

WILLIAM B. MUMFORD PRINTING COMPANY FACTORY
(Commercial Building)
17-23 West Pearl Street
Indianapolis
Marion County
Indiana

HABS No. IN-218

HABS
IND
49-IND,
52-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

HABS
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY HABS No. IN-218

WILLIAM B. BURFORD PRINTING COMPANY FACTORY
(Commerical Building)

Location: 17-23 West Pearl Street, Indianapolis, Marion County,
Indiana

USGS Indianapolis West, Indiana Triangle
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinator
16.572 060.440 1980

Present Owner: City of Indianapolis
Department of Metropolitan Development,
148 East Market Street
Indianapolis, Indiana

Present Occupant
and Use: Vacant

Significance: One of the premier printers, stationers, and publishers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, William B. Burford, built this building in which to operate his printing and stationery manufacturing operation. It was designed by a prominent nineteenth century architecture firm of Robert D. Daggett & Co. ("Washington Street Retail Mall Project: Inventory of Properties Declared Eligible or Potentially Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places," Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission, April 29, 1980, p. 2, typewritten & unpublished).

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of Erection: The William B. Burford Printing Company Factory (to be referred to below as the Burford Building) was constructed in 1892 (Indianapolis of To-Day; Indianapolis: Consolidated Illustrating Co., 1896, p.186).
2. Architect: The Indianapolis Architectural firm of R. P. Daggett & Co., designed the Burford Building. R. P. Daggett & Co. was a prolific architectural firm from 1880 to 1915. This firm designed many houses, public buildings and commercial structures in the city and throughout the state, many of which are no longer standing.

Architect Robert Platt Daggett founded the firm in 1880 entering into partnership with German-born architect James R. Lizius. An 1883 publication stated that "Messrs. Daggett & Co. have devoted special attention to the designing of school buildings...they have but few rival competitors in the state." The article noted that the firm designed "nearly every business structure on Meridian Street since 1874 from Union Depot northward to Washington St." (Manufacturing and Mercantile Resources of Indianapolis, 1883, pp. 431-432).

Daggett was born at New Haven, Connecticut where he acquired "the rudiments of his profession...removing to Indianapolis in 1868." (Ibid. p. 432). Daggett entered into partnership with Mathew Roth circa 1868 forming the architectural firm of Daggett and Roth until circa 1874. R. P. Daggett & Co. continued in business until Daggett's death in 1915. Daggett's son Robert Frost formed his own firm that year and added associates in 1948 and partners in 1952. The younger Daggett's firm dissolved circa 1978. Only very few of the nineteenth century structures designed by R. P. Daggett & Company in Indianapolis have survived. Those that remain include the 1893 commercial building at 22 East Washington Street, the Indianapolis News Mechanical Building (HABS No. IN-222) at 30 West Court Street and the 1872 John R. Nickum House, a.k.a., James Whitcomb Riley Home (HABS No. IN-51) (Andrew R. Seager, "History of the Daggett Firm" and "Architectural Projects by the Daggett Firm of Indianapolis, ca. 1868-1976, A Catalogue, With Notes Regarding Locations of Drawings," Muncie, Indiana, July 17, 1989, unpublished, typewritten manuscript, pp 5-19).

Many of the Daggett-designed nineteenth century buildings have been lost to fires and demolition as the old, near-downtown residential areas gave way to commercial and industrial encroachment and as larger commercial buildings replaced the older commercial Daggett buildings. Others were lost to surface parking lots.

