds such a completely conceived Art Deco building.

--Helen Searing

The Pioneer National Bank faces the Hampshire County Courthouse across King Street. The junction of King, Pleasant, and Main Streets has long served as a focal point of public activity. The Pioneer Bank was the site of the first post office in 1792. In 1818, the oldest continuous county fair in the United States took place at the junction of Main and King Streets and on up to the Old Church. Cattle were exhibited in the streets. The old town hall, formerly at the east corner of the Courthouse lot, held large displays of local manufactured products.

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.) Daily Hampshire Gazette January 7, 1928