

Terminal Arcade (1911)  
822 Wabash Avenue  
d. 1911

Owner: Hulman & Company  
820 Wabash Avenue  
Terre Haute, Indiana

Description:

Photo #11, Bldg. #154

The Terminal Arcade, located on Wabash Avenue just west of Ninth Street, was built by the Terre Haute Traction and Light Company in 1911. Designed by the eminent Chicago architect, Daniel H. Burnham, this one-story building is a small-scale, well-proportioned example of Beaux-Arts Classicism. The skewed plan of the building, caused by Wabash Avenue's veer to the northeast beginning at this lot, causes the building to be parallelogram in plan, with oblique angles at each corner. The east and west walls are of brick and have no notable architectural detailing. Wallner limestone quarried in Bedford, Indiana, was used to create the identical north and south facades, which feature the exuberant decorations typical of Beaux-Arts structures.

The main (south) facade is three bays wide and is symmetrical around a center axis. The middle bay features a deep barrel vault containing the double main entry doors; the outer face of this vault is supported on either side by Doric columns. The flanking bays each contain a large window with Doric pilasters on either side. These pilasters support a plain frieze and a cyma reversa cornice which stretches across the facade just above the ground floor ceiling level. Above this cornice is a paneled area featuring interposing pilasters with lion's head capitals. The panels over the ground floor windows are each decorated with a large oval cartouche, and heavy draped garlands stretch across these panels between neighboring pilasters. Garlands and another cartouche, bearing yet another lion's head, appear over the entry vault. Centered above the attic story is a long tablet bearing the engraved legend, "Terminal Arcade." A gradual transition between the tablet and attic cornice is achieved by means of a series of consoles. Over the center of the tablet is a single carved basket of fruit luxuriantly overflowing, serving as a finial.

Significance:

The Terminal Arcade is architecturally significant as the work of famous Chicago architect, Daniel H. Burnham, and as a prime example of the Beaux-Arts style. Historically, the building is significant as one of the last remnants of the days of the interurban transportation system which served major midwestern cities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The building later served as a bus station, but since the late 1960's it has stood empty.

The Terre Haute Traction and Light Company, which had provided interurban service to Terre Haute since 1890, determined in 1910 to construct the Terminal Arcade to serve as a station for their passengers. The interurban lines by that time extended north of Terre Haute to Clinton, east to Indianapolis, South to Sullivan, and west to Paris, Illinois. The building included room for various service and retail businesses catering to the traveler, and at one time housed a saloon, barber shop, cigar store, music store, and even a real estate agency. After the demise of the interurban system, the Terminal Arcade was used for many years as the city bus station, but a new station was constructed in the late 1960's, and the Arcade has since stood empty. ✓

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Building #154, Continued

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The building is an unusual and excellent example of the early work of Daniel Burnham, who later became much more famous as a leading designer of the Chicago School. This small Beaux-Arts structure features an unusual skewed plan (owing to the irregularity of the building site) with identical entry facades at both the north and south ends. These facades carved from Wallner limestone, obtained from Bedford, Indiana, were executed by J. W. Quayle and Fred Elder, and are considered to be among their best handiwork. Especially notable are the carved fruit baskets at the apex of each facade.

Geographical Data

Acreage: Less than one acre

UTM Reference: 16/465180/4368440

Boundary: Map #1806-22, Block #310, Parcel #010