1. NAME
COMMON:
First National City Bank
AND/OR HISTORIC:
(Merchant's Exchange)

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER:
55 Wall Street
CITY OR TOWN:
New York

3. CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY (Check One)

DISTRICT
SITE
OBJECT
BUILDING
STRUCTURE

OWNERSHIP
Public
Private
Both

PUBLIC ACQUISITION
In Process
Being Considered

STATUS
Occupied
Unoccupied
Preservation work in progress

ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
Yes:
Restricted
Unrestricted
No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
Agricultural
Commercial
Educational
Entertainment
Industrial
Military
Museum
Religious
Scientific
Transportation
Other (Specify)
Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
OWNER'S NAME:
First National City Bank

STREET AND NUMBER:
55 Wall Street
CITY OR TOWN:
New York
STATE:
New York

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
New York County Hall of Records

STREET AND NUMBER:
31 Chambers Street
CITY OR TOWN:
New York
STATE:
New York

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE OF SURVEY:
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

DATE OF SURVEY:
Dec. 21, 1965
Federal
State
County
Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
305 Broadway
CITY OR TOWN:
New York
STATE:
New York

[Signature]
Rep. Bella Abzug
7. DESCRIPTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONDITION</th>
<th>(Check One)</th>
<th>(Check One)</th>
<th>(Check One)</th>
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<td>Excellent</td>
<td>□ Good</td>
<td>□ Fair</td>
<td>□ Deteriorated</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Altered</td>
<td>□ Unaltered</td>
<td>□ Moved</td>
<td>□ Original Site</td>
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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Number of stories: The building is a total of eight stories high with basement. It consists of the original structure and a later addition, each of four stories.

Number of bays: The Wall Street (north) facade is thirteen bays wide. The sides on William Street (east), Exchange Place (south) and Hanover Street (west) are respectively ten, thirteen and eight bays wide.

Layout and/or shape of plan: The building is quadrilateral, no sides of which are equal or parallel.

Wall construction: The walls are constructed of ashlar granite masonry.

Structural system: The exterior walls of the original structure are masonry bearing wall with the steel-framed later addition superimposed on them.

Roof, cornice: A roof cornice extends around the four sides of the building with a masonry parapet above. In addition, the cornice capping the original structure now forms an entablature separating the original structure from the addition.

Important interior features: The great banking hall in the center of the building with coffered ceiling is one of the great interior spaces of New York City.

Important interior features: There are two colonnades superimposed, the first of Ionic columns and the second of Corinthian columns.

Other notable features: On the Wall Street front, a Corinthian colonnade is superimposed upon the original Ionic colonnade. The fluted shafts of the lower colonnade consists of monolithic blocks of stone.
The First National City Bank Building is an extremely handsome and imposing Classical building, which is exceptional as one of the City's comparatively few Landmark buildings fully exposed on all four sides and one of outstanding buildings in New York City designed upon a truly monumental scale. Executed in the finest masonry materials, it has what are probably the tallest monolithic columns in the City. In its overall proportions, and in the excellence of its details, designed by the outstanding architects of successive generations - this impressive building achieved the successful solution of a most demanding set of requirements and represents, in its present form, an architectural masterpiece.

Despite its unified appearance, this remarkable building represents two periods in its construction. The great monolithic Ionic columns of the lower colonnade belong to the Greek Revival period of architecture of the 1830's while the upper colonnade represents an addition of the early part of the Twentieth Century. The upper colonnade is traditionally correct as it superimposes Corinthian columns above Ionic, in accordance with Classic precedent.

The placing of one colonnade upon another is a familiar theme derived from the classical architecture of Greece and Rome, as seen in the Roman Coliseum with its three tiers; and in various Forums, or market places, with two tiers. Here the attic story also forms a cohesive part of the architectural design, relating to Andrea Palladio's design for the 16th century Palazzo Bonin Thiene at Vicenza.

The lower portion of the bank was built for the Merchant's Exchange as a fireproof building replacing the older building in the Great Fire of 1835. It was designed by Isaiah Rogers, architect of several fine Greek Revival hotels both here and in other cities. The then Exchange was built between 1836 and 1842. In 1862 this building became the United States Custom House. When the Custom House finally moved to the Battery, the National City Bank saved this building by acquiring it. The upper portion of the building represents the skillful addition made for the bank in 1907 by McKim, Mead & White, the outstanding firm of architects of that day.

