

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory

other names/site number LaPrelle Williams Shoe Co.

2. Location

street & number 1526 N. Jefferson Avenue [n/a] not for publication

city or town St. Louis [n/a] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county St. Louis (Independent City) code 510 zip code 63106

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Mark A. Miles

10 Dec 04

Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO

Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Signature of certifying official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet [].
- determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet [].
- determined not eligible for the
National Register.
- removed from the
National Register
- other, explain
See continuation sheet [].

Signature of the Keeper

Date

| |
|-------|
| _____ |
| _____ |
| _____ |
| _____ |

Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri

5. Classification

| Ownership of Property | Category of Property | Number of Resources within Property | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| | | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | 1 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | 1 | 0 |
| | | | Total |

Name of related multiple property listing.

n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

Current Functions
COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS
and/or Other: Shoe Factory

Materials
foundation limestone
walls brick

roof asphalt
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Industry

Architecture

Periods of Significance

1901-1940

Significant Dates

n/a

Significant Person(s)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Roach, H.E. & Son, architects

Gerhart, E.C. Construction Co., contractor

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository: Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than one

UTM References

A. Zone 15 Easting 742600 Northing 4281160

B. Zone Easting Northing

C. Zone Easting Northing

D. Zone Easting Northing

[] see continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sect. 7: Stacy Sone, Research Associate; Sect. 8: Susan Sheppard, Researcher, Mimi Stiritz

organization Landmarks Association of St. Louis date August 20, 2004

street & number 917 Locust St., 7th Floor telephone 314-421-6474

city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63101

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Jim Osher

street & number 1526 N. Jefferson telephone 314-503-0101

city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63106

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Section 7 Page 1

Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Summary

The Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory is located at 1526 N. Jefferson Avenue in St. Louis, Missouri. The brick building, which has a wedge-shaped U-plan, was completed in 1901, and features a five-story rounded corner at the intersection of N. Jefferson Avenue and Mullanphy Street. On each side of this corner is a narrow, four-story arcade with continuous brick pilasters. The main entrance is recessed on the corner behind a pair of stocky metal columns. Original windows in segmental arched openings line each level of the street facades. Some changes have been made to the delivery/service area on the rear side and some parts of the first and second story interior have recent partitions. The two street facades, however, are remarkably unaltered. The first story windows are protected by a wire mesh covering and corrugated fiberglass; a secondary entrance was added to the north facade; and the door at the main entrance is a replacement. The building is in excellent condition and retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Exterior

The four-story, red brick factory building sits at the southeast corner of Jefferson Avenue and Mullanphy Street. The four stories form a U-shaped plan approximately 190' across Mullanphy Street and 125' on Jefferson Avenue. A one story service/delivery area fills the open part of the U on the rear (south) side.

The five-story corner stair tower containing the main entrance is the factory's most dominant feature (photo 1). The rounded entrance bay is supported by twin metal Tuscan columns on a limestone base (photo 2). Granite steps lead to a recessed metal replacement door flanked by recent paneled walls. Centered in the corner on the next three levels are six-over-six windows. The one directly over the entrance has a deep limestone sill. The other two have wood sills. Over the top of the third story window is a narrow blind arch. Each side of the tower (facing north and west) has a four-story continuous arcade of three narrow, rounded arches and brick pilasters. Three six-over-six windows on each level sit under the arcade. Those in the first story are taller and have a deep limestone sill.

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Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

These first story windows are also protected by wire mesh and corrugated fiberglass. The fifth story is separated from the lower section by a continuous limestone sill with a series of brick stringcourses below. Identical brick stringcourses are repeated at the top of the tile-capped tower. Four-over-four windows (three on each side and one in the center) are located in the fifth story.

South of the tower on the facade facing west are fifteen window bays (photo 3). All are segmental arched except for the southernmost which are rectangular. The taller first story windows have limestone sills and are covered like those in the tower. The upper story windows have wood sills. The first three bays from the north on each level are paired six-over-six windows. The next eleven bays are single windows. A spiral fire escape is accessed from the rectangular window bays on the end.

The Mullanphy Street (north) facade has 19 bays east of the tower (photos 1, 4). The easternmost bay on each level is a single rectangular opening; all others are paired windows in segmental arched openings. A metal replacement door occupies the easternmost bay on the first floor. The first story windows are taller and have limestone sills. Those in the upper stories have wood sills. "Brown Shoe Co. Buster Brown Shoes" is painted over the top story. A metal fire escape sits over the east bay.

The east facade is 14 bays (photo 4). All the bays except for the sixth bay from the north are segmental arched openings with three-over-three double hung windows. Three openings on the second story are brick-filled. The first five bays are also three-over-three but have transoms over each pane. The first story has fewer openings; all are segmental arched and covered in corrugated fiberglass.

The building's U-shaped upper-story plan is evident on the rear (south) facade (photo 5). A 1909 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows that the space inside the U was open at ground level. Permits indicate that the company made costly alterations in 1909, 1918, and 1922 that probably filled in the courtyard. Except for some recent delivery doors, and a few openings that have been changed or filled, these alterations to the rear appear to be historic.

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Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
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The first story rear side of the west wing has five bays. The two on the west end are segmental arched windows (boarded) with limestone sills. The center bay on the first floor is a rectangular delivery bay that has been converted from a segmental arched opening. On the other side of the delivery bay is a walk-through metal replacement door. This opening was originally segmental arched but the arch has been brick-filled. The upper three stories of the west wing's rear side have six bays (five segmental arched and one rectangular). The second story windows are covered in fiberglass.

