

State and National Registers of Historic Places
Individual Building Nomination
August, 2011

THE HUYLER BUILDING

(a.k.a The Petri Building)
374 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, Erie County, New York 14202



Prepared by:



Clinton Brown Company Architecture ReBuild
The Pierce Building in the Theatre Historic District
653 Main Street, Suite 104
Buffalo, New York 14203
PH (716) 852-2020 FX (716) 852-3132
All contents Copyright 2012 CBCA

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

DRAFT

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name THE HUYLER BUILDING

other names/site number The Petri Building, The Pitt Petri Building

2. Location

street & number 374 Delaware Avenue [] not for publication

city or town Buffalo [] vicinity

state New York code NY county Erie code 029 zip code 14202

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 as 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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
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

Date

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) _____

Signature of the Keeper

date of action

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie, New York

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		TOTAL

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE

business (office building)

specialty store (importer)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE

business (office building)

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls cast stone, brick

roof membrane

other _____

Narrative Description

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

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie, New York

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property 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 that 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

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

- 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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical 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 Building 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 repository: _____

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Commerce

Period of Significance:

1926

Significant Dates:

1926

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Harvey Staring Horton, architect

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Erie, New York

Name of Property

County and State

Estimated Burden Statement: public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1

THE HUYLER BUILDING

**Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State**

The Huyler Building is a four-story reinforced concrete frame commercial and office building with a roughly rectangular footprint and massing. It is located on the west side of Delaware Avenue (number 374) at the corner of Trinity Place in the City of Buffalo, Erie County, New York. Delaware Avenue is a primary four-lane north-south artery in the City of Buffalo. The surrounding neighborhood is a largely commercial area in the city and is composed of many similarly scaled commercial and office buildings of comparable size and height. The Huyler Building sits on a lot which is approximately 125-feet in width along Delaware Avenue by 150-feet in depth along Trinity Place. The building is constructed to meet its lot lines along the primary east-facing elevation and its secondary northern elevation and contains surface parking lots to the west and south of the building.

The Huyler Building was designed as a reinforced concrete frame building by Buffalo architect Harvey Starin Horton in 1923-1925 and was constructed in 1926. The building features concrete floor slabs supported by concrete-encased steel columns and contains brick-faced "tile curtain walls" inside. The two most prominent elevations, along Delaware Avenue to the east and Trinity Place to the north are faced with cast stone panels in a smooth ashlar pattern with cast-stone trim with narrow mortar joints.¹ The building is designed with a four-bay façade and a six-bay north elevation.

The primary (east) façade of the building features on the ground floor three large segmental-arched display window units marking the three retail spaces which were original to the building. Each of these arched units measures the same width, and the two units at the north and south feature recessed entry doors flanked by angled display cases. The central display has been modified somewhat to become flush with the front wall, and its exterior door has been removed.. Each display window features its original bulkhead, decorative beaded molding, arched transom panel (obscured by non-compatible modern arched canopies), and moldings. Located just south of the building's centerline on the ground level is a smaller bay containing the entry door to the upper floors of the office building. The entry doors are crowned by a half-round transom and are surrounded by the carved rope mold. Directly above this entrance is a small balconet which features carved consoles, an elaborate lion head, and a floral swag below. The balconet itself features a balustrade with stone balusters and stone

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

pedestals. The windows of the second and third floors, which feature larger plate glass sash with fixed opaque transoms above, are joined by narrow engaged stone columns with a carved rope pattern and stylized Ionic capitals. Above the third floor windows are tripartite carved stone panels featuring floral scrolls, classical urns and acanthus leaf motifs. The slightly larger center panel features griffons, which flank the “Huyler’s” logo script. The fourth story appears almost as an attic story on the building, divided from the third level by a beltcourse and containing smaller windows in sets of three which align with each bay. This story also features simple circular stone medallions between each window set. The north façade is similarly detailed with its six bays on the ground floor featuring shop windows, blind arches, and an entry door unit. Also, the more ornate window designs of the façade, which span the second and third floor windows, are only present at the easternmost and westernmost bays of the north elevation, with simpler individualized units in the central bays. Both the façade and the north elevation feature a pressed metal cornice. This verdigris-colored cornice features scroll consoles with egg and dart molding. Set between each console is a circular light fixture.

The south and west elevations are more utilitarian in design and function and, as they are not as visible from the street, are much less decorative and ornamented. The west elevation features common red brick and is composed of four bays. The fire stair tower is located on the southernmost bay, and the northern three bays each feature a segmental arched window unit on the first floor. Each arched unit contains three window units which feature metal casement windows with a segmental arched opaque panel (originally glass) above. A decorative panel above the windows features a round-headed arched design at the center with a circular medallion. The two northernmost bays each contain sliding windows on the upper three floors. The other bay contains a series of concrete balconies accessed via metal fire doors, some with six-light windows, with a four-light transom window above. This bay also features sliding windows near the exit doors. The balcony features a scrolled metal bracket and diminutive metal balustrade and handrail. Entry doors on the north side of the fire stair tower, accessed from the balconies, are in projecting metal frames with a flared metal hood above.

¹ Horton’s drawings label many of the decorative elements such as moldings, panels and consoles as being of carved limestone; however they appear to perfectly match the color and texture of the artificial stone skin of the building. These elements appear to have been rendered in cast or artificial stone.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 3

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

The south elevation is brick painted a grey color to mimic the color of the limestone façade. This elevation is unornamented and contains numerous individual contemporary, double-hung metal windows.

The interior plan of the building contains a central vertical circulation core and east-west corridor, which is consistent throughout the four floor levels. This core features a large staircase with a wood balustrade and decorative newel posts, original green terrazzo flooring on some levels and large hollow metal fire doors to each floor. The core also contains two elevator shafts, and the freight elevator appears to be original, dating to the 1920s. The passenger elevator cab may be a more recent update.

The basement level features a highly intact central circulation core, giving a good representation of the original colors, finishes and appearance of the core on the other floors, most of which have been painted or refinished. Wood doors and trim are oak stained medium brown. The central core area also features terrazzo flooring. The restrooms appear largely original, with terrazzo flooring, white subway tile walls with plaster above, and marble dividers for each stall. Many of the fixtures, including sinks and toilets, also appear original. The integrity of the basement gives a good idea of what the finishes, materials and color schemes were for the upper floors, which have generally been painted or covered with carpeting. The utility spaces in the basement reveal the concrete slab construction of the building, and the ceiling showcases the unusual ribbed vaulting system of the slab above.

The first floor was originally divided into three commercial spaces (identified on Sanborn maps as 372 Delaware, 376 Delaware and 378 Delaware) with a larger area at the west end of the building; however, today these spaces, while retaining some sense of the rectilinear tripartite division, are all open to each other through openings in the walls. Many of the display cases, visible from the exterior, feature original wood parquet flooring. In the 378 Delaware space (see floor plan) the northernmost area is largely an open space. The floor is carpeted, the plastered walls are painted, and ceilings feature soffits above. The 376 Delaware retail space, at the center of the building, is more interestingly designed. This section features curved walls and display areas, many of which were installed in 1939-40 by Antonin Raymond. Towards the center of this unit is an elliptical-shaped area, set off-axis to the otherwise rectilinear oriented space, which contains curved display walls and an oval recessed ceiling design with lighting. Some of these displays feature lower cabinetry with ribbon-like

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 4

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

bands of plate racks and lighting running above. The plainly designed 372 Delaware space is used as an office. Just south of the centerline of the building is a small entry vestibule that connects to the elevators and the stairway to the upper office floors. Visible in the lobby are decorative arched panels above windows and entry doors to the adjacent commercial spaces. Further on, this entry area showcases a vaulted ceiling above the stair which is finished with marble wainscot and stair risers with green terrazzo treads. The rear portion of the building, located at the west end of the first floor, is a maze of various display areas and showrooms. Present in some of these spaces are recessed display cabinets with glass shelves and built-in storage below. At the west wall is a storage and shipping area. In this area is visible a segmental arched panel above one set of windows at the west elevation. This area contains a suspended acoustical tile ceiling.

While the central circulation core of the upper floors of the Huyler Building is generally intact in configuration and historic features such as doors (originally oak, now painted), the office and tenant spaces are generally modernized and updated with new finishes and materials. Upper levels of the building contain a double loaded corridor to access the tenant spaces that vary in size, shape and configuration. The second floor is perhaps the most intact, with a green terrazzo floor, intact door jamb with transom light above, and historic floor indicator dial above the freight elevator. This floor also features marble risers and treads to step up into the restrooms. Tenant spaces are outfitted with materials such as carpet, gypsum wall board and suspended acoustical tile ceilings. Unusual historic features which remain in the upper office floors include a section of the original corridor wall with its glass and transom configuration (although this is rendered opaque) located in an office at the west end of the third floor. Also, a historic metal partition remains in a tenant office located on the third floor, adjacent to a historic office door with transom and an arched opening which has been infilled with beadboard. The fourth floor contains tenant spaces which are perhaps the most modernized. Some spaces retain original base molding and wainscot, but these have typically been painted. The flat roof is curbed with a modern membrane within a low parapet with modern coping. A brick penthouse for the elevators and stair is present, with metal four-over-two industrial sash windows used for ventilation.

The Huyler Building is an excellent, intact example of a reinforced concrete frame commercial and office building from the 1920s. Its most significant historic features, including its structural system, decorative

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 5

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

Classical Revival exterior design, and interior core of elevators and stairs with a double-loaded corridor on upper levels, retain much of their historic integrity. While not original to the design of the building, the 1930-40 showroom designs of noted international architect Antonin Raymond are also partially intact (although the original cabinetry, displays and lighting fixtures have been painted and altered in many areas). Tenant modifications, especially in the upper office levels, have not obscured the original plan of the building.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 1

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

SUMMARY

The Huyler Building is significant under Criterion C as an excellent example of early twentieth century reinforced concrete commercial architecture. Reinforced concrete became a popular choice for commercial architecture during this period, as it was resistant to fire and could be constructed quickly and less expensively than masonry construction. In addition, the use of structural columns rather than walls allowed for open, flexible interior space perfectly suited for the changing décor and arrangements of retail showrooms. Interestingly, the utilitarian concrete and steel structural system was concealed within a non-structural masonry shell in a more traditional neoclassical design. The Huyler Building retains a high level of integrity of its key architectural features, including a largely intact exterior, and currently serves the same functions as it did when it was originally conceived.

The Huyler Building is also eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for its association with the commercial development of Delaware Avenue, one of Buffalo's primary commercial arteries and its most prestigious shopping street during Buffalo's period of national prominence. The 1926 construction of the Huyler Building represents a transitional era for Delaware Avenue, as it shifted from fashionable residential street to bustling commercial thoroughfare in the 1920s. Originally designed and built by Buffalo architect Harvey S. Horton for the nationally prominent Huyler's candy company (which apparently never occupied the building), the Huyler Building became most closely associated with the Pitt Petri company, which did business out of the building for over eighty years. Importers of a wide variety of high-end decorative and household goods (and a Tiffany & Co. retailer), the Pitt Petri company catered to an upscale clientele in Buffalo for decades before changing tastes and retailing trends led to its recent demise.

Modern Materials: Reinforced Concrete and Artificial Stone

The Huyler Building was designed utilizing a reinforced concrete structural system, clad on its primary and most notable elevations with an artificial cast stone skin. Reinforced concrete building technology originally used in industrial structures at the dawn of the twentieth century became a pioneering modern system which provided many benefits over its solid masonry counterparts when it became popular for commercial structures by the 1920s. This structural system greatly improved a building's resistance to fire, which made it an early

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 2

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

favorite for use in industrial and manufacturing buildings. Along with other technologies created at the time, such as elevators and electrical systems, the concrete structural frame system also allowed for the development of increasingly taller buildings. Reinforced concrete skeletons, with their regularly spaced cage-like systems of columns, allowed an interior which could be left as a large open space or partitioned into spaces with non-permanent, non-structural walls. Similarly, on the exterior of the building, this system allowed for non-structural infill between the columns, which could be filled with large windows, decorative spandrels or other elements.