As one of the great monumental Classical buildings of the City, the First National City Bank is important as an example of commercial power, visibly expressed in stone and mortar. It is also a remarkably successful example of greatly enlarging a building while successfully maintaining its good proportions and adhering to the formal traditions of Classical architecture.
## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Files of New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

## 10. Geographical Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corner</th>
<th>Latitude</th>
<th>Longitude</th>
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<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
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<td>00 00' 00&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>SW</td>
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**Approximate Acreage of Property:** under one acre

**List all States and Counties for Properties Overlapping State or County Boundaries:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Code</th>
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## 11. Form Prepared By

**Name and Title:** Stephen S. Lash, Ellen Rosebrock, Associates

**Organization:** New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

**Street and Number:** 305 Broadway

**City or Town:** New York

**Date:** January 26, 1972

## 12. State Liaison Officer Certification

As the designated State Liaison 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 National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

- National [X]
- State [ ]
- Local [ ]

**Name:**

**Title:** Chairman, N.Y. State Historic Trust

**Date:** 01-16-72

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**National Register Verification**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

**Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation**

**Date:** 10-18-72

**Attest:** William Hunter

**Keeper of The National Register**

**Date:** 10-12-72
FIRST NATIONAL CITY BANK
(MERCHANT'S EXCHANGE)
NEW YORK CO.-NY

□ resubmission
□ nomination by person or local government
□ owner objection
□ appeal

Substantive Review: □ sample □ request □ appeal □ NR decision

Reviewer’s comments:

Recom./Criteria_____________________
Reviewer _______________________
Discipline _______________________
Date _______________________
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: ____ technical corrections cited below
____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category
Ownership
Public Acquisition
Status Accessible
Present Use

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? □ yes □ no

7. Description

Condition
□ excellent □ deteriorated
□ good □ ruins
□ fair □ unexposed

Check one
□ unaltered
□ altered

Check one
□ original site
□ moved date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

□ summary paragraph
□ completeness
□ clarity
□ alterations/integrity
□ dates
□ boundary selection
8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ applicable criteria
☐ justification of areas checked
☐ relating significance to the resource
☐ context
☐ relationship of integrity to significance
☐ justification of exception
☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property ______________
Quadrangle name ______________
UTM References

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

13. Other

☐ Maps
☐ Photographs
☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to ________________________________

Signed ________________________________ Date ________________________________ Phone: ________________________________

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet
First National City Bank
55 Wall Street

1st National City Bank
55 Wall St.
Form 10-301

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

1. NAME

COMMON: First National City Bank
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
55 Wall Street
CITY OR TOWN:
New York
STATE:
New York

CODE COUNTY:
36 New York

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:
USGS Quadrangle, 7.5' Series Jersey City, N.J. - N.Y.
SCALE: 1:24000
DATE:

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.

STATE
New York

COUNTY
New York

ENTRY NUMBER DATE
OCT 18 1972

FOR NPS USE ONLY

NEW YORK

36

061
24 February 1972

Dr. William Murtagh  
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places  
801 19th Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20006

Dear Dr. Murtagh:

As Chairman of the New York State Historic Trust, the officially designated State Preservation Agency, and as the State Liaison Officer, I am forwarding the enclosed nominations to the National Register of Historic Places:

First National City Bank, New York County  
J. P. Morgan & Co. Building, New York County

The above nominations have been reviewed and approved by the Governor's Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation, in accordance with the criteria outlined in Section 2.2 of the Grants Guide.

The staff of the Trust would welcome the opportunity to discuss these submissions with your office.

Sincerely,

Louis C. Jones  
Chairman
# ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

**State:** New York  
**Date Entered:** OCT 18 1972

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Municipal Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coeymans (Ariaanje) House</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walnut Grove</td>
<td>Jamestown County</td>
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</table>

**Also Notified**

- Hon. Jacob K. Javits
- Hon. James L. Buckley
- Hon. Bella S. Abjug
- Hon. Samuel S. Stratton
- Hon. James F. Hastings

**Director, Northeast Region**

State Liaison Officer  
Mr. Alexander Aldrich  
Commissioner of Parks & Recreation  
Room 303, South Swan Street Building  
Albany, New York 12223

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HR NRowland:mm 10/17/72