3. Original and subsequent owners: William B. Burford, proprietor of the William B. Burford Printing Co., had the building constructed in 1892. Burford and his heirs continued to own the building until Burford's heirs sold five-eighteenths interest in the property to the L.S. Ayres Department Store in 1970. The City of Indianapolis purchased the property from the Burford heirs and Ayres on May 15, 1989. (Marion County Recorders Office, Instrument #89-45173).
4. Builder, contractor: The builder of the Burford Building is unknown.
5. Original plans and construction: It is unknown as to the survival or whereabouts of drawings of the Burford Building. The building was constructed as a five-story brick factory structure with a center, load-bearing brick wall supporting timber framed floors and roof (Sanborn-Perris Map Co., Insurance Maps of Indianapolis, Indiana, New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., 1898, III:302).
6. Alterations and additions: The Burford Building was remodeled in circa 1946 by L. S. Ayres & Co. for use as a retail warehouse above grade and for retail sales in the basement. 1945-46 is when Ayres demolished the Burford office and store at 38-40 S. Meridian Street and enlarged the Ayres south building ("Ayres Hollows Out Niche - 40,000 sq. ft. for Santa in Pit," Indianapolis Times, Nov. 11, 1947, Sec. 2, p. 13). Alterations included the partitioning of some of the floor space into offices, the remodeling of the four-bay, retail and office space on the first floor along Pearl Street into an enclosed loading dock area, and the finishing of the basement with plaster surfaces and terrazzo flooring. Additions include the three-story brick penthouse for storage and elevator mechanical room and the elevator above the southeast quadrant of the building, the two sheetmetal-clad, alley-spanning connectors (one five-story and one seven-story). The basement and first floor openings were bricked up along the alley on the west elevation at some unknown time, probably coinciding with the addition of loading dock doors, probably by Ayres circa 1946. The loading dock area along Pearl Street was probably created circa 1946 out of the commercial section of the building. Overhead garage doors fill in the spaces between the cast-iron piers where once there were storefronts. Another alteration was the removal of fifth-floor skylight in the northwest corner of the structure, which probably occurred at the time of the other alterations.

B. Historical Context

The William B. Burford Printing Company Factory Building served as the storeroom, printing plant and factory for the William B. Burford Printing Company for forty-five years, from 1892 to 1937. It served as a warehouse for L. S. Ayres & Company Department Store for fifty years from 1940 to 1990.

The William B. Burford Printing Company traces its corporate lineage back to 1838 when William Sheets opened a bookbindery on West Washington Street. Ten years later Sheets hired William Braden and formed the partnership of Sheets & Braden. Braden, with financial backing from his father-in-law Miles W. Burford, became proprietor of the bindery and print shop. Braden's brother-in-law William B. Burford (1846-1927) worked as a printer and learned the trade while working at Sheets & Braden in the early 1860's. After serving during the Civil War in his native state of Missouri and two years of college studies, Burford returned to Indianapolis in 1867. He re-entered the employ of Braden and by 1870 was a partner with him in Braden & Burford. Five years later Burford purchased Braden's interests and became sole proprietor of William B. Burford Printing Company ("Burford Firm Dates to 1838," Indianapolis Star, Dec. 31, 1947; and Jacob P. Dunn, History of Greater Indianapolis, Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1910, II:711-13). The Burford firm kept pace with the growth of the city. In 1878 a full-page advertisement in Polk's Indianapolis City Directory of that year noted that the firm was a successor to Braden & Burford and used steam power to manufacture blank books and functioned as lithographer, printer, engraver, and stationer.

The growth of the firm resulted in the growth of its physical plant as well. Burford employed local architect Robert P. Daggett to design the factory building on West Pearl Street. The factory was conveniently located on the alley directly behind the Burford store and office on West Washington Street. The commercial building extended southward from Washington Street, the city's busy commercial main street, to the alley West Pearl Street and was connected by a tunnel under Pearl. Before the factory building was constructed, the West Washington Street building accommodated the printing, engraving and bindery functions as well as the retail and office functions (Sanborn, 1887, I:3). The Journal Handbook of Indianapolis of 1902 described the plant as "an extensive one embracing printing, binding, lithographing, blank book, photogravure, steel, copper and photo engraving departments." The Handbook went on to describe each department as being equipped "with the very latest improved machinery insuring speed and economy in the production of work: (Max L. Hyman, ed., The Journal Handbook of Indianapolis, Indianapolis: Indianapolis Journal, 1902, pp. 250-25).

