

JOHN T. BEASLEY BUILDING  
(Citizens Gas & Fuel Company)  
632 Cherry Street (between Sixth & Seventh Streets)  
Terre Haute  
Vigo County  
Indiana

HABS No. IN-238

HABS  
IND  
84-TEHA,  
3-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
Northeast Region  
U.S. Custom House  
200 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

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Location: 632 Cherry Street (between Sixth and Seventh Streets), Terre Haute, Vigo County, Indiana

USGS Terre Haute Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:  
16.464800.4368600

Present Owner: Indiana State University

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The John T. Beasley Building (Citizens Gas & Fuel Company) is significant because of its association with the Citizens Gas & Fuel Company of Terre Haute, one of the oldest gas companies in the region. It is one of the few remaining examples in the state of the work of Dalton G. Shourds, a local architect who was active in the midwest during the first half of the twentieth century. It also represents a good local example of the use of terra cotta in neo-classic twentieth century commercial architecture. The structure was originally an office building as well as headquarters and showroom for the Citizens Gas & Fuel Company, as such it was a symbol of the importance of the manufactured (and later natural) gas industry in Vigo County and the surrounding area. The building gains further significance from its association with John T. Beasley, an important politician, businessman and financier who was active in the Wabash valley during the latter part of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth.

## PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

### A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: According to dates listed on the building plans (nineteen linen drawings have survived, but they are obviously design plans, not "as-builts"), the structure was designed by July 19, 1924. The building was probably under construction during the spring and summer of 1925. On September 17, the Terre Haute Tribune published a 12 page "Citizen Gas and Fuel Company Section" in honor of the building's grand formal opening which took place on Friday and Saturday, September 18th and 19th, 1925.

2. Architect: The building was designed by the Shourds-Stoner Company, an architectural and engineering firm which, in 1925, had offices in Chicago and in Terre Haute. The founder of the company, Dalton B. Shourds opened the predecessor to the firm in Terre Haute in 1912, by 1913, it was known as Kervick and Shourds. Later the firm was changed to D. B. Shourds, architects, then Shourds-McCormick-Cushman company, and finally, after World War I, in 1919, to Shourds-Stoner. At the time of the construction, the firm proudly touted itself as "one of the pioneer firms in the entire country" to unite architects and engineers harmoniously under one roof. The firm's Chicago office was located (in 1925) in the Harris Trust Building, Suite 2010, 111 West Monroe. The Terre Haute office was located in the Tribune Building (Wabash and 7th), number 510. When the Beasley building opened, the firm had recently completed the following buildings: Terre Haute Memorial Stadium, the Wadley Company Plant, Smith-Alsop Paint and Varnish Co. Factory, T. H., I. & E. Traction Co. Car Shops, the Chanticleer Building, Gibault Home for Boys, Lange School Annex, McQuirk School, Harrison Township and the Indiana State Sanitarium, Hospital for Tubercular Children.<sup>1</sup>

Dalton B. Shourds was considered a leading architect in Terre Haute and Indiana. He received his degree in architecture from the University of Notre Dame and studied architecture in Europe under Francis W. Kervick, the dean of architecture at his alma mater. Before opening his own firm in the midwest, he worked in the Boston architectural firm of Shepley, Ruten and Coolidge. During World War I, he was selected for training as an engineering officer and served as major, commanding the second battalion, 309th engineers, U. S. Army. In addition to his professional associations, he was active in the community, serving as President of the Flora Gulick Boys Club, and with the American Legion, among many other volunteer duties.<sup>2</sup>

The drawings of the building indicate that R. H. Bean had considerable responsibility for its design and planning. Mr. Bean, during this era, was the manager of the firm's

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Chicago office and a stockholder and member of the company. He was a graduate of the University of Illinois in architecture, a registered architect in Illinois, a members of the City Club of Chicago and a member of the Lincoln Park R. A. M. Before joining Shourds-Stoner, he had been associated with the Chicago firm of Holabird and Roche. In addition to his duties as manager, he was in charge of "general and special architectural design and architectural detailing."<sup>3</sup>

3. Original and subsequent owners:

Legal description: One-Eighth (1/8) part of the South half of Outlot #46 of the Original Outlots of the Town (now City) of Terre Haute, more specifically described as follows: Commencing at the southeast corner of said Outlot #46 running thence West one-eighth (1/8) the length thereof, thence north to the center line of said Outlot #46 thence east one-eighth (1/8) the length of said Outlot #46, thence south to the place of beginning.

