NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

SG-657

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name THE MENTHOLATUM COMPANY BUILDING

other names/site number Garrett Leather Building

2. Location

street & number 1360 Niagara Street [ ] not for publication

city or town Buffalo [ ] vicinity

state New York code NY county Erie code 029 zip code 14213

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [X] locally. ([ ] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Michael R. Lynch Deputy SHPO 22 DEC 2016

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([ ] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

[X] entered in the National Register
[ ] see continuation sheet
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register
[ ] see continuation sheet
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register
[ ] removed from the National Register
[ ] other (explain) _____

for Signature of the Keeper date of action 2-21-17

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

[X] private
[ ] public-local
[ ] public-State
[ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

[X] building(s)
[ ] district
[ ] site
[ ] structure
[ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
-	-	sites
-	-	structures
-	-	objects
1	**0**	**TOTAL**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/Manufacturing facility
COMMERCE/Office

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE/Reinforced concrete daylight factory

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Concrete, brick, glass
roof Synthetic
other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

[**X**] **A** Property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

[ ] **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[**X**] **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

[ ] **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

[ ] **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

[ ] **B** removed from its original location

[ ] **C** a birthplace or grave

[ ] **D** a cemetery

[ ] **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure

[ ] **F** a commemorative property

[ ] **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance:
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance:

1919-1966

Significant Dates:

1919, 1946, 1947, 1966

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

George Townsend (1886-1940)

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

[**X**] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. **NPS #34,047**
[ ] previously listed in the National Register
[ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
[ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
[ ] recorded by historic American Building 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 repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .94 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	671469	4754215	3	17		
2	17			4	17		

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Derek King, Matthew Shoen, Kelsie Hoke, M.Arch, Caitlin Moriarty, Ph.D /Architectural Historians
[Edited by Jennifer Walkowski, NYSHPO]

organization Preservation Studios, LLC date 9/22/2016

street & number 60 Hedley Place telephone 716-725-6410

city or town Buffalo state NY zip code 14208

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Paul Cimenelli /465 Washington LLC

street & number 350 Essjay Rd telephone 716-631-8000

city or town WIlliamsville state NY zip code 14221

Narrative Description of Property

The Mentholatum Company Building is located at 1360 Niagara Street in the West Side neighborhood of the City of Buffalo, Erie County, New York, two miles northwest of downtown. Behind the building to the west is the I-190 Niagara Thruway, which follows along the Niagara River. To the north and south, this portion of Niagara Street is characterized by a mix of commercial and light manufacturing, as Niagara Street is adjacent to what was once part of New York Central Railroad's Belt Line. One block to the east, the neighborhood transitions to a residential neighborhood, composed primarily of early twentieth century, freestanding single and multiple family houses. The Mentholatum building is set back approximately fifty feet from the street on the west side of Niagara Street. It is oriented to face east and has asphalt parking areas surrounding it to the immediate north, south, and east.

Constructed in 1919, the Mentholatum Company Building is a reinforced concrete daylight factory building designed by local Buffalo architect George Townsend. The building is four stories in height and rectangular in form, measuring eight bays wide across the east and west elevations by five bays deep along the north and south elevations. Attached to the northwest corner is a three-bay, one-story garage addition; the first two bays date to 1947 with the last bay added in 1966. An enclosed, shed-roofed loading dock dating to the late 1960s is present along the rear elevation. On the south side of the site, the grade slopes significantly from east to west, revealing a basement level on the south elevation. Typical to the era and building type, the Mentholatum Company Building is a reinforced concrete structure with a flat roof. While otherwise simple and utilitarian in design, expressing its reinforced concrete bays on the exterior, the eastern corners are elegantly articulated with simplified Neoclassical detailing. The interior of the building is characterized by an open floor plate with regularly spaced structural columns. For many years, the building housed the operations of the Mentholatum Company and played a significant role in terms of its architectural and economic presence. Today, it retains a great deal of its original integrity on both the interior and the exterior and continues to be an excellent example of early twentieth century craftsmanship, style, and factory design.

Exterior

Primary (East) Façade.
The primary façade is symmetrically composed. It sits on a raised concrete foundation with a water table and is divided into eight bays by exposed vertical concrete piers. The bays are also defined horizontally by the exposed concrete floor system, which is set back slightly to emphasize the verticality of the piers. At each floor, the lower quarter of each bay has a brick spandrel panel capped by a concrete sill, below a large window. Originally the openings contained large, paned, steel windows but they have since been filled in with two small square windows set into an EFIS infill panel. A flat frieze and cornice wrap the building with a simple brick parapet above.

The northern and southernmost bays of the primary façade are articulated, giving emphasis to the corners of the building. In these bays, the vertical piers thicken to form pilasters, creating a sense of pavilions at either end of the building. Each of the pilasters has a long incised panel on its face and a stylized capital with a faceted drop at its center. The pavilions are further articulated by two continuous narrow vertical piers which divide them into three bays. At the ground floor, each articulated end bay has a centered entry door. Flanking original sidelights and a brick surround occupy the bays to the side. Above is the original flat metal canopy, secured by chains to the façade. A wide, divided-light transom lights the interior foyers above the canopies. Crowning the pavilions at the roof level are triangular, concrete, built-up roof pediments with stylized pyramidal finials to either side.

North and South (side) Elevations.
The side elevations are identical. The easternmost bay continues the vocabulary of the articulated corner bays, as established on the primary, east, elevation. On the sides, however, the ground floor contains window openings, currently filled in with EFIS panels. To the west are four regular bays. As previously mentioned, owing to the sloping grade, a concrete basement level is visible on the southern elevation with loading doors in each bay.

Rear (West) Elevation.
The rear of the building is composed of eight regular bays. A large brick chimney is present at the northern end of the building. At the ground floor, the 1960s enclosed loading dock, clad and roofed in corrugated metal, extends south from the chimney across the elevation. At the south end of the elevation, the window pattern changes slightly to accommodate an interior stair and elevator shaft.

1947/1966 Garage Addition.
The three-bay garage addition is attached to the northwest corner of the building and so has three visible elevations. It is a single-story masonry structure composed of brick on the east wall and concrete block on the remaining walls, with a flat concrete roof. On its east face, there are two large loading bays to the south and a blank bay to the north. The west and north elevations are solid masonry.

Interior
The Mentholatum Company Building retains a great deal of its architectural integrity, with the interior layout nearly unchanged from its original configuration. The factory contains four floors with generally open floor plates, with the exception of half of the first floor, which is built out for offices and meeting spaces related to the building's function as the company's headquarters after 1946, and a modern office built out on the third floor. The main vertical circulation through the building is at the middle of the rear (western) wall, with a stairwell flanked by two freight elevators, with another staircase in the northeast corner as well. The 1946

loading dock addition and its 1966 extension is located at the northwest corner of the property and is accessed via a fire door at the northwest corner of the ground floor.

Many of the interior finishes are original to the building though they vary between the office and manufacturing space and some spaces with modern finishes are present. Concrete mushroom columns are present throughout the building. With the exception of the two built out office areas, where they are boxed in with various treatments, nearly all of the columns are exposed. The ceilings throughout the building are exposed, revealing the cast concrete decking, with the exception of the two office areas, which have dropped ceilings (with the main office having a patterned tile with large metal air vents). The two staircases in the building are constructed with cast concrete, with an interesting overhanging tread that juts inward before going to the next step, and have metal hand railings.

First Floor

The first floor contains the only highly finished spaces in the building, with the southern half of the space dedicated to offices and the northern portion left utilitarian and open. The office space contains some mid-century finishes, and there are some metal office partitions from the 1920-1930s offices as well. At the northwest corner of the building is a one-story loading dock addition that was attached to the westernmost bay of the northern elevation. The main staircase is accessed via a hallway that runs through the office spaces, with the elevators and secondary corner staircase in the unfinished portion of the first floor.

The main entrance to the building is in the southeast corner, and leads through paired wooden doors with three single-light windows as part of a curved vestibule with six-light windows over curved wooden paneling and capped with a projecting curved cornice. The vestibule is part of a small foyer with a curved secretary's desk in front of a multi-light wooden partition with beveled glass and two wooden doors.

Through the doors is a large open office layout with non-original cubicle partitions throughout. The space is carpeted with simple plaster walls and exposed pilasters and suspended ceiling. The tiles of the ceiling use a checkered type of pattern and are broken up by six circular air vents and four long strips of recessed fluorescent lighting. The room is bisected by boxed-in columns, which have wooden paneling on two sides and drywall on the other two sides. Along the western, northern, and eastern sides of the main room are small offices, with a very detailed manager's office in the southwest corner with carved wooden pilasters, built-ins, and interior folding window shutters. The doors to the offices are topped by square panels, and both the door and the panels are flanked by carved wooden trim.

The offices in the section immediately to the north contain offices that were built out after the building's construction in 1919 but also have been updated more recently than the mid-century front office. Circulation through this portion of the offices is via an I-shaped hallway that joins the front offices via doors at the eastern

and western ends, with the main staircase located at the western end of the building as well. New carpeting, acoustic tile drop ceiling, and paneling from various eras have been introduced to most rooms, though the original metal partitions to offices still remain. The concrete columns retain their cylindrical shape, but have been affixed with a vinyl covering. At the end of the main hallway leading from the front office through this portion of the building is a conference room with finishes similar to the lobby and front office, including wooden paneling with built-in cabinets with large sliding doors, a streamlined modern clock face affixed to the wall, recessed lighting and air vents similar to the front office, and trim found throughout the other late-1940s spaces. Attached to the conference room is a small bathroom with the original 1919 tiling and sink fixture.

Immediately north of these offices is the first floor shipping space, unadorned and industrial. The wide concrete columns mushroom at the ceiling before connecting with square concrete caps against the exposed concrete ceiling above. The columns, interestingly, have openings near the top and many feature small vents while others reveal electrical components. Along the walls are rectangular structural pilasters that angle outward when they reach the ceiling. The floor is concrete. The paired freight elevators are in the southwestern end of this industrial space, just on the other side of the main staircase and hallway located in the offices.

The main stairwell also contains a doorway that opens up onto the original loading dock that was connected to a rail spur off the New York Central Rail Road's Beltline. Currently, 75 percent of the loading dock is enclosed with corrugated metal and non-fire-rated partitions, although the dock itself is still intact, with the southernmost exposed portion revealing the original layout.

In the northwestern corner, a large sliding fire door leads to the 1947 loading dock, which is attached to the building but contains its own heavy-steel frame structural supports. The ceiling appears to be metal slats, likely with asphalt above. The 1966 loading dock addition (also accessed via fire door) maintains the height of the 1947 addition but uses thin metal framing and has a corrugated metal ceiling.

Second Floor

The second floor of the building consists of one large open floor plate with exposed structural mushroom columns, interior wall pilasters, hardwood flooring, and what appears to be an original break room in the northwest corner. The main staircase enters the second floor at the middle of the western elevation into a modern aluminum and glass vestibule. The break room from 1919 consists of a full-height metal partition similar to the first floor offices, with large glass windows and some aluminum doors, ending with a women's restroom in the northwest corner. Some modern rooms have been built out along the southern wall, but they are not structural, and columns and pilasters are still exposed. The secondary staircase is located in the northeast corner of the room.

Third Floor

The third floor has the most build-out of any floor other than the first. Though the center of the floor is open like the room below (though with concrete instead of hard-wood flooring), the periphery has been built out to include several smaller rooms. Some of these rooms (along the eastern wall) are laboratories from the 1919 design where employees of the Mentholatum Company heated and combined the components for its product. These laboratories have tiled floors and wall tiles approximately three-and-a-half-feet high. The original laboratories have some of the same metal partitions seen on the second and first floors, with later laboratories built with CMU, though they also contain tile floors and partially tiled walls. Though the rooms along the eastern wall may date to the original construction of the building, several of the later laboratories (in particular along the western wall) may have been constructed for the leather company that purchased the building in 1997, which uses the floor for treating its product. About a quarter of the floor is built out with modern drywall partitions with a dropped ceiling, and houses a photo studio constructed within the last two decades.

Fourth Floor

The fourth floor is wide open and identical to the floor below, with a single partition constructed along the northern wall. The partition runs the full width of the building and has the same tile flooring as the laboratories below. It is accessed by a large roll-up garage door and paired metal doors. The exposed columns are also expressed on this floor, but while the two center columns are the same size as the floor below, with the same openings (some of which have electrical work coming out of them), the columns of the two outer rows are much narrower, without any openings.

Summary

The Mentholatum Company Building is a good example of a reinforced concrete daylight factory from the early twentieth century and retains a great deal of its historic integrity, including original and historic materials, design, and craftsmanship, as well as its location in the industrial setting along Buffalo's Belt Line. In addition, the building retains much of the open layout and large structural columns associated with industrial buildings of the early twentieth century and although the original windows have been removed, the openings have not been altered, maintaining the rhythm of the bays and articulation of the reinforced concrete structure.

Statement of Significance:

The Mentholatum Company Building, located at 1360 Niagara Street in Buffalo, Erie County, New York, is a locally significant example of a reinforced concrete daylight factory. The four-story building was constructed in 1919, with later additions in 1947 and 1966, to serve as home of the Mentholatum Company, manufacturers of menthol-based health and beauty products. The Mentholatum Company Building is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce for its associations with the nationally prominent Mentholatum Company. Established in Kansas City in 1889 by Albert Alexander Hyde, the Mentholatum Company opened production in Buffalo in 1903 before constructing the new, modern factory building on Niagara Street in 1919. The West Side facility served as the Mentholatum Company's primary manufacturing facility and, from 1945 onward, as the company's corporate headquarters as well. The company prospered by focusing on a popular mixture of menthol and petroleum called Mentholatum, and it relied on the support of druggists to perpetuate sales. This distinguished the firm from other "snake oil" companies that employed massive advertising campaigns based around claims of miraculous cures. By 1903, the company was worth almost $100,000, and by 1945, it was shipping over 12.5 million jars of Mentholatum from its Buffalo factory.

The factory is also locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a good representative example of a largely intact daylight factory designed by George F. Townsend in 1919. The building's steel reinforced concrete structure is a great example of the development of factory buildings from brick and heavy timber construction to large, open, well-lit manufacturing facilities. Daylight factories offered what was, at that time, the cutting edge in factory design, providing large open work spaces, increased fire resistance, and improved cleanability thanks to smooth, less porous, durable finishes. The large windows set between heavy steel-reinforced concrete piers, with wide open floor plates broken only by several rows of mushrooming concrete columns, epitomize the building type. Located along Niagara Street and the New York Central Railroad's Belt Line, a rail line that circles the city, the building contributes to the industrial setting of the Belt Line and the Niagara Street corridor, which features several other large factory buildings. The building retains many character defining spaces, including a break room on the second floor, laboratory rooms on the third floor, and the 1945 office built out for the headquarters, as well as unusual structural columns that contain hollow portions previously used for mechanical ventilation.

Although the Mentholatum Company operated out of the building until 1997, the period of significance for the building begins in 1919 with its original construction and concludes in 1966 with the final major enlargement of the building. This era encompasses all major architectural campaigns as well the era during which the Mentholatum Company was at its most prominent. The company continues to operate today as a global medicine and health products company with an office in nearby Orchard Park, New York.

The Mentholatum Company

The history of the Mentholatum Company begins with Albert Alexander Hyde and the Yucca Company. Hyde was a failed real estate mogul who lost $100,000 in an 1887 housing panic in Kansas and desperately sought a means to support his family.[1] In 1889, Hyde helped form the Yucca Company, manufacturers of soaps and shaving creams that utilized the yucca plant as a primary ingredient.[2] The company began with three men: Walter Binkley, a former partner in the Stallings Palmole Soap Company; pharmacist Clayton Smith; and Hyde, who supplied the company its startup capital of $600 and manufacturing space.[3]

Advances in shipping technology heavily influenced the Yucca Company's early history. Many of the company's early products utilized essential oils and supplements extracted from non-native plants. One prominent essential oil utilized was menthol, an oil extracted from peppermint plants in Hokkaido, Japan.[4] Without advancements in steamship technology that allowed for greater shipping tonnage, the price of this essential oil would likely have been beyond the reach of Hyde and his partners in landlocked Wichita, and the company wouldn't have even considered making use of menthol in their products.

The Yucca Company experienced a breakthrough after shifting away from toilet soaps and yucca shaving creams. Hyde recognized that his company needed to sell a product with greater profitability than common soap and decided to focus on what was then being called the "Vest Pocket Cough Specific."[5] This menthol based throat relief product was moderately profitable and Hyde decided to explore the medicinal benefits of certain essential oils, particularly menthol. Using the Vest Pocket Cough Specific as a guide, Alexander Hyde created a salve that utilized essential oils to relieve muscle aches and congestion. The resulting product was subsequently named Mentholatum, a portmanteau of its two prominent ingredients, menthol and petrolatum.[6] In Mentholatum, the essential oils of menthol and camphor were mixed with petrolatum, a jelly that could adhere to the skin, allowing direct contact between the oils and pores. The Wichita based company placed its fortunes behind this new product, abandoning the Yucca Company name in favor of the Mentholatum Company moniker by which it is still known.

Mentholatum salve took off quickly in the Midwest, allowing Hyde to consider expansion. In 1903, Hyde opened a branch factory on South Division Street in Buffalo that was followed eleven years later by a second

[1] Dean Richmond, "Founded 75 Years Ago as a Matter of Survival, Mentholatum Co. Is still run by Hyde Family," *Buffalo Evening News,* October 31, 1964.
[2] "Seward – Mentholatum Corporation," C. A. Seward and the Prairie Print Makers, http://casewardprintmaker.com/Commercial_Artwork/Mentholatum_Corp..html.
[3] Alex Taylor, *Amazing Mentholatum and the Commerce of Curing the Common Cold, 1889-1955* (La Canada: Angeles Crest Publications, 2006), 1.
[4] Taylor, *Amazing Mentholatum*, 10.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid, 14.

factory in Fort Erie, Canada. These two factories were important early links in Hyde's Mentholatum production line. The Fort Erie factory supplied the entire Canadian market with Mentholatum, while the South Division Street location was the company's first inroad into the Eastern United States. Buffalo became the Mentholatum Company's most important production site in 1919, when an 80,000 square foot factory, the nominated building, was built at 1360 Niagara Street. The factory produced Mentholatum for most of the Western Hemisphere and in the 1940s, it became corporate headquarters for the company in addition to serving as the main production site.

The Mentholatum Company experienced major success overseas as well. The company hired T. W. Turner to design a factory in Slough, England in 1914, establishing a presence in the United Kingdom. The company also made several inroads into the Japanese market via Christian missionaries known as the Omi Mission. These missionaries oversaw a Mentholatum factory on the island of Honshu and used the profits they derived to support themselves and a Christian school on the island.[7] Mentholatum's connection to Japan became a defining part of the company's history. In 1988, a century after the company's inception, the Mentholatum Company was bought by the Japanese pharmaceutical company Rohto Pharmaceutical. The Mentholatum Company is now a subsidiary of Rohto Pharmaceutical and continues to provide its traditional line of menthol infused products. The company still maintains its presence in the Buffalo region through its North American headquarters, which is located in Orchard Park.

Patent Medicine and American Quackery

The Mentholatum Company's formative years occurred in the midst of the patent medicine era. Patent medicines were purported cures and miracle drugs that were sold as an alternative to medical care from a doctor. Promotors of these elixirs often claimed they contained exotic elements such as snake oil and swamp roots, giving them great potency. In 1927, Dr. A. J. Clark of the University of Pittsburgh explained that the term for these promoters, "quack," "has come to signify in popular usage a pretender to medical knowledge."[8] Hawkers and quack doctors claimed these miracle drugs could cure dozens of ailments, ranging from the common cold to cancer, syphilis, and tuberculosis, for a fraction of the cost of visiting a doctor.

Prior to widespread health insurance coverage, trips to the doctor were often expensive and potentially fatal due to the implementation of bloodletting and the administration of minerals that science would later prove to be poisonous. As a result, alternative medicines became popular as an economical and, in some cases, safer alternative to a doctor. Further, for rural Americans, a trip to the doctor's office was often a long buggy or cart ride away, meaning that in the event of an emergency or sudden onset of illness, medicine had to be

[7] Richmond, "Founded 75 Years Ago."
[8] A. J. Clark, M.D., "The Historical Aspect of Quackery," *The British Medical Journal,* No. 3482 (1927): 589.

administered at home or not at all. Beyond locally grown herbs and grasses, patent medicines and so-called miracle cures were often the only medicine available to American consumers.

Due to the inconvenience and mistrust of professional medicine at the time, opportunistic businessmen developed alternative medicines to capitalize on consumer worries. These ventures invested in aggressive advertising campaigns that presented alternative medicine products as wonder cures and put far less effort into crafting quality products. Initially, the Mentholatum Company fit the bill; it advertised Mentholatum as "The Great Japanese Salve Mentholatum," playing up menthol's exotic nature to boost sales.[9]

One of the most notable patent medicines was the "Microbe Killer," sold by the quack doctor William Radam. In 1890, a year after Hyde helped found the Yucca Company, Radam played off of scientific advances by Louis Pasteur in germ theory to promote the Microbe Killer and publish *Microbes and The Microbe Killer*. This book detailed how his Microbe Killer would eradicate any and all disease in the body of its user. Radam offered himself as an example of the Microbe Killer's potency, claiming that he was an invalid prior to developing the Microbe Killer but had been cured of all infirmaries through his research.[10] Radam's testimonial reflects the bluster and bravado of patent medicine and the quacks who sold them. It also illuminates widespread skepticism towards visiting doctors and the anger that many people felt at their inability to access proper medical care due to its expense. Radam's promotion of the Microbe Killer is sermon-like and a quintessential example of the promotional tactics employed by quacks. One passage reads,

> They [the medical profession] decry me as an ignorant man, one who knows nothing about medicine, or any thing but the raising of beets and cabbages, a useful thing to know, by the way, and an honorable business too… after abusing me for ignorance, they cry that I am killing people with poisons, and in the same breath they pray: 'Oh, Heaven aid us, and make these microbe killers harmless! Lord, protect our profession!'[11]

Another passage read:

> If your child has already been in the doctor's hands, and even if he [the doctor] has given it up, take my advice, ask him to send in his bill, give up his noxious drugs and poisonous medicines, and avail yourself of my discovery.[12]

The appeal to honest professions, such as beet farming and cabbage stewardship, contrasts with the fear doctors supposedly held for the Microbe Killer. In the book, salt-of-the-earth knowledge is touted as superior to college

[9] Taylor, *Amazing Mentholatum,* 19.
[10] William Radam, *Microbes and The Microbe Killer* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1890), v.
[11] Ibid., 138-9.
[12] Ibid., 144.

education, and the doctor is treated as a shifty individual rather than a healer. Importantly, Radam describes his tonic more as what modern readers would consider a supplement, best used regularly to keep microbes at bay, thus necessitating regular purchases to ensure continued health.[13] At three hundred and sixty-nine pages, with photographs, appendices, and multiple detailed chapters, Radam's book encapsulates the era of patent and quack medicine. Medicine was sold via bluster, quasi-religious miracle cure testimonials, and a dose of scorn for professional medicine. Though Mentholatum shared some characteristics with patent medicines such as the Microbe Killer, it developed its own marketing strategy and survival method during the era of quackery in America.

The Mentholatum Company separated itself from the swath of alternatives remedies such as the Microbe Killer because its products had actual medical value and relieved symptoms of various ailments, particularly muscle aches and the common cold. Mentholatum was first promoted as a relief to symptoms relating to burns, scalds, insect bites and other skin discomforts.[14] Later, Mentholatum became widely accepted for use in nasal passages to overcome congestion due to head colds, sinus, asthma and hay fever.[15] Other patent medicines were either useless, or physically harmful due to painkilling. Narcotics such as morphine, opium, or cocaine that were sometimes mixed into them, and were quickly labeled "quack remedies." The era of quack medicine was crippled in 1906 when Theodore Roosevelt signed into law the Pure Food and Drugs Act, which disbarred advertisers and salesmen from claiming a product was a 'cure' unless it truly cured the illness; the law also created warning labels and forced makers to detail what ingredients made up their product.[16]

The Mentholatum Company also distanced itself from other alternative medicines by advertising Mentholatum directly to druggists, bucking the industry trend towards massive advertising and miracle drug claims. Mentholatum's success was built upon free samples and the positive reception these sample boxes received throughout the country, as well as a rewards program for pharmacists who promoted Mentholatum to their customers.[17] These strategies were successful, and by 1903, the year Mentholatum first came to Buffalo, the company was worth almost $100,000, a tenfold increase from just ten years earlier.[18]

The Mentholatum Company in Buffalo

The Mentholatum Company decided to branch out from its roots in Kansas City and moved to Buffalo in 1903. The choice of Buffalo was heavily influenced by Buffalo's proximity to Canada, which Hyde believed would become a major market for Mentholatum, as well as the to the East Coast, which was to that point untouched by

[13] Ibid.
[14] Lee Griggs, "$600 Investment Parlayed Into Worldwide Business," *Buffalo-Courier Express,* August 31, 1952, 4-A.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Taylor, *Amazing Mentholatum,* 22.
[17] Ibid, 41.
[18] Ibid, 43.

Mentholatum. Further, the Hyde family saw numerous assets in Buffalo, including, "excellent water and rail transport facilities and abundance of skilled labor."[19] The company built a factory at 124 South Division Street in 1903 (not extant).[20] After growing beyond its capacity on South Division Street, the company built a massive building at 1360 Niagara Street with George F. Townsend as supervising architect in 1919. The four-story factory building was commissioned at a cost of $150,000.[21] The factory could produce a boxcar of Mentholatum products in a single day and quickly became the company's flagship factory, shipping containers of Mentholatum across the nation to the company's distribution warehouses.[22]

The process to make Mentholatum at the Buffalo factory was highly automated and efficient. Labor was divided by floor with each level having its own part to play in the mixing, bottling, and packaging of Mentholatum. Historian Alex Taylor described how the building's layout reflected the manufacturing process, which began on the top floor and continued on lower floors:

> Hundreds of thousands of pounds of Petrolatum a year started the process on the top floor in the 'Hot Room,' where it was heated by steam pipes and held in a large tank until the cooker needed it. In the 'Kettle Room' on a floor below, the ingredients were mixed with the petrolatum in a row of kettles and the hot Mentholatum was then pumped through insulated pipes from one kettle designated 'holding kettle' to where it was needed. From the warehouse on the top floor the jars were cleaned and placed in open wood boxes to be pushed down the spiral slides to the floors below… As the boxes arrived, the jars were emptied out on a sorting platform by a worker, lined up, and fed into the machine where each one was filled with a premeasured amount of hot Mentholatum and then ejected onto the conveyor. The conveyer belt ran the full length of the floor to allow the jars to cool.[23]

As is evident from the description above, the Mentholatum factory was highly automated. Workers had very little direct contact with the Mentholatum as it was being mixed and packaged. A *Buffalo Courier-Express* reporter further illuminated the degree of automation and concern for sanitation in the following description published in 1952:

> Mixed to strict composition in vats equipped with special agitators and heat controls, the liquid [Mentholatum] is piped to an ingenious assembly line machine, designed by company engineers, that fills, cools, caps and labels in a single operation. Waiting jars are cleaned and sterilized by vacuum suction and ultraviolet light. A rotary liquid filler loads the jars, which

[19] Griggs, "$600 Investment Parlayed."
[20] "Mentholatum Chairman, Edward Hyde, 88, Dies," *Buffalo Courier-Express,* April 28, 1967.
[21] "$150,000 Factory Building Planned," *Buffalo Evening News,* May 3, 1919.
[22] Taylor, *Amazing Mentholatum,* 105.
[23] Ibid., 115.

travel a series of cooling racks for about five minutes as the liquid begins to harden into an ointment. A screw capper and automatic labeler complete the jar for packing.[24]

The open floor plate of the Mentholatum Company Building facilitated large machinery that automated and streamlined the production system. Although some of the original heating and blending laboratories and worker break rooms still exist, none of the original conveyor belts, processing, or filling equipment remain in the building.

Using modern factory line techniques, the company could produce between 300,000 and 500,000 packages of Mentholatum products each week. Mentholatum was sold in many package sizes including one-ounce and three-ounce jars, and an eight-ounce collapsible tube.[25] The well-oiled production apparatus in Buffalo manufactured 12,500,000 packages of Mentholatum in 1941, a demonstration of both the popularity of Mentholatum and the importance of the Buffalo factory to the production of this product. The Mentholatum produced in Buffalo was shipped to all parts of the Western Hemisphere, with the exception of Canada, which utilized the Mentholatum produced at the Fort Erie factory.

Already a significant production site, the Buffalo Mentholatum factory gained new importance for the company after World War II. In 1945, the Hyde brothers (who ran the company after their father retired) decided to move their departmental offices from Wilmington, Delaware, to the Buffalo factory. While the executive and export department had already established office space within the factory building, the sales, accounting, and advertising branches of the Mentholatum Company came to Buffalo in 1946, uniting the entire corporate branch of the company under one roof.[26]

Given the importance of the Buffalo factory to the overall business of the Mentholatum Company, it was logical for the company to house its corporate division inside the building. The factory was located just across the river from Mentholatum's Canadian factory in Fort Erie, which was built in 1914. By relocating the executive and sales divisions to Buffalo, the Mentholatum Company brought corporate headquarters together with its two most important North American facilities. An article penned by George Rand in 1927 foreshadowed the economic motives behind consolidating the professional branches of the Mentholatum Company with the production facility: "Plants on either side of the border, controlled by a central office in this industrial community [Buffalo] permit that much desired result, lowering of overhead."[27] With so much production centered on the Fort Erie/Buffalo corridor, the Mentholatum Company streamlined its North American production facilities inside the Niagara Frontier.

[24] Griggs, "$600 Investment Parlayed."
[25] Taylor, *Amazing Mentholatum*, 79.
[26] "Mentholatum Moving Offices to Buffalo," *Buffalo Courier-Express,* December 5, 1945, 15.
[27] George F. Rand, "Our Industrial Area Becomes International," *Buffalo Courier-Express* August, 7, 1927, 17.

In Buffalo, Mentholatum was a well-respected company brand. When trade delegations came to tour the city, a representative from the Mentholatum Company often accompanied the procession. In one of these instances, a party from the Associacao Comercial of Rio de Janeiro came to discuss trade with managers from Mentholatum and other local companies.[28] In addition, the Mentholatum Company was an ally of the blind community in Buffalo. At any given time, the Buffalo factory employed around seventy people, including a number of blind and visually impaired workers. From 1934, the company employed at least two blind women as sorters and packers in the factory, and in 1936, the company provided space in its second floor recreational room for a sale of blind-made handicrafts and products.[29]

Despite the company's upstanding reputation, it faced challenges to its legacy of progressivism in the mid-twentieth century. In 1957, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) accused the Mentholatum Company of false advertising. These allegations echoed the type of accusations that destroyed quack medicine in the 1910s. The Mentholatum Company had run a series of advertisements promoting Mentholatum as a cure for rheumatism and arthritis, claims that were deemed false and misleading by the FTC.[30] The accusations did not noticeably tarnish the reputation of the Mentholatum Company, however, and it continued strong production patterns until Rohto Pharmaceuticals acquired the company in 1988.

Industrial Development Along the New York Central Railroad Belt Line

When it was constructed, the Mentholatum Company Building was located in an important industrial corridor along Niagara Street adjacent to the New York Central Rail Road (NYCCR) Belt Line. Niagara Street begins in downtown Buffalo and extends along the shores of Lake Erie and the Niagara River, past the Peace Bridge and International Train Bridge that lead to Canada, and terminates at the border of Buffalo and Tonawanda. It features dozens of other factory buildings, including other examples of daylight factories. Similarly, the NYCRR Belt Line features many more examples of this building type at industrial nodes along its length, including the intersection of Elmwood Avenue and Main Street and throughout Buffalo's east side. Along both corridors are examples of earlier manufacturing facilities, as well are large sprawling one-story facilities lit with rows of dormers. Amidst this context, the Mentholatum Company Building contributes to the diverse industrial architectural legacy in both areas. Its proximity to locomotive and naval transportation available from both Niagara Street and the Belt Line allowed the Mentholatum Company to easily distribute its product to the widest possible market.

[28] "Foreign Trade Week to Bring Brazil Guests," *Buffalo Courier-Express,* May 18, 1941, 12.
[29] "Human Guide," *Buffalo Courier-Express,* March 3, 1958, 23; "Group Working For Blind to Conduct Sale," *Buffalo Courier-Express,* December 7, 1936, 22.
[30] "FTC Accuses Local Firm of False Claims on TV," *Buffalo Courier-Express,* April 1, 1957, 10.

When the city of Buffalo ambitiously expanded its boundaries in 1854, growing from roughly four and one-half square miles to encompass more than forty-two square miles, much of the land it annexed was farmland. By the mid-nineteenth century, development had pushed far north along Niagara Street through the Village of Black Rock along the Erie Canal. In the years following the Civil War, Buffalo secured its role as a shipping and manufacturing center in the interior United States, and the majority of Buffalo's early industrial areas developed as water-borne shipping areas around the harbor and Erie Canal terminus.

The rapid expansion of railroads after the Civil War contributed to rail lines replacing canals as the primary form of transportation and shipping. In Buffalo, early rail lines like the Attica & Buffalo Railroad extended from the water's edge, straight through early industrial districts like the Hydraulics neighborhood, and out to outlying towns. Buffalo's rail network expanded through a series of consolidations in the early 1850s. The Attica & Buffalo and Tonawanda lines formed to create the Rochester & Buffalo Railroad in 1850, which was absorbed three years later by the New York Central Railroad (NYCRR). The NYCRR was one of several new rail lines including the Erie Railway, Western NY & Pennsylvania, and West Shore, all of which contributed to more than 450 miles of tracks in the city by 1907.[31]

As Buffalo's industrial growth beyond the East Side and the waterfront became increasingly dense and congested, city leaders looked to the undeveloped land in the city's northern region as an ideal area for new manufacturing development. The growth of the New York Central Belt Line from 1871 to 1883 led to a rapid expansion of industry throughout Buffalo, creating new industrial and manufacturing nodes served by rail traffic. The rail line connected portions of the former Buffalo and Niagara Railroad, the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad, and the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway to form a complete loop around the city.[32] The loop had nineteen stations spaced one mile apart, and some of the first areas to develop north of downtown were on stations along Niagara Street and in Lower Black Rock. Pratt & Letchworth was one of the most successful firms to develop around this time, with a thirty-five acre saddle-making factory located at the junction of the Belt Line and Niagara and Tonawanda Streets, just south of Black Rock. The continued growth of this company in the years following the Belt Line's construction led to an influx of workers using the Belt Line to travel to work daily and encouraged their settlement in the Black Rock area.[33] By the 1880s, Polish residents from Buffalo's East Side began migrating into Black Rock, establishing a solid community base and workforce in the area around Amherst Street.

---

[31] Jennifer Walkowski, "Historic Resources of the Hydraulics/Larkin Neighborhood, Buffalo, Erie County, NY," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, Clinton Brown Company Architecture, Buffalo, 2009, Section E, Page 6.

[32] Aaron T. Heverin, "Past Tracks: A Queen City Built by Rail," The Buffalo History Works, last updated October 1, 2010, Buffalohistoryworks.com/ptracks/.

[33] Jennifer Walkowski, "Historic Resources of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood, Buffalo, Erie County, NY," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, Clinton Brown Company Architecture, Buffalo, 2010, Section E, page 10.

Between 1890 and 1920, industrial activity flourished along the Belt Line in the Niagara Street Corridor. The Mentholatum Company was one of several businesses to take advantage of these favorable conditions. In the direct vicinity of 1360 Niagara Street were: Great Lakes Pressed Steel Corp., George J. Meyer Malt and Grain Corp., John, Fischer & Co. Inc. Lumber Yard, and the Behr-Manning Corp.[34] These factories all made use of their proximity to the Belt Line and the New York Central Railroad tracks, which still are located in the area today, and the Mentholatum Company Building still retains the rear loading dock that was served by a Belt Line spur.

Following the completion of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1959, economic activity in Buffalo and Black Rock suffered as trade and industry were diverted away from the city. Many of Black Rock's largest factories closed, and the area experienced acute economic downturn and population loss. However, as Buffalo's economy has begun to stabilize in the early twenty-first century, the neighborhoods of Black Rock have experienced a similar rebound, and the area has managed to recapture some of its former character.

Steel-Reinforced Concrete Daylight Factories

The Mentholatum Company Building at 1360 Niagara Street is an example of a steel-reinforced concrete daylight factory in the city of Buffalo. The multi-story daylight factory featured large window openings and open space to provide workers proper illumination and efficient production lines. Prior to the development of steel-reinforced concrete, most factories relied on rows of large double-hung sash windows, with large heavy-timber columns throughout. While companies erected many large factories throughout the nineteenth century, these buildings were ultimately limited by the structural strength of brick, stone, and timber.[35]

Near the end of the nineteenth century, the influence of engineering on the field of architecture radically affected many building types, including industrial buildings. In particular, the use of steel radically changed at the end of the century, as John Roebling's suspension bridges and the construction of the Eiffel Tower demonstrated the strength and variability in the material. As the twentieth century opened, these lessons were applied to the use of steel reinforced concrete in commercial architecture, and American architect Albert Kahn helped significantly expand those applications throughout the country. The onset of concrete construction allowed more weight to be distributed to piers in exterior walls, meaning that windows could become larger, to the point where they often filled the entire space between piers.[36] Kahn's Building #10 for the Packard Motor Company in Detroit embodied these principles, with large open floor plates flooded with natural light, described

[34] Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo, Erie County, New York*, 1950, Sheet 345.
[35] Tom Yots, "Alling and Cory Buffalo Warehouse," National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, Preservation Studios, Buffalo, 2009, Section 8, Page 1.
[36] Martin Wachadlo and Francis R. Kowsky, "Taylor Signal Company/General Railway Signal Company," National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, Buffalo, 2014, Section 8, Page 3.

by Rayner Banham as an "innovative structure [that would] bridge the gap between the older tradition and the stunningly new type of factory."[37]

By the turn of the twentieth-century, more factory designers began employing concrete in their designs, replacing brick and timber with concrete and steel. Reinforced concrete developed rapidly between 1905 and 1920, with most factories using an exposed frame system of construction with the spaces between exterior piers filled with steel sash windows above a low brick spandrel. The use of steel reinforced concrete was ideal, not just for the structural support it offered, but the concrete floors and ceilings offered a natural fireproofing as well.[38]

The use of large amounts of concrete and steel allowed for massive pre-production of most of the materials used during construction, and designs were often repetitious to maximize efficiency and cost. Architectural historian Jennifer Walkowski discussed the benefits of this system in the National Register nomination for the Buffalo Meter Company:

> Reinforced concrete structural systems were also modular, meaning they were composed of a repetition of equally sized units or 'modules.' Modularity made them less expensive and easier to construct since components could be manufactured of equal size and shape and quickly installed on site, with little customizing of individual features or elements, therefore reducing expensive hand-building labor.[39]

The benefits of the daylight factory were clear to its proponents who utilized concrete. Ernest Ransome further enhanced the strength of concrete construction by developing a system of embedding steel rods in concrete, which helped do away with interior columns, creating more unobstructed space for workers and machinery inside the factory compound. The typical daylight factory also featured long bays of windows that helped give the factory type its name. Lit by natural daylight, the factories were a revolution in construction, lighting, and fireproofing due to the fact that concrete is very resistant to fire.

Additional benefits of steel reinforced concrete included the ability to build non-load bearing walls as needed, meaning the building could evolve with the needs of the tenant, as well as the previously noted large window openings. This general description depicts the Mentholatum Company Building perfectly, with its tall concrete structural beams that provide support and texture to the building's façade, as well as the massive windows that flooded the interior. The partitions of the break room and the third-floor laboratories are non-load bearing as well, erected between piers, and later partitions and rooms were built with a similar method.

---

[37] Reyner Banham, *A Concrete Atlantis: U.S. Industrial Buildings and European Modern Architecture, 1900-1925* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1986), 237.
[38] Yots, "Alling and Cory Buffalo Warehouse," Section 8, Page 2
[39] Jennifer Walkowski, "Buffalo Meter Company Building," National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, Clinton Brown Company Architecture, Buffalo, 2010, Section 8, Page 3.

Buffalo is home to a number of noteworthy daylight factories. The Taylor Signal Company Complex (NR 2014) on Elmwood Avenue, demonstrates some of the early transitions to larger open floorplates with taller and wider windows but still relies on a largely brick construction. Others, like Trico Plant #1 (NR 2001) and the Buffalo Meter Company Building (1917, NR 2012), demonstrate the use of steel reinforced concrete to build taller and wider buildings, with the long steel piers and beams visible on the exterior construction like the Mentholatum Company.

The daylight factory building type was highly influential on modern architecture, as its minimal ornament and emphasis on structure and functionality captured the imaginations of European architects. Designers such as Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, Erich Mendelson, and Mies van der Rohe would take these concepts and apply them to their own buildings, giving a utilitarian and streamlined industrial feeling to the development of modern architecture.[40]

George F. Townsend (1886-1940)

Architect George F. Townsend was a native of Bradford, Pennsylvania, but he lived a majority of his life in Buffalo, New York. According to his obituary, Townsend learned the architectural practice while working in an architect's office, and throughout his career Townsend was associated with some of Buffalo's most prestigious design firms.[41] Townsend's associates included Green & Wicks, Esenwein & Johnson, Bryant Fleming and Daniel McNeil. Townsend also served as an associate architect for the Public Works Department of the City of Buffalo and was consulting for the Convention Hall in Buffalo when he died in 1940 after a three-month illness.

Townsend most notably worked with Bryant Fleming, a landscape architecture specialist, from 1904 to 1915. Fleming helped pioneer Cornell University's landscape architecture curriculum.[42] Throughout their partnership, Townsend and Fleming focused on landscape design and worked on projects throughout the country. They garnered a specialty in residential architecture in the south, with a majority of their work being completed in Belle Meade, Tennessee.[43] Their largest work was the creation of institutional grounds for Watkins Glen State Park in Watkins Glen, New York.[44] In 1907, the design of J.W. Ellis's house at 48 Dorchester Road in Buffalo earned Townsend a place in *The American Architect and Building News*.[45]

---

[40] Ibid.
[41] "Funeral Rites Tomorrow for George F. Townsend," *The Buffalo Evening News,* April 3, 1940.
[42] Robert T. Englert, "Bryant Fleming House," National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, State Historic Preservation Office, Peebles Island, 2009, Section 8 Page 1.
[43] After dissolving his partnership with Townsend, Bryant Fleming went on to build the Cheekwood Botanical Garden and Museum of Art in Nashville (1929, NR 2000). This Georgian style manor was his most impressive architectural and landscaping achievement.
[44] Englert, "Bryant Fleming House," Section 8, Page 2.
[45] James R. Osgood & Company, *The American Architect and Building News* 91 (1907): 159.

After his partnership with Fleming ended, Townsend worked as an associate for Esenwein & Johnson, with whom he was involved in the design and construction of the Albright Art Museum. In 1917, still at Esenwein & Johnson, Townsend became vice president and treasurer of the newly formed Monareh Builders' Supply Company.[46] The firm secured the Edison Cement Company as one of its first clients, foreseeing a strong demand for concrete in Buffalo. Two years later, in 1919, Townsend designed the reinforced concrete Mentholatum Company Building on Niagara Street.[47]

In 1924, Townsend partnered with Daniel McNeil, forming the architectural firm of Townsend & McNeil. Together the two men designed a church and monastery for the Carmelite Nuns at Tacoma and Carmel Road.[48] The church took the Little Flower of Jesus as it titular saint, the first to do so in America. The pair also designed buildings such as the Elks Club house at 209 Delaware Avenue and the Oriole Lodge at 558 Genesee Street.[49]

Over the course of his career, Townsend was involved in the building of the St. Bonaventure Church in Allegany, and the Hotel Buffalo, the Elks Temple, and the Trap & Field Club in Buffalo.[50] In 1937, he designed repairs to St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Lockport, New York.[51] In addition to his design career, Townsend taught architectural drawing to adult learners in Buffalo's night school system for seventeen years.[52] He died in 1940 at the age of 54, leaving the city of Buffalo with multiple notable buildings that he built or assisted on during his career.

Subsequent History

After relocating its corporate offices into the Mentholatum Company Building in 1945, the Mentholatum Company undertook two additional building expansions. The first, in 1947, added a loading dock to the northern elevation of the building. In 1966, the company expanded the loading dock, adding another bay. These expansions coincide with the increase in automobile use and highway shipping nationally, as well as the creation of the Niagara Thruway (Interstate 190) from South Ogden Street to Grand Island along the Buffalo waterfront in 1953-1954 and full completion through Niagara Falls by 1964. The building's location along Niagara Street, just a mile north of the Peace Bridge that crosses into Fort Erie, Canada, and immediately adjacent to the newly constructed I-190, allowed it better access to these growing transportation networks.

[46] "Buffalo Has New Supply Firm," *Rock Products* 19 no. 9 (March 14, 1917): 14.
[47] Townsend is named as the architect on a surviving partial set of plans.
[48] "Carmelite Nuns Will Erect $75,000 Church and Monastery at Tacoma and Carmel Roads," *Buffalo Courier,* August 17, 1924, 72.
[49] "Elks Club Plans Filed," *Buffalo Courier,* April 3, 1925; "Oriole Lodge Orders Plan to Rebuild Genesee Street Home," *Buffalo Courier,* May 24, 1925.
[50] "Funeral Rites Tomorrow for George F. Townsend," *The Buffalo Evening News,* April 3, 1940.
[51] "Edifice Erected in 1886 Undergoes Extensive Repairs," *Lockport Union Sun and Journal,* October 11, 1937, 2.
[52] "Night Schools Open with Many Pupils," *The Buffalo Courier,* September 28, 1909.

Following Rohto Pharmaceutical's purchase of the Mentholatum Company in 1988, the organization began to shift its operations to nearby Orchard Park. The Mentholatum Company Building at 1360 Niagara Street was sold to the Garrett Leather Corporation in 1997. Garrett Leather specializes in upholstery and interior uses of leather products. It used some of the old Mentholatum Company laboratory spaces for their tanning processes and also constructed more production spaces throughout the third floor. The company also built out additional office space on the third floor, as well as fashioning demonstration spaces on the first floor and storage rooms on the second and fourth floors. Although it built out some partitions and removed all of the original machinery and conveyor equipment relating to the production of Mentholatum, the large open floor plate, the original circulation, the 1945 offices, and the break rooms and third floor laboratories all remain intact from the Mentholatum Company. The company ceased its operations at the Mentholatum Company Building in 2015.

Current plans are to transform the old factory building into apartments with some commercial space on the first floor, as well as to restore the window openings to a historic configuration. The building, despite its age and constant use, is in good condition with a great deal of interior and exterior integrity remaining from its original construction in 1919, office construction in 1945, and loading dock expansions in 1947 and 1966.

Summary

The Mentholatum Company Building at 1360 Niagara Street was a critical component of the Mentholatum Company's business from the time of its construction in 1919, until Rohto Pharmaceutical purchased the company in 1988. The Mentholatum Company Building served as both the flagship factory for Mentholatum, and, from 1944 to 1988, was the company's headquarters, with a portion of the first floor being devoted to office space. As a product, Mentholatum was an incredibly popular home remedy medicine that controlled much of the market until the mid-twentieth century and still had success up until the late 1980s. Mentholatum emerged in the era of quack medicine and dangerously unregulated drugs, yet it managed to survive on the virtues of its ability to provide genuine relief from the symptoms of the cold and flu and through an aggressive marketing strategy that emphasized free samples and druggist recommendations over flashy advertisements.

At its peak, the Mentholatum Company Building represented the quintessential Buffalo industrial space, with easy links to transportation, foreign markets in Canada, as well as eastern markets throughout New York and New England, all of which were connected by an efficient rail and water network. By 1941, the factory was capable of producing 12,500,000 containers of Mentholatum per annum and easily overshadowed Mentholatum's other production centers. The factory itself represents not only the industrial development of the Niagara Street Corridor along the NYCRR Belt Line, but is an excellent example of the daylight factory, with an open floor plate, steel-reinforced concrete, and other characteristics that typify the building type.

Bibliography:

Buffalo Evening News. "$150,000 Factory Building Planned," May 3, 1919.

Buffalo Courier. "Carmelite Nuns Will Erect $75,000 Church and Monastery at Tacoma and Carmel Roads," August 17, 1924.

Buffalo Courier. "Elks Club Plans Filed." April 3, 1925.

Buffalo Courier. "Night Schools Open with Many Pupils." September 28, 1909.

Buffalo Courier. "Oriole Lodge Orders Plan to Rebuild Genesee Street Home." May 24, 1925.

Buffalo Courier-Express. "Foreign Trade Week to Bring Brazil Guests." May 18, 1941.

Buffalo Courier-Express. "FTC Accuses Local Firm of False Claims on TV." April 1, 1957.

Buffalo Courier-Express. "Group Working For Blind to Conduct Sale." December 7, 1936.

Buffalo Courier-Express. "Human Guide." March 3, 1958.

Buffalo Courier-Express. "Mentholatum Chairman, Edward Hyde, 88, Dies." April 28, 1967.

Buffalo Courier-Express. "Mentholatum Moving Offices to Buffalo." December 5, 1945.

Buffalo Evening News. "Funeral Rites Tomorrow for George F. Townsend." April 3, 1940.

Clark, A. J., M.D. "The Historical Aspect of Quackery." *The British Medical Journal* No. 3482 (1927): 589.

Englert, Robert T. "Bryant Fleming House." National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, State Historic Preservation Office, Peebles Island, 2009.

Griggs, Lee. "$600 Investment Parlayed Into Worldwide Business." *Buffalo-Courier Express,* August 31, 1952.

Heverin, Aaron T. "Past Tracks: A Queen City Built by Rail." The Buffalo History Works. Buffalohistoryworks.com/ptracks/.

Lockport Union Sun and Journal. "Edifice Erected in 1886 Undergoes Extensive Repairs." October 11, 1937.

Osgood, James R. & Company. *The American Architect and Building News* 91 (1907): 159.

Radam, William. *Microbes and The Microbe Killer.* New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1890.

Rand, George F. "Our Industrial Area Becomes International." *Buffalo Courier-Express,* August, 7, 1927.

Richmond, Dean. "Founded 75 Years Ago as a Matter of Survival, Mentholatum Co. Is still run by Hyde Family." *Buffalo Evening News*. October 31, 1964.

Sanborn Map Company. *Buffalo, Erie County, New York*, 1950.

"Seward – Mentholatum Corporation." C. A. Seward and the Prairie Print Makers. http://casewardprintmaker.com/Commercial_Artwork/Mentholatum_Corp..html.

Taylor, Alex. *Amazing Mentholatum and the Commerce of Curing the Common Cold, 1889-1955.* La Canada, CA: Angeles Crest Publications, 2006.

Wachadlo, Martin and Francis R. Kowsky. "Taylor Signal Company/General Railway Signal Company." National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form. Buffalo, 2014.

Walkowski, Jennifer. "Buffalo Meter Company Building." National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form. Clinton Brown Company Architecture, Buffalo, 2010.

———. "Historic Resources of the Black Rock Planning Neighborhood, Buffalo, Erie County, NY." National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form. Clinton Brown Company Architecture, Buffalo, 2010.

———. "Historic Resources of the Hydraulics/Larkin Neighborhood, Buffalo, Erie County, NY." National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form. Clinton Brown Company Architecture, Buffalo, 2009.

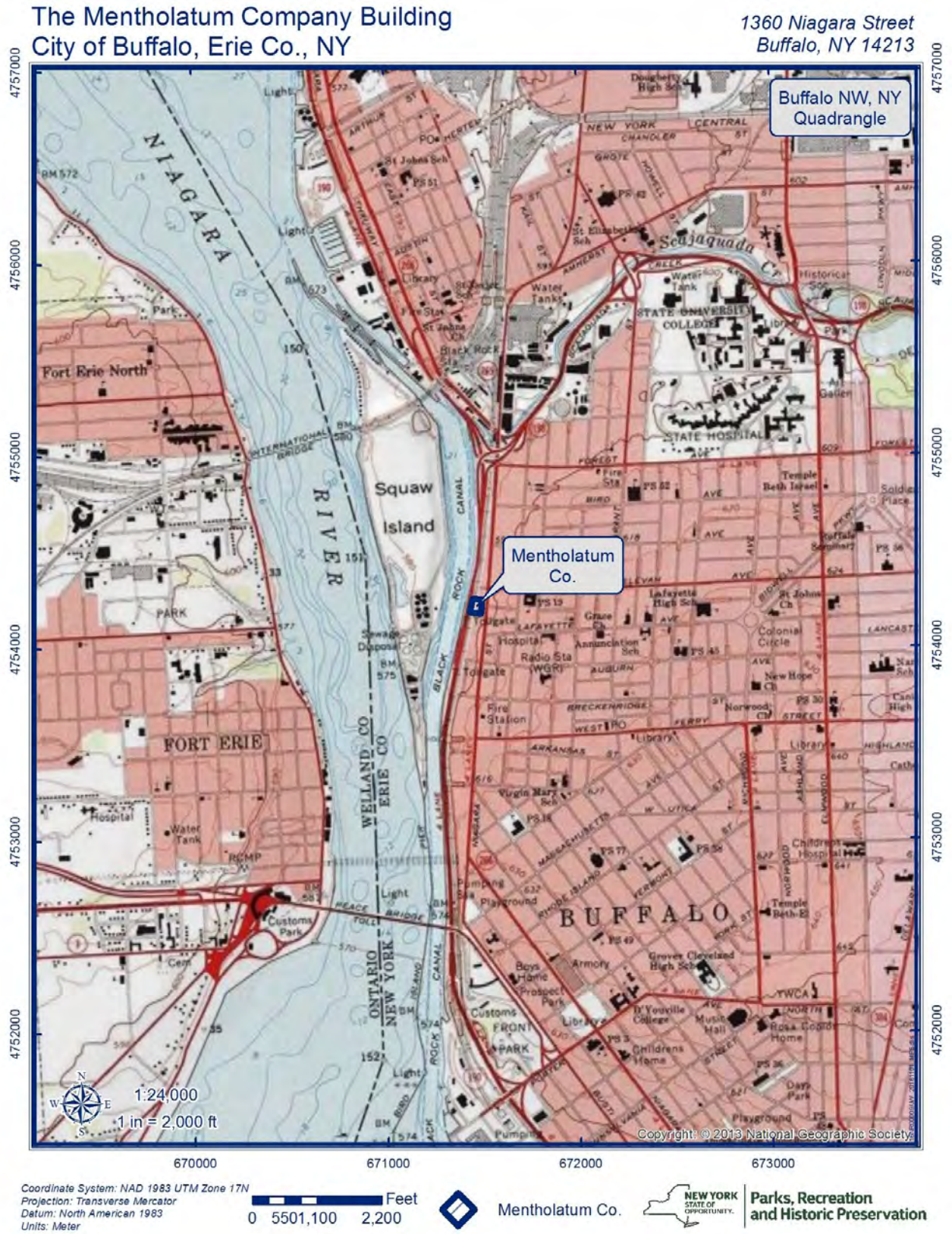
Yots, Tom. "Alling and Cory Buffalo Warehouse." National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form. Preservation Studios, Buffalo, 2009.

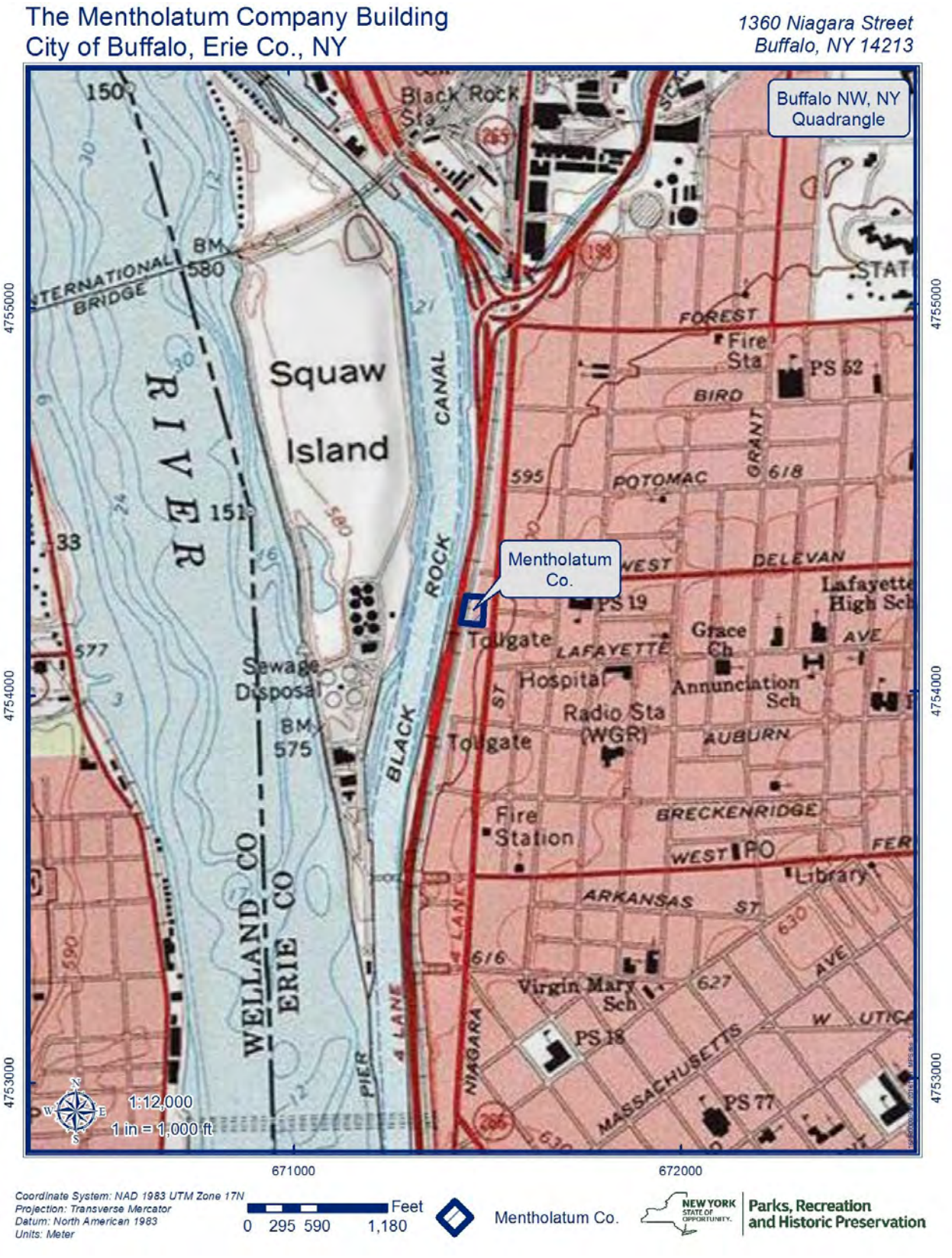
Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries are indicated with a heavy bold line on the attached maps with scale.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass the current legal boundaries of the property and correspond to the historic boundaries during the period of significance.


The Mentholatum Company Building
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY
1360 Niagara Street
Buffalo, NY 14213
Buffalo NW, NY Quadrangle
Mentholatum Co.
NIAGARA RIVER
Squaw Island
Fort Erie North
FORT ERIE
BUFFALO
WELLAND CO
ERIE CO
ONTARIO
NEW YORK
Scajaquada Cr
STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
STATE HOSPITAL
1:24,000
1 in = 2,000 ft
Copyright © 2013 National Geographic Society
4757000
4756000
4755000
4754000
4753000
4752000
670000
671000
672000
673000
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter
Feet
0 5501,100 2,200
Mentholatum Co.
NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY.
Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation


The Mentholatum Company Building
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY
1360 Niagara Street
Buffalo, NY 14213
Buffalo NW, NY Quadrangle
Mentholatum Co.
Squaw Island
RIVER
CANAL
BLACK ROCK
WELLAND CO
ERIE CO
INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE
Black Rock Sta
Fire Sta
PS 52
PS 19
PS 18
PS 77
Grace Ch
Annunciation Sch
Virgin Mary Sch
Lafayette High Sch
Hospital
Radio Sta (WGR)
Fire Station
Library
PO
Sewage Disposal
FOREST
BIRD
POTOMAC
DELEVAN
LAFAYETTE
AUBURN
BRECKENRIDGE
ARKANSAS ST
MASSACHUSETTS
NIAGARA
PIER
4 LANE
GRANT
AVE
1:12,000
1 in = 1,000 ft
4755000
4754000
4753000
671000
672000
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter
Feet
0 295 590 1,180
Mentholatum Co.
NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY.
Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation


The Mentholatum Company Building
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY
1360 Niagara Street
Buffalo, NY 14213
∑ = .94 Acres
E 671469 N 4754215
Potomac Avenue
West Avenue
NY 266
Niagara Thruway
1190
Niagara Street
Sloan Street
West Delavan Avenue
Penfield Street
Brace Street
Lafayette Avenue
Auburn Avenue
Gelston Street
4754400
4754200
4754000
671200
671400
671600
1:3,000
1 in = 250 ft
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter
Feet
0 70 140 280
Mentholatum Co.
NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY.
Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation


The Mentholatum Company Building
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY
1360 Niagara Street
Buffalo, NY 14213
∑ = .94 Acres
E 671469 N 4754215
Potomac Ave
I 190
Squaw Island Dr
Sloan St
W Delavan Ave
Penfield St
Brace St
Lafayette Ave
Niagara St
Gelston St
West Ave
Auburn Ave
Mason St
4754400
4754200
4754000
671200
671400
671600
1:3,000
1 in = 250 ft
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter
Feet
0 70 140 280
Mentholatum Co.
NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY.
Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Additional Information

Photo Log:

Name of Property:	The Mentholatum Company Building
City or Vicinity:	Buffalo
County:	Erie
State:	NY
Name of Photographer:	Derek King
Date of Photographs:	April-August 2016
Number of Photographs:	9

NY_Erie County_ The Mentholatum Company Building_0001
Façade (east elevation) and north elevation, camera facing NW

NY_Erie County_ The Mentholatum Company Building_0002
Façade (east elevation) and south elevation, camera facing SW

NY_Erie County_ The Mentholatum Company Building_0003
Main entrance, camera facing W

NY_Erie County_ The Mentholatum Company Building_0004
Lobby doors, camera facing E

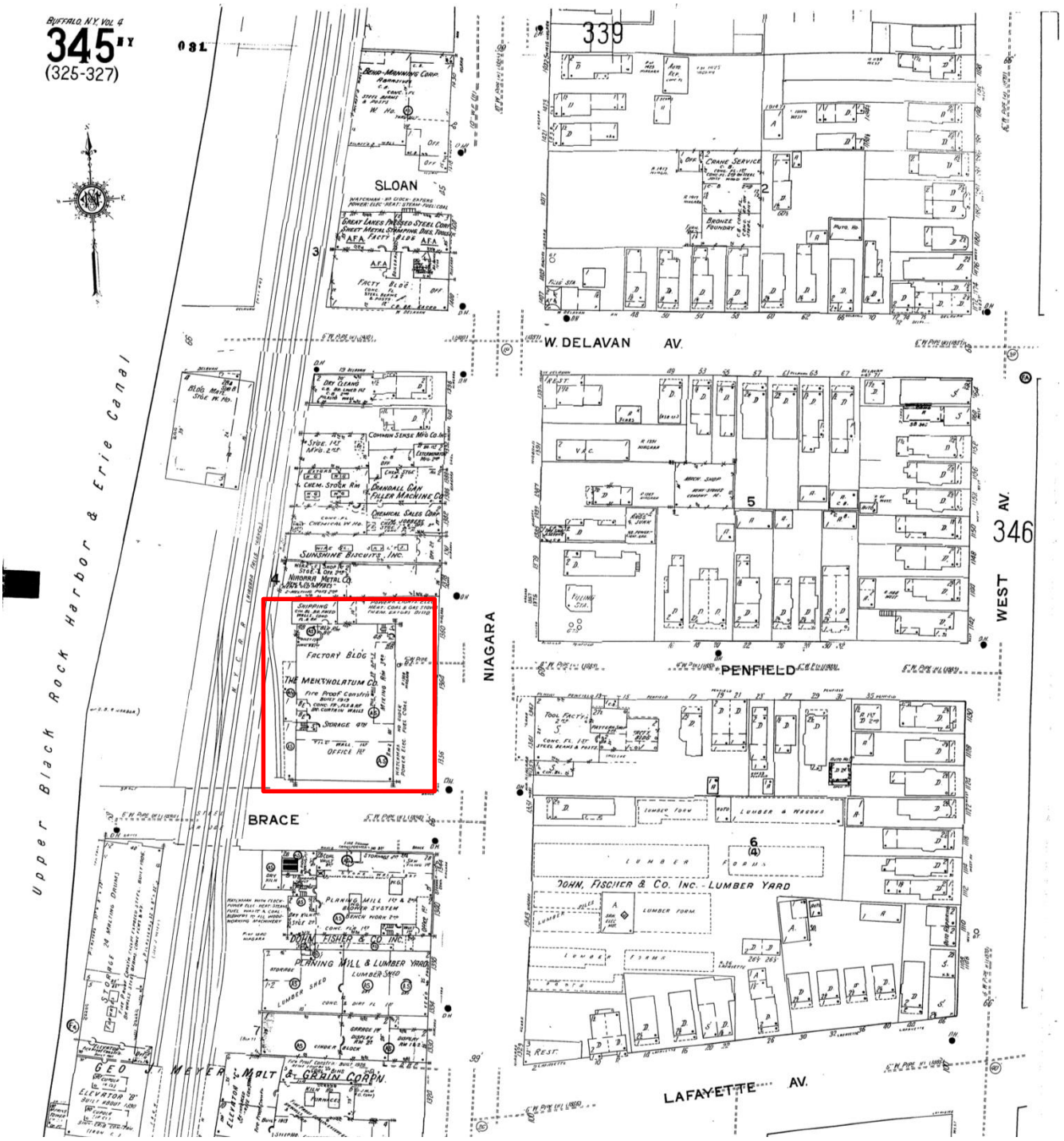
NY_Erie County_ The Mentholatum Company Building_0005
Lobby doors, camera facing E

NY_Erie County_ The Mentholatum Company Building_0006
Executive office on first floor, camera facing NE

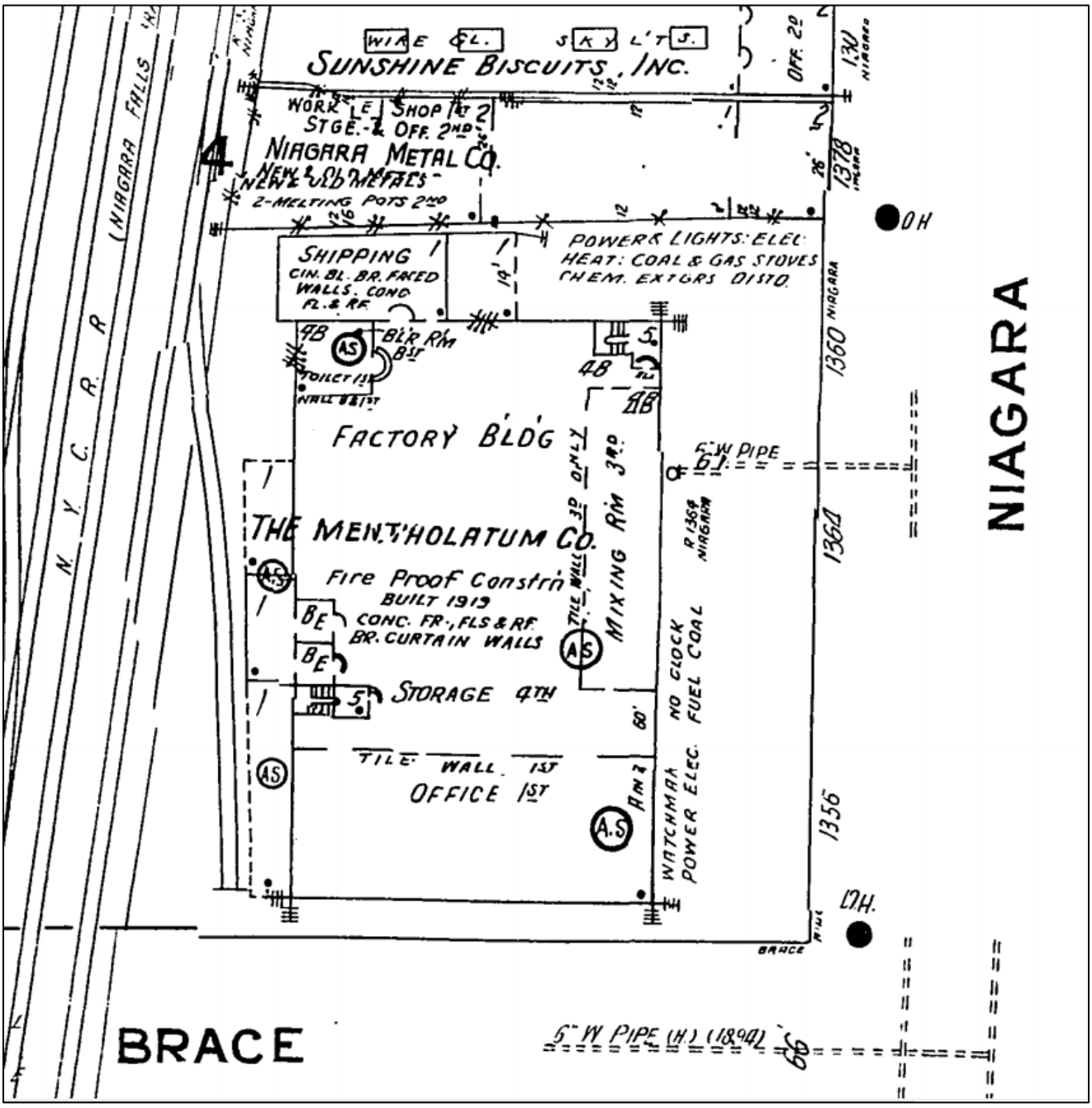
NY_Erie County_ The Mentholatum Company Building_0007
Second floor break rooms, camera facing W

NY_Erie County_ The Mentholatum Company Building_0008
Third floor manufacturing space, camera facing NW

NY_Erie County_ The Mentholatum Company Building_0009
Fourth floor manufacturing office, camera facing N

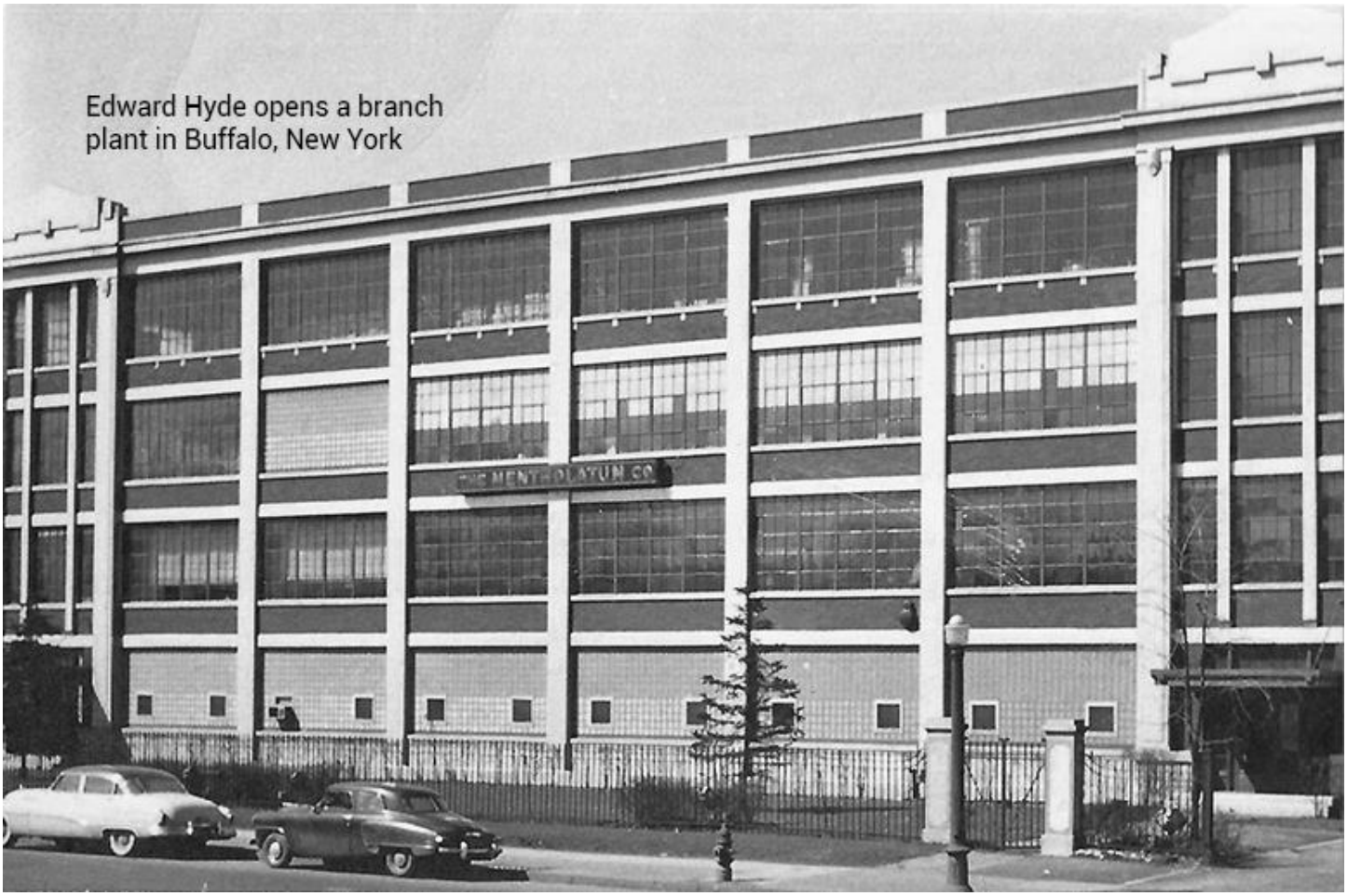


Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, vol. 4 sheet 345 (1916 updated to May 1950)
Showing building (bounded in red) with first loading dock addition,
within industrial context along Niagara Street.



Detail, Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, vol. 4 sheet 345 (1916 updated to May 1950)

The Mentholatum Company Building (date unknown, pre-1946)
An early view of the building from Niagara Street, showing the historic window configuration.
From *The Public*, http://www.dailypublic.com/articles/05122015/looking-backward-mentholatum-co.

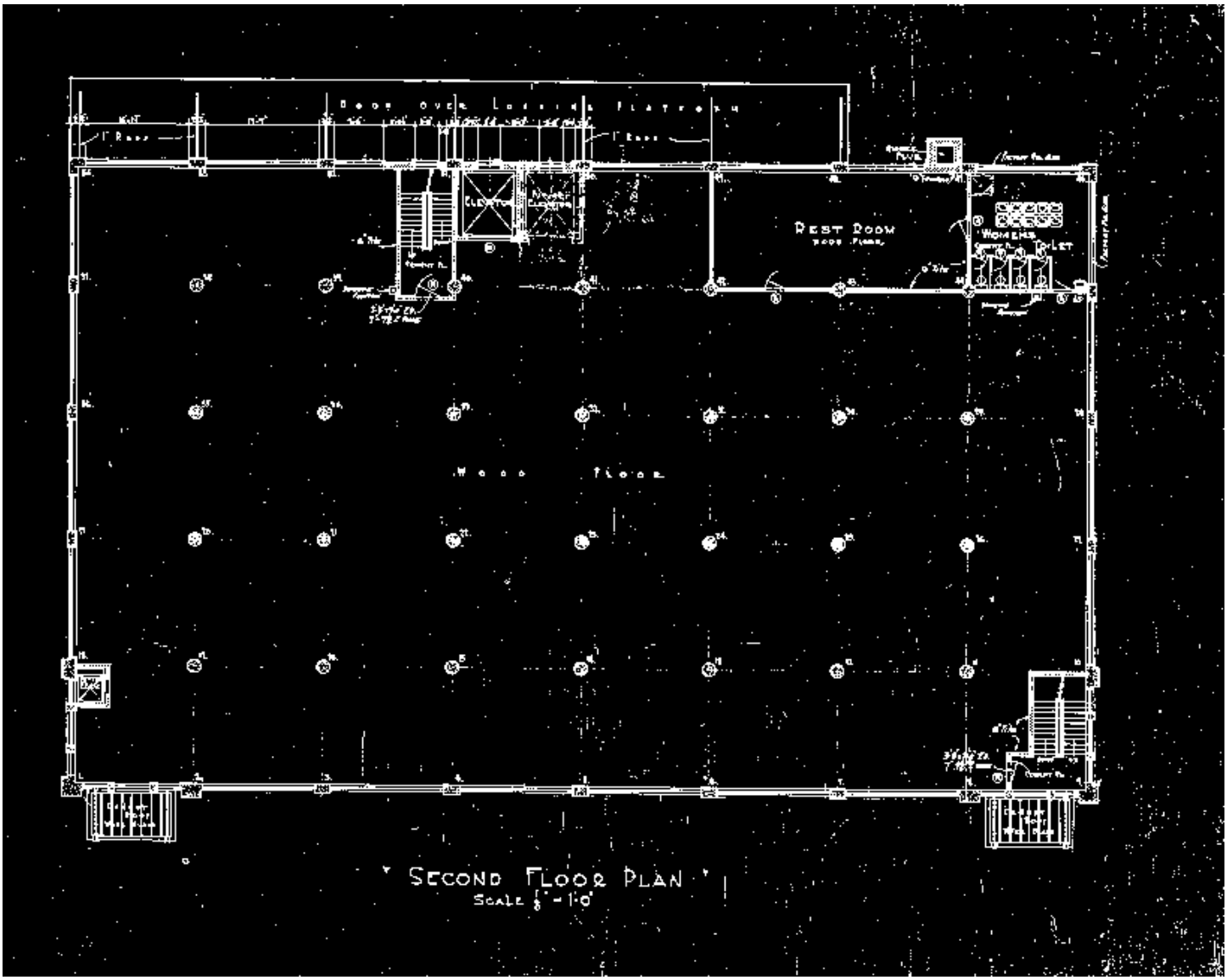


The Mentholatum Company Building (post-1946)
A slightly later view than the previous image, this view shows the partial infill at the lower floor, indicating changes made to the building after it became the company's headquarters in 1946.
From: Mentholatum Company website, http://us.mentholatum.com/about-us/.

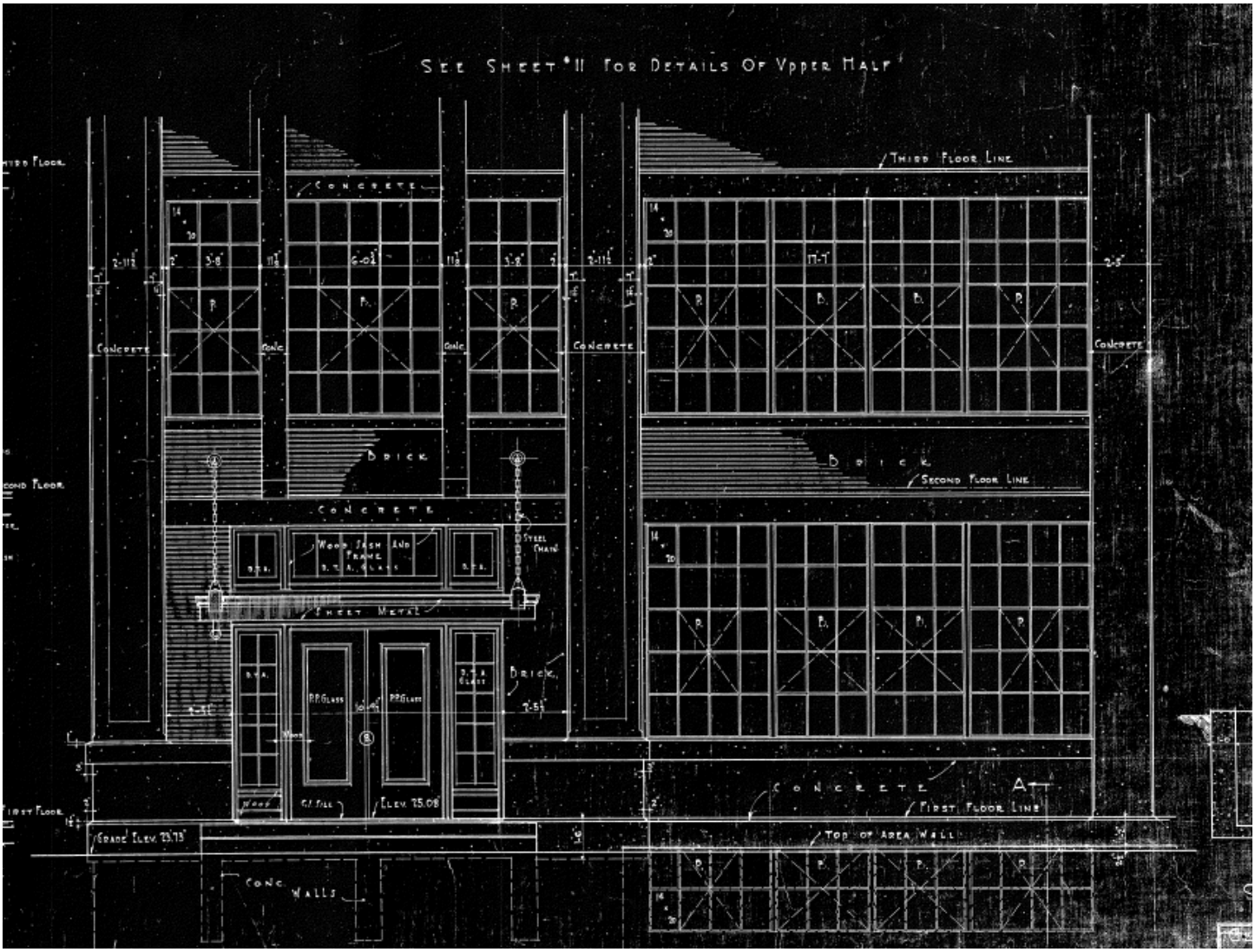
Jar of "The Great Japanese Salve – Mentholatum" (ca. 1890s)
This early label, from the era when the company was known as the Yucca Company, reflects the early attempt to market the "quack" medicine as exotic.
From: Mentholatum Company website, http://us.mentholatum.com/about-us/.

Mentholatum advertising card (ca. 1930s)
From: *Forgotten Buffalo* website,
http://www.forgottenbuffalo.com/forgottenbflofeatures/mentholatumhydesmythe.html

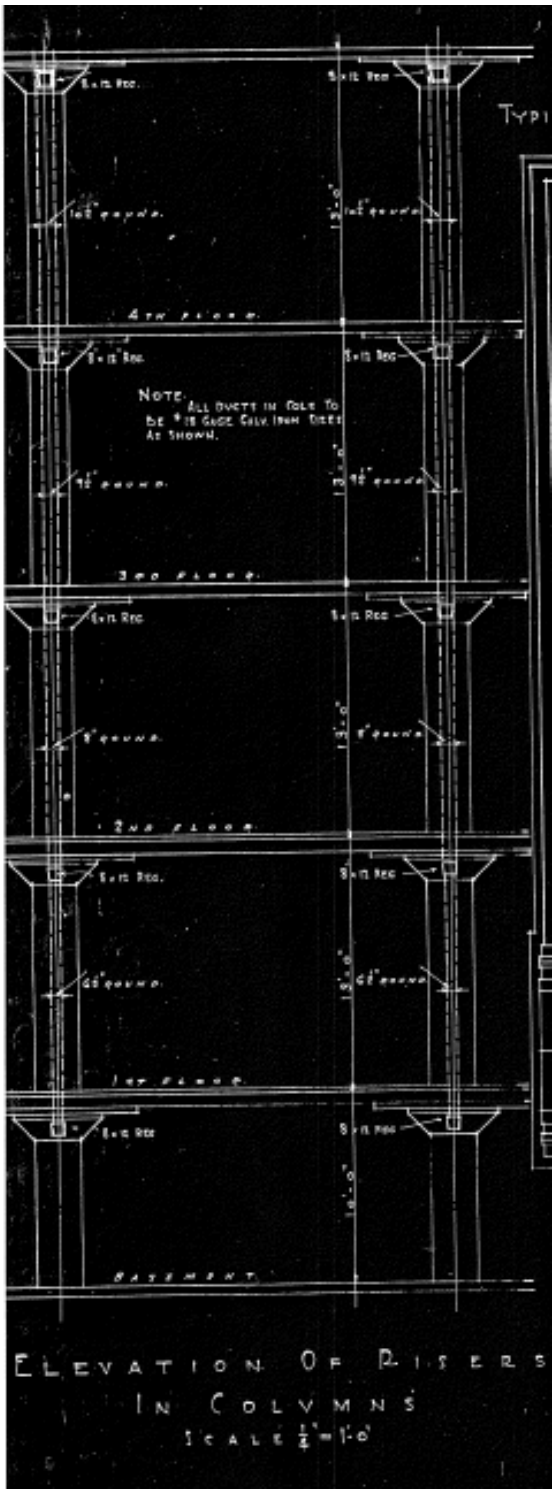
Jar of "Mentholatum" ointment (ca. first half of the 20th century)
From: *Forgotten Buffalo* website,
http://www.forgottenbuffalo.com/forgottenbflofeatures/mentholatumhydesmythe.html

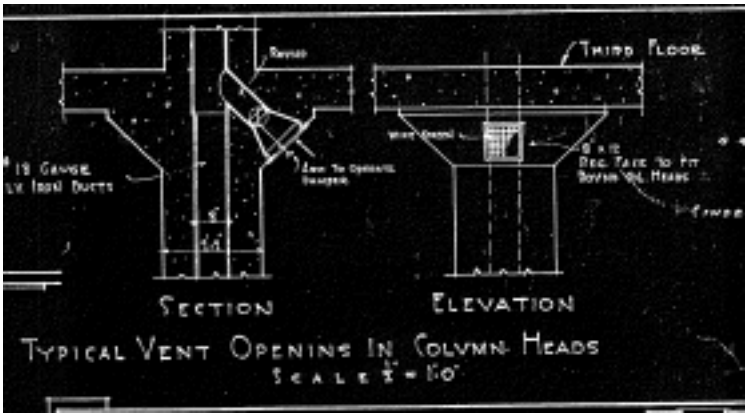


Original Drawing Set for Mentholatum Building: Second Floor (1919)
From partial drawing set only includes sheets for second floor, exterior entry, roof, and foundation. Second floor shows second floor break room, and women's toilet in an otherwise open floorplate.



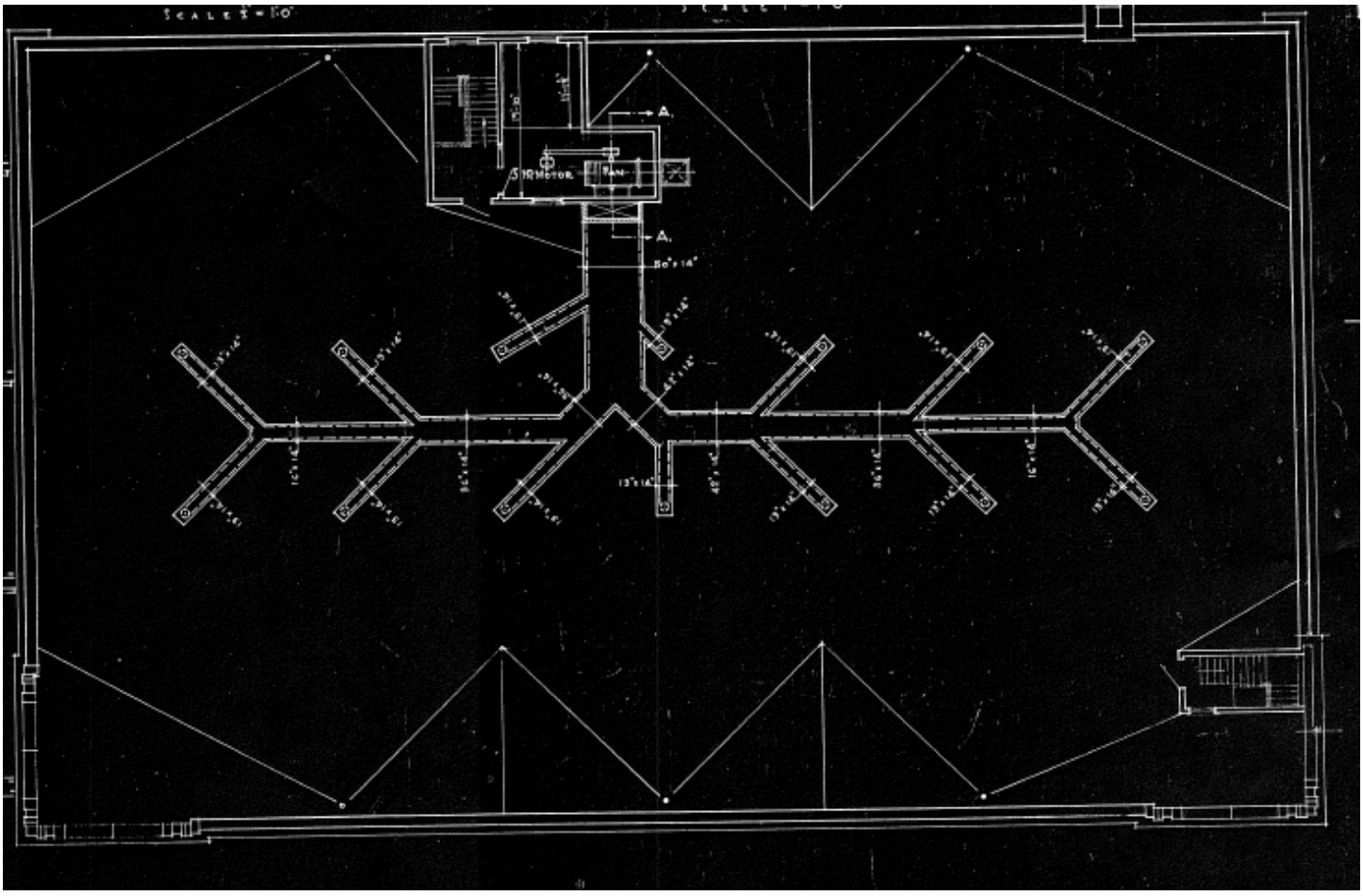
Original Drawing Set for Mentholatum Building: Entry and windows (1919)
From partial drawing set only includes sheets for second floor, exterior entry, roof, and foundation. Entry cut-sheet shows original window configuration, and transom, surround, and paired door entry.





Original Drawing Set for Mentholatum Building: Column Cross-section (1919)
From partial drawing set that only includes sheets for second floor, exterior entry, roof, and foundation.

Column cross-section shows hollow center through the whole height of the building with vents at mushroom capital.



Original Drawing Set for Mentholatum Building: Roof (1919)
From partial drawing set that only includes sheets for second floor, exterior entry, roof, and foundation. Showing Roof termination point for the hollow columns, as well as mechanical fan room at top.


GARRETT
GARRETT
NIAGARA


GARRETT
GARRETT

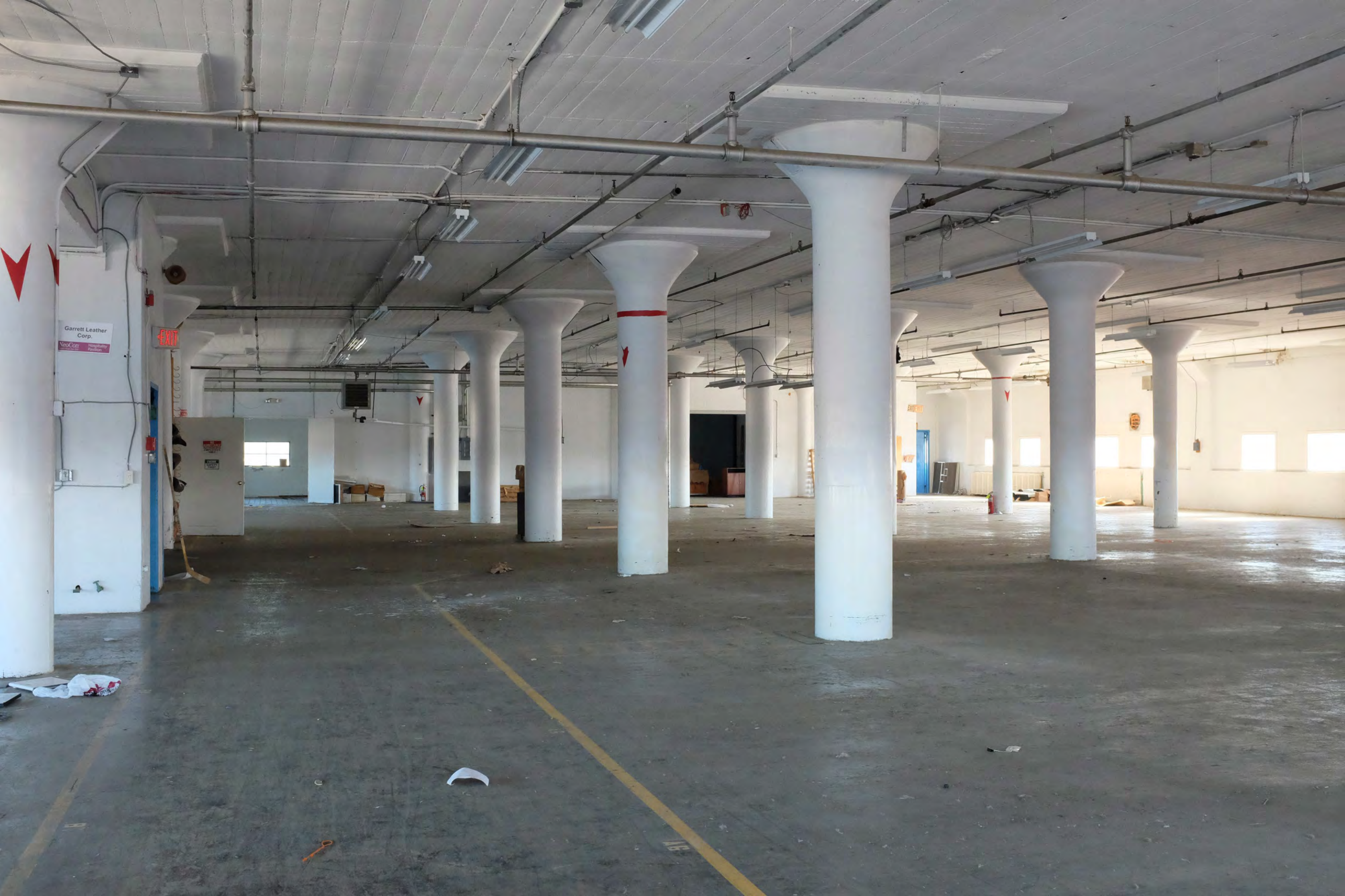

1360
SHIPPING &
RECEIVING
NO DELIVERIES TAKEN
AT THIS DOOR
Garrett
Leather
TO THE TRADE ONLY
1360
NIAGARA ST.
800.342.7738
GARRETTLEATHER.COM


GARRETT LEATHER CORPORATION
www.garrettleather.com


PLEASE USE
OTHER DOOR


Dorn Color
Dorn Color


EXIT EXIT


Garrett Leather Corp.
NeoCon
Hospitality Pavilion
EXIT

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:	Nomination
Property Name:	Mentholatum Company Building, The
Multiple Name:	
State & County:	NEW YORK, Erie

Date Received:	Date of Pending List:	Date of 16th Day:	Date of 45th Day:	Date of Weekly List:
1/6/2017			2/21/2017	3/2/2017

Reference number:	SG100000657
Nominator:	State

Reason For Review:

__ Appeal	**X** PDIL	__ Text/Data Issue
__ SHPO Request	__ Landscape	__ Photo
__ Waiver	__ National	__ Map/Boundary
__ Resubmission	__ Mobile Resource	__ Period
__ Other	__ TCP	__ Less than 50 years
	__ CLG	

X Accept _____ Return _____ Reject **2/21/2017** Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:	
Recommendation/ Criteria	Criteria A and C

Reviewer Alexis Abernathy Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2236 Date

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

NEW YORK
STATE OF
OPPORTUNITY.

Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner

23 December 2016

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following five nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Offerman Building, Kings County
St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church Complex, Erie County
St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Church Complex, Erie County
Mentholatum Company Building, Erie County
Silver Lake Cemetery, Richmond County

Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office