While concrete had been used for building since antiquity, and Roman engineers reinforced their concrete buildings with various materials including old pottery sherds, bricks, horsehair and wood, it was not until the 1800s that modern reinforced concrete began to take shape. One of the first patents for a reinforced concrete was issued in 1867 to French gardener Joseph Monier, who devised a method for encasing a metal frame in concrete to make gardening tubs and planters. By the end of the nineteenth century, architects and engineers in France and Eastern Europe were experimenting with translating this concept to architecture and engineering.

The properties of concrete and its application to architectural and engineering projects were first realized in the United States with the large-scale construction of the Erie Canal in the early 1800s. During construction of the canal, it was discovered that the excavated stone could be used to make an excellent quality hydraulic cement. Good hydraulic cement, a waterproof adhesive, was common in Europe but very expensive in the United States until this discovery. This locally made hydraulic cement, a product coming largely from the Lockport, NY and Niagara Escarpment areas, was used in the canal and locks' construction and later became a valuable commodity shipped across the region.²

However, it was nearly a century before concrete would be widely used for buildings in this county. The first building to be constructed of reinforced concrete in the United States was the William E. Ward House, located in Port Chester, NY (NR 1976). Built by Ward, a mechanical engineer, between 1873 and 1876, the house was

² Jennifer Walkowski, *Reconnaissance Level Historic Resources Survey - City of Lockport, Niagara County, New York*. (Buffalo, April 2011) 4-16.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 3

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

entirely constructed of reinforced concrete, including its mansard roof and Gothic Revival tower. While the building left the concrete exposed, celebrating its unique construction material, the styling of the house was in the conventional Second Empire and Gothic Revival domestic vocabularies of the era, even including molded concrete quoins to give the illusion of traditional masonry construction and design. While Ward's impressive innovations in reinforced concrete were published in several sources, the material remained largely an underutilized novelty during this era.³

English-born architect Ernest Leslie Ransome (1852-1917) was an early innovator in the US to explore the potential of reinforced concrete as a building material, experimenting with a twisted reinforcing rod in the 1880s. His work established reinforced concrete as a widespread, practical and cost-effective technology. Working initially in the San Francisco area, he constructed several buildings and bridges during this time before relocating to the East Coast. In 1897-1898, Ransome is credited with introducing American builders to reinforced concrete as a skeletal structural system, rather than as a solid, wall-like material, with his pioneering Pacific Coast Borax Refinery in Bayonne, New Jersey. While this building features exterior walls envisioned as self-supporting masonry, the interior contained beam-and-girder floor construction. When a devastating fire ripped through the factory building in 1902, destroying only its contents and any wood elements, the Pacific Coast Borax Building demonstrated the fire-resistance of a reinforced concrete building. In 1902, Ransome patented a true skeletal reinforced concrete construction method while devising an addition to the Pacific Coast Borax Refinery, extending the floor slab beyond the face of the building which could then incorporate large windows and brick walls. This system, believed to have been introduced by Ransome, created the first true reinforced concrete-constructed, grid-like exterior wall.⁴

By 1905, reinforced concrete as an architectural and engineering material was well established, thanks in part to Ransome's pioneering work. During this early era, the use of reinforced concrete was largely limited to industrial and manufacturing buildings due to its proven resistance to fire, its durable and cleanable surfaces, ample light provided by large windows made possible by its non-structural exterior walls and also its resistance

³ L.E. Gobrecht, William E. Ward House National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1976. NY State Historic Preservation Office. Web. <http://www.oprhp.state.ny.us/hpimaging/hp_view.asp?GroupView=10697>

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 4

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

to vibration. Detroit architect and engineer Albert Kahn was also well known for utilizing the structural system for his many factory designs of this era, including the Packard Plant (1903, NRE) the first use of reinforced concrete for a factory in Detroit, and also Buffalo's George H. Pierce Company automobile factory (1906-1907, NR 1974).⁵

While reinforced concrete was widely utilized for factory and industrial buildings, it was not long before reinforced concrete began to be used in other architectural applications. Ransome (with Carlton T. Strong) designed the Berkeley Apartments (also known as the Graystone Hotel) in Buffalo in 1884-1887 (NR 1987), an early example of a large, multistory reinforced concrete building given an Italian Renaissance style appearance. In 1903, the 15-story Ingalls Building in Cincinnati, Ohio (NR 1975), constructed by the firm of Elzner and Anderson utilizing Ransome's patented twisted steel reinforcement bars, was noted as being the first reinforced concrete frame skyscraper. This building demonstrated the successful use of reinforced concrete for tall buildings.

While the reinforced concrete structural systems were revealed and left largely unornamented in industrial applications, when used in residential or commercial applications the structural system was frequently cloaked in a more elegant skin of decorative brick or masonry. Both the Berkeley Apartments and the Ingalls Building highlight this aesthetic with their ornamented facades, clad with marble, terra cotta, glazed brick, cast concrete (in the case of the Berkeley Apartments) and other materials, rendered in the most popular architectural styles of the era. These examples reveal a desire to camouflage the concrete frame with a non-structural and purely decorative skin. It seems apparent that architects and designers at the time wished to distinguish residential and commercial applications of reinforced concrete from associations with factories and industrial uses. Also apparent is a lingering sense that the appearance of solid masonry construction was more aesthetically appropriate, especially for more domestic applications. This trend continued for several decades, as evidenced by the 1926 Huyler Building, which was also designed with a purely decorative and non-structural skin over its reinforced concrete frame.

⁴ Betsy H. Bradley, *The Works: the Industrial Architecture of the United States* (New York: Oxford UK, 1999) 156-157.

⁵ Bradley 157-159.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 5

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

Ironically, the Huyler Building presents its elegant stone-like appearance thanks in part to another popular and innovative technology of the era - artificial or cast stone. The building's east and north elevations are clad in a man-made stone material known variously as artificial stone, cast stone, concrete stone or by many other names. It was also used to make elements such as moldings, consoles and detailed panels⁶ This material was a cost-effective way of mimicking the look and appearance of natural, quarried stone at a fraction of the cost and was widely employed in the last half of the nineteenth century; it gained even wide acceptance in the twentieth century.⁷ The material was made of a mixture of water, sand, coarse aggregate, and cementing agents such as natural cements, portland cements, oxychloride cements, and sodium silicate based cements used as binding agents. Depending on the various elements used, the coloration and appearance of the cast stone could vary greatly, mimicking many different types and colors of natural stone. For example, by using a light cement matrix and adding crushed marble, the resulting cast stone could resemble limestone, which may be the mixture utilized for the Huyler Building. Additionally, cast blocks could be carved or tooled to enhance their resemblance to natural stone even further.⁸ At the Huyler Building, cast stone was used to give the illusion of natural stone at a fraction of the cost, enhancing the building's sense of grandeur, sophistication and elegance on Buffalo's premier shopping street.

Huyler's Candy Company

Huyler's chocolate and candy company was once the largest and most prominent chocolate maker in the United States. Headquartered in New York City, the Huyler's company operated a large chain of Huyler's branded stores across the country in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and its high-quality chocolate products were a part of daily life, given as holiday gifts, used as special indulgences and as treats for young boys and girls. Huyler's was founded by John Seys Huyler, son of a prominent baker and confectioner in New

⁶ While Horton's drawings specify that details were to be carved of limestone, it is difficult to discern if this was carried out in the final building. These elements are so expertly rendered and of a fine-quality appearance, matching the coloration and texture of the surface stone; they appear to have been completed in cast stone. This method was widely used for such repetitive, detailed carvings at the time.

⁷ Interesting to note is that Frederick Ransome, father of reinforced concrete pioneer Ernest L. Ransome, was an early pioneer in man-made stone, receiving a patent for an artificial sandstone in England in 1844. See: *The Mechanic's Magazine*, ed. R.A. Brooman, Vol. LXVI London: Robertson, Brooman and Co., January 3rd - June 27th, 1857: 126.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 6

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

York, and was officially incorporated in 1881. Huyler's was a nationally prominent company, drawing the likes of a young Milton S. Hershey, who worked for the company between 1883 and 1885 before leaving to establish his own chocolate making empire.⁹ Huyler's catered to an upscale market, and by the time of John S. Huyler's death in 1911, the Huyler's company was noted as having 54 Huyler's branded stores located across the country and in Canada, with 14 factories serving these stores. One of the largest, if not *the* largest candy and confectionery manufacturers in the United States at the time, the company employed over 2,000 workers. Three specialty Huyler's shops were established in Buffalo between 1885 and 1908. To manage their massive real estate holdings, the Huyler's company established the Gramercy Investing Group early in the twentieth century, managed by members of the Huyler family. This company was responsible for initiating the construction of the Huyler Building in Buffalo. The Depression hit the Huyler's company hard in the 1930s, as customers with less disposable income could not afford luxuries such as chocolates, and after decades of being bought and sold by various syndicates, the Huyler's confectionary company faded into obscurity by the 1970s.

History of the Huyler Building

The Huyler Building at 374 Delaware Avenue in Buffalo was designed and constructed during the early 1920s for the Huyler's confectionary company by architect Harvey S. Horton. The development of the Huyler's Building coincided with the widespread growth of commercial activity along this area of Delaware Avenue. Although Buffalo had three earlier Huyler's candy and confectionary shops by this time (366, 556 and 660 Main Street), the Huyler Building appears to have been designed and conceived as the "flagship" location for the Huyler's company in the city, housing an elegant restaurant rather than a smaller luncheonette counter typical of the other locations.

Prior to the construction of the Huyler Building, this parcel on Delaware Avenue contained a large three-story brick house, comparable in size and scale to the nearby Stephen Van Rensselaer Watson House at 388 Delaware Avenue (now the Buffalo Club), built in 1870, and the Charles F. Sternberg House at 414 Delaware Avenue

⁸ Richard Pieper, "Preservation Brief 42: The Maintenance, Repair and Replacement of Historic Cast Stone," *Preservation Briefs - Technical Preservation Services*. National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. Web. 05 July 2011.
<<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief42.htm>>

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 7

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

(now the Mansion on Delaware Avenue hotel), built in 1869-70. Both the Watson and Sternberg houses were designed as brick, Second Empire-styled buildings, each with a signature mansard roof, and it appears that the original house, which dates to approximately the same era, was also a Second Empire style house, two-stories with a slated mansard story, and may have been built for Thomas A. Jebb, treasurer of the Akron Cement Works, who resided in the house in 1875.¹⁰

By the end of the 1910s and into the 1920s, Delaware Avenue was beginning to transform from one of Buffalo's most fashionable residential streets into a commercial and business core in the city. As a result, many of these former residential buildings were converted with box-like additions to their front elevations, creating new commercial and office space. Many others were simply demolished to make way for new modern retail and office buildings.

Harvey S. Horton first created plans for the Huyler Building in 1923. His client was the Gramercy Investing Company, the real estate arm of the Huyler's company operated by the three Huyler brothers. Horton's plans, which date from around April to August of 1923, meticulously record the extant brick Second Empire house on the property, anticipating its removal for the new commercial and office building. In plans titled "Building for Huyler's," Horton created a scheme for a three-story reinforced concrete building with three commercial tenant spaces on the ground floor and offices on the upper levels. However, the architect also cloaked his modern structure in a traditional design, a classical revival style of cast-stone panels bolted to the concrete frame and walls. The use of a style with connotations of tradition and history lent the building a sense of elegance, good taste and refinement, qualities that were also associated with Huyler's brand at the time. In 1925, Horton revised the plans for the Huyler Building. Perhaps the most significant revision was the addition of a fourth-story, then intended to house the Huyler's kitchen and storage rooms. The reasons behind this expansion are unclear, although the 1923 set of plans contains some details for three- or four-story designs for the building, indicating that the Gramercy Investing Company may have been vacillating about how large to build the new building in Buffalo. Horton maintained the initial Classical Revival elevations, slightly modifying them to suit

⁹ As noted in *Dr. W.D. Horne Interview Transcript*. Recorded Oct 13, 1956. Paul Wallace Research Collection, Box 2, Folder 47. Hershey Community Archives, Hershey, PA.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 8

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

the new four-story design. The ground floor contained a “north store” (given the address of 378 Delaware) and a “south store” (given the address of 370 or 372 Delaware Avenue), small commercial spaces which fronted Delaware Avenue with shops measuring approximately 20-feet wide and 100-feet in depth. According to the plans revised in 1925, Huyler’s was to have a store located in the central space in the building, given the 376 Delaware Avenue address. Behind this store, located at the west end of the building, was to be a spacious dining room and men’s dining room with a serving room; these spaces suggest that the intent was to create a substantial Huyler’s restaurant, not just a luncheonette or soda counter, which was more typical of its stores. According to the plans, these dining halls were to be elegantly decorated with green terrazzo floors, decorative coffered ceilings, mirrored columns and walnut trim. The actual kitchen and supply rooms were located on an upper floor of the building, connected to the serving room via a dumbwaiter. Upper floors also contained areas that were partitioned into a variety of offices. As the new plans revised the originals, exactly what changes were made and what features were originally designed in 1923 is unclear.