The rear side of the east wing was originally six bays but the easternmost bay on each level has been filled with brick. The segmental arched windows in the second and fourth stories are boarded. Metal shutters that appear to be original cover the first story bays (one door and four windows).

The interior of the courtyard has a four-story historic addition that houses the freight elevator. Another addition behind it is two stories. The upper stories of the section of the U that faces east has 11 segmental arched window bays on each level. Nine bays face the interior of the U on the east wing. At the second story, a bridge connects the east wing to the two-story section added to the elevator tower. The windows in the second story are boarded in segmental arched openings.

Interior

The factory has wood floors and wood post supports roughly 16' apart. Clerestory windows provide additional light to the fourth story (photo 6). The brick walls are exposed in most of the interior spaces. The building's only stairway is located in the corner tower. The wood stairway is wide and unobstructed from top to bottom. Bead board lines the walls. Metal doors that slide open divide the stairway from the main rooms. The first and second stories have some recent partitions that divide the spaces but these are easily removable.

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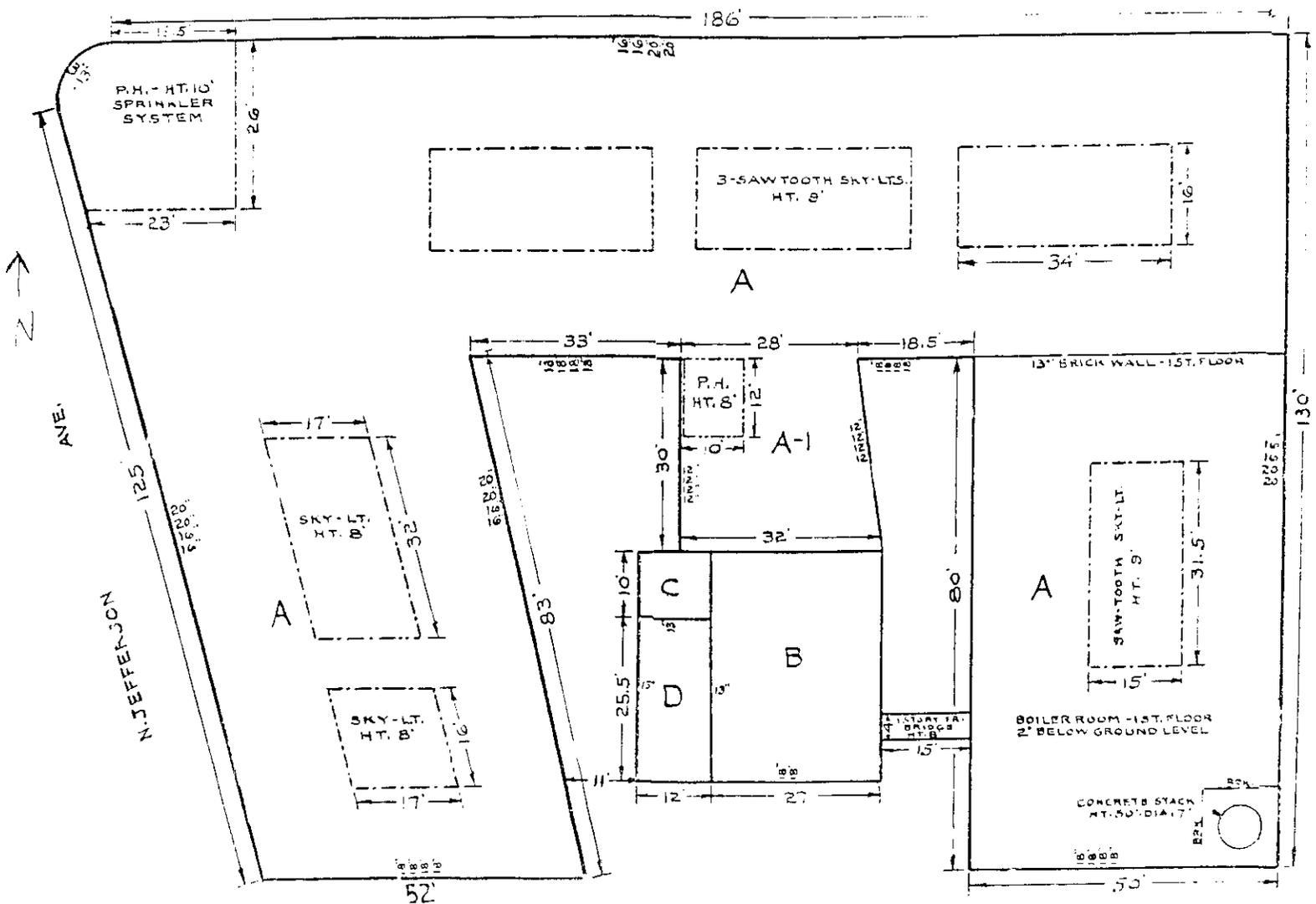
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Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Integrity

The building has had minor alterations, and the boarded windows at the first floor level can easily be removed. The Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory at 1526 N. Jefferson is in excellent condition and retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Figure 1: Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory Floor Plan



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**Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri**

Summary

The Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory at 1526 N. Jefferson Avenue is locally significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion A for Industry and Criterion C for Architecture. Designed in 1901 by architects H. E. Roach and Son, the building originally housed the LaPrelle Williams Shoe Company and cost \$45,000 to construct. In 1904 the Brown Shoe Company acquired the building and used it exclusively for the manufacturing of their Buster Brown Blue Ribbon children's shoes. The building is important for its association with Brown Shoe Company, which made St. Louis one of the largest manufacturers of shoes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Architecturally, it is one of the best remaining examples of early twentieth century industrial design, and features a highly unusual entrance tower with a rounded corner and four story arcades. With little alterations, including original windows and interior, the building retains its historic integrity. Its period of significance is its construction in 1901 through its primary years of operation, ending in 1940. Brown Shoe Company sold the building in 1955.

