

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Wolfner, Henry L., Memorial Library for the Blind
other names/site number Lindell Branch of the Bell (later Southwestern Bell) Telephone Co.,
Southwest Telegraph & Telephone Co. Operator's Training School

2. Location

street & number 3842-44 Olive Street [n/a] not for publication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 63108

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 16 May 05
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

	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
I hereby certify that the property is:		
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register See continuation sheet [] .	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet [] .	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, explain see continuation sheet [] .	_____	_____

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 Wolfner, Henry L., Memorial Library for the Blind
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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)	2	0 building
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	0	0 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0 structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0 objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	2	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	Current Functions
<u>INDUSTRY: Communications Facility</u>	<u>VACANT/NOT IN USE</u>
<u>EDUCATIONAL: Library</u>	_____
<u>SOCIAL: Meeting Hall, Civic</u>	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. Description

Architectural Classification	Materials
<u>LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS</u>	<u>foundation</u> <u>Limestone</u>
<u>Italian Renaissance</u>	<u>Granite</u>
	<u>walls</u> <u>Brick</u>
	<u>Limestone</u>
	<u>Terra Cotta</u>
	<u>roof</u> <u>Asphalt</u>
	<u>Gravel</u>
	<u>Terra Cotta</u>
	<u>other</u> _____

see continuation sheet []

see continuation sheet []

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION
 See continuation sheet [x]

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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

EDUCATION

SOCIAL HISTORY

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Periods of Significance

1938-1955

Significant Dates

n/a

Significant Person(s)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge / architect

Mauran, Russell & Garden / architect

Lintin, J. R. / architect

Edward Ward / builder

Steinhoff, W. / contractor

Steininger, E. A. / builder

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: _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property under 1 acre

UTM References

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
<u>15</u>	<u>740 330</u>	<u>4280 530</u>	<u>15</u>		
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing
<u>15</u>			<u>15</u>		

[] 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 Matthew Bivens/Researcher
organization Landmarks Association of St. Louis date October 31, 2004
street & number 917 Locust Street, 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 Osita Okpaleke
street & number 3826 Olive Street telephone 314-533-0882
city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63108

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1

Wolfner, Henry L., Memorial Library for the Blind
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Summary

The Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind, located at 3842-44 Olive Street in St. Louis, Missouri consists of a pair of joined two-story buildings with basements and counts as two contributing buildings. The first building, designed as the Lindell exchange for the Bell (later Southwestern Bell) Telephone Company by the St. Louis office of Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge in 1898, bears the primary facade facing Olive; it is a rectangular-shaped, Italian Renaissance style red brick building with unusual glazed terra cotta and limestone ornamentation. Its Italian Renaissance styling is reflected in such elements as a symmetrical facade, arched recessed entries, full-length first-story windows with arches, and brackets which once supported a terra cotta tiled parapet. The building is accented with intricately carved limestone ornament, green terra cotta medallions, and yellow terra cotta cornice brackets. The primary facade is approximately 50 feet wide and is divided into three bays at the first story. An arcade featuring five bays of paired windows lines the second story. Built as an addition at the rear of the original telephone exchange, the second building was designed by the prominent local firm of Mauran, Russell & Garden (successors to Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge in St. Louis) in 1904. It is constructed of red brick and has terra cotta sills and a parapet. Inconclusive building permits suggest that the two building portions were connected in 1916. Both buildings have flat roofs and limestone foundations. The buildings are in relatively good condition despite years of vacancy and general neglect. The nominated property is the last of a handful remaining on its side of the city block and is awaiting an adaptive reuse. Although the terra cotta parapet is missing, window frames have fallen out, an entrance was converted to a window and one arcade column has collapsed (on the main building), these repairable details do not diminish the building's important historical associations. The strong, formal composition still conveys sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Site

The Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind, on City Block 3926, is located near the Midtown Historic District east of what was formerly known as "Gaslight Square." The building measures approximately 50 feet east to west and 130 feet north to south; it is divided into two main portions. The block is bounded by Olive Street to the

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north, Spring Avenue to the east, Westminster Place to the south and Vandeventer Avenue to the west.

Exterior

The Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind is divided into two main portions and counts as two contributing resources. The front portion (1898) is a two-story red brick box accented with intricately carved limestone and features cream and green colored terra cotta ornamentation. The rear portion (1904) is a larger two-story red brick rectangular-shaped building with terra cotta sills and parapet. A portion in between the two buildings (1916, and adjoining them) is lined with white glazed brick; adjoining walls from the two buildings have the same glazed brick.

The primary (north) façade of the Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind is executed in the Italian Renaissance style and features a symmetrical façade of red brick, white limestone, cream and green terra cotta and red granite (photo 1). A limestone arcade of three unusual elliptical arches (centered in the façade) has ornate modillions (also acting as keystones), elaborately carved spandrels with shell motif medallions and a dentilled cornice with corona and cymatium. Two pilasters with shield and wreath ornaments divide three boarded window bays; the ends of the arcade have limestone quoins (photo 2). Flanking the arcade are two carved limestone, round arched openings; both were originally entrances. Intricately carved rosettes flank the sides of the arch; a limestone lintel is above. The arch at the right (west) side of the building leads to an inner marble, brick and wood paneled stair hall that leads inside the building. The opposite arch originally led through the building to an inner courtyard; it is now a window with arched transom. An exposed and polished red granite foundation supports a carved limestone base above. The second story features an arcade of five arches resting on a continuous limestone sill course; decorative plaques accent the ends of the course. Each arcade frames a pair of round arch windows; limestone imposts span the façade. Centered in each of the five larger arches is a green-colored terra cotta medallion with ornate shield and foliage motif. In between each arch is a cream-colored terra cotta cornice bracket; these brackets once supported a terra cotta parapet (removed), cast iron brackets are extant (photo 1).