Designed for future corporate growth, the factory building was not completely filled with Burford activities when the factory was new. Polk's City Directories and the 1898 Sanborn maps document that the Burford Building accommodated three other business functions as well. The Indiana Electrotpe Company occupied the first floor from 1895 until circa 1913. It offered the services of electrotyping, stereotyping, zinc etching, wood and half-tone engraving (Polk, 1899). A bicycle repair business briefly occupied the east half of the first floor from circa 1898 to circa 1902. The Gem Garment Company is listed as the occupant of the fifth floor in 1898. By 1914, Polk listed the William B. Burford Printing Company as the sole occupant of the structure. The Burford printing plant remained at 17-23 West Pearl Street until 1937 when the company vacated it and moved the operation to a ten-story industrial building at 603 East Washington Street. The company cited its growth and desire for more display space as the reasons for vacating the factory and commercial buildings ("New Homes of Burford Firm," Indianapolis Star, October 6, 1937). Polk listed the building vacant until 1941, but the chain of title records a November 1940 lease of the property by the L. S. Ayres Department Store. Ayres eventually purchased five-eighths interest in the property in 1970 and occupied it until 1990, using it as a warehouse for its adjacent store complex. The City of Indianapolis purchased the property on May 15, 1989.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural Character: The Burford Building is a five-story, brick factory structure constructed in 1892. Situated on an alley, this utilitarian structure was constructed as the industrial plant, serving the adjacent commercial and office buildings of the William B. Burford Company. Until the 1950s, the Burford Building was virtually hidden from view with the building's main facade visible from the narrow alley, Pearl Street. Demolition of the entire southwest quarter of the block (Square 66) exposed the west facade of the Burford Building after World War Two..
2. Condition of fabric: The Burford Building is generally in good condition.

B. Description of the Exterior

1. Overall Dimensions: The five story Burford Building is 145 feet, 6 inches long and 72 feet, 6 inches wide. The sixth and seventh floors of the penthouse are approximately 62 feet long and 36 feet wide. The building occupies the full lot between Pearl Street to the north and the Elliott's Block (HABS No. IN-60) at 14-22 West Maryland Street to the south. The L. S. Ayres South Building is adjacent to the east and the alley to the west. The basement connects to the L. S. Ayres basement and to the L. S. Ayres South building (Centre Venture, "Building Descriptions for Circle Centre Mall," Indianapolis, Indiana, February 8, 1988, revised July 15, 1988, typewritten, unpublished).

2. Walls:

a. North elevation: The Pearl Street facade (north) is evenly divided into two bays with each bay divided at the second through fifth floors by four windows. Across the first floor are four evenly spaced bays with overhead doors, divided by cast iron piers. The north elevation exhibits the scant ornamentation of the building with simple mouldings on the cast-iron piers, rosettes in the I-beam lintels, stone window sills, raking brickwork string courses at each sill level, rock-face stone lintels over the second story windows, a corbeltable, and corbeled finial piers flanking the pediment rising above the parapet.

b. West elevation: The west facade along the alley Bird Street is evenly divided into fifteen bays. Except for the two former storefronts (now loading dock bays) near Pearl Street, the first floor has had all of its historical openings bricked up and two new dock entrances had been created.

The west elevation's decorative elements include those initiated on the north facade, including stone sills, sill level taking brickwork string course, the corbel table immediately below the roof line and the rhythm of the segmented-arched windows. The two-story penthouse's west wall is blank except for a window at the south end.

- c. East elevation: The east elevation is very similar to north and west elevations except for the connections into the L. S. Ayres South Building located in the fourth and ninth column bays from the south wall. These consist of stairs on second and third floors and of corridors on fourth and fifth floors. Sixth and seventh floors of the penthouse again have a corridor connecting in the fourth column bay from the south wall. The penthouse's east wall is pierced by two windows (Centre Venture).
 - d. South elevation: The south elevation is not exposed except for the fourth and fifth floors rising above third-story roof of the Elliott's Block. This small area is unfenestrated as is the south wall of the penthouse.
3. Foundations: One course of limestone ashlar is exposed at foundation level along the east and west elevations.
 4. Structural system, framing: The building's structural system appears to be a combination of brick bearing wall, steel frame, and heavy timber construction. At the time of the survey it appeared that the brick exterior walls and the center brick wall were bearing, although they could encase steel framing. Between the exterior walls and the center brick wall are columns and primary beams of steel. Heavy timber joists span between the walls and the steel beams (Centre Venture).
 5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The loading dock bays have metal overhead garage doors. the two added west elevation dock entrances have utilitarian flush metal doors.
 - b. Windows: Except for the second story windows on the north elevation, all windows have segmented-arched openings. the penthouse windows are flat headed. The windows are wooden double-hung sashes with eight-over-eight lights. The third story windows on the north elevation have eight-over-one lights.