Elaboration

The importance of the factory as a building type providing unique architectural evidence of America's cultural transformation has been increasingly recognized by scholars and preservationists in recent years. Largely through the pioneering efforts and innovative management of St. Louis' Brown Shoe Company, Missouri became the third leading state in the manufacture of shoes by the early twentieth century. As part of the Company's progressive expansion program in St. Louis (1902-1907) which created specialized factories devoted to a single line of shoes, the Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe factory holds a significant place in the history of shoe manufacturing as well as in the socio-industrial development patterns of the city's near north side. Designed by the prominent St. Louis architects H. E. Roach and Sons, the Buster Brown plant embodied high standards for functionally efficient design, optimum working conditions and solid workmanship while maintaining an architectural integrity with the surrounding red brick working-class neighborhood through well-chosen proportions, material and scale.

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Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
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LaPrelle Shoe Company

The original owner of the Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory, James S. LaPrelle, began working as a salesman for the Hamilton-Brown Shoe Company around 1879, when he first shows up in the city directory. By 1900 he was vice president of the shoe company, and in 1901 started his own factory, the LaPrelle-Williams Shoe Company. In 1896 LaPrelle began his association with architects H. E. Roach & Sons when they designed his house at #10 Washington Terrace (demolished), an elaborate Richardsonian Romanesque mansion. LaPrelle hired the local architects again in 1901 to design his new shoe factory at the corner of Jefferson and Mullanphy. Built at the cost of \$45,000, E. C. Gerhart Company acted as the builder on the project. In December of 1904 LaPrelle sold the factory to the Brown Shoe Company, which would devote the building entirely to the production of their line of children's shoes.

Brown Shoe Company

When twenty-year-old George Warren Brown arrived in St. Louis from New York State in 1873, the city's shoe industry was in its infancy, operating as wholesale jobbers of eastern-made shoes. Brown worked five years as a shipping clerk and then traveling salesman for Hamilton-Brown and Co. (a wholesale shoe firm co-founded by his brother Alanson D. Brown in 1872) before he resigned in 1878 to launch the first successful shoe manufacturing company in St. Louis, Bryan-Brown and Co. Beginning with only \$12,000 capital, hand tools and five skilled shoe workers imported from Rochester, New York, the company rapidly grew from sales of \$110,000 the first year to over a million dollars in 1891. By 1896, seventy-five salesmen were carrying St. Louis-made Brown shoes throughout the country.¹

The St. Louis shoe industry expanded rapidly after the turn of the century as the city leapt from ninth to third in the country by 1905,² challenging New England's hegemony. Low cost production, an innovative selling plan and assertive advertising distinguished the young and flexible St. Louis market from its eastern

¹ Brown Group, Inc., *The First Hundred Years* (St. Louis: Brown Group, Inc., 1978), pp. 1-10.

² David Rodnick, "The Economic Development of St. Louis and the Surrounding Area: 1764-1914." St. Louis, 1944. Missouri Historical Society Collections.

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Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
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competitors and proved a basis for Brown Shoe Company's future growth. As a result of Brown's highly efficient division of labor, volume was maximized and production costs lowered through the establishment of 1) separate factories for the manufacture of different styles and grades of shoes, 2) a central cutting and supply plant, and 3) a central shipping plant.³ Specializing in children's shoes, Buster Brown's Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory thus followed the most advanced thinking in production systems, and had one of the largest yearly output capacities in the city. Producing Buster Brown Welts and Flexible Rigid Health Arch Shoes, the Buster Brown factory had a capacity of 3,000 pairs a day, and over \$2,250,000 net retail per year. Large stocks of shoes ready for shipment and an expeditious distributing system gave St. Louis another profitable advantage over New England;⁴ Brown Shoe's claim: "Two Million Dollar stock for 'At Once' Shipment...Received Before Noon—Shipped Before Night" captured new markets and promoted a very successful mail order business across the country.⁵

Factory location and design, in conjunction with labor conditions, also figured prominently in the economics of manufacturing that drove St. Louis forward. The city's high percentage of skilled German immigrants had been an important determinant in the initial location of shoe manufacturing⁶ and continued to be an excellent labor force that contrasted sharply with labor problems in Massachusetts.⁷ The Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory fulfilled demands of the time for efficient new factories designed especially for shoe production while providing optimum safety, health and sanitation conditions for employees. In view of Missouri's deficient labor protection laws and inadequate factory inspection system in the early twentieth century,⁸ it is to Roach & Son's credit that such exemplary standards in ventilation, light, fire safety and toilet facilities were incorporated in their plants.

³ I. H. Sawyer, "How St. Louis Became the Greatest Shoe Center," Shoe and Leather Gazette, 12 January 1940, pp. 29-30.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Brown Shoe Co. advertisements in Shoe and Leather Gazette, 1909-1910.

⁶ Edgar M. Hoover, Jr., Location Theory and the Shoe and Leather Industries (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1937), pp. 223-225.

⁷ Herbert J. Vogt, "Boot and Shoe Industry of St. Louis" (M.A. Thesis, Washington University, St. Louis, MO, 1929) pp. 65-68.

⁸ Biennial Report of the State Factory Inspector (Jefferson City, MO: State of Missouri, 1905).
Report of the State Factory Inspector (Jefferson City, MO: State of Missouri, 1913.)