Ownership:

- 1923 Deed, July 20, 1923, Record 177, Page 114, Emma Buntin Drummond & Goyne Drummond, William C. Buntin & Ione K. Buntin and Frances H. Buntin to Citizens Gas Building Company, of Vigo County, Indiana. (Note, the Citizens Gas Building Company was formed for "the acquiring, owning, holding and leasing of real estate" in 1923, with a capital stock of \$100,000. The officers and incorporators were, John T. Beasley, President, Buena V. Marshall, and Clifford D. Shaul, Secretary. Mr. Shaul was the General Manager of the Citizens Gas & Fuel Company, B. V. Marshall was a Director and Mr. Beasley was President.
- 1930 Deed, June 2, 1930, Record 194, Page 152, Citizens Gas Building Company of Terre Haute, Vigo County, Indiana, to Indiana Gas Utilities Company of Terre Haute, Vigo County, Indiana.
- 1941 Deed, April 3, 1941, Record 220, Page 522, Indiana Gas Utilities Company, a corporation of the State of Indiana, to Terre Haute Gas Corporation, a corporation of the State of Indiana.
- 1991 August 6, 1991, Terre Haute Gas Corporation to Indiana State University.

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4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: The general contractors for the building were William Caton & Son; the plumbing and heating contractors were O. A Toelle; the sheet metal and roofing work was executed by Hartmann Co., Inc.; painting and decorating was completed by Pugh Brothers; and the electric lighting equipment was furnished by Dreiman Brothers. All the contractors listed are from Terre Haute. Also involved as suppliers, were the following local firms: Raymond Kintz Lumber Company, G. A. Monninger and company (sand and gravel), Noffke Brothers (terrazzo floors, marble and tile) and the Brazil, Indiana firm of E. D. Wilder who provided the millwork and interior trim. These contractor's all participated as advertisers in the special opening section (9/17/25) of the local paper. Information regarding other suppliers and contractors, especially the fabricators of the terra cotta has not been discovered.

5. Original plans and construction: As previously mentioned, a set of nineteen, ink-on-linen original tracings survive, all dated July 19, 1924. All of the drawings are well executed and are typical of production drawings of the 1920s. These drawings are the property of Indiana State University, the present owners. No records of contracts for the building's construction have been unearthed, nor have any records which might indicated the original construction cost.

A description of the building, at the time of the formal opening is contained in the special supplement printed in the *Terre Haute Tribune* on September 17, 1925. In an article entitled: "Construction of New Gas Company Building a Real Achievement", the writer proclaimed, "It is seldom that a new merchandising building attracts so much desirable comment regarding its appearance and beauty as has the new John T. Beasley-Gas company building." The author continued to describe the edifice, likening it to a banking institution. The notable qualities of the building, according to the writer, included the graceful and dignified lines of its facade, and the spacious interior salesroom on the ground floor. On this floor, the terrazzo floors, the rear office, with its cashier's cages, and three massive, burglar-proof record vaults (one in the basement, one on the first floor and one on the second) provided further impressions of the dignity and quality of a financial institution.

The same article described some of the salient features of the building, including the elevator, "one of the fastest in the city", which was run by an operator during the day, but could be operated by "push button control" at night. The first floor elevator entrance was separate from the entrance to the gas company salesroom, serving the third and fourth floor offices. The Citizens Gas & Fuel Company also occupied the second floor, which was devoted to the Manager's private office, the auditing department, and toward the rear, the home service department which provided instructions in baking for area housewives. All of the gas company departments were served by a pneumatic message carrier system. A freight loading area on the ground

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floor and a freight elevator served all four floors, providing access for all of the tenants. <sup>4</sup>

Contemporary photographs and drawings can be found in the newspaper supplement, mentioned above. In addition, photographs dating from the 1950s and earlier are in the collection of Indiana Gas Company, and located in their Terre Haute office. A search of archival material in the Vigo County Historical Society collection, the Vigo County Library, Special Collections section and the University Archives of Indiana State University did not reveal additional photographic documentation. However, aerial photographs from the latter repository revealed the building in 1937 and its setting; a later aerial, in particular, was helpful to determine the physical relationship to the ISU campus.