The era of the design and construction of the Huyler Building in Buffalo corresponds to the period of great change and turmoil in the Huyler’s company. While Horton likely worked closely with the Huyler brothers during the initial design phase in 1923, the brothers had sold their interests in the Huyler’s company to a New Orleans syndicate in December of 1925. This transition likely explains why the building was not constructed in 1923 and was instead revised and delayed until 1925. A building permit was issued on December 16, 1925 to the Gramercy Investing Company (as owner) to build a four-story brick, tile and stone store and offices at 374 Delaware Avenue.¹¹ The building appears to have been finished in 1926, based on information from Sanborn fire insurance maps and city directories.

Despite the intention, records are unclear whether the building was ever actually occupied by the Huyler’s company. While city directories list the other Huyler’s locations on Main Street in the same general period (1926-1929), and the Huyler Building itself is listed, there is no entry for a Huyler’s restaurant or eatery at 374 Delaware Avenue. The initial first floor tenants in the building, listed in the city directory of 1927, were

¹⁰ Noted in the 1875 Buffalo City Directory.

¹¹ Based on building permit #95061 located in the City of Buffalo Permit Office.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 9

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

recorded as Pitt Petri Importer, Inc. located in the 378 Delaware retail space, the American Radiator Company showroom in the 374 Delaware space (this is likely the center 376 Delaware space), and the 372 Delaware address was noted as being vacant. The upper floors of the Huyler Building contained an assortment of professional offices including the Film Board of Trade (Room 307), the American Seating Company furniture (Room 308), the City Architect's Offices (Room 407) and other tenants. There is no indication that a Huyler's establishment (confectioner shop or restaurant) occupied the building in 1927, the building's first year of operation. In fact, perhaps the American Radiator Company was initially slated to occupy the 372 Delaware space but relocated to the larger and more desirable central commercial space when it became available.

The only record located indicating that the building possibly housed a Huyler's operation is from a mention in the 1933 *New York Times*. In a notice for a sheriff's auction, apparently resulting from the defaulting on the mortgage of the Huyler Building held by the Gramercy Investing Company and the subsequent foreclosure on the building, the rights, title and interest to the Huyler Building (recorded as being 370, 374 and 378 Delaware Avenue in Buffalo) were auctioned off on February 17, 1933. At the time of the auction, the various lease agreements made to the Gramercy Investing Company as landlords were recorded. This record indicates that the Huyler's company signed a lease on the building dated April 1, 1925, which was subsequently modified on November 25, 1925 and again on July 28, 1931. The lease agreement began on January 1, 1926 (reinforcing that the building's construction was completed by 1926) and was for ten years, terminating on December 31, 1935. For a yearly rent of \$15,000, Huyler's rented space in the basement, first floor and second and third floors of the building, under the address of 374 Delaware. However, unlike the other leases noted in the sheriff's auction, Huyler's is never noted as being a "tenant" in the building. While Huyler's leased this space from the Gramercy Investing Company, whether the company occupied it and with what type of operation are unclear.¹²

Despite the unresolved questions about Huyler's occupancy of the Huyler Building, one key tenant of the building was the Pitt Petri Company, an importer of housewares and decorative items. The first shop was opened by Mr. and Mrs. Pitt Petri Sr. and Esther L. Emig, sister of Mr. Petri, in 1924 and was located on Allen Street in Buffalo. Shortly after, in 1925, the Pitt Petri importers store moved to a location at 569 Delaware

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 10

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

Avenue.¹³ On September 27, 1927 Pitt Petri Importers, Inc. signed a lease with the Gramercy Investing Company for a showroom and store at 378 Delaware Avenue in the Huyler Building, described as the “north store” in the building plans.¹⁴ While many shops and businesses that featured luxury goods, including the gourmet Huyler’s confections, were hard hit during the Great Depression in the 1930s, the Pitt Petri shop appears to have grown and become prosperous. Pitt Petri became synonymous with high-quality decorative and art goods, retailing home products such as silverware, crystal, dishes, china, decorative objects and other goods. The store became so successful and highly regarded that it opened a New York City branch in 1931.

By the late 1930s, Pitt Petri Importers had achieved a national following in both its Buffalo and New York City stores and through a mail-order business. The company carried product lines that included the New York City-based Tiffany & Co., one of the world’s most prominent jewelry and decorative goods companies and a name synonymous with taste, quality and elegance, bringing these products to the Buffalo marketplace. As the company became associated with opulence, quality and modern tastes in its decorative goods, it desired to revamp its showroom in Buffalo. It was imperative for a retailer who specialized in selling the latest and most stylish products to maintain showrooms which were in the height of fashion, and the Pitt Petri showrooms underwent numerous alterations and updates throughout the years as tastes changed. In 1936 designer Lophelia Runyon of New York City was hired to remodel the store at 378 Delaware Avenue. Runyon’s design for the Pitt Petri showroom featured a color palate of “nasturtium orange, “pale blossom pink,” chartreuse, canary yellow and “madonna blue” and featured a formal bride’s table called “June,” which showcased a Venetian lace table cloth set with an antique silver service.¹⁵

In 1939, Pitt Petri engaged notable international architect Antonin Raymond to undertake a showroom expansion and redesign of the store.¹⁶ It appears that during this time, the Pitt Petri Importers business had become so successful and prominent, that it took over the former 374/376 Delaware commercial space at the center of the building. Raymond was a prominent twentieth-century architect. After studying architecture in

¹² "Sheriff's Auction," *New York Times*, 17 Feb. 1933: C36.

¹³ "Pitt Petri Inc. Remodeling Its Delaware Avenue Store," *Buffalo Evening News*, 19 May 1976: 46.

¹⁴ "Sheriff's Auction," *New York Times*, 17 Feb. 1933: C36.

¹⁵ "Pitt Petri Reopens," *Courier Express*, 1 May 1936: 21.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 11

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

Europe, Raymond worked for three years in New York City for Cass Gilbert. In 1916, Raymond entered the employ of Frank Lloyd Wright. Along with his wife and collaborator, Noémi, Raymond initially worked for Wright at Taliesin in Spring Green, Wisconsin. Upon his return from a brief stint in the Army during World War I, Raymond was convinced by Wright to serve as his chief assistant and travel to Tokyo with him to work on the Imperial Hotel. During this period, Raymond became enamored with Japanese design and culture and also began to become dissatisfied with working for Wright. In January of 1921, Raymond was dismissed by Wright. A month later he established his own firm, with Leon Whittaker Slack, the American Architectural and Engineering Company, in Tokyo. Following the devastating Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, he established the Raymond Architectural Design Office, which worked to reimagine and rebuild Japan. While working in Tokyo, Raymond pioneered modern architecture in that nation, becoming widely regarded as the “father of Modern architecture in Japan.”¹⁷

Raymond subsequently returned to the United States and established an architecture practice at his farm in Mount Hope, Pennsylvania in 1938. Shortly after his return to this country, he was commissioned by Pitt Petri to redesign the expanded showroom. Published in 1941 by the national architectural journal, *Pencil Points*, Raymond’s design for the new Pitt Petri showroom inserted new display cases into the existing structure of the commercial space that consisted of curved display areas, ribbon-like lighting fixtures and a new color scheme of dark grey, white and dark blues. The overall effect created a sleek, modern interior, and the many curves and simplified forms in the space testify to the popularity of streamlined designs during the late 1930s and 1940s.¹⁸ The engagement of an internationally prominent architect for the redesign of its showroom reflects the success and prosperity of the Pitt Petri company and its desire to create a new showroom reflective of current design trends.¹⁹

¹⁶ Jonathan D. Epstein, "Pitt Petri Alters Plans, Will Close for Good," *The Buffalo News*, 4 Jan. 2011.

¹⁷ Kurt Gerard Frederick Helfrich and William Whitaker, *Crafting a Modern World: the Architecture and Design of Antonin and Noémi Raymond*, New York: Princeton Architectural, 2006; 75.

¹⁸ "Pitt Petri Shop in Buffalo," *Pencil Points*, 22 Jan 1941: 1-10. Also, "Raymond Architectural Design Office Inc. - Company Profile," *Raymond Architectural Design Office Inc.* Web. 19 May 2011. <<http://www.raymondsekkei.co.jp/english/index.html>>.

¹⁹ Unfortunately, the Antonin Raymond-designed interior cabinetry has been altered and modified since its installation. Some fixtures and installations remain, but they have generally been painted, covered with new flooring or removed since their construction. The most intact portion of Raymond’s display areas is an area of the store located near the center of the building which features curved walls and the oval ceiling design.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 12

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

Although forced to close its New York City branch in 1941, when the war abroad made importing goods difficult, Pitt Petri Importers continued a thriving business in Western New York. The company, in its newly expanded show room on Delaware Avenue, became so recognized at this location that by 1951 the building that had originally been known as the Huyler Building (and whose name was emblazoned on carved stone friezes above the third floor windows) became known as the Petri Building.²⁰ This time period also correlates with the national decline of the Huyler's chain in the early 1950s, and the change in name for the building may have resulted from the Huyler's company fading from public memory in the area. Eventually, in the 1960s the Pitt Petri company expanded once again, completely occupying the three original tenant spaces on the first floor of the building, updating and modernizing the showrooms to stay up on current styles and trends.

Despite the growth of the store, changing tastes and a faltering economy in the 1960s and 70s led to the decline of the Pitt Petri company shortly thereafter. Pitt Petri opened a new location in Williamsville, NY, a wealthy suburb outside of Buffalo, in 1995 with the hopes of tapping into the upscale market in that area. The business was further taxed during the late twentieth century as consumers could buy these goods through the internet and also directly from the manufacturers. In 2000 Tiffany & Co, one of Pitt Petri's oldest suppliers, stopped working with its independent dealers, devastating the business of Pitt Petri. Pitt Petri, Jr., owner of the business after his father, considered reversing the previous expansion in the ground floor of the building, shrinking the showrooms into one storefront to allow the other two spaces to be rented to create more income for his building. After closing the Williamsville location in 2009, Pitt Petri hoped to consolidate its business into a smaller space. However, after a disappointing holiday season in 2010, the Pitt Petri company was forced to close its doors in early 2011. Currently, the building is owned by Pitt Petri, Jr., but it is being leased by a commercial real estate developer, who seeks to restore this building's long-time prominence on what is still Buffalo's most fabled street.²¹

Harvey Staring Horton, Architect

²⁰ This is noted as occurring ca. 1951. The 1950 Buffalo City Directory lists the building still as the "Huyler Building"; however, it was known as the "Petri Building" in the 1951/52 directory.

²¹ Jonathan D. Epstein, "Pitt Petri Alters Plans, Will Close for Good," *The Buffalo News*, 4 Jan. 2011.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 13

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

Harvey Staring Horton was a Buffalo-based architect in the first half of the twentieth century who designed several notable buildings in Western New York and played a significant role in the local architectural and cultural scene during the twentieth century.