6. Roofs:

- a. Shape, covering: The main roof is a shallow gable with eastward and westward slopes, covered with a built-up composition material.
- b. Penthouse: The three-story brick penthouse rises approximately forty-four feet above the roofline accommodating two levels of storage and a elevator mechanical room above that.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Originally all five floors were open divided only by the columns and center brick bearing wall. The exception being the first floor which accommodated offices and store frontage. Partitions have been added on the fifth, third and second floors, creating restrooms and offices. The other areas are largely free of added partitions. The penthouse floors are open. These partitions date from the 1940s and later.
2. Stairways: One stairway in the southwest corner of the building connects the first through fifth floors. The two stairs in the east elevation connectors run from the second to the third floors. A stair in the southeast corner of the first floor runs to the basement and two stairs connect the fifth floor to the penthouse levels. An elevator located in the southeastern quadrant of the building serves all floors from the penthouse level to the basement. The stairs are of steel with concrete landings and treads.
3. Flooring: Floor coverings vary according to the extent of renovation and use. The basement has a terrazzo floor, but the upper floor surfaces vary from the original wood flooring on the first and third floors to the wall to wall carpeting on the first, sixth and fifth floors and the linoleum tile and sheet covering found on the fifth second and third floors. The penthouse floors are wood except for the mechanical room with a concrete floor.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Suspended ceilings with acoustical tile are found on the fifth and second floors. Exposed ceiling joists post and beams are found on the first, third and fourth floors. Plaster ceilings are found on the first floor and basement. Most of the walls are painted brick however plastered walls are found in the basement, fifth and first floors. The walls of the penthouse are exposed unpainted brick and the ceilings are exposed joists and flooring.

5. Doorways and doors: All of the partition doors and stairwell doors date from the 1940s and later. The doors are the flush metal type and wood paneled type.
 6. Hardware:
 - a. Elevator: The circa 1946 service elevator is located in the southeast quarter of the Burford Building serving all floors from the basement to the second level of the penthouse.
 - b. Stair railings: Continuous pipe stair railings date from circa 1946.
 7. Mechanical Equipment: The primary heat source for the building is city steam, distributed by air handlers located at various points in the building. The building is cooled by chilled water from the sub-basement of the L. S. Ayres South Building (Centre Venture).
- D. Site: The Burford Building is situated on the southeast corner of the Bird and Chesapeake Streets, two alleys. No part of the building has street frontage. Abutting the Burford Building to the south is the 1875, three-story, brick Elliott's Block (HABS No. IN-60); across a vacated alley to the east is the eleven-story, L.S. Ayres Company department store. To the west is a surface parking lot, one quarter block in size. North of the Burford on the south side of Pearl Street is the six-story Kresgee Department Store of 1949.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: No architectural drawings of the Burford Building have been located. Searches for the drawings in the architectural archives of the Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis and Ball State University College of Architecture and Planning, Muncie, Indiana proved fruitless. Ball State is the repository of many of the drawings of R. P. Daggett & Company, Robert Frost Daggett Architect, and later forms of the firm.

- B. Historic views: Extensive search of the photograph collections of the Indiana State Library, the Indiana Historical Society and the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library provided no historic view of the Burford Building. The scarcity of historic photographs is not surprising considering the secondary nature of the structure (an industrial rather than commercial building) and its location on an alley hemmed in by other buildings rendering it less than photogenic. Several historic Bass Photographs provide a glimpse of the Burford Building: Bass Photo #1238 is a 1902 view of the south half of the downtown from the Indiana State Soldiers and Sailors Monument and shows the roof and top two stories of the Burford Building.

This view is similar to the one illustrated in the Burford advertisements, cited below. Undated Bass Photo #4398 (appears to be circa 1905) of the Commercial Club Building at 26-30 South Meridian Street provides an oblique view down Pearl Street documenting the westernmost three bays of the north facade. The Commercial Club was located immediately east of the Burford Building.

A Bass Photo (#300305) from the Indiana Historical Society Library, dated April 8, 1959 depicts the west elevation of the Burford Building after the demolition of the quarter block to the west. Illustrations of the Burford Building appeared in full-page advertisements in Polk's Indianapolis City Directories beginning in 1898. The 1898 illustration depicts the north and west facades with the shop fronts along Pearl Street, paint-on-brick signs and the legend "1892 Wm. B. Burford" in the front parapet gable. The 1903 illustration entitled a "Birds-eye-View, Burford's Plant" located the factory directly south, behind the office and retail building on West Washington Street.

C. Bibliography

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Centre Venture, "Building Description for Circle Centre Mall," Indianapolis, Indiana, February 8, 1988, revised July 15, 1988. (typewritten, unpublished).

Deed Books, Marion County Recorder's Office, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1833-1989.

Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission, "Washington Street Retail Mall Project: Inventory of Properties Declared Eligible or Potentially Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.: Indianapolis, Indiana, April 29, 1980. (typewritten, unpublished).