The architectural records collection of the Indiana Historical Society contains six records of the Shourds-Stoner practice including drawings (or parts of them) of five buildings in the Terre Haute area, and a photograph from the Martin collection of a school in nearby Sugar Creek Township. In addition, at least three buildings designed by the firm were included in the 1984, *Vigo County Interim Report, Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory*, the original forms and data from which are in the files of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology. The three, rated "outstanding", are the Concannon School, Sugar Creek Township (1917), the arch of the Terre Haute Memorial Coliseum and the Citizen Gas & Fuel Company building.

6. Alterations and additions: The building has had remarkably few alterations and no additions since it was constructed. The most significant changes have been interior redecorations, which included the addition of extensive counter space in the first floor sales area (once it was no longer used for that purpose), the installation of a hung ceiling which obscured the original details and bracketing, and the installation of extensive air conditioning and heating ducts in the second, third and fourth floor hall areas. The first heating system in the building was steam. The first air conditioning system was installed c. 1955, and it was updated with a new electric system c.1985. A new elevator was installed within the shaft of the original, c. 1978.<sup>5</sup>

Prior to the work of the recording team, extensive asbestos abatement treatment had taken place on the interior of the building, causing demolition of some plaster surfaces. Architectural tile fabric was revealed and certain spaces, such as elevators, and the vaults contained extensive debris. Residual fluid is evident in the basement and some other areas from this operation.

B. Historical Context:

The Citizens Gas & Fuel Company Building is directly associated with the development of utilities in the midwest, and with the use of gas for lighting, heat and cooking. Gas light illumination moved slowly westward across the Appalachians, from its first installation in Baltimore in 1817. By 1848, when Washington DC saw its first gas light company organized, demonstrations of the new marvel had been held in the midwest, in such metropolises as St. Louis, Dayton and Cincinnati. Only five years later, in 1853, the Terre Haute Gas Light Company received its city charter, although it would be three years more before the community could claim to be "an illuminated city".<sup>6</sup>

Terre Haute in the nineteenth century was a small town with big ambitions. The railroads had come through in 1852, the Wabash & Erie canal ran north to Lafayette and south to Evansville and the National Road (now Wabash Avenue) was the highway to the far west.<sup>7</sup> Even though, according to the 1850 census, the population was only a little over four thousand people, several intrepid local entrepreneurs planned a gas works which would serve nearly 50,000 inhabitants. The original plant, which was under construction in the summer of 1855, was built by a Mr. Bickwell of Philadelphia at a reported cost of \$40,000.<sup>8</sup> Like most town gas companies, Terre Haute Gas Light Company manufactured coal gas, storing it in a large gas holder at the plant, and distributing it to customers through gas mains of between three and six inches in diameter. Meters recorded the amount drawn down by each user. When the community was first "lit up with gas", in 1856, between 14 and 15 miles of gas lines had been laid, 329 street lamps were illuminated and between eight and nine hundred meters had been installed.<sup>9</sup> The farsighted planners had, from the beginning, looked forward to the community's growth and development. The advantages of gas-lit city streets were proudly proclaimed by the local paper in October of that first year of light: "Lighting our streets with gas has commenced. Night walking will soon be brilliant."<sup>10</sup>

Terre Haute continued to grow, and the gas company with it. In the late 1880s crude oil was found in great quantities around the city and several prominent men formed a company which would make fuel gas from the crude oil. The incorporators included some of the most prominent men in Terre Haute's history: Herman Hulman, Sr. and his son Anton Hulman, Sr., H. P. Townley, C. M. Warren, Frank McKeen, R. S. Tennant, A. Z. Foster, Willard Kidder, Josephus Collett and J. R. Kendall. Thanks to their use of the Archer process, the company could also use fuel oil to produce a gas, similar to natural gas, with about 22 candle power.<sup>11</sup> The Terre Haute "gas war" had begun.