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The east elevation includes the two buildings and connecting portion (photos 3 and 4). The wall of the 1898 building is completely unadorned and without fenestration; a building once abutted this elevation. A tall chimney is visible; a boiler and furnace room are in the basement (photo 3). Connecting the two buildings is a two-story stairwell and hall with basement (probably constructed in 1916); this portion has white glazed brick. Three windows are two-over-two and three are one-over-one with terra cotta sills. The white glazed brick continues across three bays of windows at the rear (south) elevation of the 1898 building. A final window bay with entrance below is contained in red brick construction. Windows on this south elevation are three-over-three with terra cotta sills (photo 3). A granite stairwell and platform lead into the basement. The white glazed brick also continues on the north elevation of the 1904 building. Here, four two-over-two windows are on two floors; the basement has three two-over-two windows and an entrance (photo 4). The east elevation of the 1904 building has six bays on two-and-one-half stories and a basement; the half-story of windows is located in a low place between the second story ceiling and the roof; it is unknown if this was ever a usable space. The basement story includes eight boarded windows with granite wells. An entrance (reached by granite stairs and platform) is flanked by two small windows at the first story. On one end there are two windows; one is open, the other doubled window is partially boarded. On the opposite end is a pair of two-over-two windows; two additional doubled windows follow. The second story includes four doubled windows and two tripled windows. These windows are two-over-two. The half-story includes four doubled windows and two tripled windows. Each window on this elevation has a terra cotta sill. The building terminates in a simple, yet attractive, terra cotta parapet (photo 4).

The rear (south) elevation of the 1904 building is divided into three bays and includes an additional entrance reached by granite stairs; a small open window is to the left of the entrance (photo 5). A chimney to the right of the entrance extends above the roof line. A single boarded window is to the right. At ground level are two small open windows; a freight elevator entrance is between stories. A bricked in window above the elevator suggests that there was originally a window here before the elevator. The second story contains three windows; two are open, the third is a two-over-two doubled window. Again, each window on this elevation has a terra cotta sill (photo 5).

The west elevation of the 1904 building includes two stories of three-over-three and four-over-four windows; four per floor, some are boarded. The connecting portion and the

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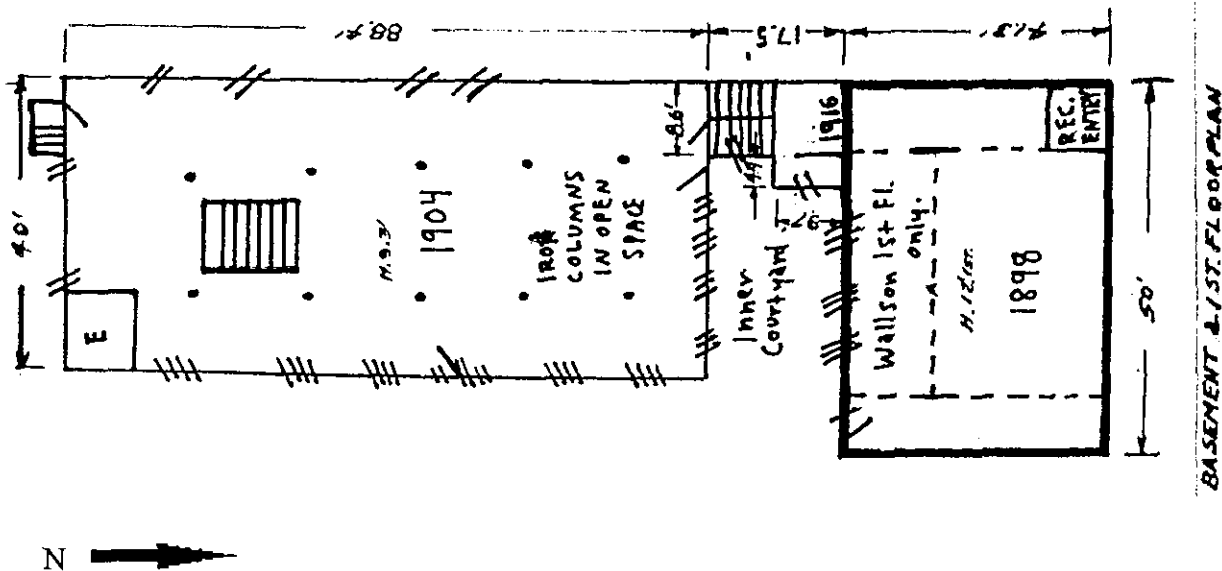
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remainder of the 1899 building are unadorned and lack fenestration. The roof contours are not level on this elevation; they are capped with terra cotta (photo 5).