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Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

The 1904 St. Louis World's Fair brought acclaim to Brown Shoe when the company was awarded a double grand prize for its participation in a model shoe factory exhibit.⁹ At the fair, Brown introduced a precedent-setting advertising technique by purchasing the rights for "Buster Brown", a recently created newspaper comic character whose name was identical to Brown's line of children's shoes. (figure 1) Buster's creator, Richard Outcault, set up a stand at the World's Fair and sold trademark rights to a variety of manufacturers. One hundred years later only two of those companies still use the Buster Brown name, Buster Brown Shoes and Buster Brown Apparel which is owned by Gerber.

The enthusiastic reception of "Buster Brown" at the Fair led to an early use of national advertising which promoted brand identity.¹⁰ Brown Shoes marketing technique was unique in that it relied on an already popular character to constitute a brand name.¹¹ (figure 2) Between 1904 and 1915 the company hired midgets, children and dogs to play the part of Buster Brown and his dog Tige. The actors traveled the country, performing to audiences in theatres, department stores, and shoe stores, further linking the image of the Buster Brown character to Buster Brown shoes. Similarly aggressive advertising continued after the traveling shows, when in the 1920s actors were again used to represent Buster Brown in billboards. In 1943 Smilin' Ed McConnell and his Buster Brown Gang began its run on the West Coast NBC radio network. The show moved to television in 1951, and ran until 1955.

The national advertising campaign which Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoes embarked on marked the beginning of a consumer based society.¹² Various methods of aggressive advertising aimed at assisting retailers soon became an effective and distinctive feature of Brown Shoe and other St. Louis shoe manufacturers who not only praised the quality of their products, but promoted their superior factories, organization and salesmen.

⁹ Brown Group, Inc., p. 20.

¹⁰ "Unusual Advertising Plan," *Shoe and Leather Gazette*, 24 November 1909, n.p.

¹¹ Ian Gordon, "Comic Strips and Consumer Culture, 1890-1945." (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998) 49.

¹² *Ibid.*, p.56.

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Figure 2: Brown Shoe catalog, c. 1910. (Brown Shoe Company archives).



The illustration depicts a scene from a children's story. On the left, a girl in a light-colored dress and hat and a boy in a dark suit and hat are walking. The boy is holding a large, dark umbrella over both of them. A small dog is running alongside them. On the right, a large, dark, lace-up boot is shown in profile, facing left. The boot has a high heel and a decorative strap across the side.

"The shoe for cold or stormy weather"
Buster Brown

F73—Little Lady's "Buster Brown Blue Ribbon" Tan Campus Calf Combination Lace and Sixteen-Button, ¼ D. S., 1½ in. heel, Doras Last, D, 1-5. \$2.85

BROWN'S ★ 5 ★ SHOES ARE BEST

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Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Figure 2: 1910 advertisement showing Buster Brown and the Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory. (Brown Shoe Company archives).



Competition became keen as new companies (frequently founded by salesmen of older firms) mushroomed in St. Louis between 1890 and World War I. While consolidation and merger offered a solution for survival of many manufactures, Brown Shoe remained independent and held its own as the third largest shoe company in the country. After World War I a new style factor emerged in women's shoes when skirts shortened and attention was directed to the feet.

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Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Again St. Louis outdistanced tradition-bound New England by responding to consumers' desires with a full line of lightweight women's novelty shoes.¹³

By 1919, shoe manufacturing was the largest single item in the city's annual business. Washington Avenue, home of Brown's central offices and distribution, had gained a reputation as "Shoe Street, U.S.A.", claiming more shoe trading than any street in the world.¹⁴ Significantly, the commercial development of much of upper Washington Avenue can be attributed to the efforts of George Warren Brown.¹⁵

The Brown factory continued to offer neighborhood families convenient and desirable employment through the 1930s,¹⁶ when Brown Shoe again revolutionized the shoe industry by initiating a new kind of marketing. Instead of selling all shoes the company manufactured, the salesmen were given a single brand that was advertised nationally and placed directly under a sales manager. The new concept proved successful and soon other companies followed Brown's lead.¹⁷

In 1955 Brown Shoe Company sold the factory to Leo J. Murphy, Jr, and the Brown Shoe Company moved all of its offices to Clayton, Missouri. The following year the city directory states that a Bussmann Manufacturing Company was operating in the building. The property changed hands several times throughout the next few decades, although it apparently remained in use. The current owner, Jim Osher purchased the building in 2001, and operates a flooring a countertop business out of the first floor. He hopes to turn the upper levels into lofts and studio space.

¹³ Maxine Faye Fendelman, "Saint Louis Shoe Manufacturing" (M.A. thesis, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, 1947) pp. 49-51.

¹⁴ St. Louis Chamber of Commerce Bulletin 1 (January, 1919).

¹⁵ Walter B. Stevens, Centennial History of Missouri, 5 vols. (St. Louis: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1921). Vol. 3, p. 23 and Vol. 5, p. 543.

¹⁶ Interview with Mrs. Thelma Hemmen, former Brown Shoe Company employee, St. Louis, Missouri, May, 1980.

¹⁷ Brown Group, Inc. pp. 34-36.

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**Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri**

Architecture

In the late 1900s Henry and Harry Roach built a reputation of fine work by designing buildings for Alanson D. and George Warren Brown, including the Brown factory at North Twelfth and Olive Streets (demolished), and in 1898 the A.D. Brown Building (NR 1980) at the corner of Washington Ave. and Twelfth Streets. In 1901 LaPrelle chose the architects to design his shoe factory after they designed his home at #10 Washington Terrace. Having used the architects for their own construction, Brown Shoe Company was already familiar with their work when they purchased 1526 N. Jefferson from LaPrelle in 1904.

Henry E. Roach was a native of Missouri, having moved to St. Louis from Pike County, Missouri, in 1866, following his service with the Union army in the Civil War. He began practicing architecture around 1871, and his son, Harry F. Roach, joined the practice in 1891. Harry was a graduate of the Manual Training School in St. Louis, as well as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He left his father's practice around 1900 to start his own architectural firm, going on to design many important buildings including the Syndicate Trust in 1907 (NR 2002). The 1901 building permit for the Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory credits both father and son as the architects. Working together and separately, they left St. Louis with a rich architectural legacy which included several private residences, as well as the La Salle Building, the Buckingham Hotel (demolished), and the Missouri Baptist Sanitarium on North Taylor Avenue.

St. Louis neighborhoods were once anchored by factories, which provided employment to the large populations of immigrant residents. Today, few of these factories remain intact, many have been demolished or left vacant and neglected. Remarkably, the Roach's Buster Brown Factory has remained intact and occupied, even as the surrounding neighborhood has changed its character. The Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe factory remains one of the best remaining examples of turn of the 20th century industrial design.

Well-sited on a corner, featuring a high frequency of windows and a unique U-shaped floor plan, the Buster Brown factory provided maximum natural illumination and cross ventilation. (figure 3) The internal arrangement allowed ample space for employees since machinery and operatives occupied one-half the

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width of the outside bays (the length of the outside walls thus determined the number of operatives on each floor)¹⁸ and separate toilets and rest rooms for male and female workers. Services were further divided among the four floors, with the first floor used for offices and stock, the second floor used for shoe finishing, the third for trimming and soling, and the fourth cutting and sewing.¹⁹ (figure 4)

Figure 3: Fourth floor interior of Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory, 1918. (Brown Shoe Company archives).



¹⁸ A. B. Groves, architect, "Shoe Factory at Litchfield, Illinois," *American Architect*, 27 February 1918, p. 259.

¹⁹ Sanborn Map Co., New York. Saint Louis, 1909, updated 1956, vol. 3, p. 8

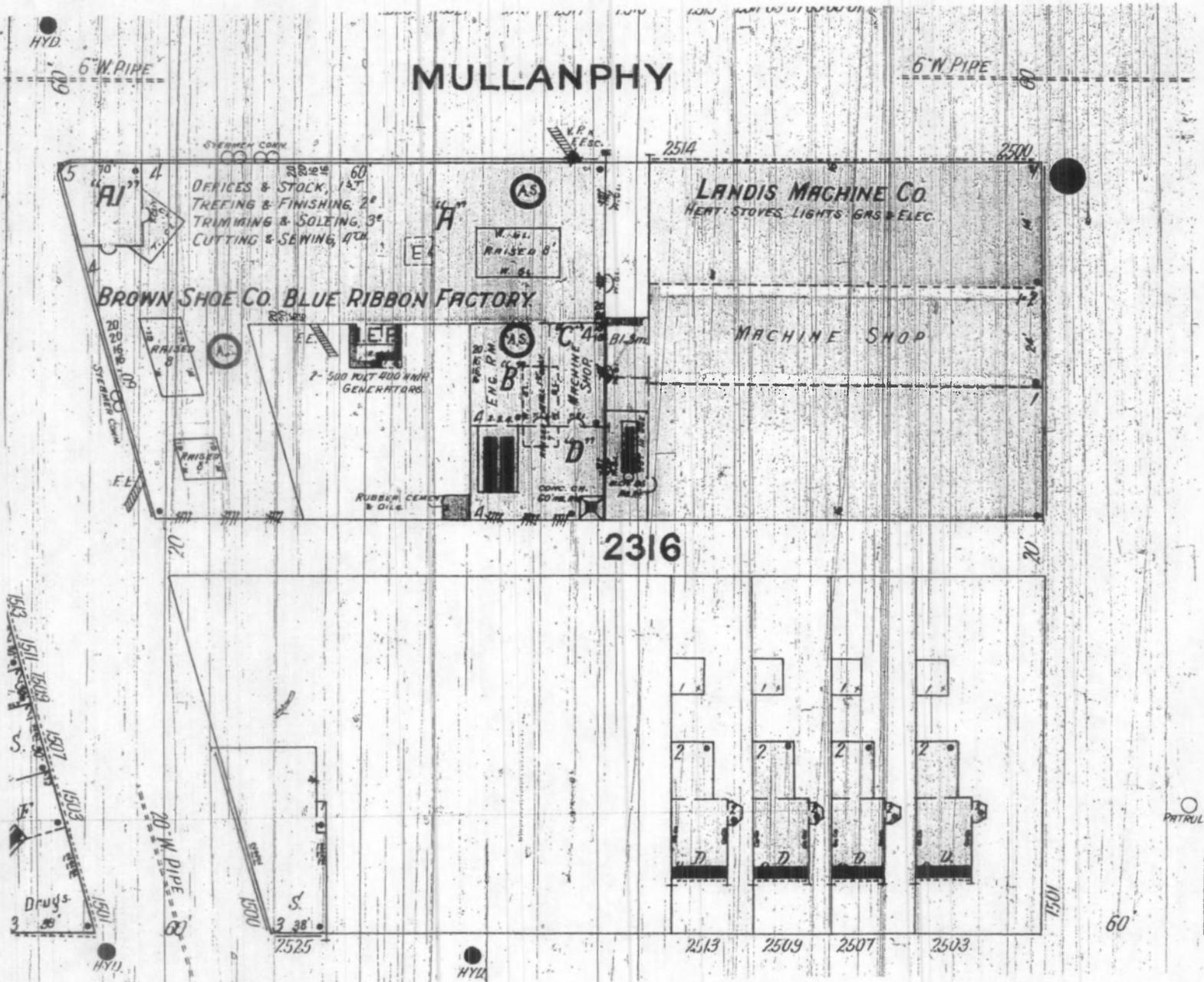
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Figure 4: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1909



