

DR. MILTON C. MARSHALL BUILDING
Central West End Historic District
414-418 North Boyle Avenue
St. Louis
St. Louis City County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1898

HABS

MO-1898

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MIDWEST REGIONAL OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1709 Jackson Street
Omaha, NE 68102

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. MO-1898

Location:

Milton C. Marshall Building
Central West End Historic District
414-418 North Boyle
St. Louis (City of St. Louis)
Missouri

Significance:

The building at 414-418 North Boyle is representative of the small commercial buildings constructed in the second and third decades of the twentieth century to meet the needs of the growing populations in St. Louis' west end. This building and others like it differed from earlier commercial building in three important ways: size, location, and use. The later buildings were one-story, were very shallow in depth, were often located in mid-block, and were designed solely for commercial use. Earlier neighborhood commercial buildings were most frequently located on corners and always had upper story residential apartments.

Description:

The structure at 414-418 North Boyle is a one-story, flat-roofed building, 25-foot 9-inch deep by 53 feet 4-inches long. The building faces west and its front wall is contiguous with the back edge of the sidewalk along Boyle Avenue. Its south wall is coincident with the rear property line and the 15-foot wide alley which serves the lot.

The front wall is divided into three equal bays. Each bay consists of a door and next to it a large expanse of painted plywood. The plywood covers what was once a fixed-glass storefront display window. The door at 414 is a flush wood door. The doors at 416 and 418 are the original single-lite wood doors, but are covered on the exterior with plywood.

Above the door and display window space in each bay are transom windows. Most of these are closed with plywood, but two are glazed. Below the sill of each former storefront window is a paneled closure. These closures are the only original elements of the storefronts which remain unaltered.

Each storefront opening is bracketed by 2-foot wide brick piers. The face brick of the piers and the wall above the storefront openings returns at the corners on each side of the building. The building's side wall and the rear wall are of common brick.

Directly above the storefront openings and continuous across the entire front of the building is a brick soldier course. Three courses above it is a stringcourse of moulded terra cotta which also returns on each side. Above the terra cotta string rises a low parapet. Directly above each brick pier the parapet extends an additional eight inches. Set diagonally into the raised parapet above each pier is a square terra cotta medallion. The parapet terminates with a rowlock course of brick.

The face brick and the terra cotta trim on the building front are painted dark red. The paint has not adhered well to the glaze on the terra cotta leaving a smeared appearance. The plywood panels and all exposed wood framing and trim of the storefronts are painted white with the exception of the doors which are painted the same dark red as the brick.

In the rear wall of the building are three door openings and three small window openings, paired together. Each pair serves an individual store space. The windows serve the toilet rooms of each of the store spaces.

The plan of the building was originally three rooms, 17-feet by 23-feet, with a toilet room in the rear corner of each adjacent the back door. The partitions have been removed for the building to function as a church.

History:

The building currently numbered 414-16-18 North Boyle was built in 1928. It is numbered in the index card on file in the Records Division of the City of St. Louis as 416-18-20 North Boyle. The owner and developer of the building was Dr. Milton C. Marshall, a dentist. It was built, it appears, as a speculative commercial venture.

The building permit was issued June 9, 1928. The project is described on the index card in the Records Division as a "one story brick store" and the construction value is listed as "\$3,000." The St. Louis Daily Record for June 10, 1928 lists R. J. and G. C. Cross as the builders in addition to Dr. Marshall as the owner.

The builders, Richard J. and Grover C. Cross, were brothers who operated a construction company with offices at 4943A Thrush Avenue. Richard Cross lived at 4924 Thrush. In 1926 they and another brother are listed as officers of the Atlas Sash and Door Co. at 5191-93 Natural Bridge Avenue. This company was apparently short-lived as it does not appear in the 1925 Directory and by 1928 each brother is listed in the City Directory as a "carp." or "cont."

The overview history of the Central West End Complex (HABS No. MO-1878) included with this documentation describes the development history of the area of St. Louis in which the commercial structure at 414-418 N. Boyle was built. It describes the original development, the forces that affected the neighborhood and influenced the changes that occurred, and finally the renewal which has given rise to the need for this documentation.

Dr. Milton C. Marshall resided at 4262 Westminster Place, at the corner of Westminster and Boyle. The Boyle Avenue building he developed, therefore, was built in the rear yard of his own house. Based on information from Sanborn Insurance maps of the 1950's which showed both buildings, there was only twelve feet between the two.

Dr. Marshall lived at 4262 Westminster Place from the date the house was built in 1895 until 1933. He was of prominent enough social stature to be listed in Gould's Blue Book, a social register, from 1895 until 1916. Dr. Marshall's office was in downtown St. Louis at 721 Olive Street, The Chemical Building, which was built in 1896.

Following 1933 a succession of four different residents are listed as residing at the 4262 Westminster Place address until 1961. City Directories for the years 1962 through 1971 list 4262 Westminster Place as being "vacant." The address does not appear in the 1972 Directory presumably because the building had been demolished.

Prior to construction in 1928 of the new building on N. Boyle there was a "two-story brick stable," which Dr. Marshall had erected late in 1895, at the rear of the lot of 4262 Westminster. In the 1928 City Directory a produce merchant, C. A. Bantham, is listed occupying this building, which was numbered then as 414 North Boyle. Mr. Bantham's residence address is listed as 4262 Westminster, Dr. Marshall's home, although his name does not appear with Dr. Marshall's in the list of occupants at that address. There is ample evidence that 4262 Westminster Place long-served more than one family for in 1895 when the 1896 edition of Gould's Blue Book was published two families are listed there: Dr. & Mrs. M.C. Marshall and Mr. & Mrs. J.H. Trump.

Following demolition of the brick stable and construction of the new building in 1928 the street numbering was changed from the 416-18-20 listed in the permit to 414-16-18 North Boyle. The building was first occupied in 1929.

As incongruous as it seems to construct a commercial building in the rear of one's residence, Dr. Marshall's action was not without precedent. Since 1910 a building very similar to the one Dr. Marshall built had stood at 408-10-12 North Boyle on the opposite side of the alley behind Dr. Marshall's house. In fact one of Dr. Marshall's first tenants, Jacob Shaikewitz, who operated a shoe repair shop, relocated to 414 N. Boyle from 412 where he had been since 1925. Mr. Shaikewitz remained at 414 N. Boyle until 1955, a period of 26 years. In 1957 a permit was issued by the City to a dairy company to erect a sign at 414 N. Boyle, but the available directories for the late 1950's list no occupant there.

Tenancy with similar permanence is also evident for the other two spaces in the building. 416 N. Boyle opened in 1929 as a barber shop. In 1930 it is listed as the home of the Nut-Matic Gauge Co. In 1933 it is listed as being "vacant." In 1935 it is shown again as a barber shop and under the operation of three different proprietors it remained one for 25 years until 1960.

The space at 418 N. Boyle showed the most stable tenancy. It operated continuously as a beauty parlor from 1929 to 1960. One operator, Georgia Gunn, was the proprietor from 1929 through 1948. Dorothy Patterson operated at the location until 1960.

Georgia Gunn's residence address from 1929 until 1933 is listed as 420 N. Boyle. This must have been an apartment with a separate side entry in Dr. Marshall's house at 4262 Westminster Place. A number of different persons are shown living at 420 until 1959 after which it is listed as "vacant."

Just as the residence at 4262 Westminster stood vacant for almost the entire decade of the 1960's, so did 414-16-18 N. Boyle. A permit is shown being granted in March, 1961 to operate 416-18 N. Boyle as a "Full Drink Tavern." The Directory for 1961 was published prior to the permit date and the 1962 and 1963 editions of the Directory were not available for verification of the tavern use. By the time of the 1964 Directory, though, 416 and 418 are listed again as "vacant" and by evidence of the Directory they remained so, as did 414, for the rest of the decade.

In May, 1969 an occupancy permit was granted for the use of 416 N. Boyle as a "counseling and information center for narcotics addicts." A May occupancy would be too late for the 1969 Directory and the 1970 edition was not available, but the 1971 Directory still lists the entire building as "vacant." Not until the 1972 and 1973 Directories does the narcotics counseling center use appear.

In 1974 the use of the building changed again. In that year it began to be used for religious services by the Greater Christland Missionary Baptist Church. This congregation occupied the building continuously from 1974 until 1990 when the current redevelopment project began.

Sources:

City of St. Louis, Records Division, Active and Inactive Building Permits (microfilm). City Hall, St. Louis, Missouri.

Gould's Blue Book for the City of St. Louis. St. Louis: Gould Directory Co. 1895-1916.

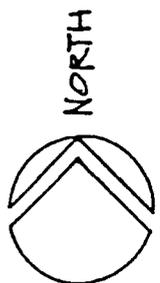
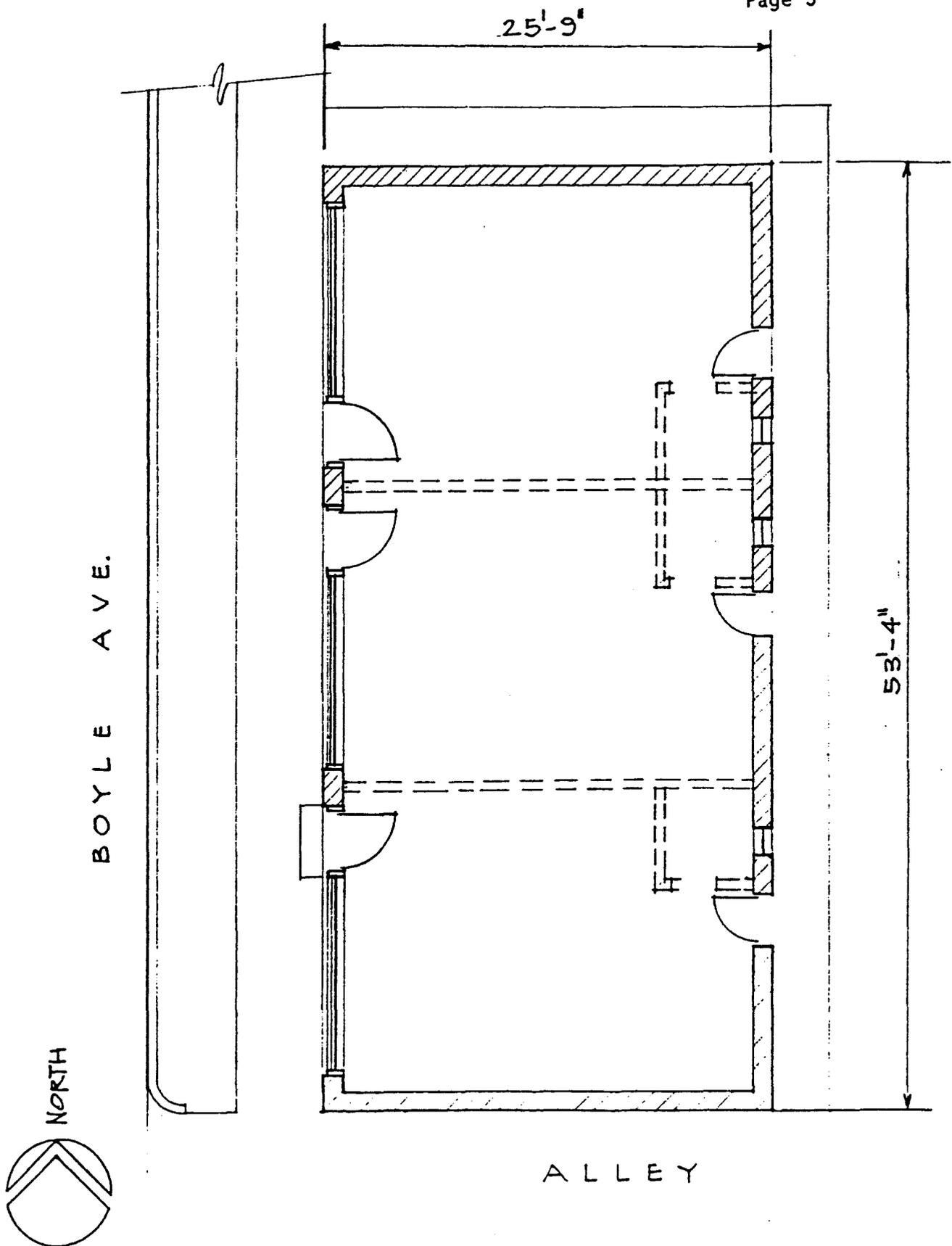
Gould's St. Louis City Directory. St. Louis: Gould Directory Co., 1929-1954.

Gould's St. Louis Red-Blue Book. St. Louis: Gould Directory Co., 1925-1929.

Polk's St. Louis City Directory. Taylor, MI: R.L. Polk & Co., 1955-1980.

St. Louis Daily Record, June 10, 1928. St. Louis Daily Record Co., St. Louis, Missouri.

Other Information: Central West End Complex, HABS No. MO-1878; George W. Parker House, HABS No. MO-1897



FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'-0''$

414-418 N. BOYLE
ST. LOUIS, MO