

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name J. K Orr Shoe Company
other names/site number Red Seal Shoe Factory

2. Location

street & number 16 William Holmes Borders, Sr. Avenue
city, town Atlanta (n/a) vicinity of
county Fulton code GA 121
state Georgia code GA zip code 30307

(n/a) not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property:

	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
buildings	1	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	1	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: n/a

Name of related multiple property listing: n/a

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Mark R. Edwards
Signature of certifying official

8/21/95
Date

Mark R. Edwards
State Historic Preservation Officer,
Georgia Department of Natural Resources

In my opinion, the property () meets () does not meet the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Edson H. Beall 9/29/95

() determined eligible for the National Register

() determined not eligible for the National Register

() removed from the National Register

() other, explain:

() see continuation sheet

Signature, Keeper of the National Register Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

Industry: manufacturing facility

Current Functions:

Domestic: multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Other: Utilitarian

Materials:

foundation	brick
walls	brick
roof	asphalt
other	

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The J. K. Orr Shoe Company is located in the city of Atlanta, Fulton County, in an industrial/commercial section of the city near the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District. The building is located on William Holmes Borders, Sr. Avenue, formerly Yonge Street.

The J.K. Orr Shoe Company is a four-story, brick masonry building with heavy timber post-and-beam interior structure constructed 1907-1908. A five-story tower stands at one corner of the front facade. The building was designed by architect A. Francis Walker and constructed by W. Bensel Construction Company (photographs 1 - 4).

Used as an industrial facility for the manufacturing of shoes, the building features parapet walls with tile coping on the east and west facades, and large windows with masonry sills and either heavy masonry or flat-arched brick lintels. The five-story tower exhibits restrained ornamentation with brick pilasters and a corbeled brick cornice. Historic painted signage also remains on the building's south facade (photograph 3). The interior includes portions of the former large open work spaces, circular support columns, original wood floors, a wooden staircase, original sliding metal fire doors, elevators, and numerous metal multi-sash windows (photographs 5 - 11).

The building is representative of the early 20th-century, utilitarian, industrial architecture built in Atlanta during a period of great commercial growth and activity in the city's central business district. The shoe company is one of the city's few industrial buildings that remain from this period and was particularly known for the manufacturing of Women's Sport Welts. In 1924, the company

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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manufactured Red Seal shoes and the building was called the Red Seal Shoe Factory.

The shoe business was owned and operated by Joseph Kyle Orr, Sr. who moved to Atlanta from Columbus in 1897. An active civic leader, he was known as the "First Citizen of Atlanta." In 1937, the J.K. Orr Shoe Company was sold to General Shoe Company of Nashville. General Shoe operated the factory at this location for many years.

Recently the building underwent extensive rehabilitation using federal investment tax credits and is now used as housing for the mentally ill. The first, third, and fourth floors are divided into residential units (photograph 12). Each floor contains a lounge area (photograph 10). The second floor contains the cafeteria, storage, and recreational space (photograph 9).

Now called "People's Place," the building is operated by a private, nonprofit organization. The rehabilitation project received a preservation award from the City of Atlanta in 1994.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Architecture
Industry

Period of Significance:

1907 - 1937

Significant Dates:

1907

Significant Person(s):

J. K. Orr, Sr.

Cultural Affiliation:

n/a

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

A. Francis Walker, Architect
W. Bensel Construction Co., Builder

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INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Significance of property, justification of criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above:

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

The J. K. Orr Shoe Company is a 1907-1908 brick, four-story industrial building and is significant in the areas of architecture and industry.

Under architecture the building is significant as a good representative example of an early 20th-century factory designed by architect A. Francis Walker and constructed by the W. Bensel Construction Company. Walker, a former mill architect from Framingham, Massachusetts, moved to Atlanta, and in 1909 formed the architectural firm of Walker and Chase. Utilitarian in design, the shoe factory features masonry construction with a heavy post-and-timber interior characteristic of industrial buildings during this time period. Significant features include masonry construction, large, multi-sash windows, sliding metal fire doors, a stair tower with a reconstructed wooden staircase, and wood floors. The factory represents the typical functional design used for large industrial buildings during the early 20th century. In Atlanta, this type of historic building, although once common, is now increasingly rare due to demolition for new development or destruction by fire, neglect, etc.

The building is significant under industry as a shoe factory owned and operated by J.K. Orr, Sr. Orr employed between 200 - 400 people at his company where men's, women's, and children's shoes were manufactured. The shoe factory marketed its product primarily in the southeast but also exported its shoes to Cuba and South America. The building is significant for representing early 20th-century industrial activity in Atlanta. Orr served as president of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, was active in the Atlanta Freight Bureau and the Atlanta Credit Mens Association. He was head of the committee to raise funds for the Luckie Street YMCA and also served as a trustee on several college boards. Because of his various civic activities in Atlanta, Orr was honored as the "First Citizen of Atlanta." The J. K. Orr Shoe Company is the only remaining building in Atlanta associated with J. K. Orr, Sr.

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National Register Criteria

The J. K. Orr Shoe Company is eligible under Criterion A for its contributions to the early 20th-century industrial activities in Atlanta. The building meets Criterion B for its association with J. K. Orr, Sr., founder of the Orr Shoe Company and active Atlanta civic leader. It is eligible under Criterion C as a good example of an early 20th-century factory designed by architect A. Francis Walker.

Period of significance (justification)

1907 - Construction of the building
1937 - date building was sold to General Shoe Company

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

1 - Contributing Building

Developmental history/historic context (if applicable)

The J. K. Orr Shoe Company was established in 1897 and located at 30 - 32 Auburn Avenue. In 1907, an architect, A. Francis Walker, was hired to design a new factory building at 101 - 103 Yonge Street (the street numbers changed in 1927). By 1908, construction of the building, by the W. Bensel Construction Co., was complete.

The company manufactured all kinds of shoes for men, women, and children. It was particularly known for its popular "Women's Sport Welts." In the 1920s, it temporarily manufactured luggage. The company marketed their product primarily in the southeast, however, shoes were also exported to Cuba and South America.

The factory was owned by Joseph Kyle Orr, Sr., a native of New York. In the late 19th-century, Orr joined his uncle's general merchandise company, the Joseph Kyle and Co. in Columbus, Georgia. In 1897, he established the J. K. Orr Shoe Company and moved his business to 30 - 32 Auburn Avenue in Atlanta. The operation then moved to the new building on Yonge Street in 1908. In 1924, the company produced Red Seal Shoes and was known as the Red Seal Shoe Factory. The factory employed between 200 and 400 people.

During the Depression, Orr kept the factory open three days a week in order to aid his employees. He rented space all over town in order to

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store the surplus production. The factory continued production under the name J. K. Orr Shoe Company until Orr retired and General Shoe Co. of Nashville bought the business in 1937.

During the early 20th-century, there were only a few shoe factories in the southeast. Southern states were not listed in the 12 principal shoe cities of the United States from 1879 to 1933. Bona Allen in Buford, Georgia was another southern shoe company. New England, and later, the midwest, were the main centers for manufacturing shoes. Orr purchased most of his raw leather in Boston.

General Shoe Co. operated the plant at this location for a number of years and moved the company to Carolina Street in the 1970s. The building was subsequently used by a decorating company and as artist's studios. Recently the building underwent extensive rehabilitation using federal investment tax credits and is now used as housing for the mentally ill.

J. K. Orr, Sr., was an early civic leader in Atlanta and was known as the "First Citizen of Atlanta." He served as President of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, and was active in the Atlanta Freight Bureau, and the Atlanta Credit Mens Association. He was head of the committee to raise funds for the YMCA on Luckie Street. He was extremely interested in education and was a trustee of the George Peabody School College in Nashville, the Martha Berry School in Rome, Georgia, and was Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Agnes Scott College in Atlanta. He established the Knights Templar Education Fund in 1922 for advanced education.

Orr became the Grand Commander of the Knights Templar of Georgia in 1885 and became Master of the Grand Encampment of the Knights Templar in the United States in 1919. Mr. Orr died in September 1938 and is buried in Atlanta at the West View cemetery. The shoe company building is the only remaining structure in Atlanta associated with Orr, Sr. His residence was on the corner of Peachtree Street and 14th Street but has since been demolished. The earlier company building on Auburn Avenue is also gone.

Architect A. Francis Walker was a former mill architect from Framingham, Massachusetts. In 1909, he formed the architectural firm of Walker and Chase, in Atlanta, with partner William J. Chase. The firm designed a variety of buildings throughout Georgia, before dissolving the partnership in 1919. Examples of their work in Georgia include the 1917-1918 DeKalb County Courthouse and the 1913-1916 Hand Trading Company in Pelham, Mitchell County.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Wilburn, James R. "J. K. Orr Shoe Factory." Historic Property Information Form, November 4, 1988. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources,

Previous documentation on file (NPS): () N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)
has been requested NPS Certification of Completed Work 2/14/94.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other, Specify Repository:

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

n/a

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10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property less than one acre.

UTM References

A) Zone 16 Easting 743170 Northing 3737770

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary encompasses the building and rear parking lot as indicated with a heavy black line on the property plat map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary coincides with the current legal boundary of the property. It contains the historic building on its historic city lot.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lisa Raflo, National Register Coordinator
organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
street & number 500 The Healey Building, 57 Forsyth Street, NW
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** 7/27/95

(HPS form version 10-29-91)

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Name of Property: J. K. Orr Shoe Company
City or Vicinity: Atlanta
County: Fulton
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: July 1994

Description of Photograph(s):

1 of 12. Front entrance along Wm. Holmes Borders, Sr. Avenue; photographer facing east.

2 of 12. Streetscape view, corner of W.H.B. Avenue and Chamberlain Street; p.f. northeast.

3 of 12. Side facade view; p.f. southeast.

4 of 12. Rear facade view and parking area; p.f. northwest.

5 of 12. First floor lobby/reception area; p.f. northeast.

6 of 12. First floor lobby/reception area; p.f. northwest.

7 of 12. First floor front entrance area, sliding metal fire door; p.f. southwest.

8 of 12. Second floor side lounge; p.f. southeast.

9 of 12. Second floor cafeteria; p.f. northeast.

10 of 12. Second floor front lounge; p.f. northwest.

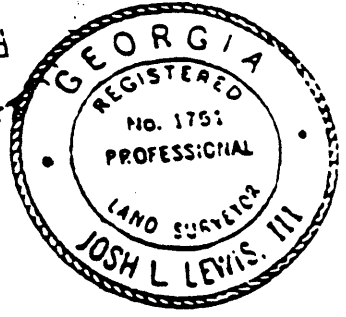
11 of 12. Reconstructed wooden staircase between second and third floors; p.f. southeast.

12 of 12. Fourth floor hallway; p.f. southeast.

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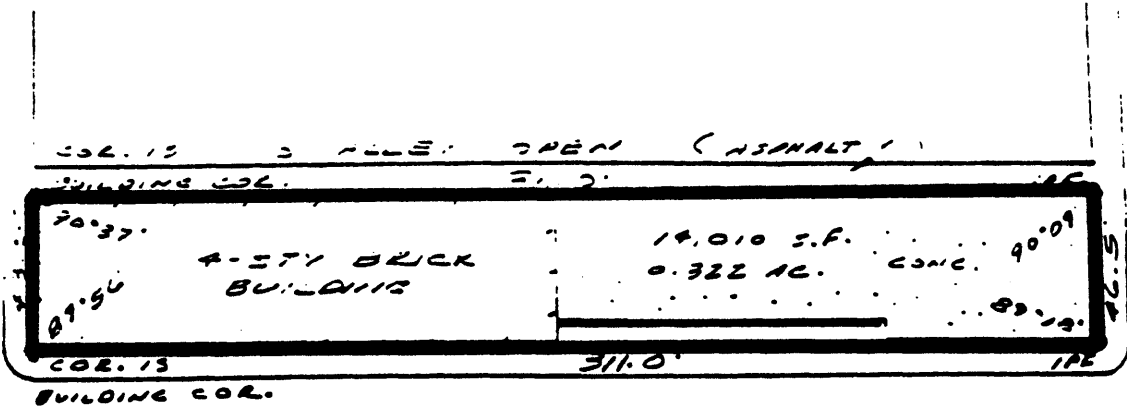
THIS IS A COPY OF THE ORIGINAL RECORD

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JUL 15 1991



WILLIAM H. WILSON, SURVEYOR
CHAMBERLAIN STREET
2037

JACKSON STREET



CHAMBERLAIN STREET 40' R/W

PROPERTY OF PROJECT INTERCONNECTIONS

LAND LOT 45 14TH DISTRICT
FULTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

J.K. Orr Shoe Company, Atlanta,
Fulton Co., Georgia

SCALE 1" = 60' DATE: 9-9-91

Plat Map

REG. LAND SURVEYOR NO. 1751
GEORGIA LAND SURVEYING CO., INC.

Boundary:

Scale: 1"-----60'

I CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION SHOWN ON THIS DRAWING IS TRUE