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Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
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Known for its modernity in function and layout, the Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory also features a modern design. (figure 5) With a rounded corner tower that has sweeping lines and unbroken arcades, the surprisingly graceful building features a highly unique entrance tower, which distinguishes it from many other factory buildings of its era. Its unified design and symmetrical massing culminates in the five-story tower which is set off from the rest of the building with a series of string courses at the top story, and recessed arcades which house narrow eight-over-eight windows. This streamlined treatment was unusual in 1901 when most factories were simpler in appearance and had square corners with minimal architectural details, similar to Brown's Homes-Take Factory on Russell Boulevard (NR 1980), which was built in 1904.

Buster Brown's Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory's sound structural system, fine craftsmanship, quality of space and convenient access to the city center make it a prime candidate for adaptive re-use. The current owner hopes to rehabilitate the building for use as apartments and studio space. For many area residents, the old factory has strong historical associations and identity as a neighborhood landmark. For decision makers in the city, the anticipated success of this project should encourage the retention and re-use of St. Louis' under-utilized or abandoned historic industrial architecture.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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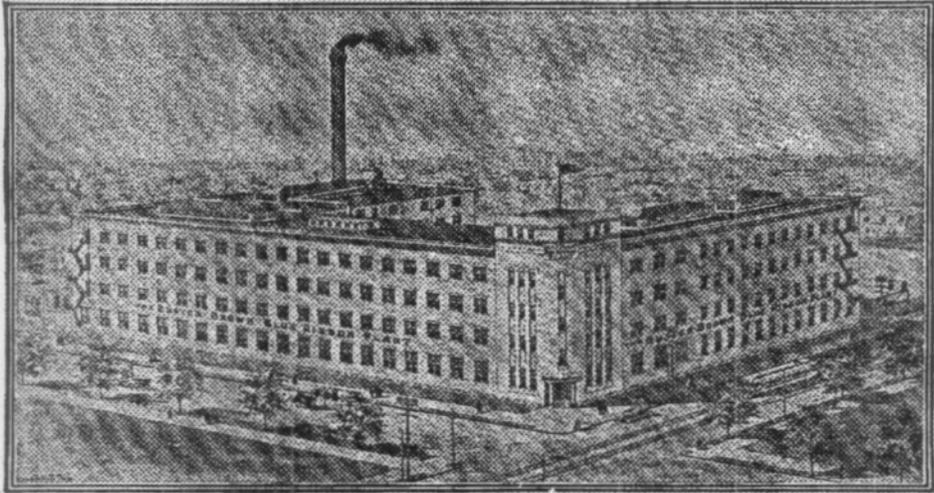
Section 8 Page 16

Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Figure 5: Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe advertisement, 1912. (Brown Shoe Company archives).

63

ADVERTISED TO THE NATION  WORN BY CREATION



BUSTER BROWN BLUE RIBBON PLANT
"Buster Brown Blue Ribbon" Shoes for Girls.
CAPACITY, \$2,000,000.00 PER YEAR

BROWN'S ★5★ SHOES ARE BEST

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Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

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Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

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Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Verbal Boundary Description

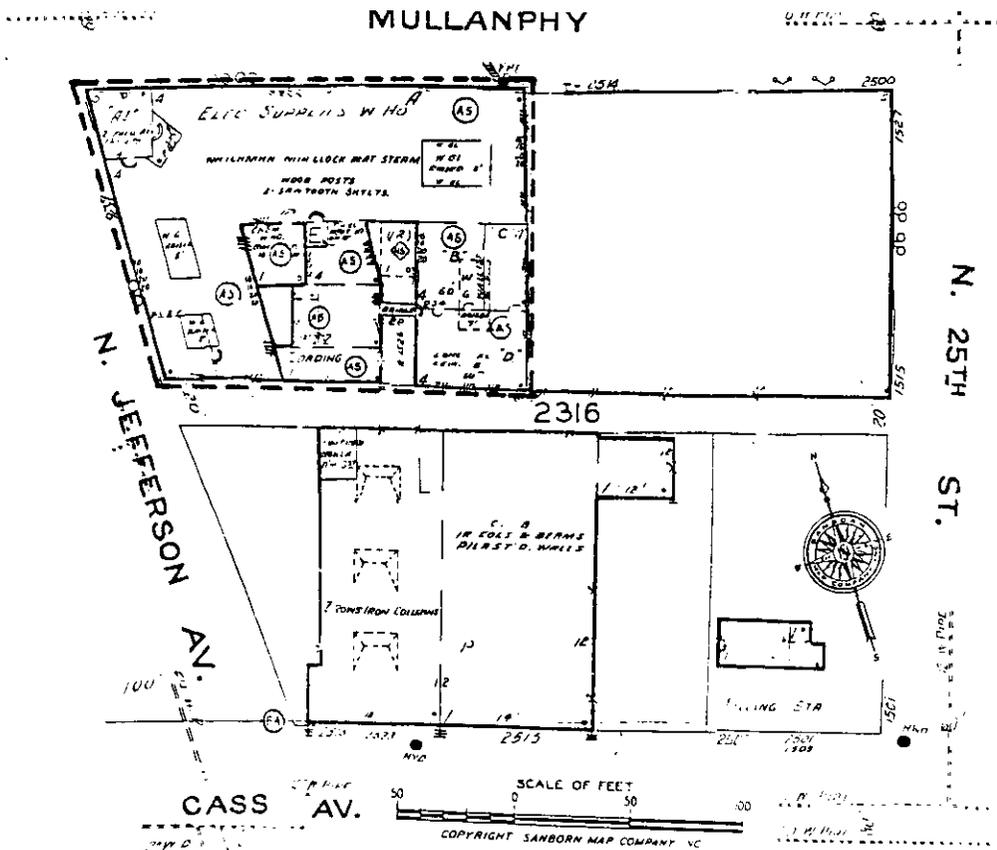
The nominated parcel is located at 1526 N. Jefferson on City Block 2316 in St. Louis, Missouri. The site is legally known by the Assessor's Office as parcel number 00231600010. The property includes all of lots 1 through 7 of the Mullanphy Estate and Boyce's subdivisions. The nominated parcel is indicated by a dashed line on the accompanying map entitled "Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory Boundary Map."

