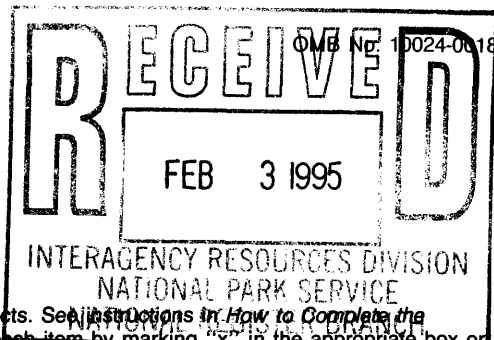


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



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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 Indiana State Library and Historical Building

other names/site number 098-296-01501

2. Location

street & number 140 North Senate Avenue N/A not for publication

city or town Indianapolis N/A  vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Marion code 097 zip code 46204

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  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Daniel R. Kalkbrenner* 1-27-95  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
State of 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:
- 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 Edson H. Beall Entered in the National Register 3/3/95 Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- 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
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	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**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: library

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: library

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Neo-Classical Revival

Art Deco

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: limestone

walls STONE: limestone

METAL: bronze

roof ASPHALT

other METAL: iron

CONCRETE

**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.)

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

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- 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)

ARCHITECTURE

ART

EDUCATION

**Period of Significance**

1934-1945

**Significant Dates**

1934

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Pierre, Edward Dienhart Joseph

Wright, George Caleb

**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):**

- 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
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Indiana State Library and Ball State University

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** 1.26 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 6	5 7 1 6 2 0	4 4 0 2 3 1 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

**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 Jeffrey L. Huntington, Executive Director

organization Hillforest Historical Foundation, Inc. date August 15, 1994

street & number P.O. Box 127, 213 Fifth Street telephone 812-926-0087

city or town Aurora state IN zip code 47001

**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 the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

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

name State of Indiana, Department of Administration

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**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. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Marion County, IndianaNarrative Statement of Description

The Indiana State Library and Historical Building is an excellent example of Stripped Classical Modernism with its combination of Neoclassical features and Art Deco detailing. This style of architecture dominated government building projects during the 1930s. The building has a balanced and symmetrical plan and exhibits a subtlety in ornamentation.

The front or east facade contains nine bays. From the sidewalk along Senate Street there are four shallow limestone steps which lead onto a broad limestone platform and another set of four shallow steps which lead to a small centrally-located platform at the front or main entrance. Small lawns flank either side of the entrance steps. There is a large stylized limestone surround at the front entrance which is topped by an owl, the symbol of learning and wisdom, supporting an open book and carved above the doorway is "INDIANA STATE LIBRARY AND HISTORICAL BUILDING". On the first floor there are large cast bronze security doors which slide into the exterior walls when not in use. The original interior doors have been replaced with a modern aluminum and glass air lock. There are four small windows flanking either side of the front door. The openings are covered with decorative wrought iron bars. From the southeast corner, there are large limestone urns with carved bison decoration between the third and fourth windows and the sixth and seventh windows. The front facade is dominated by nine large, deeply-recessed windows on the second floor which are the main public spaces of the building. Originally these were steel casement windows, but they have been replaced with aluminum frames and maintain the same openings. Between the first and second floor windows there are small, square carvings which include: an Indian with a peace pipe; a trapper; a Catholic Priest; a woodsman or pioneer; a plainsman; and representing invention is a motion picture machine, transportation is represented by an airplane, and the arts by a designer and his instruments.

Directly above the second floor windows there is a cornice and a short third floor containing nine small steel casement windows. At either end and between each window opening there are bas-relief panels (5'x 8') with carvings. The carvings, by Leon Hermant of Chicago, Illinois, are slightly larger-than-life and tell the story of the settlement and development of Indiana. The carvings show, starting from the southeastern corner, the Explorer (La Salle at

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the portage of the St. Joseph and Kankakee rivers), the Soldier (Capture of Vincennes), the Pioneer, the Farmer, the Legislator (signing the state constitution), Miner, Builder, Constructor, Manufacturer, Educator, and the Student. The surface of the figures is flush with the face of the building, the relief in all cases being obtained by cutting deep into the surrounding limestone. The surfaces of the figures are flat and the edges are squarely cut. On the south return of the building, at the same height and in size to correspond with the carvings on the east facade are single figures symbolizing Science, History, Invention, and Religion; on the similar return at the north end are Philosophy, Art, Charity, and Justice. The north and south sides of each contain eight bays and have a similar window configuration to the front facade; however the entire wall steps back approximately one foot after the first bay from the northeast and southeast corner. There is a highly-stylized wall cresting of organic shapes and owls carved in limestone.