By the summer of 1890, the competition began to heat up. Although gas prices had been declining consistently, from about \$4.00 per month net in the 1850s and 1860s to

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\$1.50 net in 1887, in 1890 both companies dropped prices to \$1 a month for fuel. A year later, in order "to meet competition" they were charging 35 cents per thousand cubic feet. The younger company, better capitalized, initially withstood the drain of this protracted "war", but by the spring of 1895 both companies were in a perilous financial state. During the summer of that year, the Citizens Gas & Fuel Company reorganized, and, with mortgage bonds purchased the property of the competing company. In essence the "new" Citizens Gas & Fuel was a consolidated company whose directors included men from both ventures, including the Hulmans, Demas Deming, M. N. Diall and J. T. Beasley. In the fall of 1895, gas prices returned to "pre-war" levels and net earnings began to rise, although the company would not fully recover until well after the new century had begun. <sup>12</sup>

The Citizens Gas & Fuel Company continued to operate independently until 1908 when it was taken over by the United Gas and Electric Company, a sub-holding company of Associated Gas & Electric Company of New York. Local operations were maintained under the same name and the franchise operators, Demas Deming, John W. Cruft, B. Marshall and John T. Beasley were familiar to all. By joining Associated's large stable of prominent electric and gas utilities, Citizens could boast that it had become one of the ten leading gas companies in the country, for a city of Terre Haute's size. <sup>13</sup>

The growth of the Citizens Gas & Fuel Company continued throughout the first two decades of the century, under the guidance of local men like John T. Beasley and experienced professionals like Clifford D. Shaul who was the general manager during the era of the construction of the new building on Cherry Street. Mr. Shaul was brought to Terre Haute in 1914 from Altoona, Pennsylvania. He was an experienced man who set ambitious goals for company growth. The development of Terre Haute was always tied to the capacity and dynamism of its utilities and infrastructure, thus, both commerce and industry were considered the beneficiaries of the progress of the gas company. When the new building opened in 1925, manager Shaul proudly announced: "During the current year approximately four miles of main have been laid in Terre Haute ... This together with doubling of the capacity of the manufacturing plant and the erection of the new home on Cherry street makes the Citizens Gas and Fuel company a public utility of which Terre Haute may feel very proud."<sup>14</sup>

Over the years since the first gas company was founded, gas lighting had been replaced by Thomas Edison's wonderful incandescent fixture, but gas fuel was extremely popular for cooking and heating. While gas was still predominant in 1925, when the Beasley building opened, early rumblings of electric kitchens could be heard. Perhaps that is one reason why the building's ground floor display window and showroom area was so well-appointed. In the mid-nineteen twenties, retail sales were an important part of

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the gas company's operations and customers enjoyed the opportunity to see the latest in cooking and heating apparatus. Manager Shaul's claim that he wanted to make "service" the motto of the company certainly included service to the housewife. Like many other utility companies, Citizens new building included, on the second floor, a spacious area at the rear of the second floor where the Home Service Department served special meals and provided home baking demonstrations for local housewives.<sup>15</sup>

Corporate changes continued to occur, although operations continued under the same name. Only a year after the building opened, its rights were transferred to the Indiana Gas Utilities Company. In 1941, the physical assets were transferred to the Terre Haute Gas Corporation which became the distributing company in April of that year. The officers of the new corporation included A. M. Ogle, president and R. S. Brunner, general manager. While the building on Cherry Street continued to display the old company name in raised letters above the display window, Terre Hauteans began to get used to the new appellation.<sup>16</sup> Although natural gas had been introduced in some communities as early as the 1930s, it wasn't until 1953 that Terre Haute saw the conversion from manufactured to natural fuel. But there were many cities which would not enjoy the benefits of this cleaner gas, as the local paper boasted: "There are hundreds of cities which will look enviously at Terre Haute because it now has natural gas. That's the way we like to keep our city -- way ahead of the parade."<sup>17</sup>

Continuity of the Board was maintained, in the persons of Roy S. Brunner, who in 1964 was President and General Manager of the Terre Haute Gas Company - Anton "Tony" Hulman was Chairman of the Board.<sup>18</sup> The Terre Haute Gas Company continued to manage Terre Haute's gas needs until the 1990s when it became part of the Indiana Gas Company, which operates it at the present time.

The Citizens Gas & Fuel building is also significant for its association with many prominent local citizens, not the least of these is John T. Beasley, for whom the building was originally named. A native of nearby Sullivan, Indiana, Mr. Beasley was associated with the Citizens Gas Company since at least 1895 and had been important in its development, especially during the years when the building which bore his name was constructed.

Mr. Beasley had studied in the small Crawford Seminary in Sullivan, leaving to take a teaching position at the precocious age of 16. He was admitted to the bar at the age of 21, after reading law with a local Sullivan law firm. In 1887 and 1889 he was elected to the state legislature, representing Sullivan county. After five years in practice in Indianapolis, he moved to Terre Haute in 1895, where he became associated with a prominent local attorney. His contributions toward the financial and legal growth of the gas company must have been considerable. He was also the first president of the

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United States Trust Company, organized in 1902, resigning in 1925 to become Chairman of the Board until 1927. When the grand Cherry Street building opened, John T. Beasley's law firm of Beasley, Douthitt, Crawford and Beasley (later Beasley, O'Brien and Beasley) were among the first tenants. Among the many community services that John T. Beasley performed for Terre Haute, the most prominent was probably his service as organizer and first president of the Terre Haute Commercial Club, which laid the foundation for the community's industrial growth at the turn of the century. According to newspaper accounts at the time of his death in May of 1936, at least twenty major plants were opened during his five terms as president of the club which eventually became the basis for the organization of the Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce.<sup>19</sup>

In 1925, when the Beasley building began its commercial life, Indiana State University was known as the State Normal College. More than a decade later, the campus was still relatively contained within the area north of the alley behind Cherry Street (See Historic Photo, IN-238-26). In spite of this superficial barrier, there has been a continuous relationship between the structure and the historic nineteenth century Condit house which is located behind the building and to the northwest. (The Condit house presently serves as offices for the President of the University).

The population of the campus grew, and the complexion of downtown Terre Haute began to evolve following World War II and with the onset of urban renewal in the 1960s and 70s. University expansion tended to take place in areas north of Cherry street. However, during the 1950s the character of the north side of Cherry street began to change with the construction of an office building on the block between Sixth and Seventh streets by Marathon Oil Company. In the late 1960s, only the Beasley building, its two story neighbor and a structure at the corner of Seventh Street remained from the early twentieth century commercial residential mix (see Historic Photo, IN-238-27). Terre Haute's central business district was also beginning a process of shrinkage, giving way to pressure from new shopping centers south and east of downtown.

Today, demands for academic space have resulted in University expansion north and westward to the natural barriers of an active railroad track and of U.S. 41. A new technology building has been constructed on the corner of Sixth and Cherry. The Marathon Oil building is now owned by the University and serves as supplemental office space. With the exception of the Beasley building, Cherry street is now used for either academic needs, parking or open spaces related to this function. Many of the remaining downtown merchants are dependent upon the University, and several provide services for students and faculty.

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Downtown Terre Haute has recently seen the construction of several new buildings along its main thoroughfare, but the presence and liveliness of the University is now of greater importance than ever before to the continued life and vitality of the area.

## Part II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

1. Architectural Character: The Beasley building is a good example of the three-part vertical block which had developed in Chicago. By the 1920s, examples of this type were dominant in tall buildings. Although on a much smaller scale, three distinct zones are apparent in the Terre Haute building, the first floor, the central feature of which is a central, display window with a segmental arch, recessed and infilled with decorative terra cotta and a tripartite bay window. The center zone contrasts this motif with flat head windows, whose rhythms echo the ground floor fenestration. Untypically, the upper zone is dominate in the composition, with bracketing adding height to the row of windows and an impression of further height added by an ornately decorated parapet.

Stylistically the building reflects its designer's Chicago commercial style influences, as well as Neo-Classic elements in the decorative embellishments of the facade. Designers of this era looked to the Beaux Arts lexicon, recalling its figures in updated motifs and with sleeker, more restrained lines. All of these practices were fairly common among architecture of the first part of the twentieth century and similar examples can be found throughout the midwest. However, what sets this building apart, for the Terre Haute area is that its entire facade, and wrap-around portions of the east and west facades are faced with terra cotta, in an unusually good state of preservation. The detailing of the decorative elements are delineated on the original drawings and include a generous variety of motifs. While other buildings in the area contain similar elements, none which remain are as complete examples of this expensive, and often custom-produced treatment. It is probably for this reason that the building was rated "Outstanding" in the 1984 Vigo County Interim Report.

2. Condition of Fabric: The terra cotta is in excellent condition, except for very few tiles. Only two or three demonstrate crackling. The exterior concrete and brick evidence no visible deterioration and the steel sash and frame windows are in good to excellent condition. In general, the structural integrity of the building appears excellent.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The building, four stories high plus a full basement, is a long rectangle of 73' 6" by 150'.

2. Foundations: The foundation is reinforced concrete, 13" thick.

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3. Walls: The major Cherry Street facade and approximately 19' on the east and west facades are clad in a speckled ivory terra cotta tile, semi-gloss. The terra cotta clad portions of the building are nicely enriched. For example, the legend contained within the rear arch of the fourcentered segmental arch on the ground floor, additionally there are belt courses, cornices and, on the fourth floor, deep cornices above the windows which are supported by anconei and contain incandescent light wells centered above each window in the soffit. The facade also contains pseudo-gargoyles (grotesques), memorial devises, antefixes and nicely detailed spiral moldings at the arrisses of the first floor openings. The remainder of the structure, typical of the era, conveys an utile impression with a combination of expressed, reinforced concrete beams and posts as a network, infilled with common bond brick and windows. The brick is a pale yellow with darker details picked out. The rear of the building is of the same composition, but incorporates a fire escape.

4. Structural systems, framing: As mentioned earlier, the structural system is simple, the fabric of the building is reinforced concrete beams and posts. (Please refer to the photographed, original measured drawings for more details about the structural systems of the building). The floors are composed of the aforementioned beams and reinforced concrete joists which have been infilled with heavily grouted hollow architectural tile, the upper surfaces finished with concrete. The roof is dead level, and is constructed as are the floors below -- it is also ballasted with tar and gravel.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: none

6. Chimneys: There is a brick chimney located near the rear northeast corner of the building, approximately 6' square.

7. Openings:

- a. Doorways: The building contains two major doors in the Cherry Street facade. They were originally wood, with a metal push bar and a single large light. At some unknown period they were converted to aluminum, panic bolt and door checks. The transoms remain. At the rear of the building in the trucking space, there are two openings, one a double door, approximately centered, and an opening into the side of the freight elevator which has been sealed at an undisclosed time.
- b. Windows: All windows are steel-framed. Those in the front are one-over-one light, double hung. The windows on the east and west elevation are three-over-three, double hung, many have wire glass installed. The rear windows are also one-over-one, similar to the front facade. The steel has been painted.

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The front contains a large display window which is flanked by the two entrance doors. The show window is beveled, surmounted by a three light transom, the glass in the west portion of which has been replaced by louvres. Contained within the fourcentered arched structural opening, is the terra cotta inscription in low relief: "Citizens Gas & Fuel Co", in an ornate lettering style. The letters have been custom designed to conform to the confines of the arch.

The remaining three floors of this facade contain groupings of five windows each, centered above the ground floor arch and single windows, each centered above the two major entrance bays. The fourth floor windows are contained within heavily enriched terra cotta hoods and surrounds.

8. Roof: The roof is flat, composed of tar and stone ballast as mentioned above. The building has a brick parapet, approximately four to eight feet high; the parapet caps are coped with terra cotta tiles. Two penthouses are located on the roof, both contain elevator machinery. The front, or south penthouse also contains a stair case which adjacent to the main elevator. The other penthouse serves the freight elevator.

Steel I-sections have been let into the side parapets of the roof, to carry the condensers for a retrofit air conditioning system for the entire building. An aluminum penthouse which has been constructed in the rear third of the roof contains related equipment and services. The roof has been repaired to include the application of fabric to the brick parapet interiors and aluminum flashing.

#### C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans. (See original architectural drawings and sketch plans of all building floors) The building was erected, primarily, to serve as headquarters for the Citizens Gas & Fuel Company, which included executives, maintenance, sales persons, and other staff. The upper two floors were leased as professional offices. Generally, the portions of the building occupied by the gas company contained two large open spaces. One of these spaces, on the ground floor was for merchandise display. On the second floor, the auditing department and a home service room were accommodated. Very few partitions were built on the gas company floors, there was plenty of light, utile, comfortable working and customer service spaces.

The upper floors were flexible, in that both had commodious central corridors running from north to south, but they could also be adapted to lessees' needs through movable partitions.

2. Staircases are enclosed within hollow architectural tile walls. They have steel tread, (covered with heavy linoleum in the front), with wood banisters, on brass brackets. The front stairs has two types of decorative marble facing along the walls.

3. Flooring: Most of the public areas on the ground floor are terrazzo over concrete, including the lobby, the elevator lobby and the former showroom area. However, the area at the rear of the main room, where the original counters were located, as well as service areas around the vault are concrete covered with battleship linoleum. The show window floor is made up of quarter inch tesserae of white and pale blue tile. The upper floors are trowelled concrete, originally finished in linoleum, except the lavatories which have tile floors.

