

10 North Warren Street  
(Commercial Building)  
Trenton  
Mercer County  
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-956

*HABS  
NJ,  
11-TRET,  
29-*

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

10 North Warren Street (Commercial Building)

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Location: 10 North Warren Street, Trenton, Mercer County,  
New Jersey.

Last Owner: Trianco, Inc., a Pennsylvania corporation.

Last Occupant: Rexall Drug Store, first floor. Upper floors  
used as warehouse/storage space and  
apartments. Building vacant from 1977.

Last Use: Commercial.

The building at 10 North Warren Street was demolished in  
September 1987 to make way for new commercial construction.

Significance: A restrained example of late 19th century  
commercial architecture with original details  
reflecting the influence of the Victorian  
Gothic style, and subsequent storefront  
alterations in the popular early 20th century  
Classical Revival style. The interior retains  
some interesting elements of late 19th century  
technology, including gas jets and a freight  
elevator with exposed hoist mechanism.  
Although the first tenant was a harness and  
saddlery shop, for much of the building's  
history it contained a drug store. Stuckert's  
Drug Store moved into the building in 1916, and  
by 1964 it was the oldest retail drug business  
in Trenton. In that year, the Stuckert family  
sold the building and the business, but the  
Rexall drug store chain continued operations  
here for another decade.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: ca. 1887.
2. Architect: Not known.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Chain of Title references from the Mercer County Hall of Records:
  - 1886 September 9 - Transfer from Charles B. Mathis to Albert D. Smith. Deed book 150, page 397.
  - 1906 June 30 - Transfer from Susan A. Smith and Mary S. Ricker (heirs at law of Albert D. Smith) to Charles Stuckert. Deed book 287, page 499.
  - 1946 November 18 - Transfer from Florence M. Stuckert, widow, to William C. Braun and Edward Kent, partners trading as Stuckert's Pharmacy. Deed book 954, page 25.
  - 1956 November 29 - Transfer from William C. Braun and Edward Kent, partners trading as Stuckert's Pharmacy to William C. Braun Sr. and William C. Braun Jr., partners trading as Stuckert's Pharmacy. Deed book 1390, page 288.
  - 1964 December 11 - Transfer from William C. Braun Sr. and William C. Braun Jr., partners trading as Stuckert's Pharmacy to Makefield Associates, Inc., a New Jersey corporation. Deed book 1722, page 776.
  - 1977 November 3 - Sheriff's deed to the National State Bank, Elizabeth, New Jersey in the amount of \$100. Deed book 2064, page 509.
  - 1978 August 3 - Transfer from National State Bank, Elizabeth, New Jersey to Trianco, Inc., a Pennsylvania corporation. Deed book 2079, page 225.
  - 1987 September - Transfer from Trianco, Inc. to DKM Properties Corp.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Not known.
  5. Original plans and construction: The building has not been substantially altered, and retains its original plan.
  6. Alterations and additions: Tax assessment records for the City of Trenton note no alterations to the building. The marked stylistic difference between the classical decoration at the first floor storefront surround and the rest of the building suggests that the original storefront was replaced in the early 20th century. A likely date for this alteration is 1916, when the store changed from a harness shop to Stuckert's Pharmacy.
- B. Historical Context: Throughout the 19th century, various buildings occupied this site, but it was after Albert Smith's purchase of the property in 1886 that the present building at 10 North Warren Street was constructed. Smith constructed the four story brick commercial building in place of an earlier hotel. His first tenant was Claffey and Slack, a recently formed partnership which sold saddlery and carriage hardware. There were a number of such establishments in this area at the turn of the century, including the harness store at 8 North Warren Street run by Joseph McPherson, and another across North Warren Street.

Entries for Claffey & Slack in the Trenton directories of the early 1900's provide a more detailed look at the merchandise they carried. It included harnesses, carriage "materials", saddles and accessories, horse blankets, and fur and plush robes. No doubt the increasing popularity of the automobile diminished their trade; the partnership and the business dissolved in 1914.

Long before Claffey & Slack retired, the building they occupied had been sold by the Smith family to Charles Stuckert. Stuckert was a successful local pharmacist. In 1900, he bought the drugstore business established elsewhere in Trenton by Dr. Isaac James in 1843. For some years, Stuckert's Pharmacy was across the street from 10 North Warren in the Masonic Building (now demolished). With the demise of Claffey & Slack, Stuckert moved into his own building in 1916.

Stuckert's Pharmacy was a notable Trenton business, and its popularity is reflected in its longevity. Like any self-respecting drug store of the early 20th century, it boasted a soda fountain as well as a pharmacy. The establishment's name was continued even after Charles Stuckert died in the 1940's, and William Braun and Edward Kent took over the business. William Braun's son (also William) was the final successor to the Trenton pharmacy that had its origins in the mid-19th century. He sold the business in 1964, and at that time it was the oldest retail drug business in Trenton.

Beginning in the 1930's, the Trenton City Directories mention residential tenants living in the upper floors of the building. Apartments on the second and third floors were apparently occupied into the 1960's, and possibly later.

## Part II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: A four story commercial building located in the middle of a block of other 19th century commercial buildings. The narrow building gains monumentality by the dark brick walls with very narrow joints, and the restrained molded lintels with tightly compressed acanthus leaf motifs at the ends. The heavy corbelled cornice was once topped by a parapet bearing a sign; the sign is now gone. The Classical Revival-influenced storefront is well-preserved. It almost certainly replaces the original storefront configuration of the building.
2. Condition of fabric: The building has been vacant since about 1977, and a decade of neglect has taken its toll. However, the building was solidly constructed, and it appears to be in better condition than many in the surrounding area.

### B. Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: The rectangular-shaped structure is 18.2' across the North Warren Street facade, and 99' deep. It is four stories tall and three bays wide.

2. Foundation: The foundation walls are rough stone with brick infill, roughly covered with cement.
3. Walls: The facade walls are made of machine pressed brick with narrow "butter" joints. The dark red brick is in sharp contrast to the light-colored cast stone and wood storefront elements, which are highlighted with white paint. The walls are unadorned except for a brownstone molding which forms a continuous single sill at the base of the second floor windows, and a continuous lintel, ending in acanthus knots, above the second and third floor windows. The side and rear walls of the building are common red brick.
4. Structural system: The brick walls are load bearing, carrying wooden beams in the party walls to support interior wood framing.
5. Bulkheads: The recessed entry of the building is marked by a white glazed brick wainscot and white hexagonal tile floor with a red geometric pattern border. The rest of the storefront's bulkheads are painted wood. The storefront is framed by cast stone pilasters, fluted above a molded oval cartouche. Egg and dart molding accentuates the pilaster capitals. Above the transom area, a wooden entablature with dentils completes the storefront's classical composition.
6. Chimneys: A square section brick chimney extends above the roof on the south side of the building.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doors: The first floor door and frame trim has been replaced with a temporary plywood enclosure.
  - b. Windows: The upper floor windows are all two-over-two wooden double hung sash with a soldier course of brick forming the lintel, and brownstone sills. The fourth floor windows are set under relieving arches. Along the south side of the building on the second floor there are five windows, large one-over-one sash, set high in the wall. They are covered on the exterior by metal grills.
8. Roof: The single pitch asphalt-covered roof slopes gently toward the rear of the building. A corbelled brick cornice is below a parapet wall. The sign which covered much of the parapet in the past is still evidenced by a different color brickwork.

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor plans:

- a. First floor: The open storefront extends the full area of the first floor.
- b. Second floor: The open floor area was once divided only by two centered archways. Several modern partition walls have been added to the front half of the building. The rear of the second floor is used as open warehouse space.
- c. Third floor: Divided into two apartments, front and back.
- d. Fourth floor: Divided into two apartments, front and back.

2. Stairways: The main stairway is extremely narrow, situated on the south side of the building with a separate entrance off North Warren Street beside the first floor storefront. It runs enclosed from the first to third floors.

The staircase from the third floor to the fourth floor is located in the center of the building, running perpendicular to the main staircase. It is well preserved, retaining a square-section newel post with fluted shaft and cap, and square-section balustrade.

3. Flooring: Wooden flooring is found throughout the building. It has been covered in places with linoleum tile, particularly on the first floor. The stair hall on the fourth floor retains an early floral-printed linoleum "runner", imitating carpet in its pattern. Rough floorboards (3 1/2" wide) are found in the warehouse portions of the building.

4. Wall and ceiling finishes: The warehouse part of the building is finished with a tongue and groove wooden ceiling, found also on sections of the walls. This is very deteriorated and water damaged. Painted plaster walls finish other parts of the building. The second floor front room has a coved cornice below the plaster ceiling, above a molded plaster ovolo. Several layers of old wallpaper remain in the third and fourth floor apartments.

The first floor storefront is presently finished with pegboard, plywood paneling, and painted wallboard. Ceilings are of dropped acoustical tile with inset fluorescent lights.

5. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Multi-paned wooden French doors are found within the front apartments on the third and fourth floors. They help provide natural light to rooms within the narrow, deep building. Most interior doors within the apartments on the upper floors have clear glass, multi-pane transoms.
- b. Windows: Interior windows at the top of the staircase and along the side of the staircase's interior wall are multi-paned fixed light windows with transoms above. These provide light to the staircase and the central part of the building. A skylight above the staircase provides further interior light. The rectangular skylight is divided into multiple panes in a hipped roof configuration, with an opaque center panel.

6. Decorative features and trim: On the fourth floor, the front apartment features a half wall with two free-standing fluted Ionic columns. The wooden columns have a plaster composition capital. They stand on a high base which has a tongue and groove interior panel. The doorway surround containing these columns is completed by a molded entablature.

7. Hardware: The interior hardware survives on most doors on the upper floors. It is typical of the late 19th century with a patterned hinge plate and pointed tops to the hinge pins. Typical door knobs are dark or light colored ceramic on iron pins. The French doors have brass handles rather than knobs.

8. Mechanical Equipment:

Heating: The building is heated via steam heat, passed through iron radiators located on each floor. The furnace is located in the basement.

Lighting: In the warehouse space toward the rear of the second floor, an original hanging gas fixture survives. It hangs from a thin metal tube about three feet down from the ceiling. The fixture forms an inverted "T" shape with two gas jets at the ends of the fixture. Any globes that may have been on the bronzed metal fixture are gone. (The Trenton Historical Society removed this gas jet from the building prior to demolition). The third floor hall retains an interesting electrical

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light fixture; a hanging metal (wrought iron?) pendant shape with a solid tear-drop finial at the bottom and a cone-shaped top. The glass globe is now gone.

Elevator: A freight elevator is located on the rear, north side of the building, serving the first and second floors only. Its wooden frame, housing the iron wheel, has painted black letters stating, "Otis Elevator Co." The elevator itself is only a platform, without an enclosed cab.

Plumbing: The kitchen on the second floor has an old square enameled sink served by exposed pipes running along the walls and ceiling of the building. A fourth floor rear apartment retains an early claw-footed bathtub.

#### D. Site

1. General siting and orientation: The building stands within the west side of the block defined by East State Street, North Broad Street, East Hanover Street, and North Warren Street in Trenton, New Jersey. This block was known in the 20th century as the "Dunham Block" for a large downtown department store which occupied much of the block. Number 10 North Warren Street has a westward facade elevation, and no other exposed elevations below the second floor level, as the building fills its lot. Immediately adjacent on the north is 12 North Warren Street (commonly known as the True American Building); and to the south lies 8 North Warren Street.
2. Historic landscape design: None.
3. Outbuildings: None.

#### Part III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Original architectural drawings: Not known.
- B. Early views:
  1. Picture File - Warren Street - Photograph.  
"Warren Street about 1893", in the Trentoniana Collection of the Trenton Free Public Library.

C. Interviews: None.

D. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

- a. Real Estate Transactions, Mercer County Hall  
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2. Secondary and published sources:

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b. Newspapers and periodicals

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c. Maps

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York: Sanborn-Perris Map Company, 1890.

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New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1908.

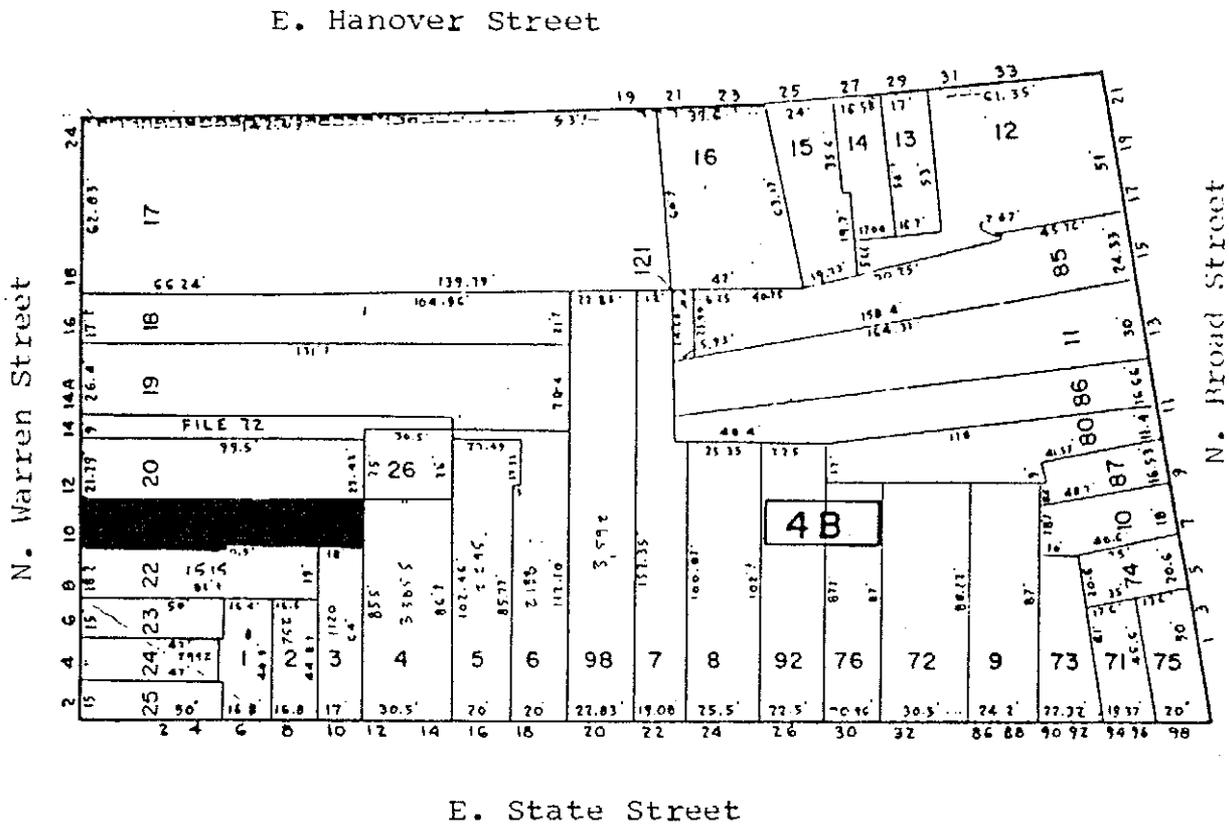
Part IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Documentation for 10 North Warren Street was prepared for DKM Properties Corp. under an agreement with the City of Trenton, the Office of New Jersey Heritage, and DKM Properties Corp. The site was recorded to HABS standards to mitigate the loss of historic buildings, impacted by a project utilizing funds from HUD through an Urban Development Action Grant. The site is under development by DKM Properties as the Capital Center project, a mixed retail and office building containing 331,000 square feet. It is scheduled for completion in 1989.

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Site Plan



Floor Plan