Interior

The interiors of the 1899 and 1904 buildings are in average condition, yet they retain their original architectural features. The main entrance contains its marble steps, brick walls and wood paneled ceiling. Cast iron columns with Doric capitals are extant, wood wainscoting on most of the columns is intact. Original light fixtures still hang from the ceilings; glass globes are broken. Two cast and wrought iron stairwells are intact; marble steps and clay tiles remain as well (photo 6). Interior paint is flaking and peeling. Fifty or so badly damaged "Talking Book Reproducers," property of the U. S. Government, still lie lifelessly on the basement and first story floors.

Figure 1: Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind interior floor plan.



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Integrity

The buildings are in good condition despite years of vacancy and general neglect. Although the terra cotta parapet is missing, window frames have fallen out, an entrance was converted to a window and one arcade column has collapsed (on the main portion), these repairable details do not detract from the building's historical significance. In spite of this condition, the strong, formal composition still conveys sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

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Summary

The Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind in St. Louis, Missouri is locally significant under Criterion A for EDUCATION, SOCIAL HISTORY and ENTERTAINMENT & RECREATION. Originally built as a telephone exchange in 1899 and in 1904 for the Bell Telephone Company (later Southwestern Bell) by the architectural firms of Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge and successors Mauran, Russell & Garden, the building became the first home of the Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind. When the library opened in 1938, it was the first of its kind in the United States; there was no other library for the blind situated in its own building with the facilities organized purposely for the convenience of its patrons.¹ The annual report of the Library of Congress (LC) for 1940 showed that Wolfner distributed more Braille and talking books than any other library in the United States (after LC) and that it housed the second largest collection of materials for the blind (also after LC).² The library was the first branch library building to be given to St. Louis by a group of citizens; it served a tri-state area including Missouri, Arkansas (until late 1950s) and Kansas (until 1971). The building housed a community center and numerous organizations for the blind, the two most important being the Carver League for the Negro Blind and the Cultural and Service Club for the Blind—a club founded to serve as a social, recreational, and service organization dedicated to the physical and mental well-being of the blind. Wolfner remained at 3844 Olive until 1971. The period of significance begins in 1938 when the library opened for service and ends in 1955, the arbitrary 50-year cut-off date.

Background

The St. Louis Public Library began loaning Braille books to blind patrons before an actual department was formed at the request of the St. Louis Society for the Blind. Organized in 1924 as an independent venture and directed by Edward F. Endicott (blind himself), the new department located in the Main Library basement (at Olive and Thirteenth) contained 360 volumes for use by blind St. Louisans. In addition to the department, literary clubs and a music society were also formed there. A national

¹ "Wolfner Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped." Library history in Landmarks' and St. Louis Public Library collections. A 1940 Annual Report of the Library of Congress mentions the survey.

² *ibid.* The statistics printed in the 1940 report state the nearly 81,345 volumes of Braille books and talking books had been issued to 2,265 blind readers in Missouri, Kansas and Arkansas.

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program of free library service for blind adults was established through the Pratt-Smoot Bill in 1931. President Herbert Hoover authorized an annual expenditure from the federal government of \$100,000 to develop the program regionally and nationally. In that year, the Library of Congress selected the St. Louis Public Library as one of eighteen regional libraries to conduct this free blind service and to circulate Braille books furnished by the federal government.³

Standard English Braille was adopted in 1933. In 1934, the federal government initiated the talking book program (a phonograph recording of reading materials); the government constructed and provided the talking book machine which brought reading materials to those who could not read Braille. In St. Louis, Endicott reported that circulation had reached 52,000 in 1934; the library contained 15,000 volumes of which 500 were talking books.⁴ Prompted by a need for a separate facility to house the growing collection for the blind, a St. Louis corporation headed by Dr. Meyer Wiener⁵ was formed in 1936 to raise funds for the erection of a library and recreation building for the blind. Until a new library could be realized, two temporary reading rooms for the blind were established in the Marquette School (razed) at 4015 McPherson Avenue, while the main collection remained overcrowded in the basement of the Main Library.

Elaboration

By May of 1937, Dr. Wiener and the corporation had raised \$35,000 (in both public and private subscriptions) and announced their plans to purchase an attractive, older brick building located at 3844 Olive Street as the new home of the library for the blind; the title would later be transferred to the St. Louis Public Library. The building was to be renamed the Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind as a memorial to Dr. Wolfner, a locally noted eye specialist and colleague of Dr. Wiener who died in 1935. Originally designed as a telephone exchange by the St. Louis office of the Boston architectural firm Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge in 1898 (front) and the successor firm Mauran, Russell & Garden in 1904 (rear), the buildings first housed the Lindell office of

³ Richard T. Miller. "In Sight Out." (Special Library Services, no date). Missouri Historical Society archives collection. And "Wolfner Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped."

⁴ "Wolfner Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped."

⁵ Dr. Wiener, an eye specialist, was the former director of prevention of blindness on the Missouri Commission for the Blind.