Upon entering the front door there is a small lobby, out of which rises a broad marble stairs leading to the foyer (name given by the architects) or main reference hall on the second floor. (Photo #9) The room has marble floors with cast brass inserts, decorative paneled plaster ceiling, and several wooden benches designed by Pierre and Wright. (Photo #14) Flanking either side of the main stairs there are a couple of steps down into a hallway that services the first floor which is devoted to offices, collection storage, restrooms, and an elevator. (Photo #12) In the hall under the stairs is a large plaque which documents the participants of the construction of the building from 1932 to 1934. (Photo #11)

The lobby foyer/reference room, and exhibition hall walls are constructed of Monte Cassina sandstone from quarries at St. Meinrad, Indiana, which is a warm buff color with veins of brown. On the north wall of the lobby is carved the following inscription:

IN MEMORY OF THE PIONEERS OF INDIANA, WHO IN LAYING  
THE FOUNDATIONS OF A STATE AMID PRIMITIVE SURROUNDINGS,  
HAD THE WISDOM AND FORESIGHT TO PROVIDE FOR THE SELF-  
INSTRUCTION OF ITS CITIZENS BY ESTABLISHING A STATE  
LIBRARY.

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On the south wall is carved:

THE STATE LIBRARY WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 1825; THE PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION ESTABLISHED IN 1899 WAS UNITED WITH IT IN 1925. THE HISTORICAL BUREAU WAS CREATED AD 1915 AS THE INDIANA HISTORICAL COMMISSION.

The central main stair leads up to the foyer/main reference hall. (Photo #10) The foyer has a forty-two foot barrel vaulted, coffered ceiling and the room contains large elaborate spun and cast brass metal lighting fixtures which are supplemented by ten newer square fixtures. The room has a marble floor with small cast brass squares representing coins from many foreign nations and contains a variety of decorative motifs spaced periodically. Located in the west wall are five large stained glass windows which were created by J. Scott Williams of New York. The center window depicts William Henry Harrison and General Anthony Wayne, plus other figures of early Indiana history, with the insignia of the state flag in the background. The other four windows illustrate means in which knowledge has been transferred in the past (from left to right); the left window displays the Oral Tradition of communication; (Photo #16) the next window shows thirteenth century monks illuminating a manuscript; the window to the right of the center window shows Gutenberg reading a freshly printed page; and the far right window shows an American Indian working on a legend by illustrating it with pictures. These windows are illuminated by an internal light well. Directly across from the top of the stairs and under the center stained glass window is the reference/information desk. (Photo #15) Behind the desk are a set of doors which lead into a workroom and further back are the book stacks. Lining the south wall, under the stained glass windows and flanking the reference desk are built-in card catalogues with cast brass owl decorations. (Photo #13)

To the north end of the foyer/main reference room is an entrance to the Indiana History Room and to the south is the General Reference and Reading Room. Both rooms feature walnut veneer woodwork and paneling, built-in book shelves with brass detailing, high ceilings with stenciled decoration over the exposed concrete beams, and a mural by J. Scott Williams. The north room mural is entitled "Song of the Indian Land" and the south room mural is "Indiana Gift of Corn".

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East of the foyer, with access on either side of the main staircase, is the exhibition hall. This space overlooks the stairs. The walls in this room are also constructed of St. Monte Cassina sandstone and has a twenty-two foot coffered ceiling and an elaborate Art Deco lighting fixture. (Photo #17) The east wall contains three of the front windows which overlook Senate Street. In the north and south walls there are double wooded doors with a sandstone surround leading into the Genealogy Library and the Smith Memorial Library respectively. Above the north door is a mural by Williams entitled "The Winning of The State" and the mural above the south door is entitled "The Building of The State". (Photo #17)

Both the Genealogy Library and the Smith Memorial Library, located in the northeast and southeast corners of the building respectively, can be entered either from the Exhibition hall or from the reference rooms to the west. Both rooms have three large windows which face the front of the building, the walls are covered with Jacobean-revival walnut paneling, mezzanine space encircles part of the rooms increasing shelving space, and the ceilings have applied moldings.