In recent years, many of the floors were carpeted.

4. Wall and ceiling finishes: In general, the walls and ceiling were finished with plaster. On the ground floor a crown molding containing dentils was incorporated into the major plaster ceilings. It was used without dentils in the elevator lobby. The major first floor transverse beams were plaster covered and supported at the exterior walls with decorative brackets. The third and fourth floor halls were wainscoted with brown glazed tile.

5. Openings: Most of the doors in the interior of the building contained a single pane of obscure glass, providing excellent interior light to the hallways. The doors to the stairwells were steel clad fire doors. On the office floors, many windows faced onto the central hallways. These were furnished with obscure glass, thus providing additional interior natural light. Individual offices maintained privacy, yet light flowed through the building.

6. Decorative features and trim: Many of the built-in features have been changed or removed. There are service counters on the first and second floors and cupboards in the manager's office. In addition, the leasehold spaces on the third and fourth floor contained floor-to ceiling closets of inexpensive pine, dark-stained, with a closet space on the left and a built-in sink on the right. Other offices contained simple built in cabinets and bookcases. On the first floor, the fireplace which was used to demonstrate gas as a fuel is located in the customer display area. It is flue-less (under a window) and is equipped with a single gas pipe and valve. The fireplace is rectangular with a slightly arched opening and is finished in brown glazed tile. The mantel is of stained wood.

7. Hardware: Most of the interior hardware is of architectural bronze, including knobs, escutcheons, kick-plates and hydraulic door checks.

8. Mechanical Equipment: The building was originally heated by a gas-fired boiler which operated a steam-heating system. Many of the rooms contained 110 volt outlets and shelves for electric fans. Most of the offices have movable transoms to assist circulation. As previously mentioned several later air-conditioning systems were retrofitted.

Lighting was accomplished through large and medium sized chain-hung, ceiling fixtures with glass globes, except in the show window which had a number of recessed incandescent lights to illuminate the appliances which were featured.

Plumbing consisted primarily of supply and waste pipes to and from the lavatories on each floor and the small closet sinks. A number of gas lines were supplied to accommodate the displayed appliances and demonstration areas.

Other mechanical equipment of note: In addition to the two elevators, an extensive two-tube pneumatic system connected the first and second floor. This equipment brought cash and paper work from the cashiers below to the audit department above. There are three vaults (locations shown on the sketch drawings), located in the basement, first and second floors. These were walk-in fixtures of reinforced concrete, approximately 9 x 12 feet. The basement and ground floor vaults had walls which were approximately one foot six inches thick - the one on the second floor had walls which were one foot thick. They had simple iron doors with a continuous bolt operated by a lever and a combination lock. The vaults were arranged one above the other in plan, the concrete walls bearing the weight of the one directly above, thus eliminating the need for special framing.

#### D. Site

The south-facing building was originally designed to fit between two existing structures, a two-story brick commercial on the west and a two-story, late nineteenth century residence, converted to a water company office, on the east. The rear faced a large alley. The building, on the edge of the University (then Terre Haute Normal College), enjoyed a campus-like setting to the rear and an urban commercial setting on Cherry Street. The structure is located in the flat area of Terre Haute, near the original core of the historic portion of downtown.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. "Shourds-Stone Company an Organization of Specialists", Citizens Gas & Fuel Supplement, *Terre Haute Tribune*, September 17, 1925

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2. Esarey, Logan, Ph. D. , *History of Indiana from its Exploration to 1922* - Also an account of Vigo County from its organization., Vol. II, Dayton, Dayton Historical Publishing Co., 1922
3. Special Edition, *The Terre Haute Tribune*, September 17, 1925.
4. Ibid.
5. Telephone interview with Mr. Bud Cottrell, April 1993, former Terre Haute Gas Company employee who worked in the building for 25 years, until February of 1991.
6. Beck, William, unpublished MSS History of the Indiana Gas Company, Lakeside Writers Group, Indiana, Chapter one, "The Town Gas Era", courtesy of the author.
7. Markle, A. R., "Move for Local Gas Supply was Started in 1853", *Terre Haute Tribune*, (Terre Haute Gas Corporation Section), July 6, 1953.
8. *The Wabash Valley Remembers 1787-1938, One hundred and fifty years of pioneer history*,
9. Ibid.
10. Markle, *Terre Haute Tribune*, July 6, 1953.
11. Ibid.
12. Beck, Chapter One, p.8
13. Beck, unpublished MSS, draft dated October 18, 1992, p. 10 and *Wabash Valley Remembers* p.55.
14. "Citizens Gas and Fuel Company Has Had Interesting Progress", *Terre Haute Tribune*, Special Supplement, September 17, 1925.
15. Ibid.
16. " History of Gas Company's Long Record of Public Service Here", *Terre Haute Tribune*, Sunday, November 16, 1941.
17. "Natural Gas -- Another Step Forward For Terre Haute", *Terre Haute Tribune*, July 6, 1953 (Special Section)
18. *Terre Haute Tribune-Star*, Sunday, June 7, 1964, p. 43.
19. Obituary, *Terre Haute Tribune*, May 19, 1936

### PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: The original contract drawings were 2'6" by 3'9". The narrow end margins have been trimmed. They are black india ink on blue Imperial cloth (irish linen). The line work is extremely fine and the cloth is soiled and darkened with age. Xerox prints of these originals were unsatisfactory for photography and the documents were found to be too fragile for exposure through a diazo machine. Graphic arts high contrast film did not capture all of the lines (especially dimension lines, equivalent to a 000 technical pen line), therefore continuous tone film was selected to photograph these drawings (see Index to photographs for descriptions and titles of drawings) Large portions of the plumbing drawings were in brown ink which has faded and spread -- some of these lines did not reproduce. The set of 19 tracings which have survived are all dated July 19, 1924. The title block includes the name of the building, "Citizens Gas & Fuel Company", the name of the architectural/ engineering firm, the function of the drawing, the initials of the draftsman, the tracer and the checker and the drawing number. The drawings are presently in the University Archives of Indiana State University, Terre Haute.

In addition to the sources mentioned in Part I, section A.5, the Shourds-Stoner practice was checked in the files of Chicago architects kept by the Chicago Historical Society, but no records were found.

- B. Historic Views: Please see Index to Photographs for complete description of each photo included. The primary sources of the views were the Indiana Gas Company, Terre Haute office, and the Indiana State University Archives. A search of the files at the Vigo County Historical Society and the Vigo County Library, Special Collection did not unearth any additional historic views. As previously mentioned, the architectural records collection of the Indiana Historical Society was consulted for records of the Shourds-Stoner practice. In addition, the Martin photographic collection records were checked, (also located at the Indiana Historical Society), but revealed only three possible streetscape photographs which might contain views of the building.
- C. Interviews: A brief telephone interview was conducted in April of 1993 by Camille Fife with a former Terre Haute gas company employee, Mr. Bud Cottrell, who worked in the building for twenty-five years. Additional oral history information may be available from Mr. Don Wedel, the former assistant treasurer and office manager of the gas company.

D. Bibliography:

Primary Sources

Beck, William, unpublished MSS, The History of the Indiana Gas Company, Lakeside Writers Group, to be published in 1993.

"Organization and History of Citizens Gas & Fuel Co.", unpublished internal MSS, by an unknown author, c. 1914. In the collection of the Indiana Gas Company, Terre Haute office.

Title Abstract, 632 Cherry Street, in the offices of the Vice President of Business Affairs, Indiana State University, Terre Haute.

Secondary Sources and Published Material

Clark, Dorothy, *Historically Speaking*, Evansville, Whipporwill Publications, 1981.

Esarey, Logan, Ph.D., *History of Indiana from its Exploration to 1922 - also an account of Vigo County from its organization., Vol II*, Dayton, Dayton Historical Publishing Company, 1922.

Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce, *The Wabash Valley Remembers 1787-1938*, Terre Haute, Terre Haute Chamber, 1938.

*Terre Haute Tribune*, Special Citizens Gas Company Edition, September 17, 1925

*Terre Haute Sunday Tribune*, November 16, 1941.

*Terre Haute Tribune-Star*, July 6, 1953

*Terre Haute Tribune-Star*, June 7, 1964

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentation has been compiled in accordance with a schedule of documentation provided by the National Park Service as part of Section 106 review pursuant to the Historic Preservation Act. This material was prepared by members of The Westerly Group, Inc., of Farmersburg, Indiana, on behalf of Indiana State University, the owner of the property, in advance of demolition of the building, to provide for the construction of an Advanced Technology Center on the site.

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