Horton was born in Silver Creek, NY, located about 35 miles south of Buffalo, on April 25, 1884 to Charles C. and Leora (*née* Staring). His father, Charles C., worked as a fruit grower in Silver Creek, which is located in the heart of a fertile agricultural area along Lake Erie. Horton was educated in the local grammar and high schools in Silver Creek before he attended Cornell University. While at Cornell, Horton was awarded the Clifton Beckwith Brown Bronze Medal from the school for his high grades in architectural design.

After graduating from the prestigious school with a Bachelor of Architecture degree in 1906, Horton worked with the prominent New York City-based architectural firm of Carrère and Hastings. Carrère and Hastings are significant in Western New York for John M. Carrere's role as chairman of the Pan-American Exposition Board of Architects and for the firm's design of the McKinley Monument in Niagara Square, designed in 1907 to commemorate President McKinley's assassination at the 1901 exposition. Eventually Horton worked with important Buffalo architect George Cary. These experiences would have given Horton a solid background in the Beaux Arts style, which focused on technical skills such as drawing and painting, as well as the fundamentals of "good" architecture such as form, proportion, and aesthetics that drew largely from classical models of Roman and Greek antiquity. This experience would have been further augmented when he took a six month trip spent traveling through Europe.

After working with Cary, Horton established his own practice in 1916 in an office located in the Marine National Bank Building on Main Street (contributing to the NPS-certified local Joseph Ellicott Historic District). Eventually, Horton relocated to the prestigious Prudential Building (also known as the Guaranty Building, NHL 1975). Noted among the works of Harvey S. Horton are the English Tudor style Saddle and Bridle Club of Buffalo, located on Amherst Street (1922, NRE).²² Horton also designed the Collegiate Gothic style Methodist Episcopal Church (ca. 1920s, NRE) and the Gothic Revival style Silver Creek High School

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 14

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

(1923, NRE), both located on South Main Street in his native Silver Creek. Several Marine bank (now HSBC bank) branches were also said to have been designed by Horton. He also designed the Lancaster Memorial Building, in Lancaster, NY (currently unidentified). Besides his design for the Huyler Building of 1923-1925, records indicate Horton also designed or renovated another Huyler's building in Buffalo as well.

Besides his larger commissions, Horton also designed several residential projects. While many are unidentified at this time, one of the most prominent examples of his residential work is the William H. Bayliss House, also known as the Bayliss-Oishei House (NRE). Located at 360 Depew Avenue, this stunning example of Tudor Revival architecture was designed by Horton in 1935.

Like many contemporary architects, Horton was also involved in local groups and organizations and his clients indicate membership in high society. Harvey S. Horton was a member of the Buffalo Athletic Club, the University Club and the Cornell Club. Horton was a member of the First Presbyterian Church in Buffalo and was active in the congregation. He was also very involved locally in architectural organizations. He was noted as serving as director of the Buffalo Association of Architects and also served as treasurer and president of the Buffalo Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in the 1920s. He was active in the local architectural scene as well, as he was one of a group of architects who fought to preserve the facade of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery (1890-1905, E.B. Green, NR 1971) when a new addition was constructed in 1962, making Horton perhaps one of Buffalo's early preservationists. He died at the age of 83 on October 4, 1965 and was later interred in Buffalo's Forest Lawn Cemetery (1849, NR 1990).²³

Commercial Development of Delaware Avenue, Buffalo

²² Today, the Saddle and Bridle Club is known as the Buffalo Therapeutic Riding Center.

²³ Sources of information on Horton include: Lee F. Heacock, *The Buffalo Artists' Register; a General Review of the Activities of Representative Organizations of Buffalo, N.Y. ... Related to ... the Creative and Interpretive Arts* (Buffalo, NY, 1926) 327. "H.S. Horton Dies; Architect of Many WNY Structures," *Buffalo Evening News* 5 Oct. 1965: 28. Henry Wayland Hill, *Municipality of Buffalo, New York: a History, 1720-1923* (New York: Lewis Historical Pub., 1923) 83. "Alumni Notes." *Cornell Alumni News* XIX.11 (Dec 14, 1916): 128.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 15

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

The Huyler Building is a good example of the transformation that was occurring on Buffalo's Delaware Avenue in the early decades of the twentieth century. Beginning at the Terrace and radiating northward from Niagara Square (Buffalo's earliest town square sited at the heart of the developing community), Delaware Avenue had been a primary artery since Buffalo was first laid out in 1804 by surveyor Joseph Ellicott. Initially the street was designated as Delaware Street, named in honor of a Native American group, and in 1879 it was renamed Delaware Avenue to reflect its growing prominence and status.²⁴

Through much of the nineteenth century, Delaware Avenue was one of Buffalo's most fashionable residential streets, especially in the area nearest to Niagara Square. Delaware Avenue north of Niagara Square initially was opened for traffic in 1826, leading to the construction of one of the street's most significant early houses, the large stone house of Dr. Ebenezer Johnson, Buffalo's first mayor, was constructed in 1833 on Delaware Avenue between what is now Chippewa and Tupper Streets. Bolstered by the economic growth and prosperity in Buffalo in the decades following the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, Delaware Avenue saw much of its residential growth in the 1850s and 1860s. Houses of this era included the Richard Upjohn-designed Gothic Revival house (ca. 1853) at Delaware and Utica, the Walter Cary house (1852) at 184 Delaware Avenue, and the elegant Italianate-style Rufus L. Howard house at 251 Delaware Avenue (ca. 1858). One notable house was the fanciful Gothic Revival house for John Hollister (1852) at 107 Delaware Avenue, which later became the home of former President Millard Fillmore when he returned to Buffalo in 1858. By mid-century, the Gothic Revival and Italianate styles had given way to the French-inspired Second Empire style, characterized by a mansard roof and towers. Extant examples of the style include the William Dorsheimer House (1868, NR 1980) designed by H.H. Richardson, the Stephen Van Rensselaer Watson House at 388 Delaware Avenue, now the Buffalo Club, (1870), and the Charles F. Sternberg House at 414 Delaware Avenue (now the Mansion on Delaware Avenue hotel) built in 1869-70.²⁵ Records indicate that a similar brick Second Empire-style house

²⁴ Francis R. Kowsky, "Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, New York," *The Grand American Avenue 1850 -1920* (San Francisco: Pomegranate Art, 1994) 36.

²⁵ Kowsky 35-45.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 16

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

occupied the parcel at 374 Delaware Avenue later occupied by the Huyler Building, possibly constructed ca. 1875 for Thomas A. Jebb, Canadian-born capitalist and treasurer of the Akron Cement Works.²⁶

Around the turn of the twentieth century, Delaware Avenue's residential character began to be eroded by the growing commercial and business development of downtown Buffalo. While residential development continued, primarily north of North Street, Delaware Avenue began a transition to commercial architecture, beginning at Niagara Square and moving northward. Already, Delaware Avenue south of Niagara Square had lost much of its residential character by the second half of the 1800s. The 1910s and 20s saw a rapid transformation of not only the use but the architectural scale of the area around Niagara Square with the arrival of the Spencer Kellogg Company, which transformed the former Henry H. Sizer House (1836) at 98 Delaware Avenue into offices for its linseed oil company in 1910. This era also saw the construction of the new Statler Hotel (1923, NRE), which replaced the former Hollister-Fillmore House (which itself had become the Hotel Fillmore in 1881) and the Buffalo Athletic Club (1924, NRE), which replaced the former Stephen G. Austin House (1836).

This commercial transformation spread northward on Delaware Avenue especially in the decades after World War I, as cultural, societal and economic climates changed. In 1888 the first commercial enterprise, Margaret Armstrong's millinery store, opened on Delaware Avenue at Mohawk Street, marking the first of the many stores and shops to come along this stretch of Delaware Avenue. Delaware Avenue's transformation was ushered in by improvements in transportation, including the advent of public transportation such as buses, which allowed this north-south artery to be used by a growing number of people. This phenomenon was further enhanced as the automobile allowed even greater access to the street. The growing number of people utilizing Delaware Avenue encouraged businesses to locate along this artery. Further compounding this transformation was the fact that as fortunes and domestic customs changed in the twentieth century, many of the older mansions became too costly for a single family to maintain and were subsequently divided into boarding houses or had additions added for use as offices and shops.

²⁶ Edward T. Dunn, *Buffalo's Delaware Avenue: Mansions and Families* (Buffalo, NY: Canisius College, 2003) 183. Also information drawn from the 1874 and 1875 Buffalo City directories and the 1889 Sanborn Fire Insurance map.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 17

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

Despite the shift from residential to commercial artery, Delaware Avenue retained a degree of exclusivity and status amongst other commercial strips such as Main Street. The Delaware Avenue Associates (formed in 1923) was a group of merchants who were concerned with managing the quality of life on the street through the transition. As a result, Delaware Avenue adopted rules and regulations which governed the transformation of the street and sought to “make its business portion as attractive a commercial thoroughfare as it formerly was a residence street.”²⁷ The group successfully had the street widened from Niagara Square nearly to North Street in 1924. This allowed for better modern amenities such as new sewer lines, traffic signals and light fixtures. While this project modernized the street and made it an attractive and desirable commercial location, it did have the negative impact of decimating the treescape of primarily elm trees, which had given Delaware Avenue a shaded, arboreal appearance throughout its history.²⁸

It was in this environment of the 1920s that the Huyler Building was constructed on Delaware Avenue. Like many other commercial projects, the older residential building (which at the time was serving as Jennie Canfield’s rooming house) was demolished in 1925 to make way for a new, modern commercial building, built flush to the newly widened street line. The elegant Classical Revival façade of Huyler Building may indicate the design tastes and preferences of the Delaware Avenue Association, and is an indication of the group’s desire to create a sophisticated design befitting the earlier associations with Delaware Avenue. As a company with a national reputation of the highest rank, the Huyler company apparently sought to build its flagship store in Buffalo on the city’s most fashionable commercial corridor. Similarly it was probably no coincidence that the Pitt Petri import shop, with its selection of elegant, tasteful and high-end goods, also elected to make its home on fashionable Delaware Avenue.

By the late twentieth century, however, Delaware Avenue began to see its status as a fashionable retailing corridor erode. The improved automobile transportation network in the region, initially promoted by groups such as the Delaware Avenue Association, had the opposite consequence. The improved highway system constructed in Buffalo and in Erie County in the 1950s and 60s made it easier and more attractive for residents

²⁷ Quoted in Kowsky 59.

²⁸ Kowsky 56-61.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 18

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

to locate in the booming suburban areas surrounding the city. Occurring simultaneously was the development of new retailing methods such as auto-centric shopping plazas which combined multiple retailers in one location, conveniently accessed by car from the highway. With the loss of city residents and the rise of new “one stop shopping” centers, the more pedestrian-oriented retailing spread out along Delaware Avenue and Main Street in Buffalo suffered. The Pitt Petri importing company’s survival into the twenty-first century was a rare success amongst the many locally or family owned businesses which closed their doors in Buffalo during the last half of the twentieth century. It was the last store of an era of elegant retailing here. Today, while some retailing has returned to downtown Buffalo, mainly in the form of unique specialty stores and boutiques for the many, elegant retailing for the carriage trade has still not returned to its pre-World War II era level, as shopping malls and big-box retailing continue to dominate.

The Huyler Building, both through its appearance and its occupants, is an excellent reminder of Delaware Avenue’s once-thriving upscale commercial character. The building’s elegant classical façade is also a reminder of the elegance, sophistication and refinement associated with retailing on Delaware Avenue in the early 1900s, when Buffalo ranked amongst America’s pre-eminent cities.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 1

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

"Alumni Notes." *Cornell Alumni News* XIX.11 (Dec 14, 1916): 128.

Banham, Reyner. *A Concrete Atlantis: U.S. Industrial Building and European Modern Architecture, 1900-1925*. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1986.

Biniaz, Martin. "Bayliss Oishei Residence, 2011 Decorators Show House, Junior League of Buffalo." *Forgotten Buffalo Tours*. Web. 11 May 2011. <<http://www.forgottenbuffalo.com/baylissosheiresidence.html>>.

Bradley, Betsy H. *The Works: the Industrial Architecture of the United States*. New York: Oxford UP, 1999.

Brooman, R.A., ed. *The Mechanic's Magazine*. Vol. LXVI. London: Robertson, Brooman and, January 3rd - June 27th, 1857. *Google Books*. Google. Web.
<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=dRIFAAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&vq=Ransome&source=gs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

Directory of Directors in the City of New York. New York: Directory of Directors, 1918.

Dunn, Edward T. *Buffalo's Delaware Avenue: Mansions and Families*. Buffalo, NY: Canisius College, 2003.

Epstein, Jonathan D. "Pitt Petri Alters Plans, Will Close for Good." *The Buffalo News*, 4 Jan. 2011.

Gobrecht, L.E. William E. Ward House - National Register of Historic Places Nomination. NY State Historic Preservation Office. Web. <http://www.oprhp.state.ny.us/hpimaging/hp_view.asp?GroupView=10697>.

Heacock, Lee F. *The Buffalo Artists' Register; a General Review of the Activities of Representative Organizations of Buffalo, N.Y. ... Related to ... the Creative and Interpretive Arts*. Buffalo, NY, 1926. 327.

Helfrich, Kurt Gerard Frederick., and William Whitaker. *Crafting a Modern World: the Architecture and Design of Antonin and Noémi Raymond*. New York: Princeton Architectural, 2006.

Hill, Henry Wayland. *Municipality of Buffalo, New York: a History, 1720-1923*. New York: Lewis Historical Pub., 1923. 83. Print.

"H.S. Horton Dies; Architect of Many WNY Structures." *Buffalo Evening News* 5 Oct. 1965: 28.

"Huyler's Advertisement." *Buffalo Daily Courier*, 4 Apr. 1908, sec. 10: 1.

Kins, J.N. "The Accomplishment of Forty Years." *The National Magazine* XLI (Oct 1914 - Mar 1915, Inclusive): 536-40.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 2

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

Kowsky, Francis R. "Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, New York." *The Grand American Avenue 1850 -1920*. San Francisco: Pomegranate Art, 1994. 35-63.

"Let's Talk It Over." *The National Magazine* 35 (Dec 1911): 741-42.

Pieper, Richard. "Preservation Brief 42: The Maintenance, Repair and Replacement of Historic Cast Stone." *Preservation Briefs - Technical Preservation Services*. National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. Web. 05 July 2011. <<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief42.htm>>.

"Pitt Petri Inc. Remodeling Its Delaware Avenue Store." *Buffalo Evening News*. 19 May 1976: 46.

"Pitt Petri Reopens." *Buffalo Courier Express*. 1 May 1936: 21.

"Pitt Petri Shop in Buffalo." *Pencil Points* 22 (Jan 1941): 1-10.

"Raymond Architectural Design Office Inc. - Company Profile." *Raymond Architectural Design Office Inc.* Web. 19 May 2011. <<http://www.raymondsekkei.co.jp/english/index.html>>.

"Sheriff's Auction." *New York Times*, 17 Feb. 1933: C36..

Walkowski, Jennifer. *Reconnaissance Level Historic Resources Survey - City of Lockport, Niagara County, New York*. Rep. Buffalo: Clinton Brown Architecture, April 2011.

Also:

- Sanborn Fire Insurance Map
- The collections of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society
- The records of the Building Permits Office, City Hall, Buffalo

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 1

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Huyler Building is located on a roughly rectangular shaped 0.42-acre plot measuring approximately 50-feet wide by 174-feet in depth in the City of Buffalo at 374 Delaware Avenue at the south-west corner of Trinity Place. It is bordered by other commercial parcels at the south and west sides.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The historic boundary of the resource is in keeping with the historic lands associated with the building since its construction in 1926, with the addition of a parking lot parcel located to the south (formerly 366 Delaware Avenue).???????



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

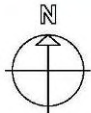
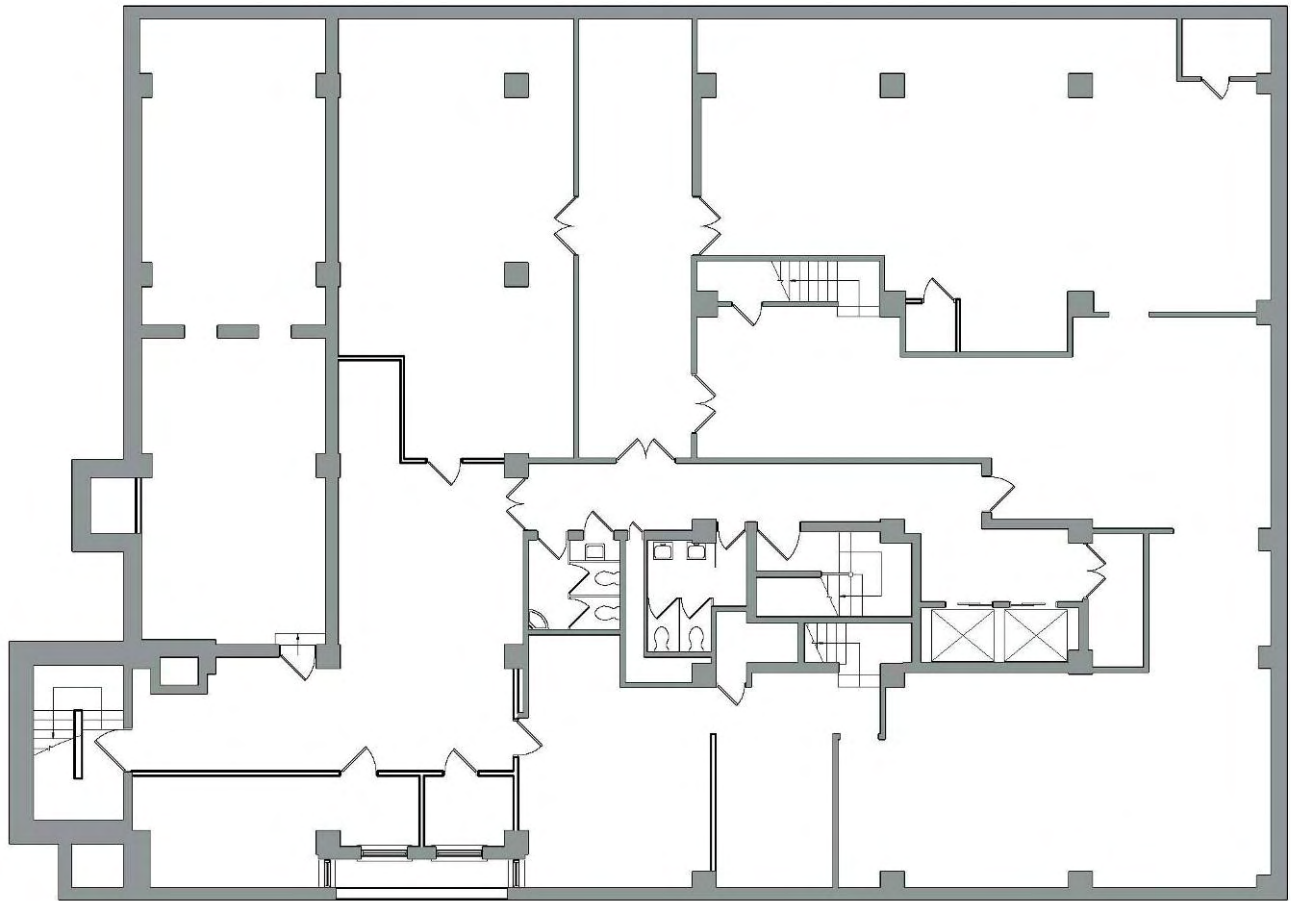
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 2

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

FLOOR PLANS



BASEMENT PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

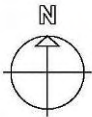
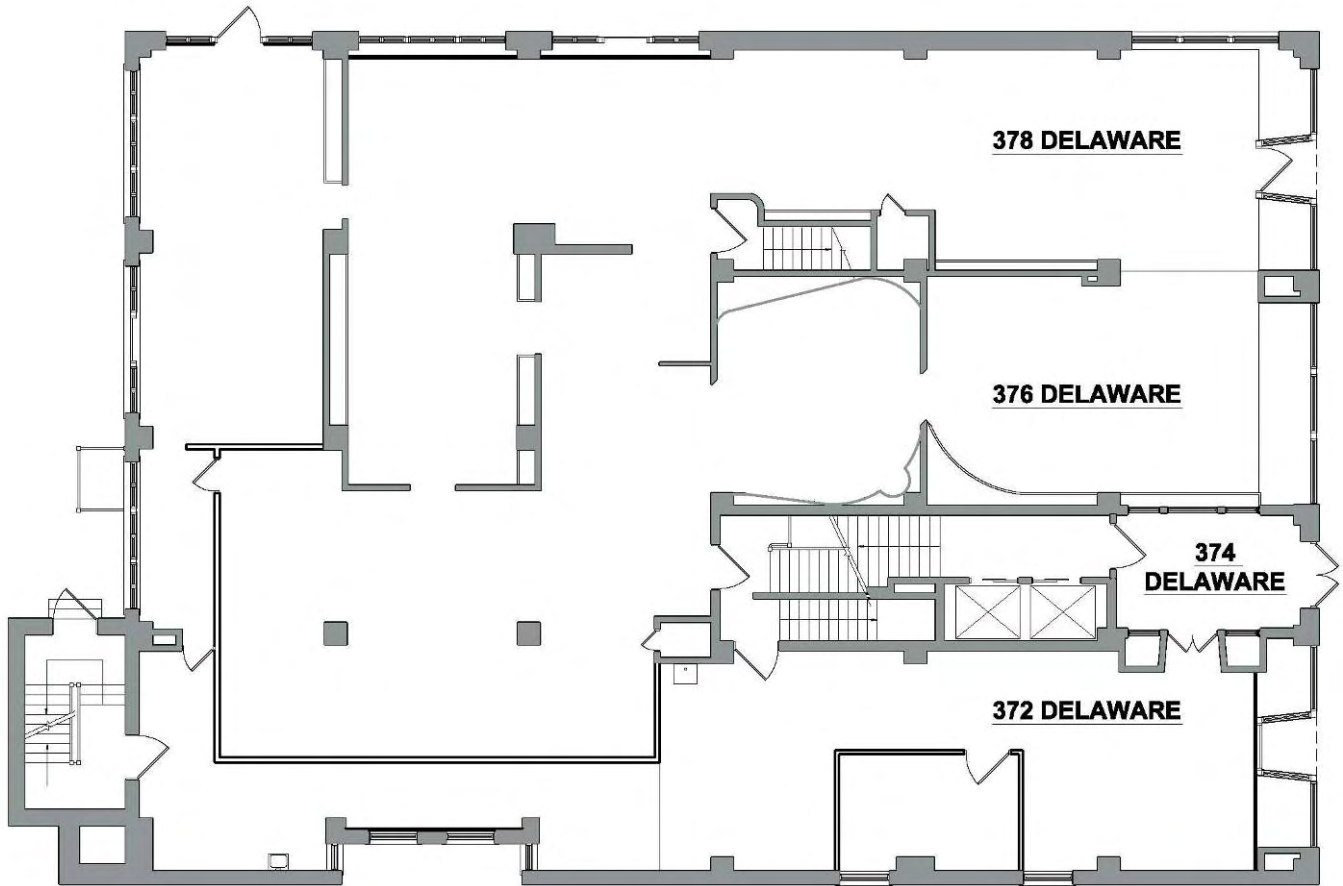
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 3

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

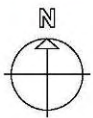
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 4

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



SECOND FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

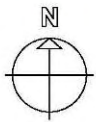
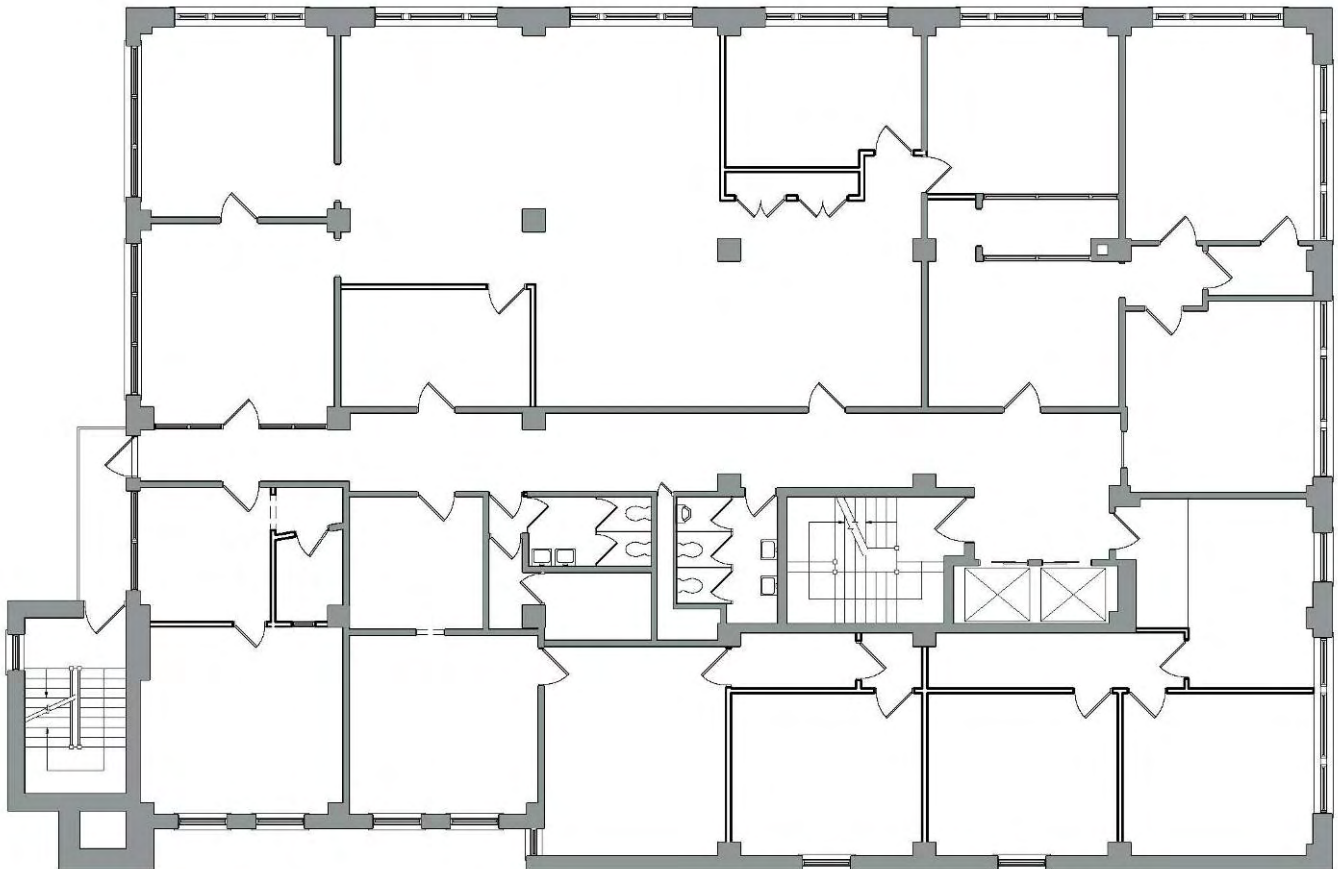
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 5

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



THIRD FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

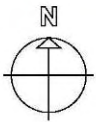
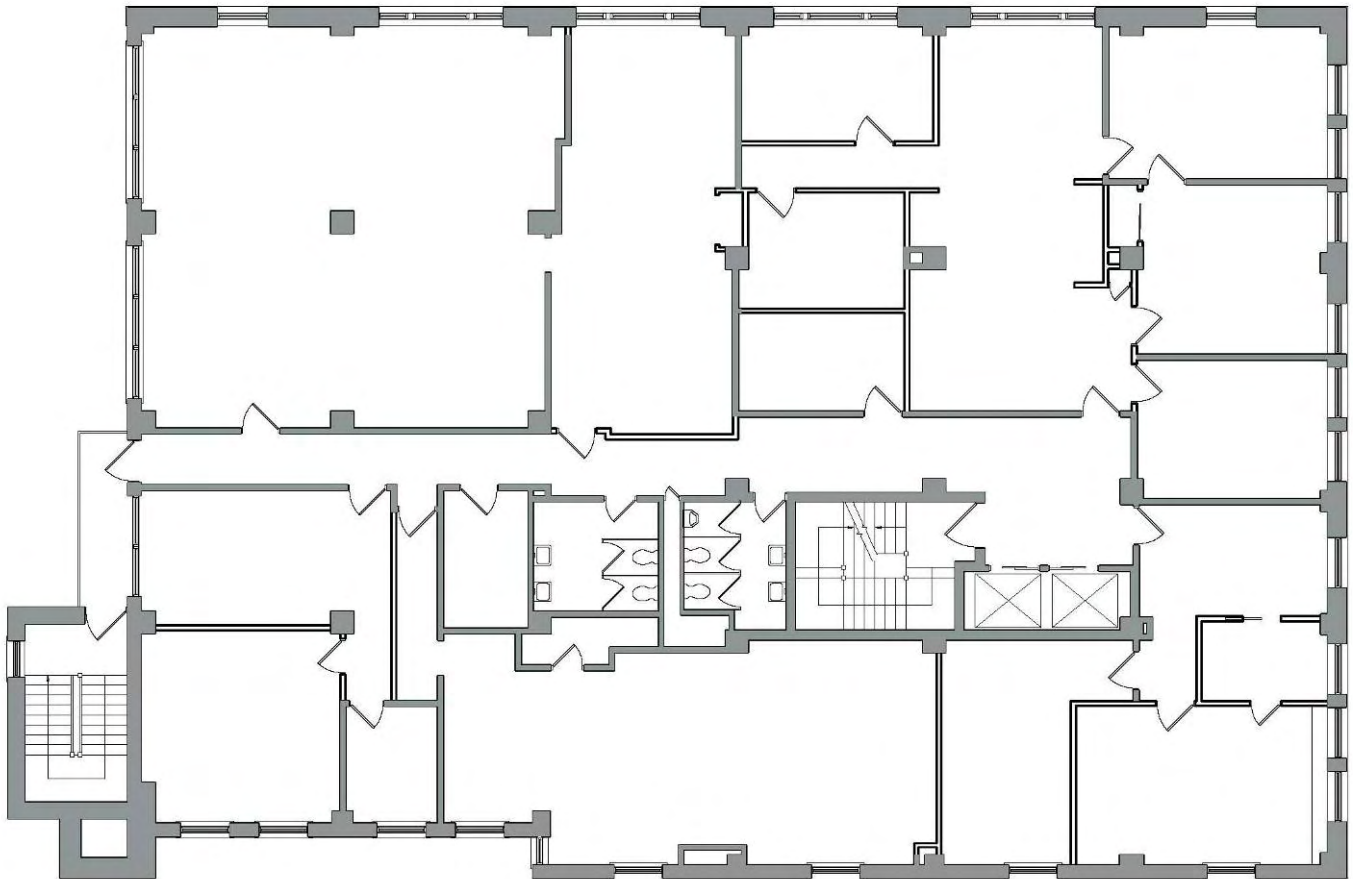
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 6

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



FOURTH FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

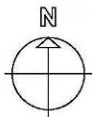
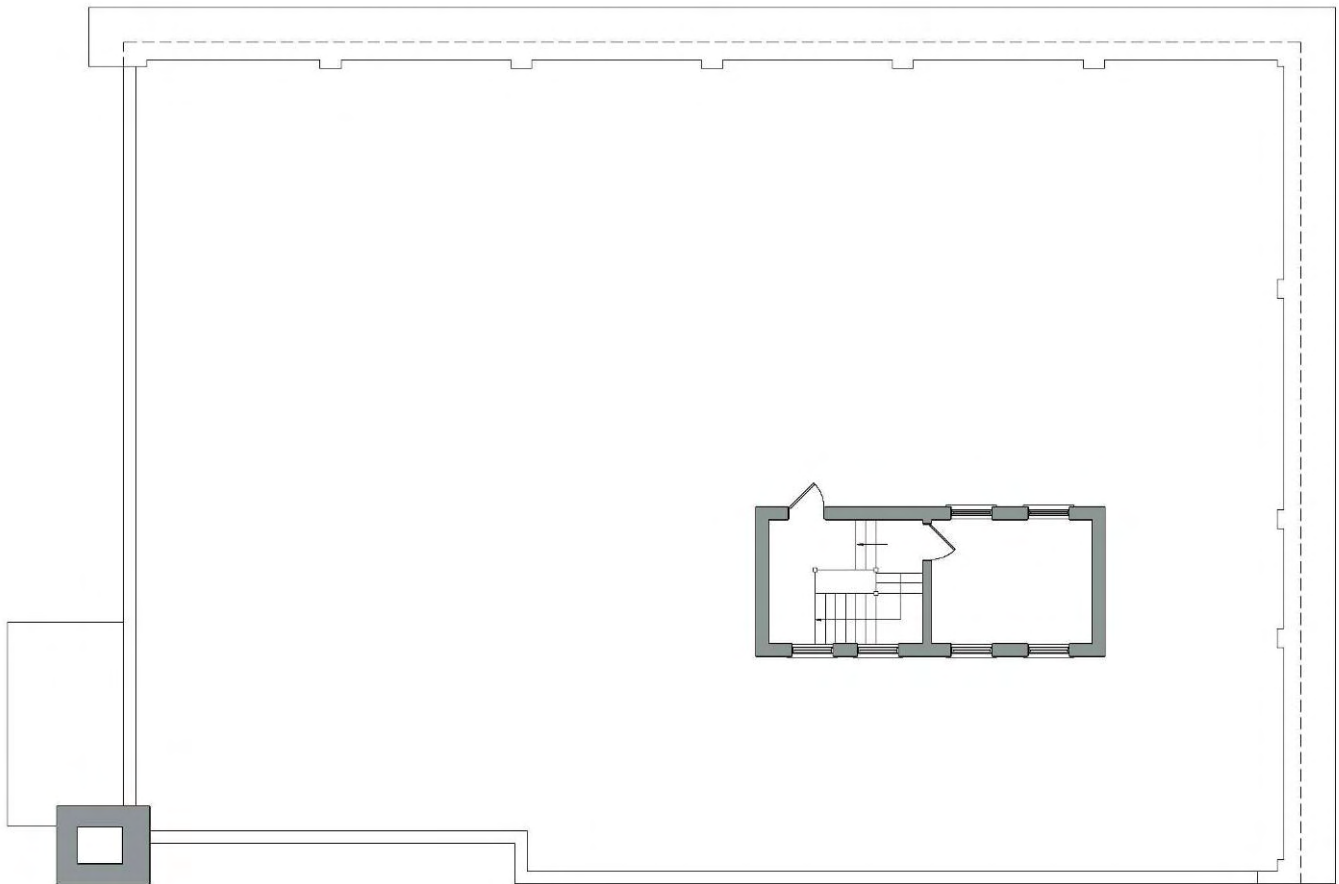
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 7

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



ROOF PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 8

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS



East Elevation, "Building for Huyler's" (1925)

Harvey S. Horton, architect

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 9

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



North Elevation, "Building for Huyler's" (1925)

Harvey S. Horton, architect

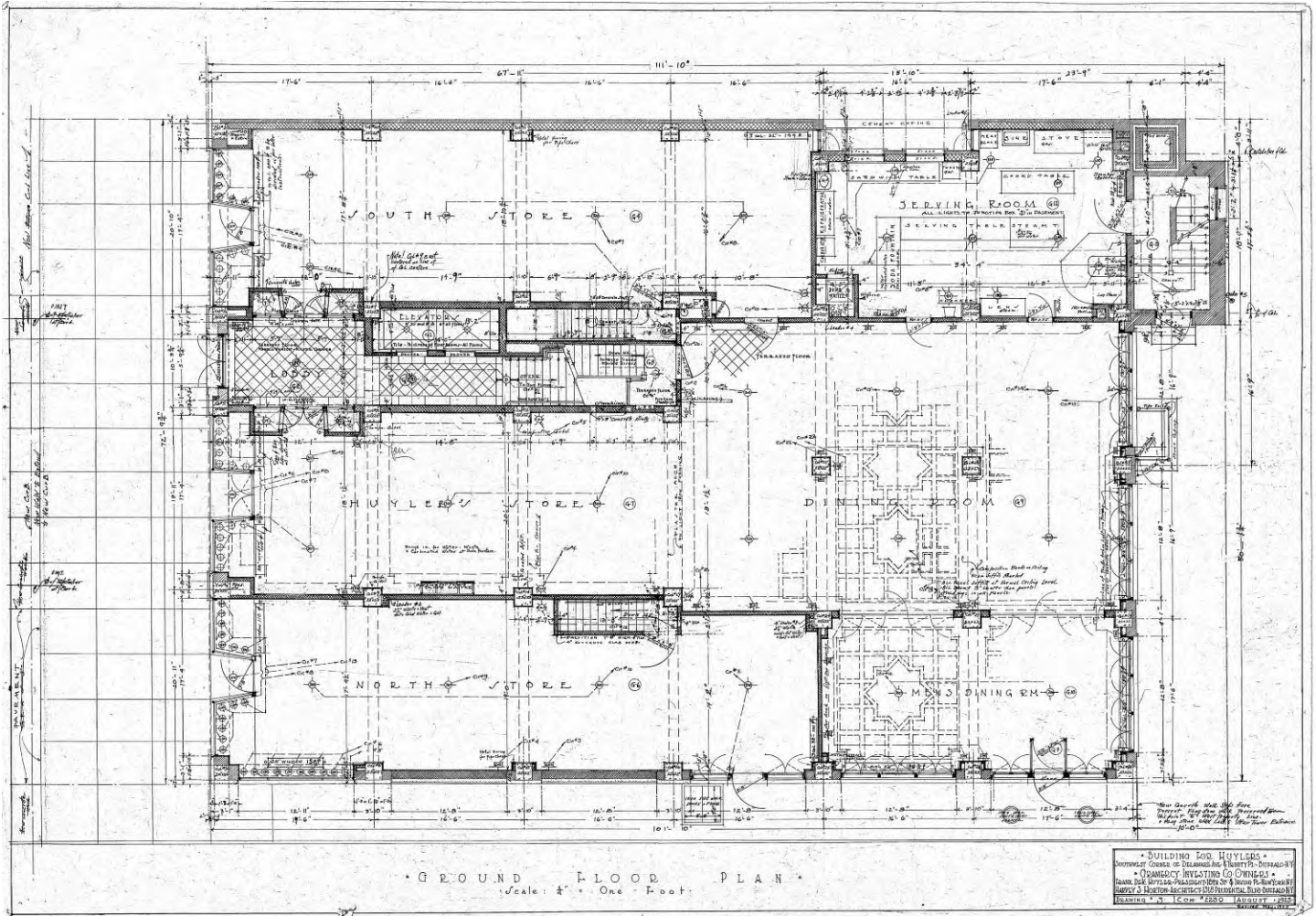
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 10

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



Ground Plan, "Building for Huyler's" (1923, revised 1925)

Harvey S. Horton, architect

North is down in this drawing.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

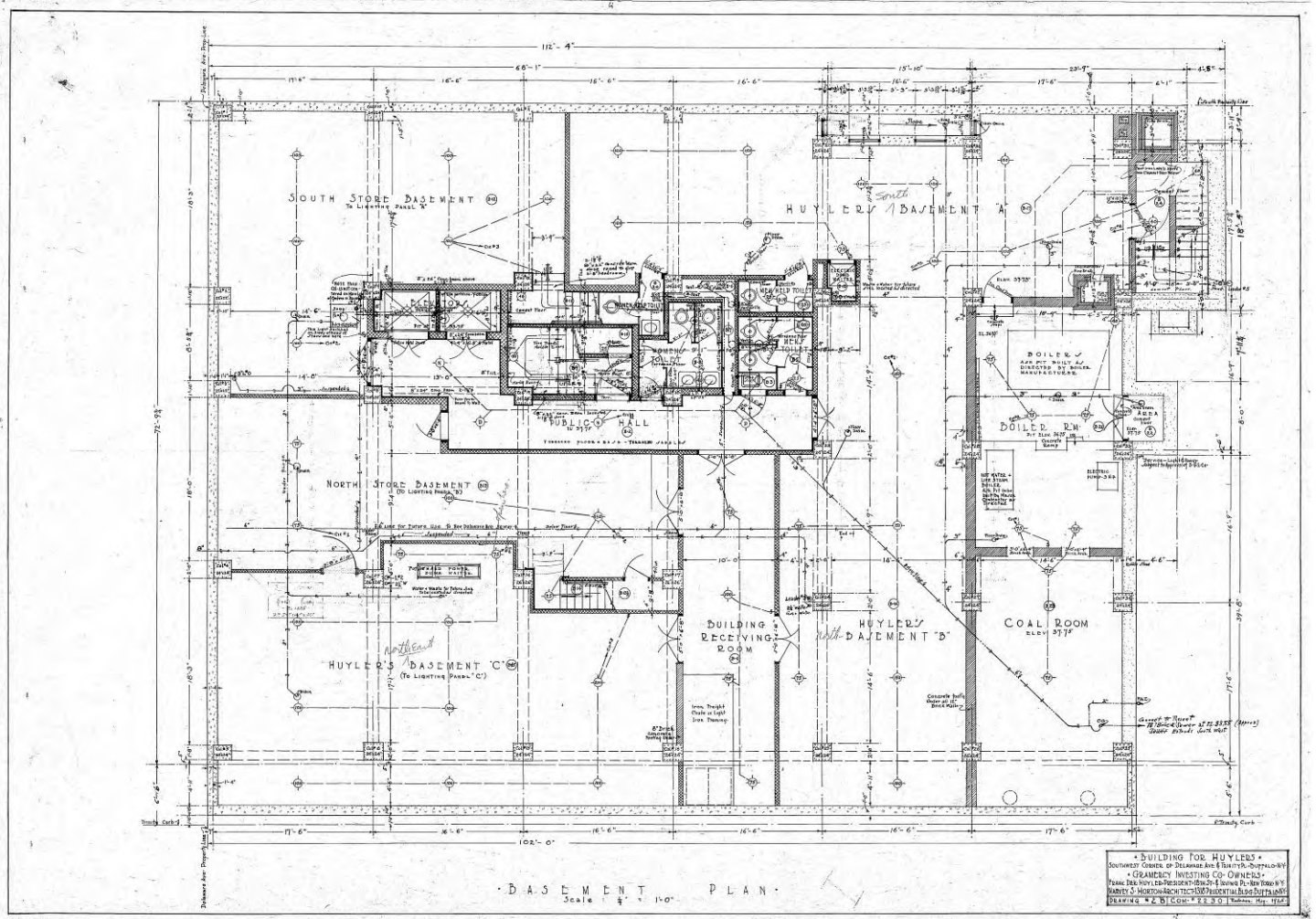
Section 11 Page 11

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State



Basement Plan, "Building for Huyler's" (1923, revised 1925)

Harvey S. Horton, architect

North is down in this drawing.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

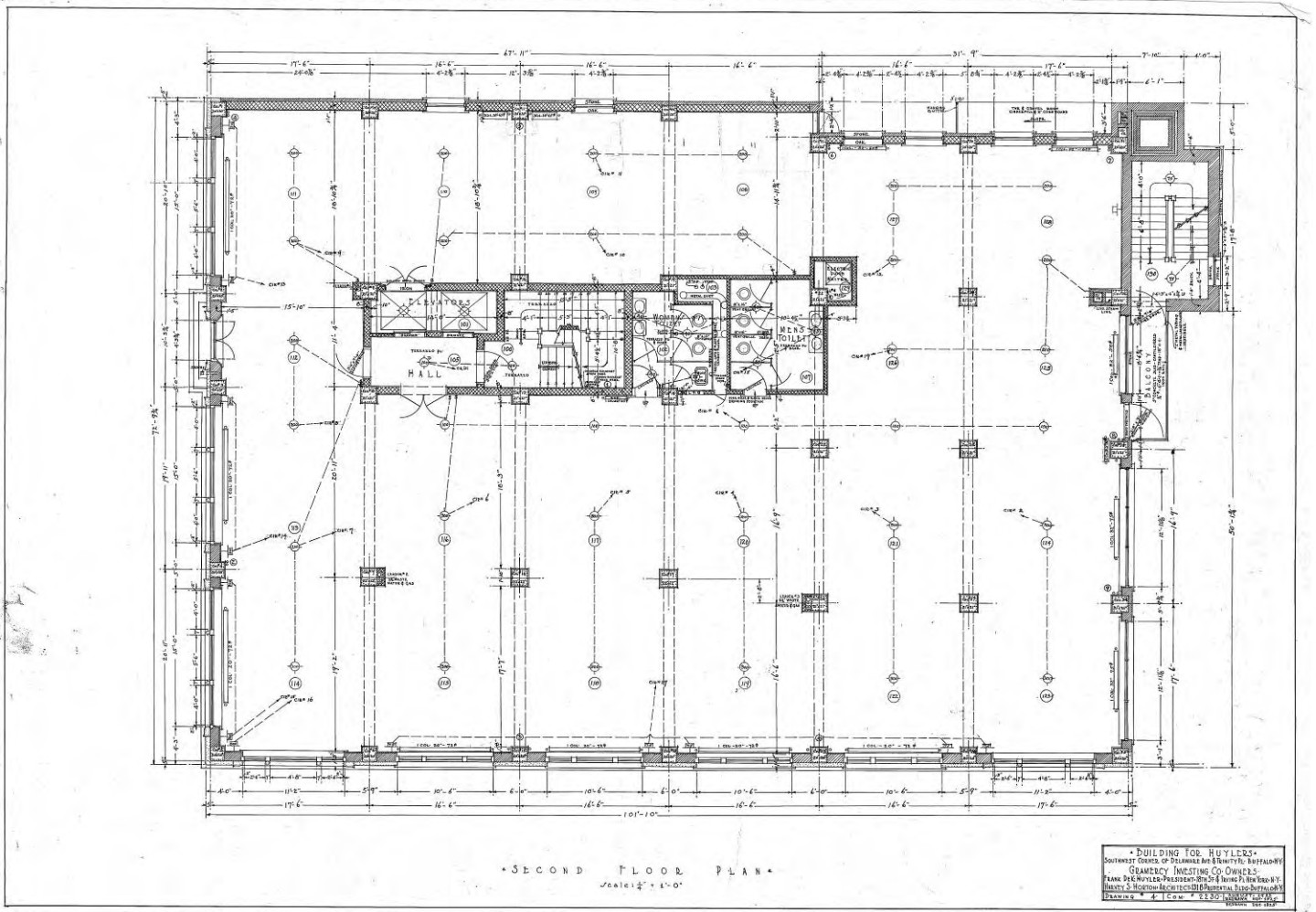
Section 11 Page 12

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State



Second Floor Plan, "Building for Huyler's" (1923, revised 1925)

Harvey S. Horton, architect

North is down in this drawing.

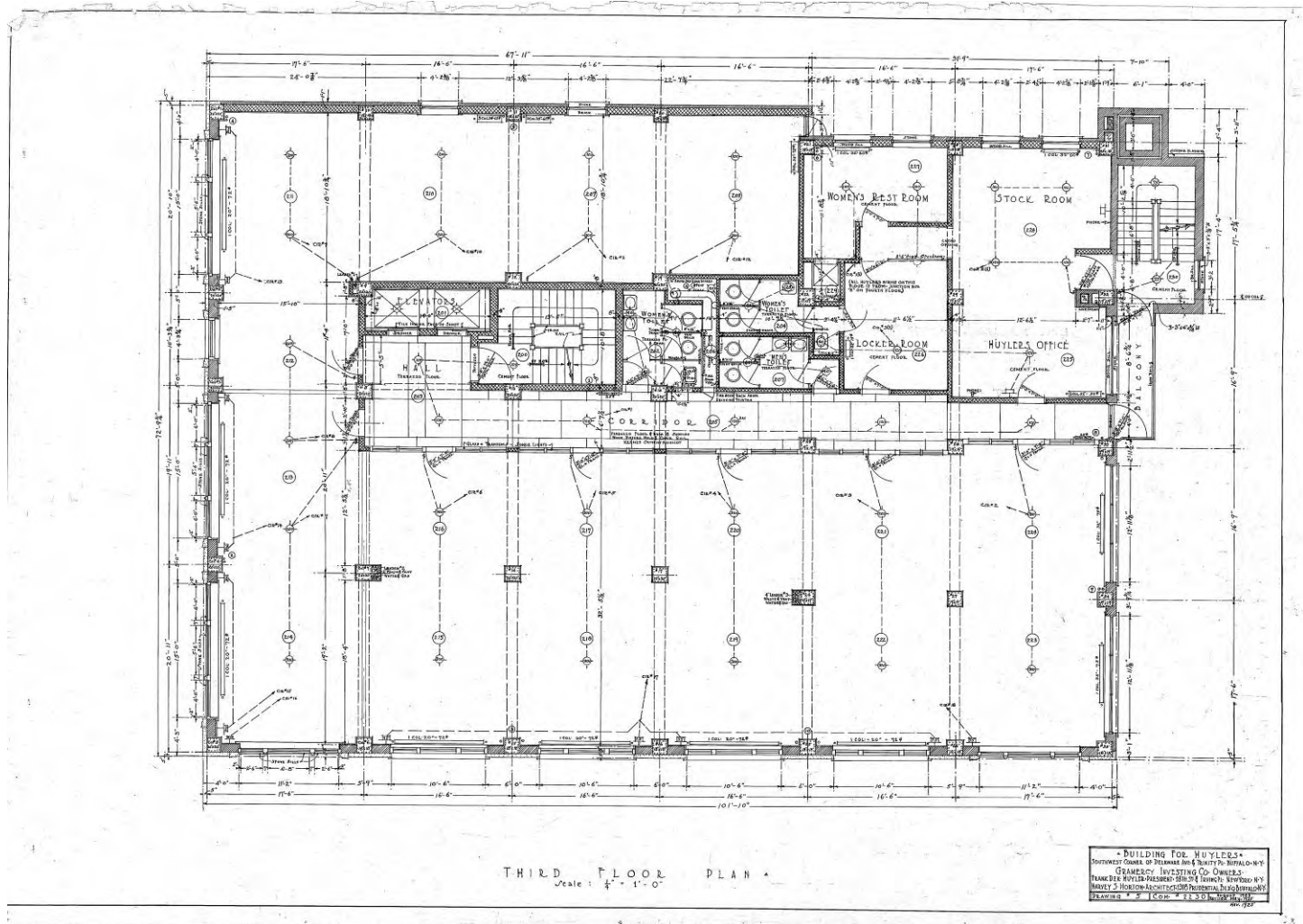
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 13

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



Third Floor Plan, "Building for Huyler's" (1923, revised 1925)

Harvey S. Horton, architect

North is down in this drawing.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

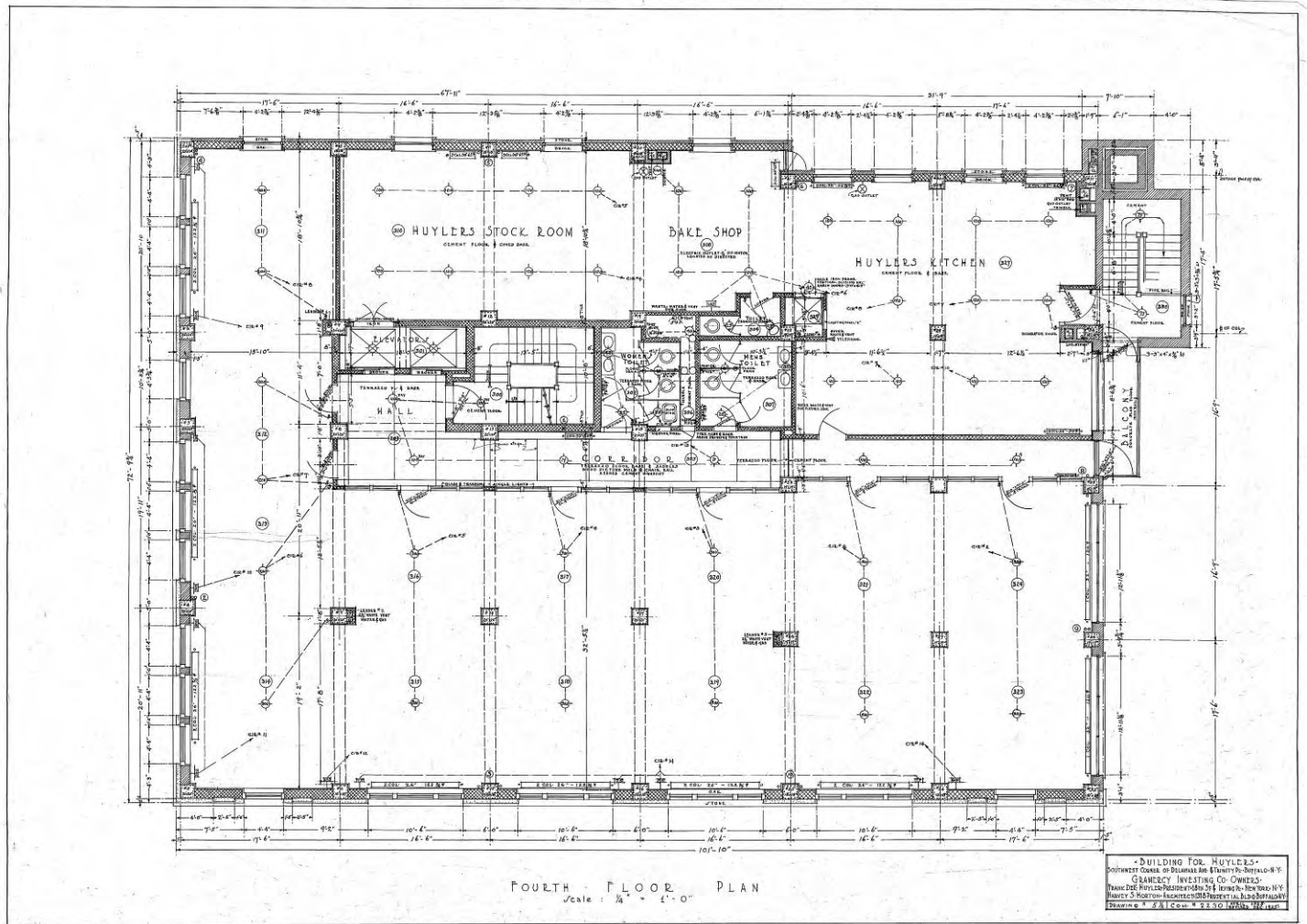
Section 11 Page 14

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State



Fourth Floor Plan, "Building for Huyler's" (revised 1925)

Harvey S. Horton, architect

North is down in this drawing.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 15

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS AND MATERIALS



Harvey Starin Horton, AIA (1925)

From the Buffalo Arts Journal

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 16

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State



Huyler's Advertisement, ca. 1906

This advertisement highlights the Huyler's philosophy of providing the best quality products to their customers.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 17

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



Huyler's Advertisement (April 4, 1908)

From the Buffalo Daily Courier, section 10, page 1.

While not an advertisement for the Huyler Building on Delaware Avenue, this ad showcases the types of products and prominence of the company in Buffalo. Note the script "Huyler's" logo which also appears on the façade of the Huyler Building.

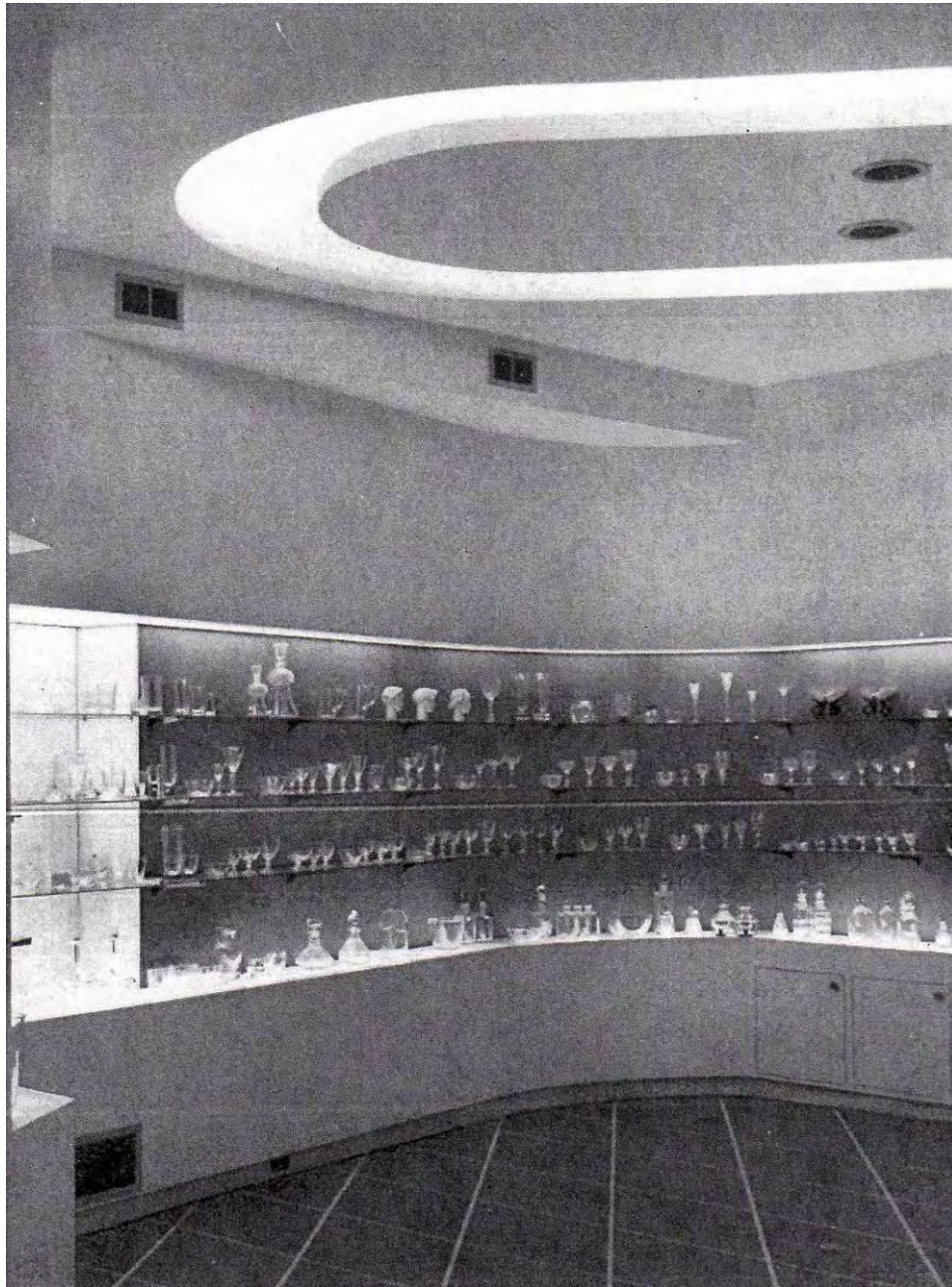
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 18

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



“Stemware Room” Pitt Petri Shop, Buffalo, NY (1939-40)

Antonin Raymond, architect

Photographed by J. Debus

From: "Pitt Petri Shop in Buffalo," *Pencil Points*, 22 (Jan 1941) 6.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 19

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State

CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHS

Taken by Jenifer Walkowski, May, 2011



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 20

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 21

THE HUYLER BUILDING

Name of Property
Erie County, New York
County and State