Seager, Andrew R. "Architectural Projects by the Daggett Firm of Indianapolis, Ca. 1868-1976: A Catalogue, With Notes Regarding Location of Drawings." Ball State University, Muncie, Ind., July 17, 1989. (typewritten, unpublished).

Seager, Andrew R. "History of the Daggett Firm." Ball State University, Muncie, Ind., June 11, 1989. (typewritten, unpublished).

2. Secondary and published sources:

a. Books

Consolidated Illustrating Company (compilers). Indianapolis of To-Day. Indianapolis: Consolidated Illustrating Company, 1896.

Dunn, Jacob Piat. "Greater Indianapolis: The History, the Industries, the Institutions, and the People of a City of Homes." 2 Vols. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co. 1910.

Hyman, Max R., ed. Hyman's Handbook of Indianapolis: An Outline History. Indianapolis: M.R. Hyman Co., 1909.

Hyman, Max R., ed. Journal Handbook of Indianapolis. Indianapolis: The Indianapolis Journal, 1902.

Manufacturing and Mercantile Resources of Indianapolis, Indiana. s.l.: s.n., 1883.

Polk, R. L. and Company. Indianapolis City Directory. Indianapolis: R. L. Polk Company, 1878-1946.

Sanborn Map Company. Insurance Maps of Indianapolis, Indiana New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1887, 1914, and 1914 corrected to 1954.

Sanborn-Perris Map Company. Insurance Maps of Indianapolis, Indiana. New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Company, 1898, and 1898 corrected to 1913.

b. Newspapers

"Ayres Hollows out Niche - 40,000 Sq. Ft. for Santa in Pit." Indianapolis Times, Nov. 11, 1947, sec. 2, p. 13, c. 3.

"Burford Firm Dates to 1838." Indianapolis Star, Dec. 31, 1947.

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"New Homes of Burford Firm." Indianapolis Star, Oct. 16,
1937.

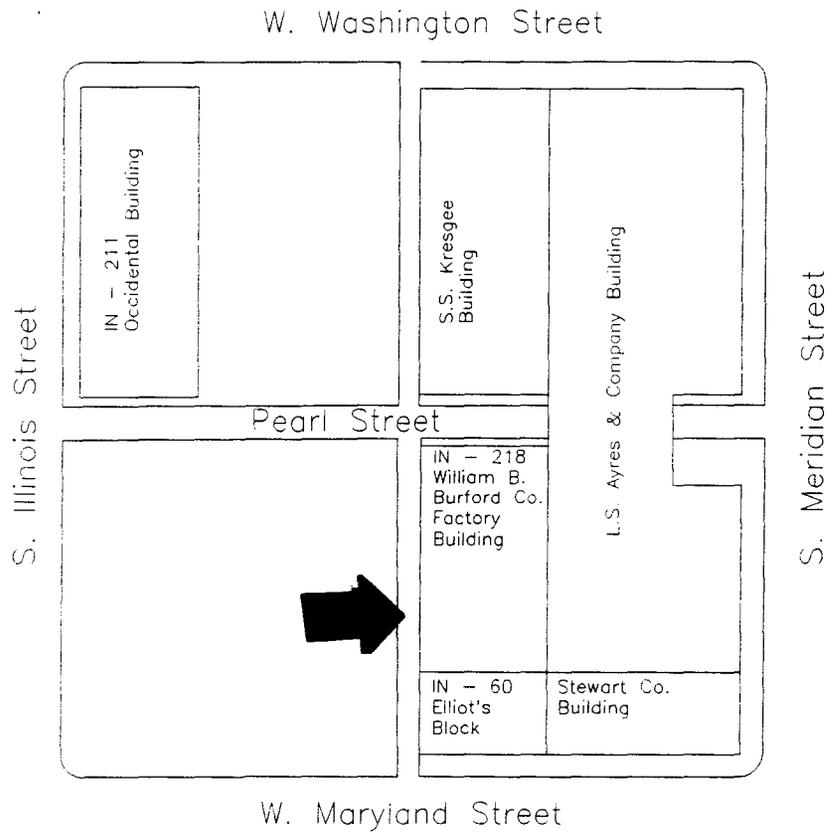
"William B. Burford Is Dead; Long Active in Business Life."
Indianapolis Star, Jan. 15, 1927.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission (IHPC) in compliance with Executive Order 11593 and a Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as a mitigative effort before demolition.