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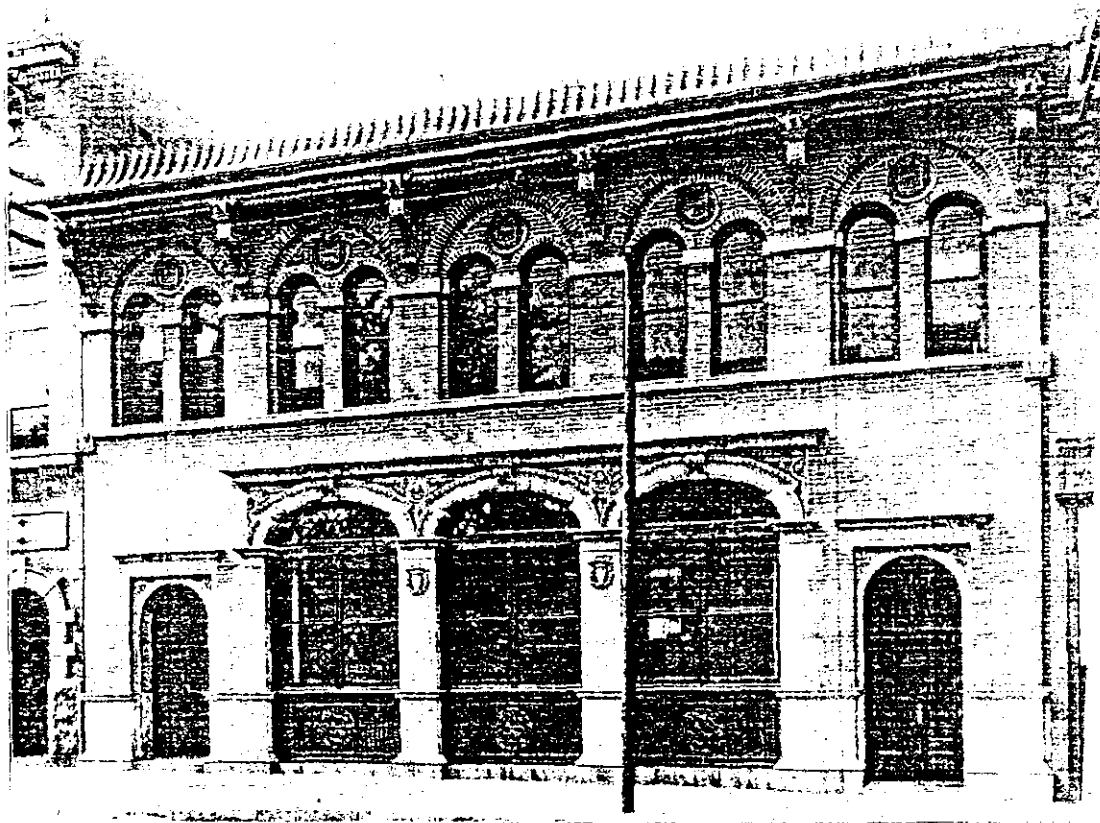
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the Bell (later Southwestern Bell) Telephone Company and the Southwest Telegraph & Telephone Company Operator's Training School until 1932; during 1937, it housed the Works Progress Administration sewing project (figure 2).

Figure 2: Lindell Branch of the Bell (later Southwestern Bell) Telephone Company as pictured in the *Brickbuilder*, vol. 15, no. 10, plate 137. Circa 1905.⁶



⁶ The *Brickbuilder* credits Mauran, Russell & Garden with the design. Research concludes the members of the firm were originally employed in the Boston, St. Louis and Chicago offices of Shepley, Ruten & Coolidge (1892-1900) until establishing the St. Louis successor firm of Mauran, Russell & Garden in 1900— hence the attribution.

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Wolfner, Henry L., Memorial Library for the Blind
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The Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind formally opened on June 7, 1938 and it remained at 3844 Olive until 1971. The Library was the first of its kind in the United States; a Library of Congress survey revealed that there was no other library for the blind situated in its own building with the facilities organized purposely for the convenience of its patrons.⁷ It not only housed the nation's second largest collection for the blind, the Library also served as a vital social center for the St. Louis blind. The location was perfect in that it was on a streetcar line and within reach of ninety percent of the city's blind population (between 1,600 and 2,000 individuals); a population that did not have a place to meet previous to 1938.⁸ The Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind was the first branch library building to be given to St. Louis by a group of citizens.

All of St. Louis's newspapers covered the opening of the new library, an event witnessed by over 300 including Mayor Bernard F. Dickmann, library officials and leaders in education for the blind. The *St. Louis Star-Times* featured a story proclaiming "Henry L. Wolfner Library for the Blind Formally Opened." The story proudly recalled the man for whom the institution was named:

Dr. Wolfner, who for thirty-five years before his death in 1935 was associated as an eye specialist with Dr. Wiener, "restored sight to hundreds of afflicted... and by his skill and knowledge was able to prevent thousands of others from losing their sight." His motto was the golden rule. His services were open to everyone at all times without consideration of fee.⁹

Dr. Wolfner was born in Chicago in 1860 and received his degree in medicine from the Missouri Medical College in 1881. Dr. Wolfner's postgraduate work was in diseases of the eye; he attended several European universities. For a number of years he was professor of clinical ophthalmology in the Washington University School of Medicine and was a staff member of the Jewish and Bethesda Hospitals. In November of 1931, Dr. Wolfner was honored by the St. Louis Medical Society for having practiced here a half century. Dr. Wolfner was a member of the Board of Education for nine years and served

⁷ "Wolfner Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped."

⁸ *ibid.* and *St. Louis Star-Times*. "Henry L. Wolfner Library for Blind Formally Opened." June 7, 1938.

⁹ *St. Louis Star-Times*. "Henry L. Wolfner Library for Blind Formally Opened." June 7, 1938.

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a term as president. He was also president of the Board of the Home for Aged and Infirm Israelites.¹⁰

At the opening, Mayor Bernard F. Dickmann declared that "the new library (the first branch library building to be given to St. Louis by a group of citizens together with the Missouri School for the Blind and other facilities here for the sightless, made St. Louis an outstanding educational and cultural center for blind citizens."¹¹ Also in attendance, Miss Adaline A. Ruenzi, President of the Cultural and Service Club for the Blind, stated for the *St. Louis Star-Times* that before Wolfner:

The blind of St. Louis had no general meeting place where they could become familiar with their surroundings... having our own building will greatly increase our enthusiasm and interest in life. In a short time we hope to have such social activities as dancing, glee clubs, a gymnasium, musical programs and lectures.¹²

The library was located in the basement and first floors and covered 17,000 square feet; parts of the basement were allotted for a storage room and a clothes exchange. The first floor housed Braille books and a library reading room. A large auditorium (seating 400) and several meeting rooms were located on the second floor. These second floor rooms included a community center as well as cultural and service organizations for the blind, the most important being the Service Club for the Blind and the Carver League for the Negro Blind (both discussed below). The building housed over 47,000 adult Braille volumes and a children's library for the blind containing over 23,000 volumes (until an amendment of the Pratt-Smoot Act in 1952, children's services were not free). Music and books were transcribed into Braille by friends of blind individuals at the library. The library was the first of its kind in the United States and its circulation only second to that of the collection for the blind at the Library of Congress.¹³

¹⁰ *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*. "Dr. Henry L. Wolfner, Practicing Physician Here 54 Years, Dies." July 12, 1935.

¹¹ *St. Louis Star-Times*. "Henry L. Wolfner Library for Blind Formally Opened." June 7, 1938.

¹² *ibid.*

¹³ A Library of Congress survey (not named) mentioned in the source, "Wolfner Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped" states that it revealed that there was no other library for the blind situated in its own building with the facilities organized purposely for the convenience of its patrons. Library history in Landmarks' and Main Public Library collections.

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Elaborating on the uniqueness of the institution, Ms. Ruenzi stated for the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*:

[I] have been unable to find or learn of another institution in the world similar to the new branch library in furnishing both library facilities and a community center for blind persons.¹⁴

The Cultural and Service Club for the Blind & Carver League for the Negro Blind

The Cultural and Service Club for the Blind was founded in 1934 by Adeline Ruenzi (blind herself) to serve as a social, educational, recreational, and service organization dedicated to the physical and mental well-being of the blind.¹⁵ The early activities of the Club were limited to monthly socials, and when funds were available, the Club purchased glasses, medicine and clothing for the blind. The first meetings of the Club were held at the Catherine Springer Home for Business Women, in St. Louis.¹⁶ With Ruenzi as Director of Education, programs soon expanded to include dancing classes, the organization of a club orchestra and chorus and sponsorship of home teaching including selling materials at cost to the blind and placing talking book machines in the homes of the blind. The Club incorporated in 1938 and had over 400 members, yet still not a permanent home. Financial difficulties led the Missouri Commission for the Blind to discontinue its operations (with the exception of its pension department) in 1939.¹⁷ Ruenzi held fast and set out to take control of the Commission's responsibilities on her own. Through her strength and the generosity of Dr. Meyer Wiener, the Club found its first permanent home on the second floor of the Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind at 3844 Olive in 1939. From this location, Ruenzi sponsored the distribution and maintenance of the 800 Talking Book Machines then assigned to Missouri. She

¹⁴ *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*. "Wolfner Library for Blind Dedicated." June 7, 1938.

¹⁵ Mary Kimbrough. *St. Louis Star-Times*. "Bright Light in a Dark World." Nov 24, 1950. Ruenzi was the pioneer home teacher for the Missouri Commission for the Blind and is credited with devising an aluminum alphabet to help the blind learn penmanship. Ruenzi also originated the idea of comparing the 6 of dominoes with the Braille cell in the Braille alphabet, a method that was soon used nationally.

¹⁶ Robert Schulte. *Our Foundation for the Future: The Story of the Service Club for the Blind, 1934-1959*. (St. Louis: Mutual Advertising, 1959).

¹⁷ *ibid.* The Commission would begin to function again in 1946.

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created a Home Teacher Division, and sold raw material to the blind (at cost) for their home industry in addition to establishing retail outlets for their finished products.¹⁸

Through the early 1940s, the Club took over added responsibilities by continuing work stopped by other agencies. Prompted by the Red Cross discontinuing its Braille department and the closing of all WPA projects, the "Give Thanks For Your Sight" Canister Campaign was inaugurated in 1941 by the Mayors of St. Louis City and County.¹⁹ It was also during this period that the Club began to supply work to the blind and industrially inclined blind in their homes; finished products were sold in department stores and specialty shops and sales arranged by private groups.

Club services were continued on a private enterprise basis until the Missouri Commission for the Blind began to function again in 1946. Relieved of some of the financial burdens, the Club was able to extend its programs; a social worker was hired and the Club began to care for the sick blind. At its home inside Wolfner through 1950, the Club continued to grow into national prominence as a philanthropic organization for the blind; activities increased a hundred fold.²⁰ The services at Wolfner increased in addition, and the Club was forced to move to 4312 Olive late in 1950 (demolished).

Fund raising campaigns and generous donations relieved more of the financial strain between 1946 and 1948 and allowed Ruenzi to found the Carver League for the Negro Blind—a social and recreational organization for the African-American blind of Greater St. Louis. Although the Cultural and Service Club for the Blind was open to any person regardless of race, creed or religion, African Americans had not participated in the recreational activities of the Club to any extent.²¹ The Carver League was sponsored by the Club and made its home at the Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind.

Other accomplishments at the Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind

In 1939, Wolfner extended its services to include the distribution of books to the Missouri School for the Blind. Talking books were also sent to blind patrons in Missouri,

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ *ibid.*

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Wolfner, Henry L., Memorial Library for the Blind
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Kansas and Arkansas. The annual report of the Library of Congress for 1940 showed that Wolfner distributed more Braille and talking books than any other library for the blind in the United States; nearly 81,345 volumes had been issued to 2,265 blind readers in Missouri, Kansas and Arkansas.²²

After WWII, Wolfner directed its attention to providing talking books to blinded veterans of the war. By 1950, service had increased to an extent that the Cultural and Service Club for the Blind had to move a few blocks down the street. Another new program, in 1951, was the recording of textbooks for blind college students. Previously, these recordings were made solely by the New York Public Library for the Blind.²³ In 1952, the Pratt-Smoot Act was amended to include library services to children and Wolfner added a children's room to accommodate this new service. In June of 1959, more than 2,000 patrons were borrowing books from the library. Efforts were directed even further to reach more patrons by urging doctors to tell their blind patients about Wolfner.

Until 1961, the St. Louis Public Library had funded the building, equipment and staff for library service to blind readers in Kansas and Missouri. Service to Kansas was arranged on a cost basis after 1961. In 1963, the State of Missouri began to pay the St. Louis Public Library for Wolfner's services; this additional reimbursement allowed services to be improved. In July of 1964, the Wolfner Library was cited in "Talking Book Topics" as 'library of the month.' Within a year about 3,165 blind had received library service; 121,503 books were loaned.²⁴ In 1966, the national program was extended to the physically handicapped through Public Laws 89-522 and 89-511. Wolfner's name was changed to the Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in 1968. Also in that year, the library became the Talking Book Machine Agency for Missouri. In 1969, a cassette program was added to improve services at Wolfner.

Wolfner remained at 3844 Olive until 1971, when the library moved to 1808 Washington. Expanding the staff to twenty, Wolfner provided over 4,200 blind and handicapped persons in Missouri with talking books, Braille and large print books and tape recordings. In 1977, Wolfner was administered by the Missouri State Library and designated by the Library of Congress as the state's library for the blind and physically handicapped. Wolfner moved to its final home in Jefferson City in 1985 and merged with the Missouri

²² "Wolfner Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped."

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ *ibid.*

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Wolfner, Henry L., Memorial Library for the Blind
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State Library. By then, Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped was one of the 56 regional and over 100 sub regional libraries for the blind and physically handicapped in the United States, but the only one in Missouri. The Library mailed recorded books and Braille books to over 9,000 Missourians.

The Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind retains integrity; its exceptional architectural design conveys a sense of the library and the service clubs that once made the building home. It is one of a few original buildings still extant in a once dense residential and commercial neighborhood. The new owner envisions an adaptive reuse that includes an art gallery and residence; the building will make a valuable contribution to the arts and theater district of Midtown, St. Louis.

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Section 9 Page 15 Wolfner, Henry L., Memorial Library for the Blind
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

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Section 10-map Page 16 Wolfner, Henry L., Memorial Library for the Blind
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Boundary Description

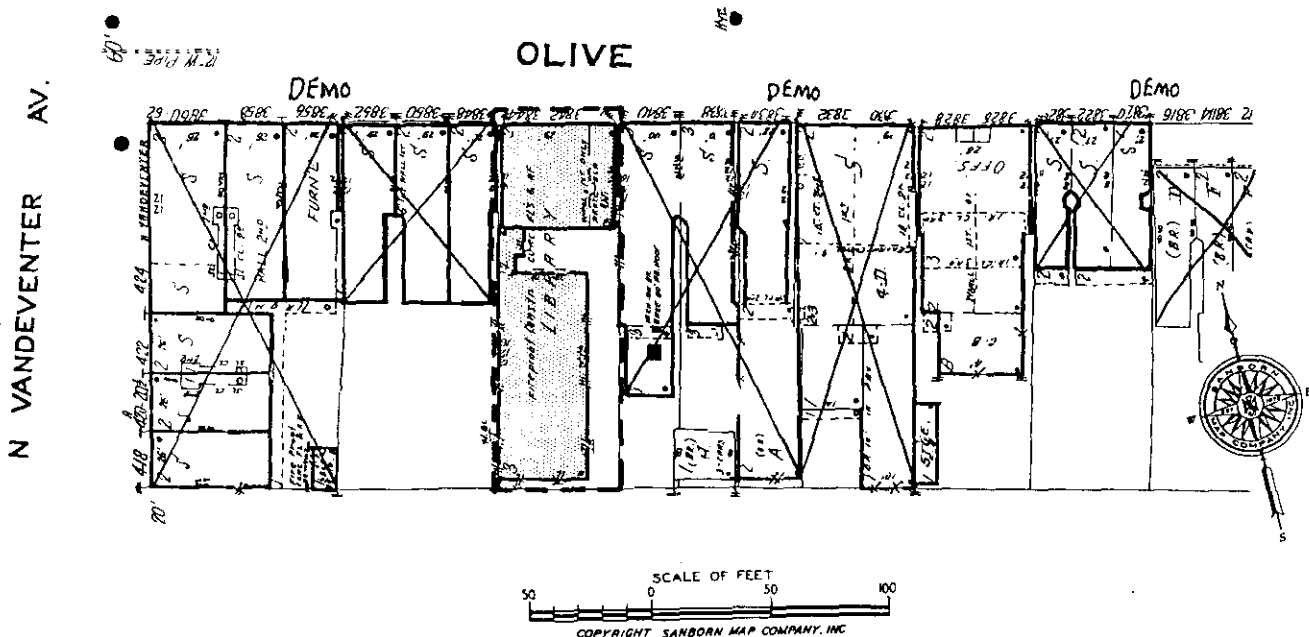
The nominated parcel is located at 3842-44 Olive Street on City Block 3926 in St. Louis, Missouri. The site is legally known by the Assessor's Office as parcel number 39260000300. The parcel is part of blocks 18 and 19 of Peter Lindell's 2nd Addition, lots M, N and O of the Pettus & Hardy et. al. Subdivision and Patchin's Subdivision; it does not have an individual lot number assigned. The property measures approximately 50 feet wide by 152' 7 1/4" long. The nominated parcel is indicated by a dashed line on the accompanying map entitled "Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind Boundary Map."

Boundary Justification

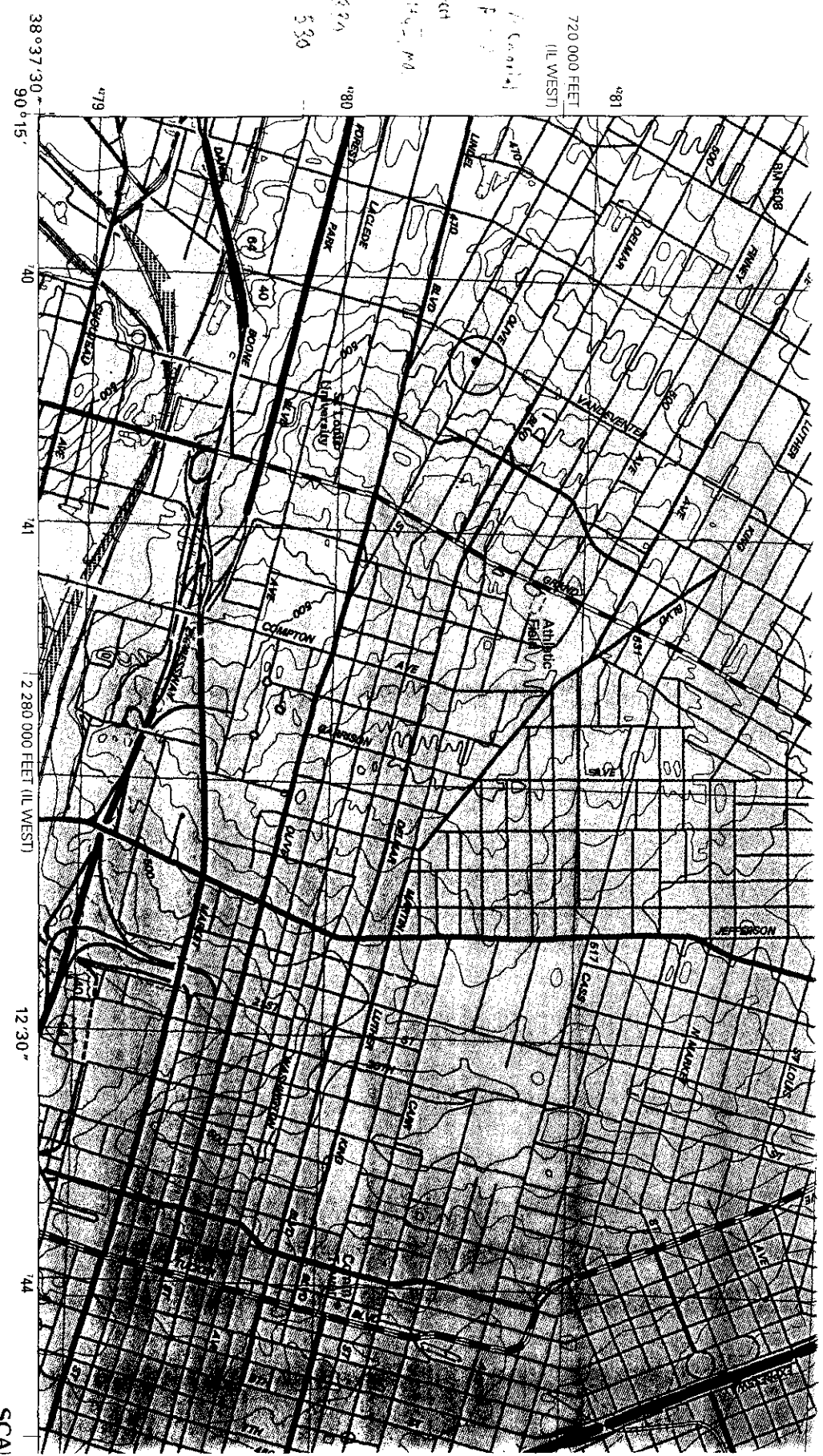
The nominated parcel includes all of the property historically associated with the Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind Boundary Map.

Henry L. Wolfner Memorial Library for the Blind Boundary Map

Source: Sanborn Map Company, v. 5N, plate 49, circa 1968.



Unitary Survey of Control
 - Survey for the P
 38° 37' 30" N
 St. Louis East, Zone 15
 Zone 15
 Easting 744 334
 Northing 2 280 530

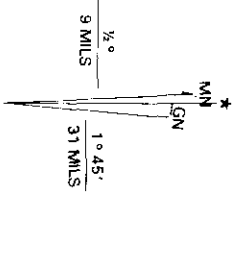


Produced by the United States Geological Survey

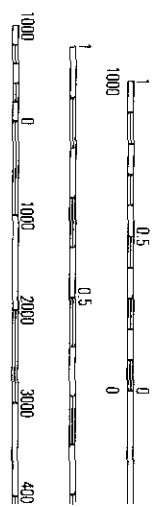
Topography compiled 1952. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1993 and other sources. Photoinspected using imagery dated 1998; no major culture or drainage changes observed. PLSS and survey control current as of 1954. Boundaries, other than corporate, verified 1999

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
 North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 83 and NAD 27 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software

Contours that conflict with revised planimetry are dashed
 There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map



UTM GRID AND 1999 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



SUPPLEMENTARY NATIONAL GEODETIC TO CONVERT FROM THIS MAP COMPILES WITH NATIONAL DIVISION OF GEOGRAPHIC MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
 FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY AND ILLINOIS GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
 MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ILLINOIS GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC



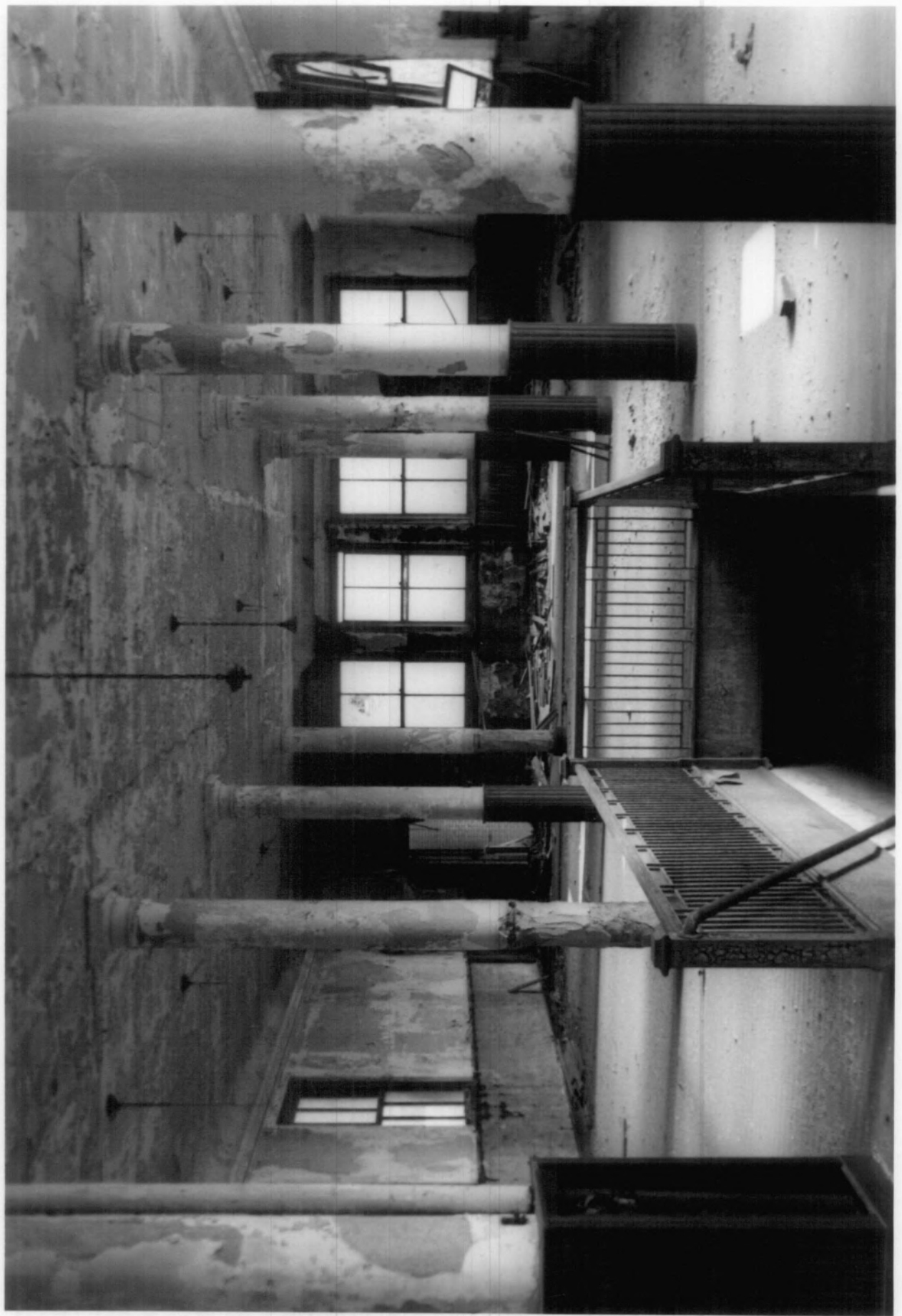






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