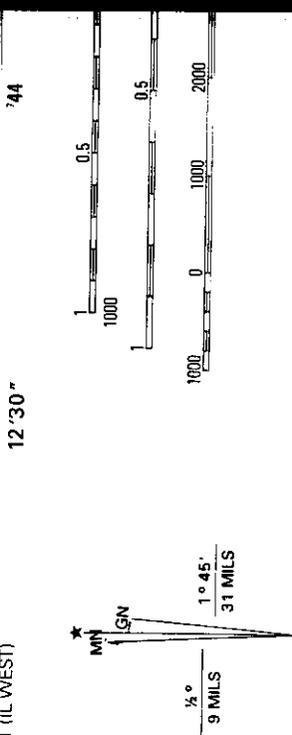
Boundary Justification

The nominated parcel includes all of the property historically associated with the Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory on city block 2316.

Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Shoe Factory Boundary Map

Source: Sanborn Map Company, v. 3, no. 8, 1971.





Produced by the United States Geological Survey
 Topography compiled 1952. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1993 and other sources. Photoinspected using imagery dated 1998; no major culture or drainage changes observed. PLSS and survey control current as of 1954. Boundaries, other than corporate, verified 1999
 North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83). Projection and 1000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 15
 10 000-foot ticks: Illinois (west zone) and Missouri (east zone) Coordinate Systems of 1983

720 000 FEET (ILL WEST) 740
 38° 37' 30" 90° 15'

Buster Brown Blue
 Ribbon Factory
 St. Louis (Independent
 city), MO
 Zone 15
 Easting
 742600
 Northing
 4281660

Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Factory

1526 N. Jefferson

St. Louis [Independent City], MO

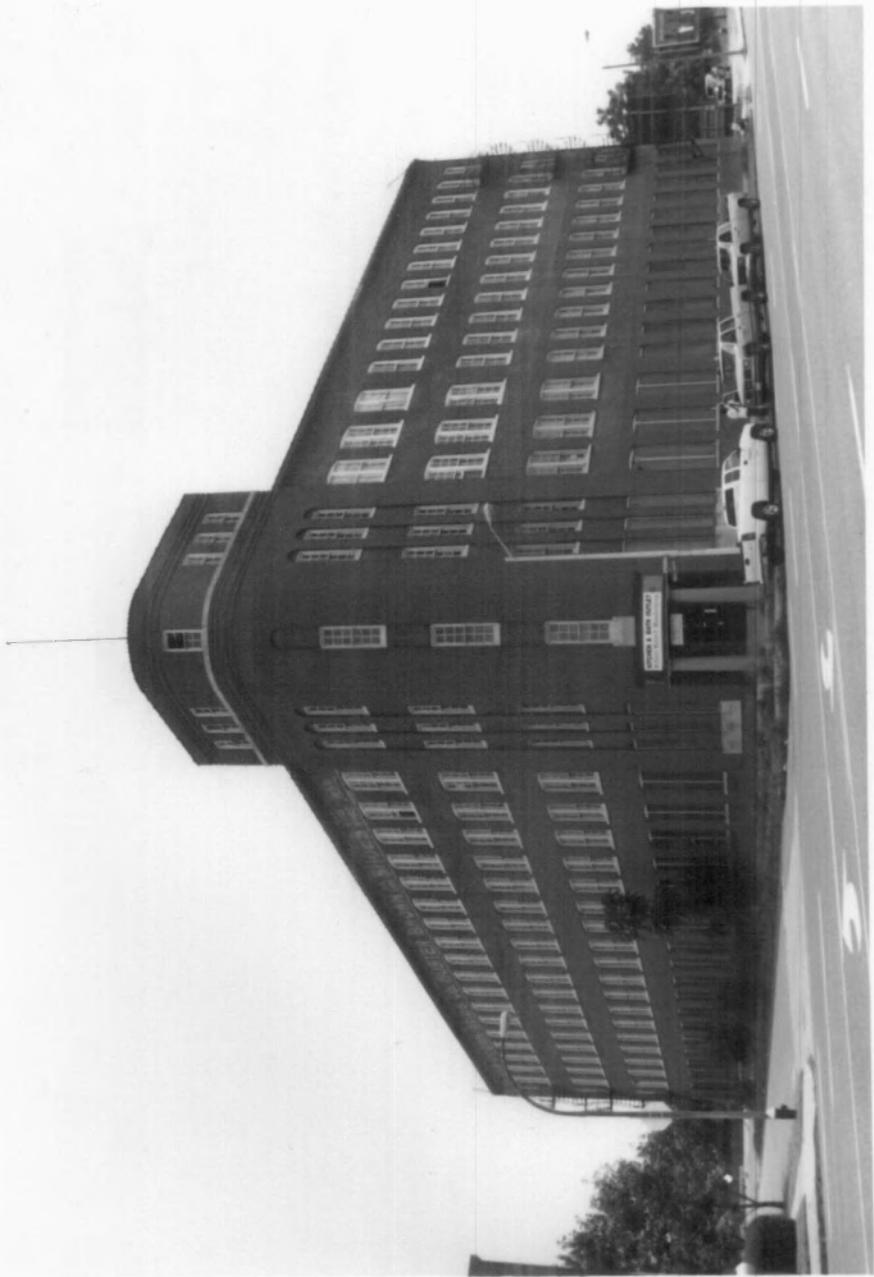
Stacy Sune

9/2004

Landmarks Association of St. Louis

View to SE

1 of 6



Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Factory

1526 N. Jefferson

St. Louis [Independent City], MO

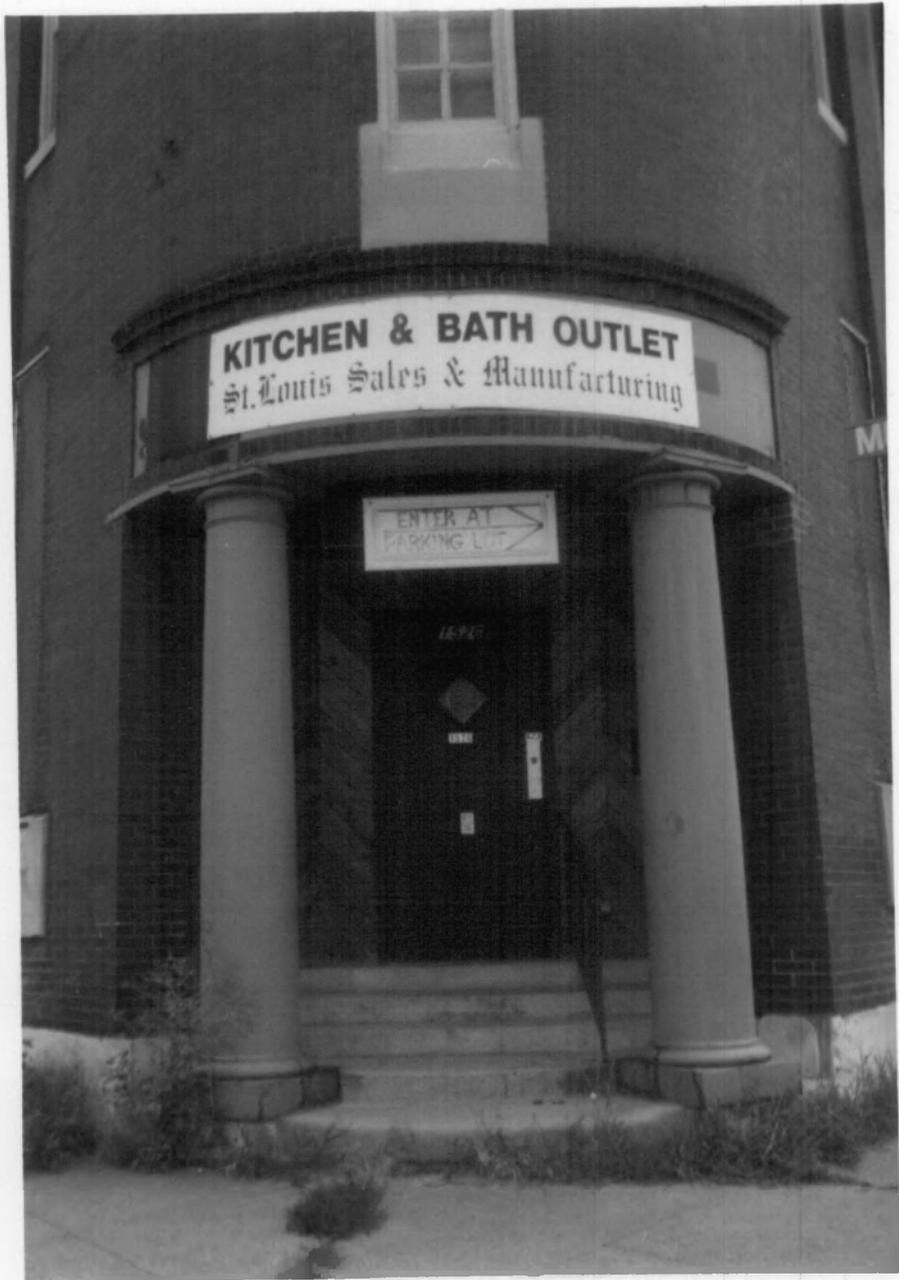
Stacy Sone

8/2004

Landmarks Association of St. Louis

view to SE

#2 of 6



Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Factory

1526 N. Jefferson

St. Louis [Independent City], MO

Stacy Sone

8/2004

Landmarks Association of St. Louis

view to east

3 of 6



Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Factory

1526 N. Jefferson

St. Louis (Independent City), MO

Stacy Sore

8/2004

Landmarks Association of St Louis

view to SW

#4 of 6



Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Factory
1526 N. Jefferson
St. Louis [Independent City], MO

Stacy Sone
8/2004

Landmarks Association of St. Louis
View to North
5 of 6



Buster Brown Blue Ribbon Factory

1506 N Jefferson

St. Louis [Independent City], MO

Stuy Stone

8/2006
Landmarks Association of St. Louis

View to South - 4TH FLOOR

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