

WASHINGTON

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only
received
date entered

See Instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic *Graham Building*

and/or common *Graham Building*

2. Location

street & number *33 South Stolp Avenue*

N/A not for publication

city, town *Aurora*

N/A vicinity of

congressional district *15th*

state *Illinois 60506*

code *012*

county *Kane*

code *089*

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<i>N/A</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name *Old Second National Bank, Trust #2715 (Dwight and Victor Avram)*

street & number *37 South River Street*

city, town *Aurora*

N/A vicinity of

state *Illinois 60506*

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. *Kane County Court House*

street & number *719 South Batavia Avenue*

city, town *Geneva*

state *Illinois 60134*

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title *Historic Aurora Walking Tour*

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date *May 1979*

federal state county local

depository for survey records *Department of Community Development, Aurora City Hall*

city, town *Aurora*

state *Illinois 60505*

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Graham Building was designed and built as a Prairie School Style, eight storey, commercial and office structure sited within a block of two and three storey commercial buildings. The street and river facades are divided into three vertical segments of varying sizes, placed symetrically.

It is a steel-reinforced concrete building of trapezoidal plan shape, with a flat roof. The running-bond, modular brick is set with raked horizontal, and plain cut vertical, mortar joints. The first floor area of the street facade is finished in polished granite.

The wood-frame, double-caseament with transom windows are slightly recessed and set in seven rows, in groups of one, four and one. These are located between pilasters which form the vertical divisions, on the street and river facades of the building. The two side facades have common double-hung windows. The two front entrance openings, are symetrically positioned in the end bays of the structure. The double-leaf entry doors are recessed about four feet from the edge of the openings.

The decorative ornamentation is found on the Stolp Avenue and Fox River facades only. This was done in anticipation of taller buildings to be constructed at a later time, adjacent to and covering these two plain facades. The detailed, repetative ornament of the building is confined to the horizontal bands of terra-cotta and brick string-coursing at the cornice line and immediately below the second storey windows. The string-coursing at the cornice can be seen on all sides of the building, and the terra-cotta ornament is at a larger scale at this height enabling the pedestrian to see it at the eighth storey on both the street and river facades. Each row of windows on these facades has a smaller scale terra-cotta ornament detail in the edge of the line of connected sills. The pilaster corners of the middle bay have brick in staggered, stepped-back edges (as in vertical string-courses) amplifying the structural system, and visually reducing the larger size of the center bay.

The only changes to the exterior have occured at the first-floor entrances: the light fixtures were removed; and the original wood-frame and glazed entrance doors, and wood-frame windows were replaced with new aluminum and glazing.

The building's second floor plan is repeated on floors three through eight, with several rental office spaces of various sizes on each floor. All of the spaces open onto a foyer adjacent to the stair-well and two elevators located along the north wall of the building. The plan of the first floor contains the entrance lobby to the upper floors by elevator or stair, and retail rental space with a separate street entrance.

The interior finishing details were modest at best and very simple in design. Modernization over the years has altered much of the woodwork and partitioning as a result of changes made by and/or for different tenants.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates *drawings dated 1924*
building dated 1926 **Builder/Architect** *William Graham, builder - George G. Elmslie architect*

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Graham Building is significant as an example of George Grant Elmslie's architectural designs. Elmslie, who was a prominent student of Louis H. Sullivan, is most well known for the work he did in partnership with William G. Purcell. After the partnership dissolved, his work in Aurora began with the Old Second National Bank (started 1921 - completed 1924) and ended with the Healy Chapel (1926 drawings). He completed five buildings in total, the Graham Building was next to last. Two of his five structures, the Keystone Building and the Old Second National Bank, previously were placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Of the five Elmslie/Aurora buildings, the Graham is the tallest at eight storeys; the most recently constructed of his four office buildings; and, it exhibits an ornamental restraint not seen in the others.

William Graham, Elmslie's client and building owner, was also the general contractor for the nominated structure, and the other Elmslie structures in Aurora. Graham immigrated to Aurora from Nova Scotia, Canada in the 1890's, becoming a general contractor of area prominence. Graham owned the namesake building until his death in the early 1950's.

A comparison of the Graham Building to the Keystone Building, a preceding Elmslie structure, immediately across Stolp Avenue, reveals that: the Keystone was designed to integrate into the existing three-storey scale of the pedestrian streetscape, while the Graham rises eight storeys high, towering above its neighboring structures; and, while the Keystone displays an abundance of terra-cotta ornament, brightened with colored glazes, the Graham's decorative elements are smaller in size, lacking in additional colors and limited to the sills and cornice line. In spite of their obvious differences; both buildings have/not so obvious, stylized lattice infill of the arch area in front of the recessed portion of the front entrance opening.

Elmslie also took care to give equal attention to what other architectural designers have often treated with indifference, the river facade. In essence, he designed a building with two front facades. Both the same, with the exception of a smooth granite facade on the first floor, street side.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Gebhard, David, written correspondence, Santa Barbara, California, 1974. re Elmslie/Aurora
2. Elmslie, G.G., blue-prints of Graham bldg., Univ. of Minnesota Arch. Archives, 1980.
3. Matthew, John, telephone interview, Sep. 1980. re association with Wm. Graham since 1932.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 0.07 acres

Quadrangle name Aurora North, Illinois

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UMT References

A

1	6	3	9	0	6	2	0	4	6	2	3	4	6	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone		Easting				Northing									

C

Zone		Easting				Northing									

D

Zone		Easting				Northing									

E

Zone		Easting				Northing									

F

Zone		Easting				Northing									

G

Zone		Easting				Northing									

H

Zone		Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property occupies lot 4 and most of lot 3 in Block 1 of Island Avenue Addition to the City of Aurora, and is roughly 45' wide by 70' deep.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Deborah J. Kramp

organization - date 15 October 1980

street & number 727 South Fifth Street telephone (312) 892-1002

city or town Aurora state Illinois 60505

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature David Kenney

title Director date 1/2/81

For HCRS use only I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	date
Keeper of the National Register	date
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

STATE ILLINOIS

Date Entered MARCH 19, 1982

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Unity Church	Mattoon Coles County
Masonic Temple	Aurora Kane County
Bane, Warren, Site (M1-5)	McLean County
Rutherford House	Alton Madison County
Graham Building	Aurora Kane County

Notified

Honorable Charles H. Percy
Honorable Alan Dixon
Honorable Tom Corcoran
Honorable Paul Findley
Honorable Edward R. Madigan
Honorable Daniel B. Crane

Midwest Regional Office, NPS

✓ State Historic Preservation Officer
Dr. David Kenney
Director, Department of Conservation
State Office Building
400 South Spring Street
Springfield, Illinois 62706