

122 SOUTH MERIDIAN STREET (COMMERCIAL)
Indianapolis
Marion County
Indiana

HABS No. IN-227

HABS
IND
49-IND,
48-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Mid-Atlantic Regional Office
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

122 SOUTH MERIDIAN STREET
(Commercial Building)

HABS No. IN-227

Location: 122 South Meridian Street
Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana

USGS Indianapolis West, Indiana Quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
16.572/100.4401/780

Significance: Built in 1866-67, 122 South Meridian Street is one of the original commercial structures erected to house wholesale businesses in Indianapolis' Wholesale District. Established during the Civil War, the Wholesale District served the city and central Indiana until after the Second World War as a source of wholesale products ranging from groceries to tires and millinery. 122 South Meridian Street is a contributing structure in the Indianapolis Union Station-Wholesale District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places on July 14, 1982.

Description: 122 South Meridian Street is a four-story brick commercial building facing South Meridian Street. The building is 25 feet wide and 202.5 feet long, stretching the length of the lot along the alley Chesapeake Street to the alley Bird Street. The building abuts the three-story House of Crane Building (HABS No. IN-228) immediately to the south.

The principal facade (east) has sustained several alterations. The first-story storefront is completely covered with textured plywood and shaded with a pent roof awning. The four second-story windows are covered with sheets of painted plywood and a business sign. Behind the plywood are wooden double-hung sashes with three-over-two lights. The three third-floor windows are covered with plywood but the four-over-four double-hung wooden windows have survived. The window openings are decorated with limestone, round-arched hoods and corbeled stone sills. The original second-story fenestration was identical to that of the third floor. Limestone quoins define the north and south edges of the face on the second and third floor levels. The fourth floor, an early twentieth-century addition, is framed by a string course, consoles supporting pilasters and an entablature, all executed in limestone. The three windows have brick frames and a corbeled stone sill.

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The north facade along Chesapeake Street is articulated by a series of round-arched and segmented-arched openings in all floors but the fourth, where smaller casement windows follow the established fenestration pattern. The rear (west) facade has three openings. Two round-arched entrances with double doors and boarded transoms pierce the north facade.

The eastern half of the first floor interior has been drastically remodeled with suspended ceilings and paneling, circa 1961. The western half and the upper floors have interior elements intact from the 1860s and circa 1905.

History:

122 South Meridian Street was constructed for Henry Schnull in 1866-67 as a speculative wholesale commercial building. Schnull is credited with being the creator of the Wholesale District because he constructed the first commercial building on South Meridian Street in 1863 (HABS No. IN-210). Schnull built many other wholesale structures in the 1860s. 122 South Meridian Street is a survivor from the first wave of construction when the district was born. The building's architect and builder are unknown.

Schnull purchased the site of 122 South Meridian Street on April 13, 1866. By July 1, 1867 the building was completed and occupied by its first tenant, the wholesale grocery firm of A. Jones & Company. The building was occupied in 1869 by the J. E. Robertson & Company, a wholesale grocer, until 1880. Other nineteenth-century tenants include wholesalers of groceries, general merchandise and paper. The E. C. Dolmetsch & Company occupied the building in 1905 after its building and wholesale inventory were destroyed by fire in the 200 block of South Meridian Street in 1905. The Dolmetsch firm was a wholesaler of druggists' and stationer's sundries, toys and fancy imported goods, and occupied the building until circa 1915. Between 1917 and 1960 two electrical supply companies occupied the building.

The Schnull heirs sold the building in 1959 to Sanford Rothschild who occupied the building with his insurance agency and wholesale clothing business until 1988 when the City of Indianapolis purchased it.

Since circa 1905 the building has endured three remodeling campaigns. Historical photographs reveal that sometime between 1905 and 1907 the fourth floor was added to the building. Before that time the building was a three-story structure with scale, materials and details identical to its neighbor to the south (HABS No. IN-228). This addition coincides with the 1905 lease and occupation by the E. C. Dolmetsch Co. By November 1923 the second-story windows of the main facade had been replaced with the present bank of four windows with an I-beam lintel. The chain of title contains a mechanic's lien in October 1923. The present refacing of the storefront and the remodeling of the first floor interior probably dates from 1961 as indicated by two mechanic's liens that year and the beginning of owner-occupancy by the Rothschild enterprises.

Sources:

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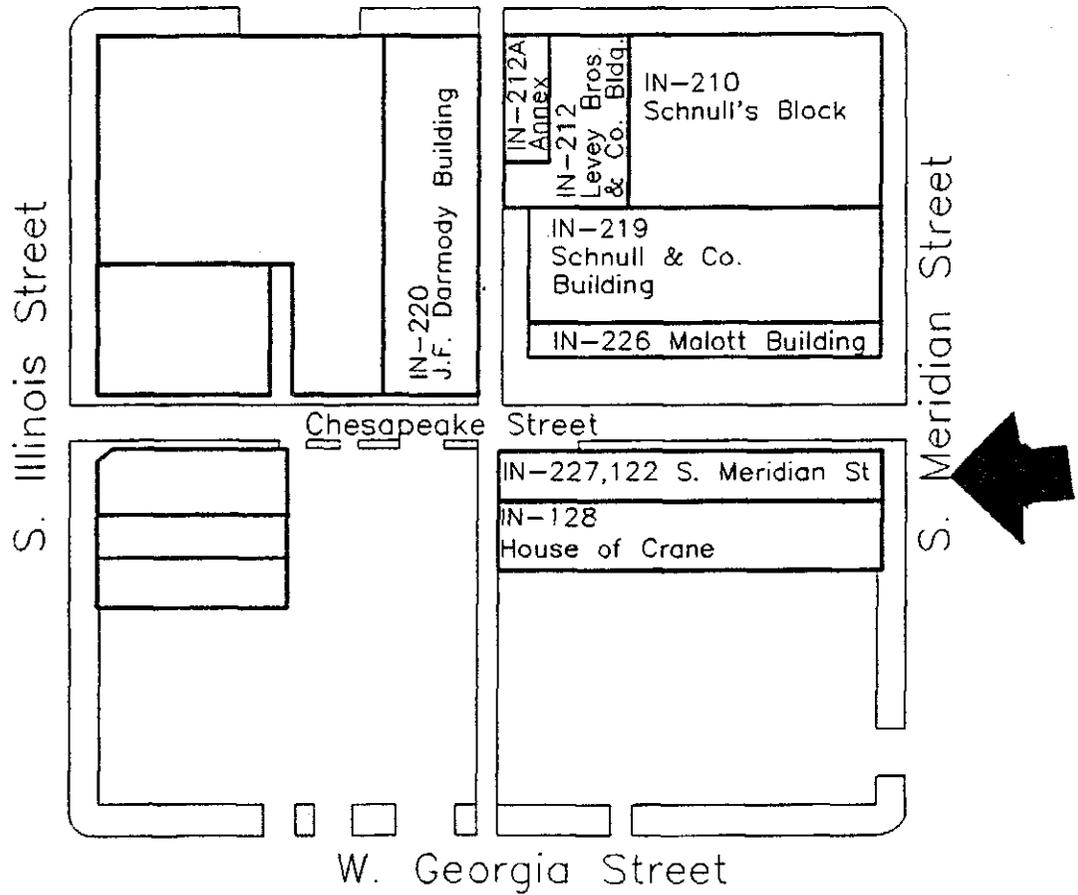
Historian:

William L. Selm
Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission
February 23, 1990

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W. Maryland Street

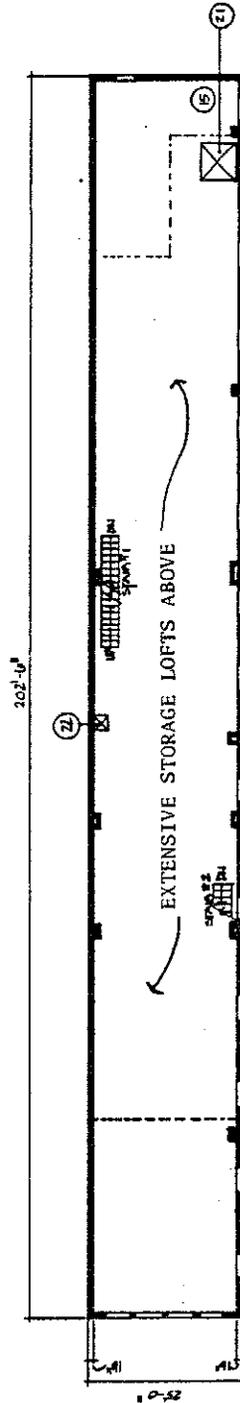


INDIANAPOLIS, IN.
CITY SQUARE 75

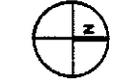


NORTH

- LEGEND**
- 1. AIR INTAKE/EXHAUST VENT
 - 2. AIR CONDENSING UNIT
 - 3. AIR HANDLING UNIT
 - 4. FAN
 - 5. MECHANICAL DUCT
 - 6. LIQUID STORAGE TANK/WATER HEATER
 - 7. MISC. MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT
 - 8. INCUBATOR
 - 9. BOILER
 - 10. PUMPING EQUIPMENT
 - 11. EXTENSIVE PIPING ABOVE
 - 12. MECHANICAL CHASE
 - 13. GAS SERVICE ENTRANCE
 - 14. WATER SERVICE ENTRANCE
 - 15. RESTROOM AREA
 - 16. STOREFRONT WINDOW SYSTEM
 - 17. COLUMN ENCLOSURE (TYP.)
 - 18. BUILDING ELECTRICAL PANEL
 - 19. ELECTRICAL SWITCHGEAR
 - 20. TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT
 - 21. ELEVATOR (PASS. OR FREIGHT)
 - 22. DIMMER/ELEVATOR
 - 23. ELEVATOR EQUIPMENT
 - 24. LADDER
 - 25. COOLING TOWER

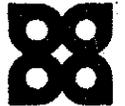


2nd Floor



BOMD Project No. 8311

PROJECT: CIRCLE CENTRE MALL	DATE: 02/09/88	C06-84
CLIENT: Rothschild Insurance/A. Jones & Co. Bldg. C-88	SCALE: as shown.	drawn by:
TITLE: Browning Day Mullins Dierdorf Inc. Planning - Landscape Architecture - Architecture - Interior Design	Indianapolis, Indiana 46204	317-635-5030



7/15/88

ROTHSCHILD INSURANCE/A. JONES & CO.

C06-5