Prepared by William L. Selm
Historian
Indianapolis Historic preservation Commission
February 10, 1990

SITE PLAN

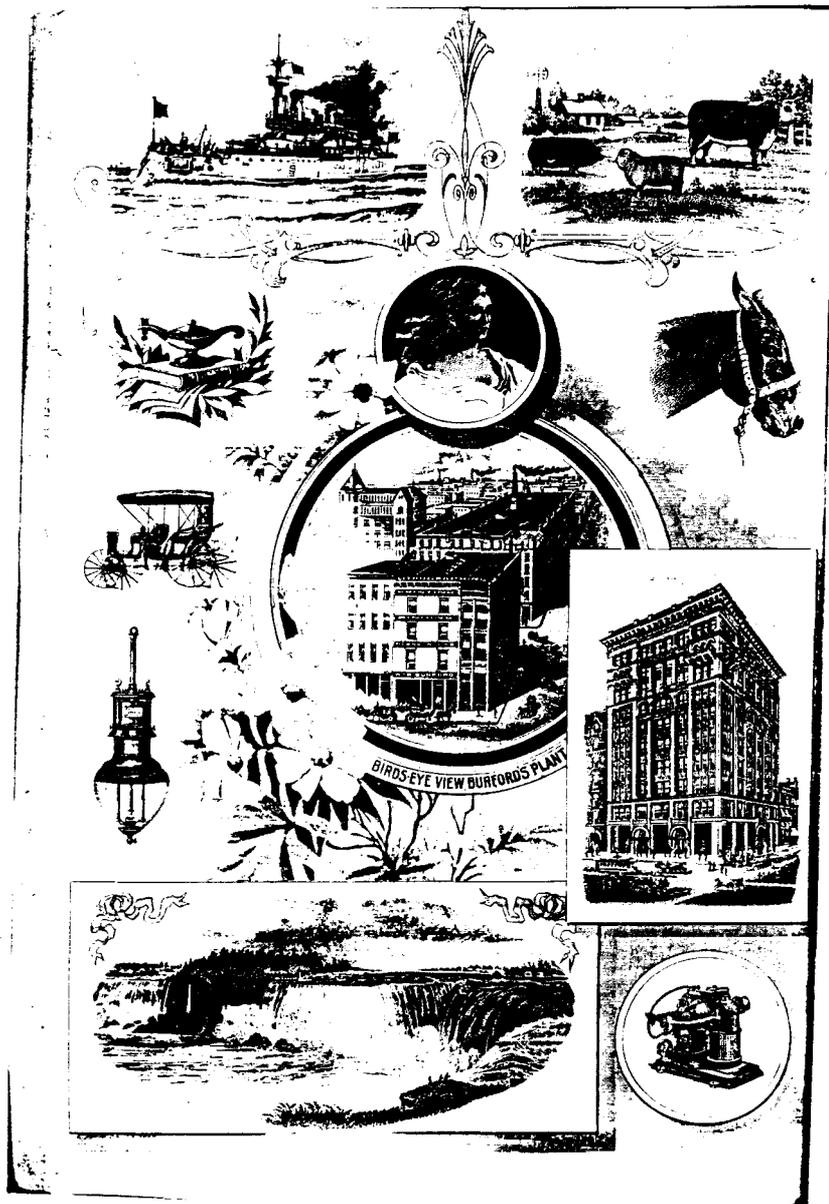


INDIANAPOLIS, IN.
CITY SQUARE 66

DIVISION OF PLANING JUNE, 1990



Wm. B. Burford Printing Company advertisement from
R. L. Polk & Co.'s Indianapolis City Directory, 1900



Wm. B. Burford Printing Company Advertisement
R. L. Polk & Co.'s Indianapolis City Directory, 1898

Wm. B. Burford
Manufacturer of
**BLANK BOOKS,
PRINTERS',
LITHOGRAPHERS.**

**CORRESPONDENCE
SOLICITED**
**ESTIMATES
FURNISHED.**

Over 1000 Varieties
OF
**LEGAL BLANKS
KEPT IN STOCK.**

**OFFICE & SALESROOM,
218, 23
West Washington St.**
**FACTORY,
17, 19, 21 & 23 West Pearl St.**

STATIONER.
Photo-Gravures
FOR
CATALOGUES, PORTRAITS, BUILDINGS,
Commercial and Artistic Work,
OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND.