

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section _____ Page _____

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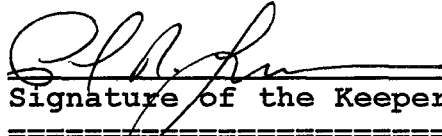
SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 15000337 Date Listed: 6/3/2015

<u>Parker-Browne Company Building</u>	<u>Tarrant</u>	<u>TX</u>
Property Name	County	State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

	<u>6/3/2015</u>
Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Bibliographical References:
The box for *Preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)* has been requested should be checked. [Part 1 approved 8/13/2002.]

These clarifications were confirmed with the TX SHPO office.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

337



1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Parker-Browne Company Building
Other name/site number:
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 1212 E. Lancaster Avenue
City or town: Fort Worth State: Texas County: Tarrant
Not for publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this 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 set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
 national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Maria Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer 4/20/15
Signature of certifying official / Title Date
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register
- other, explain: _____

[Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

6/3/2015
Date of Action

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

Category of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: Industry/Processing/Extraction: industrial storage; Industry/Processing/Extraction: manufacturing facility

Current Functions: Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification: Other: Two-part Commercial Block

Principal Exterior Materials: Brick, Concrete, Clay Tile

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-6 through 7-9)

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: Social History; Architecture

Period of Significance: 1924; 1939-41

Significant Dates: 1924

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Hodge, C. T., contractor

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 8-10 through 8-16)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheets 9-17)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- 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 (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one acre

Coordinates (either UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

32.745848° -97.316584°

Verbal Boundary Description: The parcel originally known as Block 88 Lot 8, Texas & Pacific Railway Addition

Boundary Justification: The boundaries include all of the property originally associated with the nominated building.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Susan Allen Kline, historian

Organization: NA

Street & number: 2421 Shirley Avenue

City or Town: Fort Worth

State: Texas

Zip Code: 76109

Email: sskline@sbcglobal.net

Telephone: 817-921-0127

Date: November 18, 2014

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheet Map-18 through Map-21)

Additional items (see continuation sheets Figure-22 through Figure-27)

Photographs (see continuation sheet Photo-28 through Photo-30)

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photographs

Name of Property: Parker-Browne Company Building
City or Vicinity: Fort Worth
County, State: Tarrant County, Texas
Photographer: Susan Allen Kline
Date Photographed: March 13, 2014 (except as noted)

Photo 1
North (front) elevation, camera facing southwest

Photo 2
North and east elevations, camera facing southwest

Photo 3
Date: September 6, 2013
South (rear) elevation, camera facing northwest

Photo 4
Date: September 6, 2013
West elevation, camera facing southeast

Photo 5
Interior, first floor, camera facing south

Photo 6
Interior, third floor, camera facing north

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Narrative Description

The Parker-Browne Company Building is a three-story brick, clay tile, and reinforced concrete warehouse/industrial building at 1212 E. Lancaster Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas. Construction began on the building in late 1923 and was completed in 1924 by the local contracting firm C. T. Hodge. It is located at the southwest corner of East Lancaster Avenue and Poplar Street with the façade (north elevation) facing East Lancaster and the east elevation facing Poplar. It sits on a raised concrete foundation with a partial basement under the rear of the building. Design details of the north and east elevations are atypical of early twentieth century warehouse/industrial buildings on Fort Worth's Southside. The use of concrete spandrels above large, steel-framed multi-light industrial windows and brick pilasters between the windows gives the building a more refined appearance compared to the utilitarian design often used for these types of buildings. Another notable feature is the storefront windows and recessed entrance found on the first floor of the façade which are characteristic of the Two Part Commercial Block building typology. The structural reinforced concrete grid system is visible on the south and west elevations. The interior is characterized by large open volumes and concrete floors, columns, and ceilings. The Parker-Browne Company Building is located approximately one mile southeast of the heart of downtown and just a block east of the junction of Interstate 30 and Interstate 35W. Although in close proximity to the central business district, the elevated ramps of the two highways sever the building from downtown. Before the advent of the interstate highway system, Lancaster Avenue was an important gateway to the city and was part of the main east/west highway between Dallas and Fort Worth. The building is currently located in a neighborhood of mixed commercial, warehouse, and social service institutions. The Parker-Browne Company Building retains a high degree of its architectural and historic integrity.

The Parker-Browne Company Building is located at 1212 E. Lancaster Avenue, just a short distance east of Fort Worth's central business district and approximately one block east of the junction of Interstate 30 and Interstate 35W. Within the last twenty years, the completion of numerous overhead ramps servicing these highways has created a visual barrier between the area and downtown Fort Worth. The building was erected in 1923-24 by Fort Worth contractor C. T. Hodge. At the time it was built, Lancaster Avenue served as a gateway to the central business district. The area was transitioning from a mixed industrial and residential neighborhood to one that included industrial, manufacturing, wholesale, and transportation-related businesses. Today, many of these structures have been replaced by buildings that house social service organizations for the homeless. Other buildings have been demolished, leaving vacant lots to the south of the building. The Parker-Browne Company Building is among a small number of early twentieth century industrial/warehouse buildings that has survived this transition. The three-story brick, reinforced concrete, and clay tile building is located at the southwest corner of East Lancaster Avenue and Poplar Street. It sits on a raised concrete foundation with a partial basement under the rear of the building, thus elevating the first floor a few feet above the street. In addition, Lancaster Avenue was a slight incline at this location, providing a noticeable change in grade across the façade. The front elevation faces Lancaster Avenue and measures approximately 50 feet wide. The east elevation faces Poplar Street and is approximately 140 feet long. These two elevations have brick walls that are embellished with concrete spandrels above the large, steel-framed, multiple-light industrial windows, and brick pilasters separating the windows. The spandrels and windows are character-defining features of these elevations. Storefront windows and a recessed entrance on the façade also add visual interest and is an atypical application of the Two-part Commercial Block for warehouse and industrial buildings in south Fort Worth. The south and west elevations have smaller industrial style windows and their walls are characterized by the use of clay tile between the structural reinforced concrete grid system. All of the exterior walls of the building have been painted a cream color, giving the building a uniform appearance. The interior is characterized by large open volumes with concrete floors and columns and exposed board-formed concrete ceilings. These features made the building ideal for use as a storage warehouse. Retention of the Parker-Browne Company Building's exterior and interior features gives it a high degree of architectural and historic integrity.

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Exterior

The Parker-Browne Company Building has a prominent presence at the southwest corner of West Lancaster Avenue and Poplar Street. The north and east elevations have similar characteristics (Figure 2 and Photos 1 and 2). The articulation of their large, steel multiple-light industrial windows, concrete spandrels, and wire-cut brick pilasters give the building a rhythmic, vertical emphasis. These features divide the front (north) elevation into three evenly spaced bays and the east elevation into nine bays. The windows are intact but the first floor windows are currently boarded over. The glass panes in the windows consist of both frosted and clear glass. The frosted glass was installed c. 2003 when a proposed rehabilitation was started on the building. Although a warehouse building, stylistically, it can be classified as a Two-part Commercial Block because of the horizontal division of separate zones of the facade. The first floor of the façade has large storefront windows flanking the entrance, corresponding with the public spaces of the interior. The second and third floors represent the non-public spaces, or work zones, of the building.

The north elevation is notable for its recessed entrance on the first floor. The entrance is beneath a modified Tudor arch in the center bay with flanking storefront-style windows (currently boarded over). The opening to the recessed entrance is protected by a non-original metal security gate. Within the recessed opening is the original three-sided storefront with multiple light transoms and storefront windows. Access to the entrance is provided by a short flight of concrete stairs to a landing covered with white hexagonal and square ceramic tiles with black tiles spelling "Parker-Browne Co." (Figure 7). The second and third floors each have three large industrial style steel-framed windows with multiple lights. There is a shaped parapet above the center bay. Within this space is the date "1924." Below the date is the name "Parker-Browne Co." The name had previously been filled-in (it was still evident in a 1943 photograph, see Figure 1) but was exposed c. 2003. Three flag poles are on the roof behind the parapet.

The east elevation continues the pattern of large, steel-framed industrial windows separated vertically by concrete spandrels and horizontally by brick pilasters (Figure 2 and Photo 2). As mentioned previously, this elevation is divided into nine bays. At the north end of the first floor is a storefront window with multiple light transom above. Like all the windows on the first floor, it is boarded over. The first floor window opening in the second bay from the south end was converted to a freight opening sometime after 1943 but is now filled in with concrete block. The southernmost bay has tri-fold steel doors that access a concrete loading dock. The existing loading dock is likely not original but was added after 1943. North of the loading dock are basement windows that are covered over. This elevation also features a fire escape and rain spouts.

On the west and rear (south) elevations, the concrete reinforcing system is articulated through a grid pattern. The walls are composed of clay tile. The rear elevation is divided into four bays (Figure 3 and Photo 3) and the west elevation is divided into nine bays (Figure 3 and Photo 4). The rear elevation has 12 multiple-light metal industrial windows and five basement windows that have been infilled. To the right of center is the headhouse for the elevator. The west elevation has six small metal industrial-style windows and two smaller windows lighting an interior stairwell. A non-historic metal overhead door has been inserted in the first floor of the third bay from the south end and has a concrete drive in front of it. The building received a new modified bitumen roof in 2000.

Interior

The interior of the building is notable for its large open volume and concrete floors, columns, and ceilings. The ceilings bear the imprint of the wood used for the forms for the concrete. The first through third floors each have 16 large concrete load-bearing columns placed in pairs in the center of the floor (Photos 5 and 6). Engaged concrete columns are located along the walls. The basement has six columns in the center of the floor. First floor walls and ceilings near the front end of the building are plastered, likely marking the former location of an office; otherwise,

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

the walls are bare brick or clay tile. There is an interior elevator at the rear of the building and concrete stairways along the south and west walls of each floor. Nonoriginal restrooms are located in the southwest corner of the first floor. An enclosure around the lower leg of the west stairway on the first floor has been removed.

The Parker-Browne Company Building sits just north of an unpaved and little used alley. There is unpaved parking along the east side of the building and a vacant lot and a concrete drive between 1212 E. Lancaster and the next building to the west, 1200 E. Lancaster. A decorative metal fence with sliding gate stretches from the northwest corner of the building to the northeast corner of 1200 E. Lancaster Avenue. A chain link fence stretches westward from the southwest corner of the building.

Alterations

The ninety-year-old Parker-Browne Company Building retains a high degree of integrity. The most noticeable alteration is cosmetic. Formerly, the building featured red brick contrasting with the concrete spandrels on the north and east elevation. The building has been painted a light tan color, giving it a uniform appearance. The foundation was stuccoed and the concrete spandrels received a light sand finish. First floor windows are boarded over but are intact. One window opening on the east elevation was converted to a freight opening after 1943 and later filled with concrete block. The concrete loading dock on that elevation is not original and has been lengthened. A freight door was added to the west elevation at an unknown date. This door is on a secondary elevation and is not prominently visible from Lancaster Avenue. In the interior, an office on the first floor was removed at an unknown date. A non-historic bathroom is located in the southwest corner of the first floor and an enclosure around the west stairs has been removed.

Proposed Rehabilitation (Figures 2 through 6)

The Parker-Browne Company Building is being rehabilitated using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation as part of federal and state tax incentive programs. All work will be completed under consultation with the National Park Service and the Texas Historical Commission. Because it would be difficult to remove the paint from the exterior, the proposed work includes painting the exterior brick red and the concrete spandrels a sand color to return the building to its former appearance. The filled-in freight opening on the east elevation will be removed and the space infilled with matching multiple-light industrial windows and brick bulkhead. Boarded windows will be uncovered. Existing window frames will be retained and the glass panes will be replaced with a Low-E glass. The fire escape will be removed from the east elevation. A first floor window on the rear elevation will be converted to a door for access to mechanical systems. A steel stair tower and basement access will be added to the west elevation to provide emergency egress. It is proposed to add windows to the third floor of the west elevation. These windows will have a different fenestration pattern to differentiate original windows from new windows. Three small windows will be removed because of the addition of the stair tower. The overhead freight door will be removed and the opening infilled with appropriate materials. A pedestrian entrance will be added in the southernmost bay. The elevator headhouse will be enlarged to accommodate a new elevator. An enclosed stair hall and storage room will be added to the roof. The interior will be rehabilitated for retail and commercial use. The non-historic restroom on the first floor will be removed. Offices, break rooms, bathrooms, and dressing rooms (first floor only) will be added across the south and the south half of the west walls, thus retaining much of the original volume. The third floor may be converted to office space in a second phase of the project. A parking lot will be constructed to the west of the building.

The Parker-Browne Company Building retains a high degree of integrity. It retains its integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and location. Although it no longer functions as a manufacturing facility, the proposed rehabilitation will respect that historic use through retention and restoration of character-defining features such as

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

the large, steel multi-light industrial windows and the open volume of the interior. The setting of the building has changed over the years with the nearby construction of interstate highways and the surrounding area's transition to other uses, resulting in the demolition of contemporaneous buildings and construction of new ones that serve the needs of the homeless. The Parker-Browne Company Building is an important reminder of the area's industrial history during the early decades of the twentieth century.

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Statement of Significance

The Parker-Browne Company Building is significant for its association with the evolution of a building type in Fort Worth, Texas and for its role in providing a place of work for hundreds of women on the relief rolls during the Great Depression of the twentieth century. Constructed in 1923-24 by Fort Worth contractor C. T. Hodge, it is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion C for its architectural significance as an early twentieth century warehouse/industrial building. It is also eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Social History for its use as a Work Projects Administration (WPA) Sewing Room. The periods of significance are 1924, the year the building was completed, and the years 1939-41 when it housed the WPA Sewing Room.

Historic Context

In the early 1900s, Fort Worth's status as a regional transportation and industrial center was secured following the establishment of the Fort Worth Stockyards in 1902-03. The arrival of the Armour and Swift packing plants stimulated a growth in manufacturing and population. Between 1900 and 1910, the population grew from 26,688 residents to 106,482 residents. The development of west Texas oilfields in the 1910s and 1920s stimulated additional growth. Between 1920 and 1930, Fort Worth's population grew from 106,482 to 163,477 residents. This tremendous growth spurred a building boom unlike any other the city had experienced up to that date. The Parker-Browne Company Building is associated with the building boom of the 1920s and Fort Worth's continued rise as a manufacturing center.

Although the Parker-Browne Company Building was constructed in 1923-24, the company began in 1906. It was started by Virgil Browne, Robert J. Parker, and John M. Parker, a druggist. The company was originally located at 305 W. Weatherford at the north end of the central business district. Early city directories noted that it manufactured "Res-ola," a flavoring extract, as well as perfumes, and pharmaceuticals. The 1909-1910 city directory indicates that Robert Parker was no longer associated with the company (or at least was no longer serving as an officer). Mr. Browne was the president and John M. Parker served as Secretary-Treasurer. At that time, the company was then located at 209-11 W. 13th Street near the south end of the central business district. No Parkers were listed as being associated with the company in the 1911 City Directory. It was in that year that the Parker-Browne Company was sold to Morris Greenspun (c. 1870-1957) who served as Secretary-Treasurer and general manager. In 1912, the company was located at 1302-04 Pacific (later changed to Presidio). This address was about a mile southeast of the downtown core, indicating the spread of the city's manufacturing center away from the central business district. The company was at this location in 1919 when it announced plans to construct a three-story facility at East Front and Cedar (now East Lancaster Avenue and Poplar Street). The *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* stated that "[occupation] of the new building will bring an enlargement of the present force . . . and approximately seventy-five persons will be employed" It was expected that "[work] on the new building will be hastened." The site for the new building was on the block immediately northwest of the Pacific/Presidio facility. Front Street (Lancaster Avenue) was part of the main east/west highway connecting Fort Worth and Dallas, soon to be designated US 80 as part of the Bankhead Highway. It also served as the route of the Interurban between the two cities from 1902-1934. It was also close to the Texas and Pacific Railroad tracks. By 1924, the company was shipping its products to Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas, and New Mexico and competing against firms in Dallas and New Orleans. Its proximity to major transportation systems was advantageous. However, work on the building did not begin until late 1923.¹

¹ Various Fort Worth City Directories from 1909-10 to 1923; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 15, 1919; *Fort Worth Record*, January 27, 1924; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 11, 1923.

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Construction of the Parker-Browne Company Building

Construction of the Parker-Browne Company Building began in December 1923 with C. T. Hodge of Fort Worth as the contractor. The *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* noted that “The Parker-Brown [*sic*] Company is a local concern that started in a small way and has grown rapidly into one of the largest extract manufacturing concerns in the state. [The growth of the company] this past year made necessary the erection of the new building which will add 30,000 square feet of floor space to its capacity.” The article also noted that the building would be three stories and cover a ground space of 50 feet by 162 feet although the constructed building was only 140 feet long. The paper stated: “It will be constructed of brick and reinforced concrete and will be equipped with the most up-to-date machinery and factory appliances. It will cost approximately \$80,000.”² In January 1924, the *Fort Worth Record* also reported on the construction of the building, noting that it would cost approximately \$85,000. It also noted that the new building would be used for offices and as a warehouse and the present building would be used for manufacturing. The 1926 Fort Worth City Directory provided additional information on the uses of the two buildings. The directory noted that the company manufactured “Carbonic Acid Gas [carbon dioxide used in soft drinks], Flavoring Extracts, Machinery and Supplies for Bottlers, Fountains, Creameries, and Bakeries.” The office and laboratory were located at 1212 E. Front [Lancaster] and the carbon gas and machinery shop was located at the company’s old building at 1302-04 E. Presidio. The office was likely located at the front (north) end of the first floor, as this area’s plastered concrete columns, walls, and ceiling provided a finished appearance compared to the rest of the interior.³

The construction of the Parker-Browne Company Building coincided with a major building boom in Fort Worth. That year witnessed the greatest building activity in Fort Worth to date. Other major projects under construction during that year and their estimated value were as follows: Gulf Refining Company’s plant, \$2,000,000; Fort Worth Club Building, \$1,250,000; Methodist Hospital, \$1,000,000; Worth Mills, \$1,125,000; Kimbell Mill and Elevator Company, \$600,000; Williamson-Dickie Company, \$75,000; Monnig Dry Goods, \$250,000; Trinity Episcopal Church, \$50,000; and College Avenue Baptist Church, \$35,000.⁴

During the first half of the 20th century, the area around the Parker-Browne Company Building developed from a primarily residential neighborhood to mixed industrial, manufacturing, wholesale, and transportation-related businesses. The building at 1111 E. Lancaster Avenue was used as Uncle Joe’s’ Bottling Works; 1112 E. Lancaster Avenue was a wholesale candy and tobacco distributor; 1200 E. Lancaster housed a wholesale coffee and tea distributor; 1315 E. Lancaster was home to the Artesia Bottling Company and then other soft drink distributors; 1324 E. Lancaster served a variety of uses including a distributor of Delco and Frigidaire appliances, a manufacturer of automobile radiators, and a patternmaker; and 1413-15 E. Lancaster Avenue had commercial functions on the first floor and residential apartments on the second.

City directories indicated that the Parker-Browne Company vacated the Lancaster Avenue building around 1933. It remained vacant until 1935 when it was apparently leased to the General Cartage Company and a plumbing firm. J.D. Trammell, consulting engineers, leased it in 1937 and then it was vacant for part of 1938-39. In 1939, it was leased to the Work Projects Administration for use as a Sewing Room and was then used as a War Industries Training School. Around 1945 it was leased to Bekins Van and Storage Company who remained in the building until 1962. The Parker-Browne Company continued in operation at 1302-04 Presidio until it was sold to the Spencer Chemical Company in 1956. The building at 1302-04 Presidio is no longer extant.⁵

² *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 11, 1923.

³ *Fort Worth Record*, January 27, 1924; Fort Worth City Directory, 1926.

⁴ *Fort Worth Press*, September 12, 1924, as transcribed in the Federal Writers’ Project, “Guide to Fort Worth,” typed manuscript, 1936-1941 [microfiche], 5111-13, Fort Worth Public Library, Fort Worth, Texas.

⁵ Various Fort Worth City Directories, 1932-1962; “Pioneer Firm of Parker-Browne Co. Has Changed Hands,” *Fort Worth*,

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Architectural Significance

The Parker-Browne Company Building is an excellent example of a 1920s warehouse/industrial building on Fort Worth's Southside. The three-story brick, hollow tile, and reinforced concrete building was documented in the *Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey: Phase III Fort Worth's Southside* and evaluated as being potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places upon restoration.⁶ The exterior of the building has been painted and first floor windows on the front and east elevations have been boarded over. However, even in its current state, the building retains enough integrity to identify it as an early 20th-century warehouse facility.

The design of the Parker-Browne Company is indicative of the evolution of the use of reinforced concrete in warehouse/industrial and manufacturing buildings on Fort Worth's Southside. Twelve years before the construction of that building, the Miller Manufacturing Company Building, 311 Byran Avenue (NR 2010), was constructed with solid reinforced concrete walls. Two years later, the Fort Worth Warehouse and Transfer Company Building (201 S. Calhoun, NR 2013) was constructed using a reinforced concrete grid system that was articulated on the exterior of the building with brick walls and windows placed within the grid. Advances in structural engineering allowed for greater load capacity of the buildings. Higher load capacity increased the cost of the buildings which was likely a contributing factor in the construction of utilitarian warehouse and manufacturing buildings. Examples of these include the Fort Worth Warehouse and Transfer Company Building, another warehouse building a block east of the Parker-Browne Company Building at 1324 E. Lancaster Avenue, c. 1919, and the Williamson-Dickie Company Building at 509 W. Vickery Boulevard, 1924, also on Fort Worth's Southside. The Parker-Browne Company Building is notable for its use of cast concrete spandrels and brick pilasters on the facade and east elevation. These details give the building more than a utilitarian appearance. This attention to detail may have been due to its prominent location on East Lancaster Avenue, a major gateway to downtown Fort Worth. Although it was built as a warehouse, the façade of the building was divided into two zones. The first floor featured large storefront windows and a recessed entrance, and the second and third floors containing large window openings, putting the building in the category of a Two-part Commercial Block. However, the fact that the upper-stories of the façade and east elevation had multiple-light steel industrial windows attests to the building's intended use as a warehouse or manufacturing facility. The open volume of the interior also attests to the building's use.

The designer of the Parker-Browne Company Building has not been identified. It is possible that the contractor, C. T. Hodge (1862 to 1952), designed the building. His firm was one of the largest contracting companies in the city at the time the Parker-Browne Company Building was constructed. In 1919, Hodge designed and constructed "a three-story concrete, brick and steel building" at the southwest corner of Ninth and Commerce in downtown Fort Worth (demolished). The building was to be used as an automobile dealership. Little of Hodge's work has been documented but from evaluating known projects, it appears that he specialized in warehouse/industrial and manufacturing buildings. Other projects for which Hodge was the contractor included clearing the land for the construction of Lake Worth in the early 1910s, a three-story factory near the Parker-Browne Company Building (possibly the Kingsbury Building at 1302 E. Lancaster, 1919-20, demolished), an ice plant at Mason and Cherry streets (1920), a grain elevator (1920), a warehouse in Abilene, Texas (1922), and an ice plant at Nashville and Vickery Boulevard in Fort Worth's Polytechnic area (1922).⁷

Official Publication of the Chamber of Commerce, 32 (February 1956): 24.

⁶ *Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey: Phase III Fort Worth's Southside* (Fort Worth: Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, 1986), 65. For city planning purposes, 1212 E. Lancaster Avenue is considered to be in Fort Worth's Near East Side.

⁷ "Texas, Deaths, 1890-1976," Index and Images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/K3Z8-L3C>; accessed November 29, 2014), C. T. Hodge, May 24, 1952; citing certificate number 25330, State Registrar Office, Austin; FHL

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Social History Significance

The Parker-Browne Company Building is significant for its association with the Work Projects Administration (WPA) for its use as a Sewing Room from 1939-1941. WPA Sewing Rooms were important for the work they provided for thousands of area women who were the economic heads of their households, helping to keep such women and their families off of the relief rolls during the Great Depression of the 1930s and early 1940s.

The WPA was created in 1935 as one of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal-era relief programs. Originally called the Works Progress Administration, the name was changed to the Work Projects Administration in 1939. The WPA's regulations required that anyone employed by the agency had to be the economic head of his or her household. WPA projects varied from the construction of schools, armories, streets, sidewalks, and highways, to clerical projects at public libraries and county courthouses, to sewing and toy making. The federal government provided the majority of the funding with local sponsors providing a small match usually in the form of materials or work space and utilities.⁸ Over the years, much focus has been given to the types of projects that engaged men working for the WPA. Less attention has been given to the work performed by women under WPA projects.

Special work programs for women were first established through the Women's Division of the FERA in 1933. Projects included professional work such as clerical jobs or as librarians. Other work was domestic-related and included the production of household goods, canning and the production of food, gardening, and the creation and repair of clothing. The latter program was the largest employer of women on the relief rolls across the country. Nationally, approximately seven percent of WPA workers were women engaged in sewing projects. A study conducted in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1939 noted that nearly half of the women employed in sewing rooms had been unemployed for over six years and approximately three-quarters had not been employed by the private sector on any jobs of consequence since 1935 (the year the WPA was organized). Far from being a program for women in urban areas, sewing rooms could be found in rural areas and large cities alike.⁹

The first sewing room in Fort Worth was established in 1935 and the program became the longest continually run WPA program in the city. For the first year it was entirely financed by the federal government. Because of this, the clothing that was produced could be distributed to nearby counties that did not have their own sewing rooms. The following year, the program was financed jointly by the city, county, and the federal government. The federal government funded the salaries and major supplies and equipment with the city paying two-thirds of the other expenses and the county paying one-third. Because of this arrangement, all items produced by the sewing rooms stayed in Tarrant County.¹⁰

In the beginning, the women made \$35 a month for 140 hours of work. Those who were promoted to floor ladies or cutters could make as much as \$52 a month. The work began at 7:30 am. At one sewing room, a brief song service was held on the women's own time before the work day began. They worked eight-hour days until they had

microfilm 2075085; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 11, 1917, November 11, 1913, October 6, 1919, April 17, 1920, and November 7, 1920; *Abilene Daily Reporter*, September 8, 1922; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 11, 1922.

⁸ Mallory B. Randle, "Work Projects Administration," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, (<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/WW/new1.html>), accessed Tuesday, November 6, 2001. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

⁹ *Security, Work, and Relief Policies: Report of the Committee on Long-Range Work and Relief Policies to the National Resources Planning Board* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1942), p. 43, footnote 10, p. 44, footnote 20, p. 64, footnote 6, and p. 128 (<http://infoweb.newsbank.com>), accessed January 24, 2013.

¹⁰ *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, (morning edition) May 7, 1939, Fort Worth Star-Telegram Clippings, File AR406-7-195-100, Special Collections, University of Texas at Arlington Library [hereafter cited as FWSTCC/SCUTA].

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

accumulated 70 hours at which time they would lay off for a few days and return for another 70 hours. This rotation made it possible for more women to work during the month. By 1937, the program employed 900 women.¹¹

Women did not need to know how to sew to find work in the sewing rooms. The *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* noted “Women who have never done anything but chop cotton go there and learn to manipulate a needle and thread as effectively as they did a hoe.” They were trained in a manner that emphasized the type of work a homemaker would do to provide for her own family. The work progressed from patching used clothing to creating new garments. The women did not engage in piece work as each person was responsible for a garment from beginning to end. They averaged two and one-half garments a day (not including any trim work). The design of the Parker-Browne Company Building made it conducive for use as a sewing room. Photographs of the interiors of other sewing rooms indicate that they were arranged much like a traditional classroom with women working at sewing machines arranged in rows. Handwork could be done while seated at long tables. The building’s open volume would allow for this arrangement of activities. In addition, the large windows helped to illuminate the building and provided ventilation. Because there were few windows on the west side of the building, the women could work without facing the heat and glare of the afternoon sun.¹²

Women in the sewing rooms were taught other things besides sewing. Illiterate women received basic educational training. Five hundred women working at the Parker-Browne Company Building received first aid training from the Red Cross on their own time.¹³

Through the years several sewing rooms were operated in the city in various buildings with separate locations for African American and white women. The 1936-37 City Directory indicates that a sewing room was located at the Kingsbury Building at 1302 E. Lancaster (no longer extant). The 1937-38 and 1938-39 directories indicate that the Sewing Room and Home Economics Division was located at 610 W. Daggett at what is now the Justin Boot Company Factory (see Figure 8). When that building was leased to a shoe company in 1939, the Sewing Room moved to the old City-County Hospital at 306 E. Third Street. The building had been recently vacated with the opening of a new county hospital on South Main Street. Because the old hospital building was still owned by the county, local authorities would not have to pay rent as required with privately owned buildings. However, another sewing room also was established at the Parker-Browne Company Building that same year at a rental cost of \$250 per month. In addition, a sewing room for African American women was located on the second floor of the Kingsbury Building at a rental cost of \$60 per month.¹⁴

In 1940, while the Sewing Room was in operation in the Parker-Browne Company Building, the local program employed 650 women ranging in age from 35 to 64 years (in 1939, it had been reported that 1,000 women worked at the Parker-Browne Company Building and 118 women worked at the Sewing Room for African American women located across the street). They were paid \$46.80 a month, working 130 hours per month. In the five years that the program had been in operation, the women had made 2,341,369 garments and 130,408 household articles. Each garment bore a WPA label with the inscription “Not to be sold.” When finished, the items went to the surplus

¹¹ *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 4, 1936.

¹² *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, (morning edition) May 7, 1939, AR406-7-195-100, FWSTCC/SCUTA. Photographs in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection in the Special Collections, University of Texas at Arlington depict sewing rooms arranged in this manner. These photos were likely taken at the sewing room located at 610 W. Daggett, Fort Worth.

¹³ Susan Allen Kline, “‘We Patch Anything’: WPA Sewing Rooms in Fort Worth, Texas,” *Living New Deal*, May 27, 2013 (<http://livingnewdeal.berkeley.edu/author/susanallenkline/>), accessed March 10, 2014; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, (morning edition) May 7, 1939.

¹⁴ “New Sewing Room Location Chosen,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, Morning, February 25, 1939, “WPA--Fort Worth, 1939” clipping file, FWSTCC/SCUTA.

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

commodities depot and then distributed on order of county and city welfare case workers to needy individuals.¹⁵

So as not to stigmatize recipients of WPA-made garments, care was taken to avoid the production of identical pieces of clothing with the exception of men's trousers, little boys' overalls, baby gowns, and diapers. According to a local newspaper report, "Sewing room styles have improved so much in four years that a designing department functions now to give variety to stock patterns used. One pattern may be used for 50 dresses, but no two of the 50 will look alike when they are finished."¹⁶

From the inception of the program, the women who were employed in the sewing rooms took great pride in their work. The WPA was criticized as being a "make work" program that sponsored projects of questionable worth and it was not uncommon for some to use the derisive phrase "We Piddle Around" when referring to the agency and its projects. Women working in the Fort Worth sewing rooms knew their work was meaningful to so many and triumphantly proclaimed that the initials "WPA" stood for "We Patch Anything."¹⁷

The sewing rooms were at the center of attention in 1940 when WPA administrators in Washington ruled that local communities had to bear more of the cost of operating the program by providing the material used in the sewing rooms. Communities in Texas balked at this added expense, claiming that the cost would place additional strains on local governments. In Fort Worth, compliance with the ruling would require at least an additional \$40,000 a year. Local officials admitted that complying with the ruling would cost less than supporting the workers who would be placed on direct relief roles. Funds for the continued operation of the sewing rooms eventually were found. The Parker-Browne Company Building continued in use as a WPA Sewing Room until October 1941 when the sewing rooms were disbanded. As the United States geared up for World War II, many women were able to find better paying jobs in defense industries. Those women still working at the Sewing Room at the time it was closed were transferred to jobs at school lunch rooms. As an agency, the WPA was abolished in 1943 as the country emerged from the Depression into a wartime economy with virtually full employment.¹⁸

Following the closure of the WPA Sewing Room, the Parker-Browne Company Building was used as a War Industries Training School. To date, no information has been found on what type of training occurred at the site. However, the possibility exists that this function could add potential significance for the building for its association with defense-related training during World War II.

Conclusion

The Parker-Browne Company Building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A for its role in the Social History of Fort Worth. From 1939 to 1941, the building functioned as a WPA Sewing Room. This program provided jobs for thousands of unemployed women who were the economic heads of their households, offering them a means to support themselves and their families. The work the women performed provided much needed clothing and household items for Fort Worth and Tarrant County residents who were also experiencing economic difficulty as a result of the Great Depression.

¹⁵ *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, (morning edition), July 11, 1940 and March 24, 1940 (evening edition), and *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, (morning edition) May 7, 1939, AR606 7-195-100, FWSTCC/ SCUTA.

¹⁶ *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, (morning edition) May 7, 1939.

¹⁷ *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, (evening edition), February 21, 1936, AR606 7-195-100, FWSTCC/ SCUTA.

¹⁸ Various articles from "WPA-Fort Worth and Tarrant County, 1940" and "WPA-Fort Worth and Tarrant County, 1941" clipping files, FWSTCC/ SCUTA.

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The Parker-Browne Company Building is also eligible for listing in the National Register at the local of significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Completed in 1924, it is an excellent local example of an early twentieth century warehouse. Its reinforced concrete grid system represents the evolution of this building type in south Fort Worth. However, the use of concrete spandrels and brick pilasters on its two most prominent elevations is atypical of a building type that was generally designed in a utilitarian manner. In addition, the division of the façade into two zones places the building within the Two-part Commercial Block typology yet the use of large, steel-framed industrial windows and its open interior volume attest to its use as a warehouse rather than a strictly retail and commercial facility.

The periods of significance are 1924, the year the building was completed, and the years 1939-41 when it housed the WPA Sewing Room.

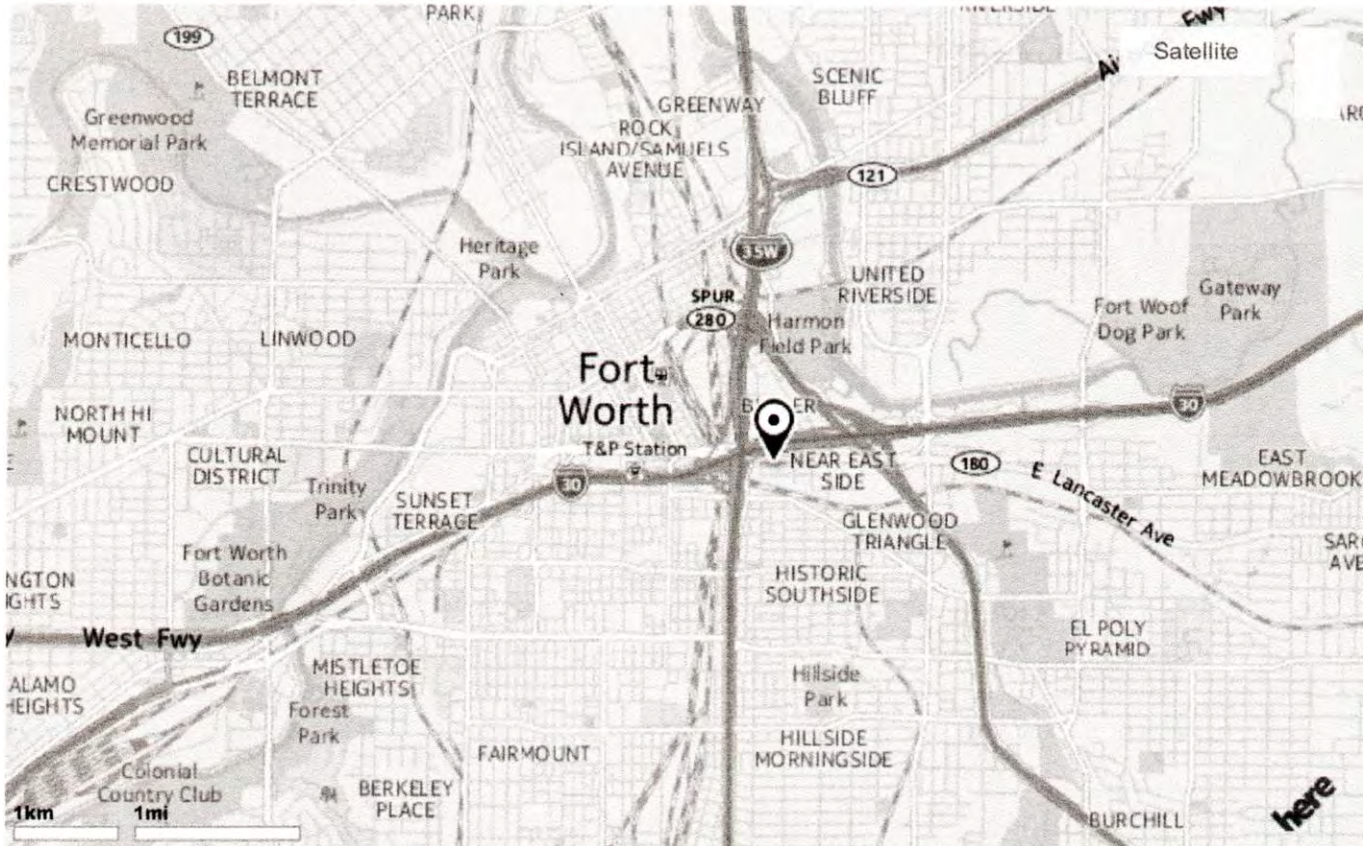
Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

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Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Map 1: Location of the Parker-Browne Company Building, 1212 E. Lancaster Avenue, in relation to downtown Fort Worth, Texas, and the junction of Interstate Highways 30 and 35W. Courtesy Yahoo Maps, retrieved November 20, 2014.



N↑

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

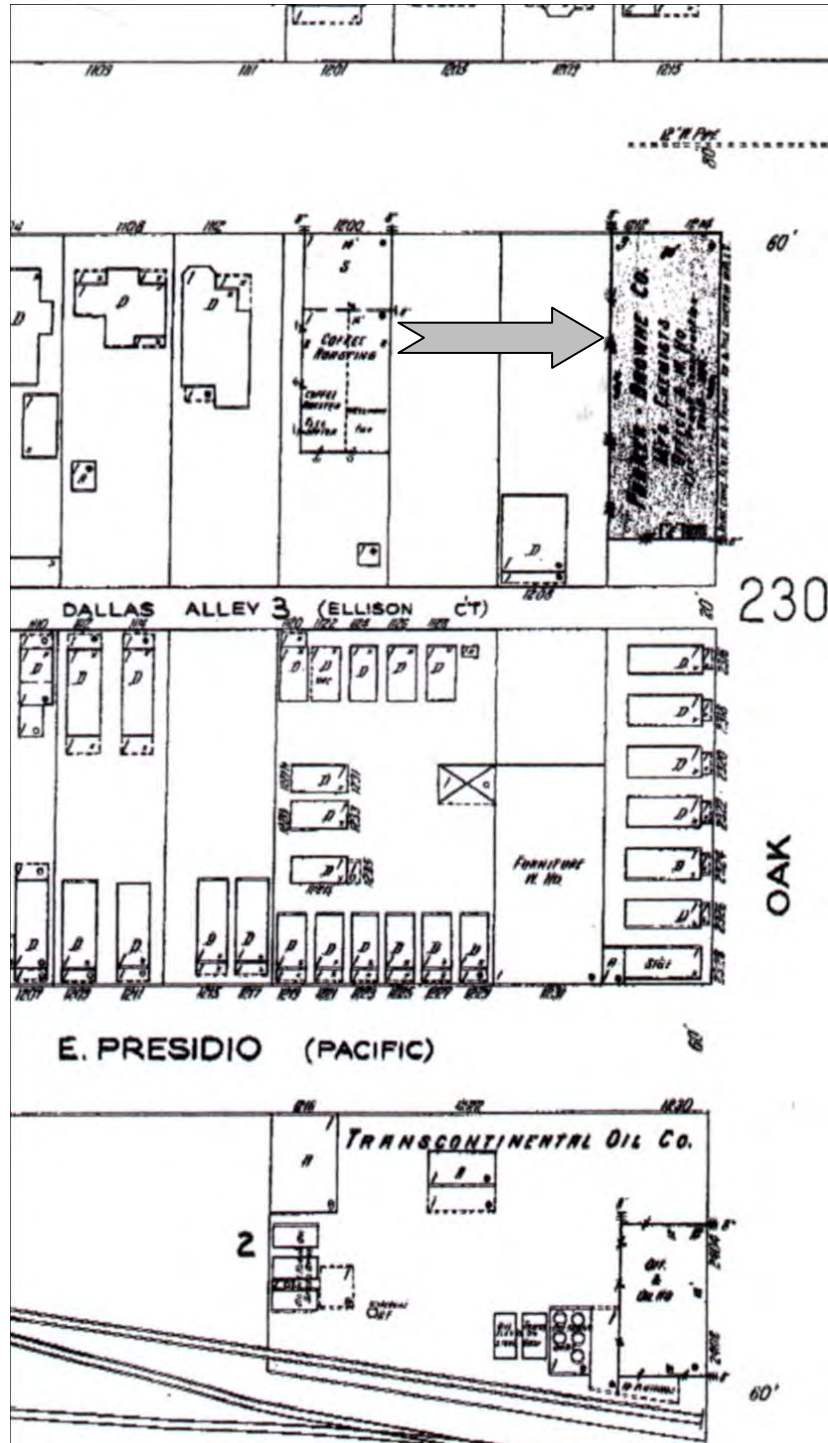
Map 2: Immediate setting of the Parker-Browne Company Building, 1212 E. Lancaster Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas. Google Earth, retrieved April 17, 2015.

32.745848° -97.316584°



Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

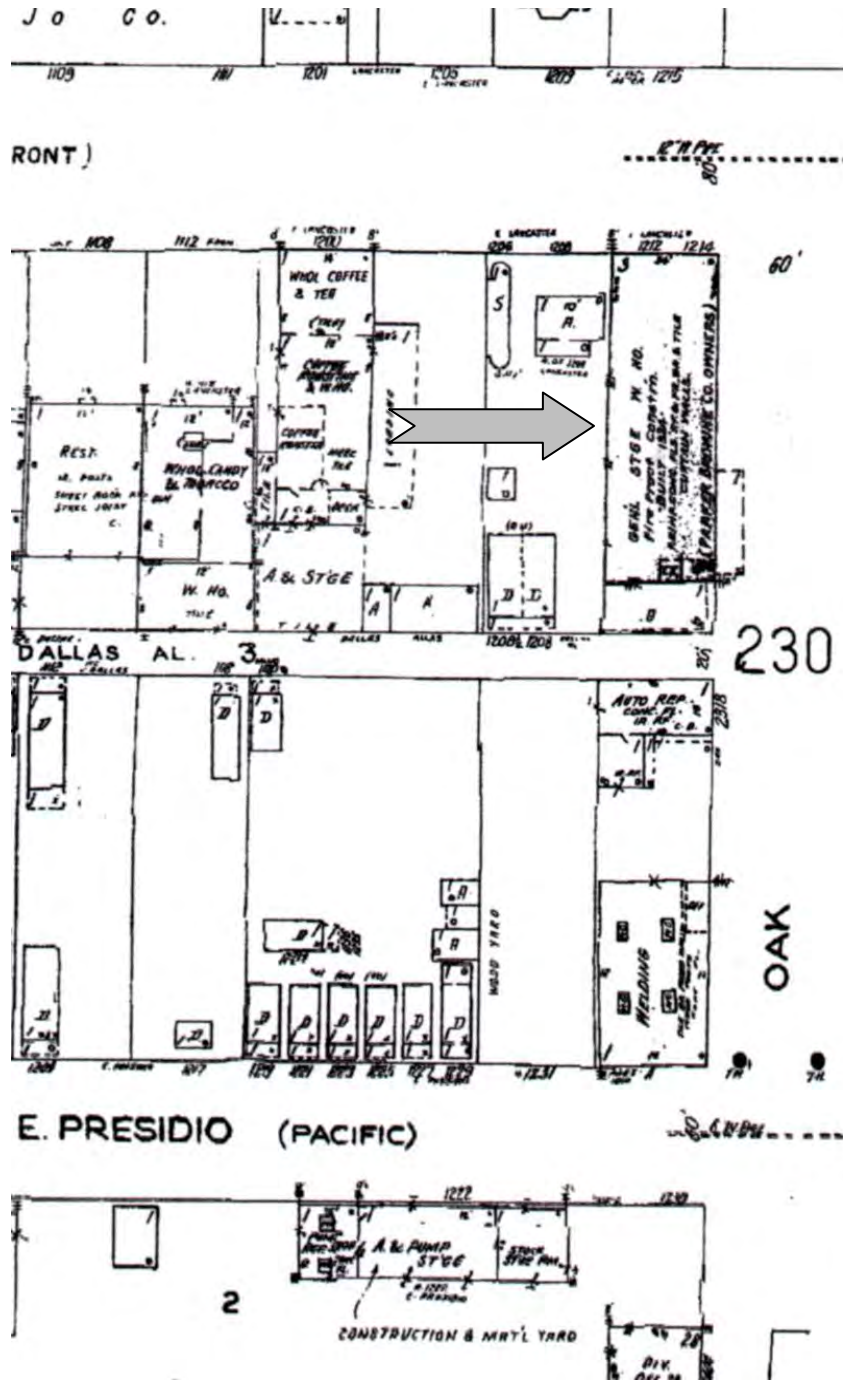
Map 3: Parker-Browne Company Building. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Company, Fort Worth, Texas, 1926, Volume 2, Sheet 229.



N↑

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Map 4: Parker-Browne Company Building. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Company, Fort Worth, Texas, 1951, Volume 2, Sheet 229. Note addition of loading dock on the east elevation.



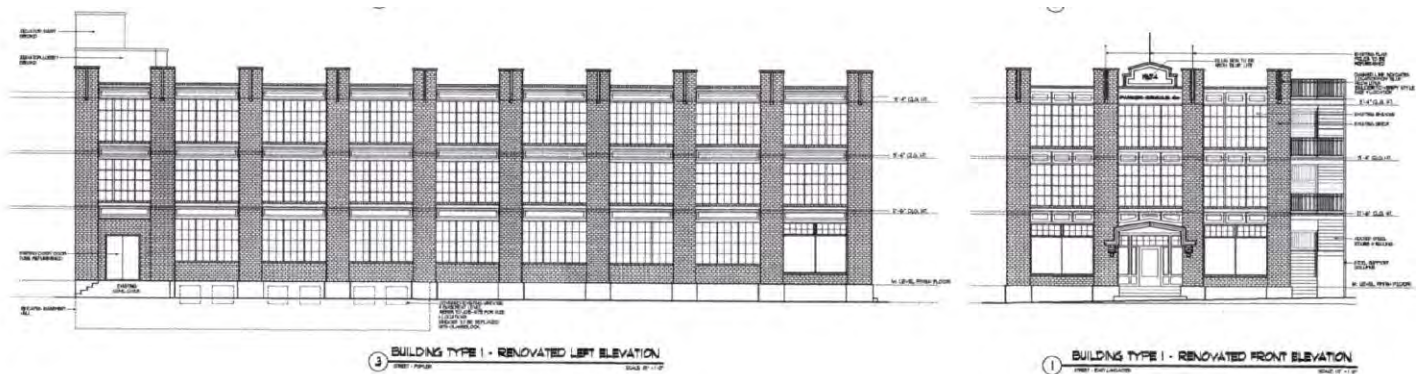
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Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 1: Parker-Browne Company Building, 1212 E. Lancaster Avenue, Fort Worth, TX, c. 1943. W. D. Smith Collection, Special Collections, University of Texas at Arlington Libraries, Arlington, TX.



Figure 2: Front (north) and east elevations showing proposed rehabilitation. *Courtesy N.T.S. Architects & Planners, Inc.*



Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 3: Early concept for rehabilitation of west and rear (south) elevations. *Courtesy N.T.S. Architects & Planners, Inc.*

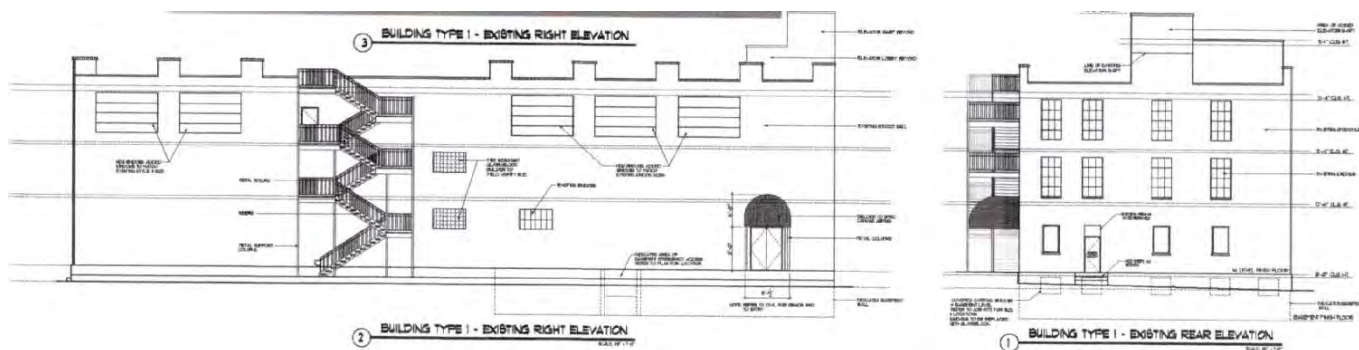
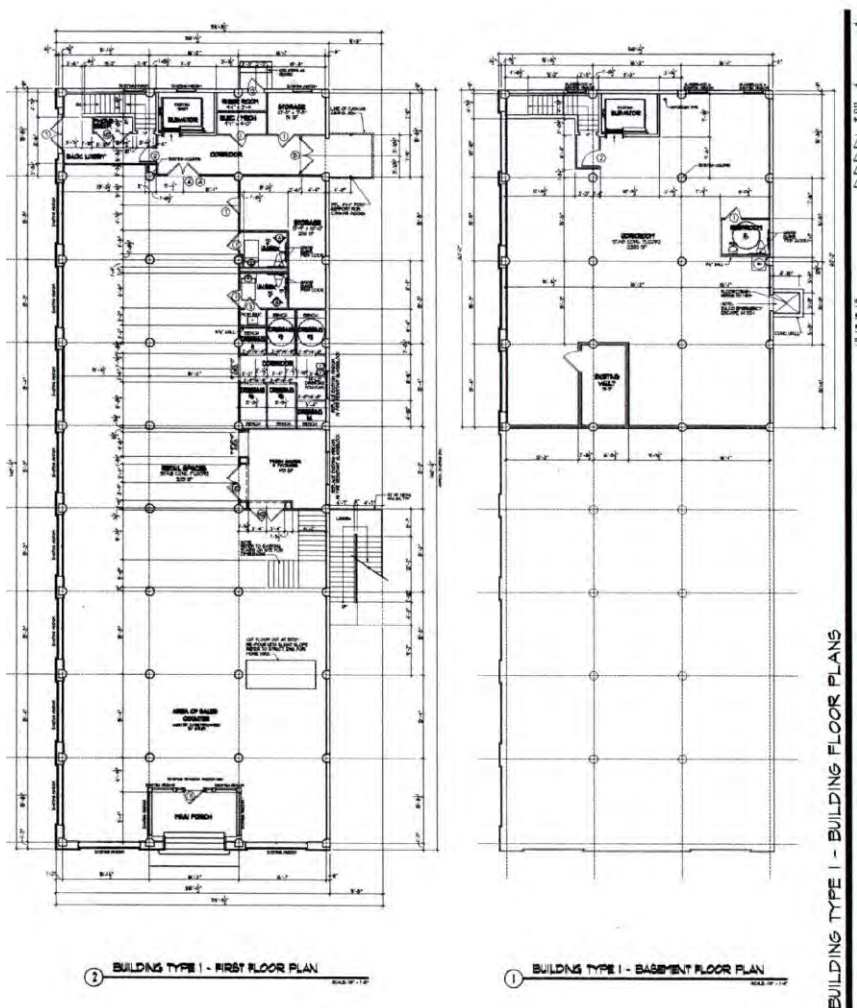
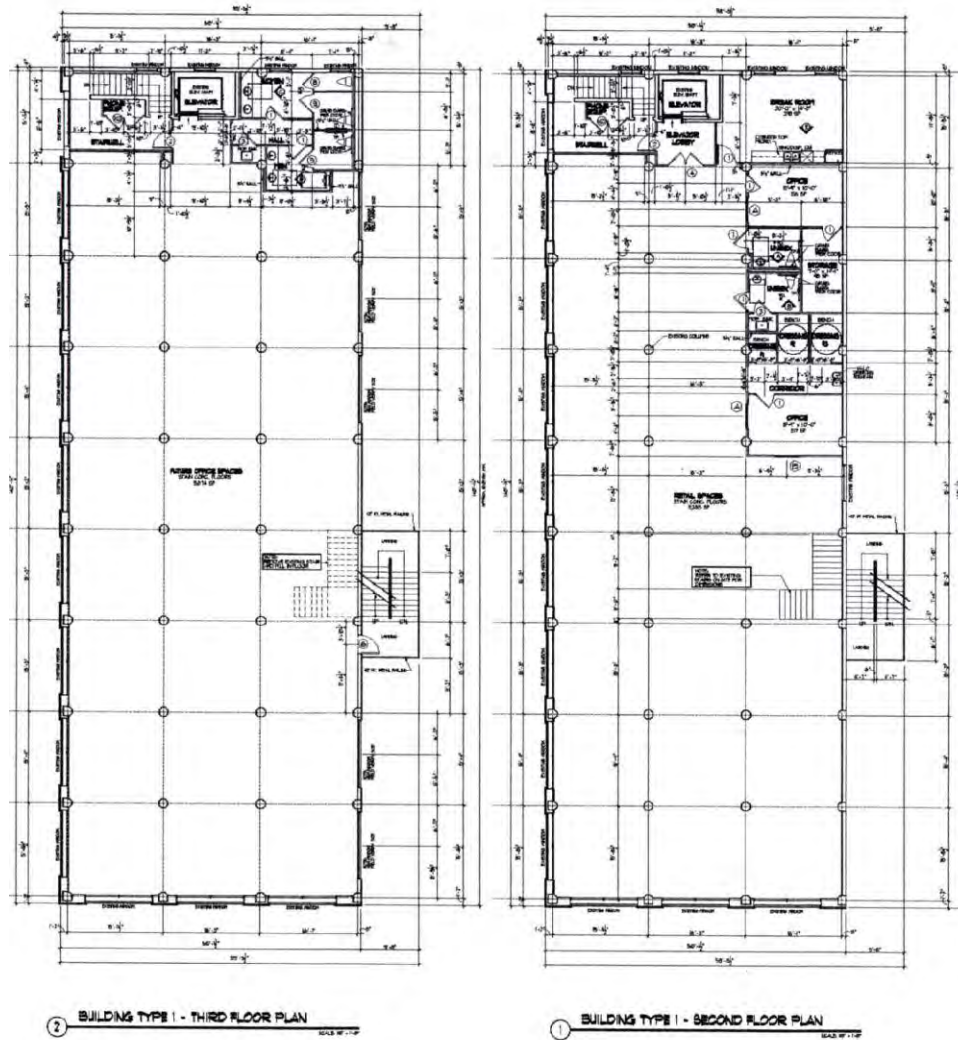


Figure 4: Proposed rehabilitation of basement and first floor. Bottom of plan is north. *Courtesy N.T.S. Architects & Planners, Inc.*



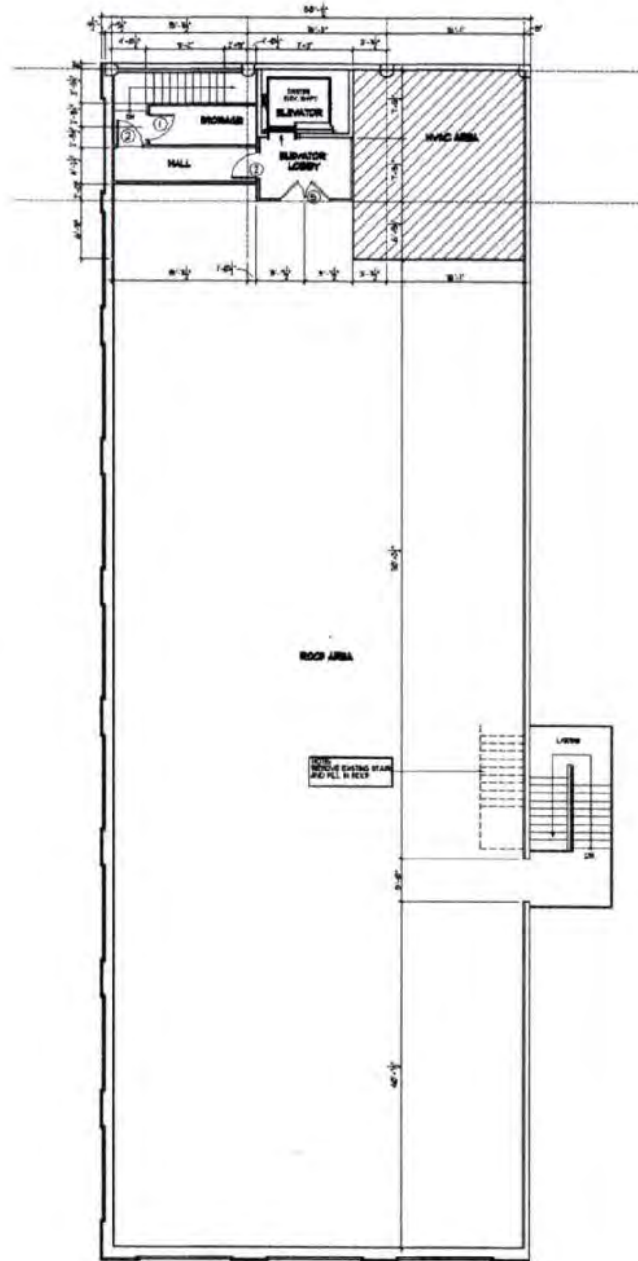
Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 5: Proposed rehabilitation of second and third floor. Bottom of plan is north. *Courtesy N.T.S. Architects & Planners, Inc.*



Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 6: Proposed rehabilitation of roof. Bottom of plan is north. Courtesy N.T.S. Architects & Planners, Inc.



1 BUILDING TYPE I - FOURTH FLOOR PLAN & ROOF DECK
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 7: Detail of recessed entrance and tile block with the name “Parker-Browne Co.”



Figure 8: 610 W. Daggett was the location of the Sewing Room and Home Economics Division prior to the establishment of the Sewing Room at the Parker-Browne Company Building in 1939.



Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 9: Williamson-Dickie Company Building at 509 W. Vickery Boulevard, also on Fort Worth's Southside, was built the same year as the Parker-Browne Company Building.



Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 1

North (front) elevation, camera facing southwest



Photo 2

North and east elevations, camera facing southwest



Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 3 Photographer: Steve Kline; Date: September 6, 2013
South (rear) elevation, camera facing northwest



Photo 4 Date: September 6, 2013
West elevation, camera facing southeast



Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 5

Interior, first floor, camera facing south



Photo 6

Interior, third floor, camera facing north







1924

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Parker--Browne Company Building

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Tarrant

DATE RECEIVED: 4/24/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/19/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/03/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/09/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000337

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT _____DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The Parker—Browne Company Building is locally significant under National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture and Social History. The building, a three-story, brick, clay tile, and reinforced concrete warehouse structure, is among the dwindling number of early twentieth-century industrial facilities still extant within Fort Worth's transitional Southside neighborhood. Erected in 1923-24, the prominent building is characterized by steel, multi-light industrial sash, vertical brick pilasters and heavy concrete spandrels enlivened with decorative trim. Built during Fort Worth's early twentieth century building boom to house offices and warehouse facilities for an extract manufacturing concern, the building hosted a WPA Sewing Room during the Depression. The Sewing Room provided unemployed local women with much needed economic security. (According to one source, approximately 7% of the WPA's workers nationally were women engaged in clothing operations via Sewing Rooms and other similar temporary operations. Susan Allen Kline, "We Patch Anything: WPA Sewing Rooms in Fort Worth, Texas," *Living New Deal*, May 27, 2013).

RECOM. /CRITERIA Accept Criteria A+C

REVIEWER Paul R. Lusignan DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 6/3/2015

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories



TO: Edson Beall
 National Park Service
 National Register of Historic Places
 1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)
 Washington , DC 20005

FROM: Gregory Smith
 National Register Coordinator
 Texas Historical Commission

RE: Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

DATE: April 17, 2015

The following materials are submitted:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original National Register of Historic Places form on disk.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the National Register of Historic Places nomination for Parker-Browne Company Building, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas.
	Resubmitted nomination.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
	Multiple Property Documentation form on disk.
	Resubmitted form.
	Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CD with TIFF photograph files, PDF, and KMZ file
	Correspondence

COMMENTS:

- SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)
- The enclosed owner objections (do___) (do not___) constitute a majority of property owners
- Other:

