

Pfau Manufacturing Company
(Foy-Johnston Paint Company)
1775 Mentor Avenue
Norwood
Hamilton County
Ohio

HABS No. OH-2414

HABS
OHIO
31-NOWD,
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Great Lakes System Support Office
1709 Jackson Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68102

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Pfau Manufacturing Company
(Foy-Johnston Paint Company)

HABS No. OH-2414

Location: 1775 Mentor Avenue
Norwood, Ohio

Present Owner: Cintech Industrial Coatings, Inc.
2217 Langdon Farm Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45237

HABS
OHIO
31-NOWD,
2-

Present Occupant: Vacant

Present Occupant: Vacant

Statement of Significance: The Pfau Manufacturing Company Building contributes to the industrial historic and architectural development of Norwood, Ohio. The Ohio Historic Preservation Office has determined that the building is potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A for its association with the industrial development of the community. It has also been determined as potentially eligible under Criteria C as a good representative example of early twentieth century industrial architecture.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Date of Erection:

The building was constructed in 1917. In 1928 a two story brick addition was constructed at the west side facade. In 1947, two additional floors were constructed over the first addition.

Architect: Harry Hake and Partners

Historical Narrative:

The building was constructed as the second largest industrial building within a complex for Pfau Manufacturing Company. In 1907, the company had constructed a large building to house the manufacture of plumbing components. By 1916, the company was in need of expanding its facility and a new building was planned that used the same architect and incorporated the same general architectural details as the original building. With the construction of the second building in 1917, the company also expanded into the manufacture of automobile components. The company did not succeed with its plumbing and automobile component businesses and went out of business in 1921.

Late in 1921, the Miller, DuBrul, and Peters Manufacturing Company had established its operation within the two buildings. This local company specialized in the manufacture of equipment used in the making of cigars and cigarettes. They remained in both buildings until 1928 when the Foy Paint Company leased the second building to manufacture paints, oils, and varnishes for wholesale and retail sale. The Foy Paint Company was one of several Cincinnati firms that specialized in the manufacture of paints and varnishes. By 1930, the Foy Paint Company had merged with one of the other local firms, the R. L. Johnston Paint Company, to form the Foy-Johnston Paint Company. This firm remained in the building until it ceased operation in 1989.

Biographical Information - Harry Hake

This building was designed by the local architectural office founded by Harry Hake (1871-1955). Harry Hake and Partners and its successors were one of Cincinnati's most prolific architectural firms designing commercial, industrial, and institutional buildings. In 1889, Harry Hake began work with a local architectural firm as a draftsman. In 1891, he established his own company. By 1907, he had established himself as one of Cincinnati's leading architects. He had attracted a variety of clients which included the Cincinnati Bell Telephone Company, the University of Cincinnati, Western and Southern Life Insurance Company, and developers who had constructed office buildings in downtown Cincinnati.

The Pfau Manufacturing Company building was typical of the type of industrial design produced by Hake's firm. Most were functional in design with limited architectural embellishments.

Harry Hake was active in the firm he had established up to the time of his death in 1955 when the firm passed to his son, Harry Hake II. It remained in the family until 1977, when it was sold to its successors, Champlin and Haupt, Architects. While within the family, the Hake firm designed numerous local and out of town commissions. The company was considered to be one of the better architectural firms in Cincinnati.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Information

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: The Pfau Manufacturing Building exhibits architectural merit because it is a good representative example of industrial architecture located within a community that contains numerous industrial buildings which range from good to excellent in character and quality. It is

also important because of its association with the architectural firm of Harry Hake and Partners.

2. Condition of Fabric: The building is in fair condition with evidence of increasing vandalism. It is scheduled for demolition.

3. Summary Description: This is a four story, common bond brick building. It is function on overall design. Distinctive details include multi-bay fenestration with pier and spandrel construction that enframe large multi-light steel windows, classically inspired entry bays, and modest use of stone trim. The lower level is gradually exposed, from east to west, because of the slope of Mentor Avenue. Brick work rests atop a tooled sandstone lower level which is found along the east and north sides of the building. Plain sandstone coping accentuates the piers between the third and fourth floors on the main facades. Window bays exhibit plain brick lintels and a narrow slip sill which extends below the three part window construction. At the location of the interior stairwells, the exterior exhibits several recessed blind bays. A decorative corbel course is found above the fourth floor, at each window bay, along the main facades. Above the corbel course is found a continuous sandstone string course that extends across the main facades. The west side facade is similar in detail to the other facades, except it is less embellished. The west facade has been obscured by the construction of a four story addition. The interior of this industrial building is very plain and functional. It lacks any significant architectural embellishment.

B. Detailed Description of Exterior

1. Foundation: Brick and tooled sandstone

2. Wall Construction: Exterior walls are common bond brick. Pier and spandrel construction helps to articulate the fenestration. Overall length is 214'-5". Overall width is 60'-0".

3. Structural System: Wooden floors demise into the exterior walls. Numerous circular cast-iron columns rise from each floor to support the floor above. Clear height from floor to ceiling is 12'.

4. Shipping Platform: An elevated shipping platform projects 11' off of most of the south side facade. This is covered with a continuous flat roof.

5. Openings, Doorways, and Windows: Classically detailed entry doors are found at the east and north facades. Each single door entry is flanked by a plain brick engaged pilaster which rises

above a plain transom to support a full sandstone entablature. The south side facade exhibits several large wooden double doors. A metal "garage door" has been added at a previous door bay on the north first floor facade. Also on the north side facade, an enclosed elevated walkway was constructed at an unknown date to facilitate movement between this building and the original 1908 building.

Window construction incorporates three large multi-pane sashes within each bay. Window bays are 11'-11" wide and 7'-1/2" in height (sill to lintel). Window panes are held in place with metal muntins, jambs, sills, and heads. Below the raised penthouse are found several bays, at each floor, that exhibit recessed blind window bays.

6. Roof - Shape and Covering: The roof is hidden behind a low parapet which extends across each facade. It has a slight convex shape to send water to the gutters behind the parapet walls. Composition built-up materials cover the wood roof. Three wooden raised skylights, with low gable roofs, pierce the main roof. A brick penthouse rises above the roof at the stairwells and elevator shafts. This houses the elevator cables.

C. Detailed Description of Interior

1. Floor Plans: Each floor is divided into thirteen bays with the east bay being 17'-7" in width, the west bay being 16'-9" in width and all other bays being 16'-1" in width. Each bay is 56'-5" in length. Approximately 10,500 square feet are found on each floor and approximately 42,000 square feet are found within the building. At the east and north sides is found a stairwell that rises to each floor. A functional elevator is adjacent to each stairwell. At unknown dates, several small wooden partitions have been added to create a small office area at each of the upper floors. At the west side of the building, several openings are found at each floor to allow access between the original building and the large addition. Each floor has experienced limited alteration. The configuration of each floor exhibits most of the original open plan.

The upper floors still retain some of the mixers used in the manufacture of paint. The making of paint started on the top floor and, with the use of gravity, found its way to the second floor where it was placed in drums.

2. Stairways: The building exhibits two interior stairways; one at the east side and the other at the north side. Each rises to the floors above and contains a plain metal balustrade. Treads and risers are also metal.

3. Flooring: Floors are composed of wood resting atop wooden floor joists and structural I beams. Each floor is supported from below by numerous circular cast-iron columns.

4. Wall and Ceiling Finishes: Walls at each floor and stairwell are composed of brick. They have been painted numerous times over the years. Ceilings are open and expose the structural composition of the floor above. There is no interior architectural adornment. Each floor is plain in design.

5. Doorways, Doors, and Windows: There is an absence of door and door trim at the interior of each floor. Those which do exist are found at the stair wells or at the rear of the first floor for doors that lead to the loading platform. Stairwell doors are metal with plain door surrounds. Doors leading to the loading platform are composed of wood with plain wooden surrounds. Interior window enframement is plain with simple lintel and sill details. There are no decorative window details.

6. Interior Trim: Since this is a functional industrial building, there is no interior embellishment. Its space and detail reflect functional utility.

7. Mechanical and Electrical Equipment: Two older elevators are found at the east and north sides of the building. The electrical system has been updated over the years to reflect the changing needs and situation of its occupants. The heating system, which had been changed at various times, has been removed from the building.

D. Site and Surroundings

1. Orientation and General Setting: This building is located at the southwest corner of Mentor Avenue and Huston Avenue in the city of Norwood, Ohio. Norwood is a community that is surrounded by the city of Cincinnati. It is across the street from the original Pfau Manufacturing Building that was constructed in 1908. Located in close proximity to this building are several other industrial buildings that were constructed by the Foy-Johnston Paint Company that were used in the manufacture of paints, varnishes, and oils. Immediately to the east and north of the two buildings is found a residential neighborhood that contains homes that were constructed ca. 1915 to ca. 1940. To the south is found the back side of a small strip shopping center that was constructed in 1967. To the west, a railroad track separates the industrial buildings from property owned by Xavier University.

PART III. SOURCES OF PROJECT INFORMATION

This building will be demolished in order to implement an economic development program funded by the Economic Development Administration. The recording of this building to the standards of the Historic American Building Survey was undertaken as part of the stipulations contained within a Memorandum of Agreement signed by the Hamilton County Development Corporation, the Department of Community Development for Hamilton County, Ohio, the Ohio Historic Preservation Office, the Economic Development Administration, and the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation.

A. Original Architectural Drawings: Copies of the original architectural drawings prepared by Harry Hake and Partners are on microfiche at the Cincinnati Historical Society.

B. Bibliography:

Childress, Margaret,

Norwood, Ohio 1787-1915, unpublished Master's thesis,
University of Cincinnati, (1970).

Clubb, John,

Cincinnati Observed: Architecture and History, Ohio State
University Press, Columbus, (1991).

Hake, Harry,

Architectural drawings for the Pfau Manufacturing Company
are on microfiche at the Cincinnati Historical Society
(Architectural Collection, Harry Hake Series V).

Miami Purchase Association for Historic Preservation,

Inventory of Hamilton County, Ohio, (1991).

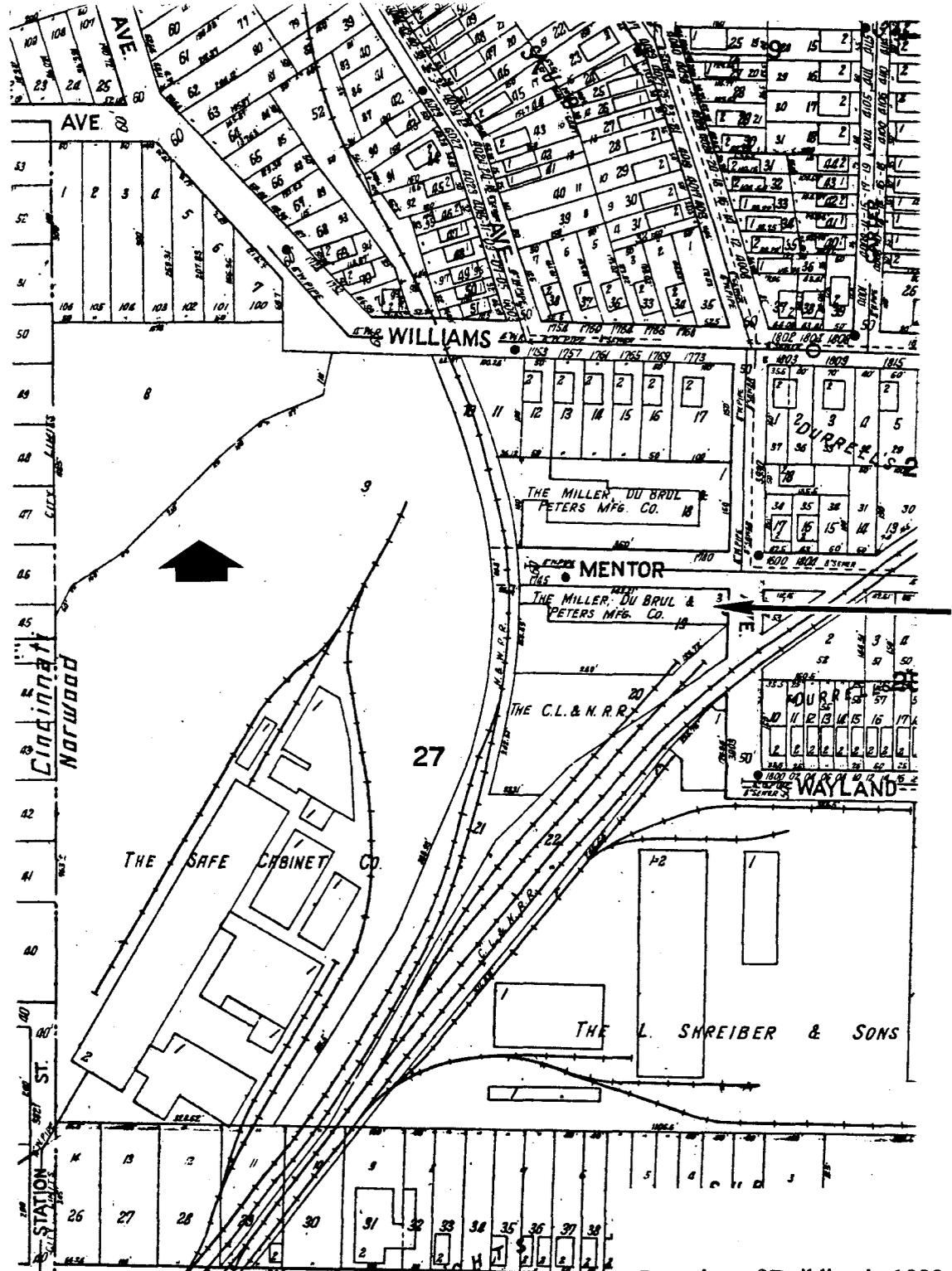
Sanborn Insurance Map Company,

Various insurance maps for the city of Cincinnati, Ohio.
These start with the 1904 addition, as revised and continue
through to the 1957 revisions.

Williams Publishing Company,

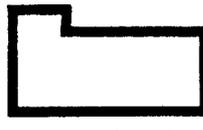
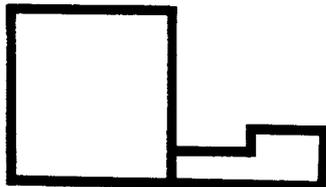
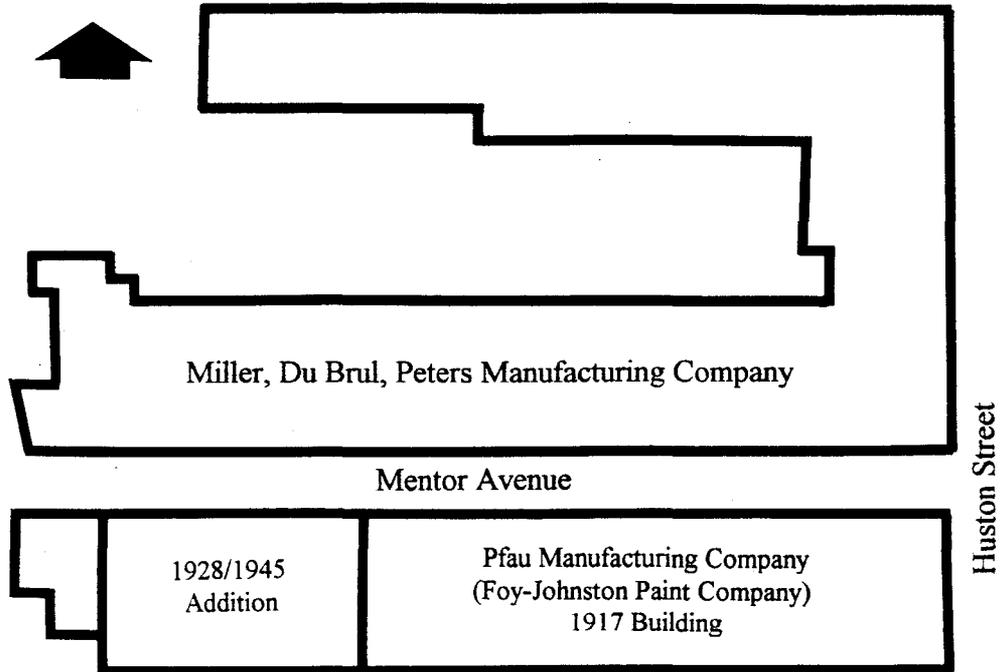
Various Cincinnati and Hamilton County city directories.
These start with 1902 and continue through 1994.

Documentation prepared by: Fred Mitchell
Historic Preservation Associates
1026 Lenox Place
Cincinnati, Ohio 45229
April, 1996



Source: Sanborn Insurance Map, 1922

Location of Building in 1922

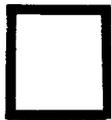


Varnish

Drum Cleaning

View of 1917 Building in Association with
Other Buildings in Complex in 1950

Oil Storage



(All adjacent buildings have been determined not eligible for the National Register. This includes the addition)