The east, south, and north facades of the building are four stories in height, even though from the outside of the building it appears to be only three stories because of the window openings. At the rear of the building are the book stacks which have lower ceiling heights and contain seven stories. When the State Library was constructed there was a desire to include the latest developments in library design and fire protection. This entire area is constructed of ivory glazed blocks, steel supports, and steel and poured concrete ceilings and floors. Two elevators as well as steel stairs service this area. Also, fireproof vaults were built into this section of the building for valuable manuscript collections. The building was also designed with a state-of-the-art heating and ventilation system which continuously circulated fresh air throughout the building.

The semi-public hallways, such as in the basement, fourth floor and others, have plaster walls, terrazzo floors, and simple plaster ceiling moldings. On the fourth floor, at the center of the building and facing Senate Avenue, is the slightly more elaborated office of the State Librarian. Other offices which are located off the hallways are very functional but placed to ensure adequate natural light.



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Under the entire building there is a basement which houses the mechanical systems and was intended for future storage space. The stack area was designed and constructed to permit the addition of four stories which were never built and space was left west of the building for future expansion. The building had an four story addition, plus basement, added in 1976 which houses numerous offices, laboratories, collection stacks, an auditorium, and other facilities to allow the Indiana State Library and the Indiana Historical Society to operate effectively in the building.

The Indiana State Library and Historical Building is an excellent example of a high-quality governmental building which illustrates a popular style of the period, as well as quality construction and architectural materials.

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Narrative Statement of Significance

The most significant structure designed and built by the Indianapolis architectural firm of Pierre and Wright, and the one for which they are best known, is the Indiana State Library and Historical Building (commission #633) located northwest of the Indiana State Capital. The building is an outstanding example of Neoclassical or the Stripped Classical style of architecture popular for governmental buildings in the 1930s.

The Indiana State Library was created by the Indiana Legislature on February 11, 1825 and was housed in various locations during the nineteenth century. The Indiana State Library was one of the first six established in the United States.<sup>1</sup> The library, originally intended to meet the needs of the legislature and other government offices, grew slowly until it was placed under the control and management of the State Board of Education in 1895. Following this change the amount of materials available and public service provided expanded greatly at the State Library. Also, during this period in Indiana history there was an increase in the number of public libraries being established and constructed throughout the state.

A new building for the state library, which was previously housed in the 1888 Capitol building, had been discussed for many years. In the late 1920s the shortage of space so became acute that a coalition of individuals and organizations began a public information campaign. The group published an eight page booklet, For Indiana! A State Library and Historical Building (circa 1926), which describes storing important research materials in the open hallways of the capital building, losing significant items to institutions out of state, the threat of fire, and not being able to adequately serve the citizens of Indiana. The booklet also showed examples of libraries in other midwestern states which had recently been built. One proposal would have placed the new building on the grounds of the State Capital, but the Indianapolis Star (17 July 1930) discouraged this and suggested several other downtown sites including Military Park and the World War mall. However, it was the Depression-era need for public works projects

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<sup>1</sup>Bailey, Louis J., State Librarian, Indiana History Bulletin, Vol. VIII, No. 7, reprinted from a speech given at the 12th Annual Indiana History Conference held at Indianapolis, 12 December 1930.

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and the availability of federal money which allowed the project to finally come to fruition in 1932.

In 1929 the Indiana State General Assembly during its seventy-fifth session authorized a special two cent levy spread over three years levy to fund the one million dollar building, which was to be 180' by 160' in size and house 500,000 volumes. The tax levy generated \$1,023,725.31 and the land, building, and equipment ultimately cost \$982,119.87. The building was constructed under the auspices of the State Library Commission during the gubernatorial administrations of Harry Leslie and Paul V. McNutt. The library was the first building in a proposed group of governmental buildings to be constructed west of the State Capitol towards the White River. A multi-story government office tower was constructed directly south of the library in the 1960s and additional buildings were constructed in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

A booklet, Indiana State Library and Historical Building (1934), published at the time of the building's dedication gave the following description of the \$20,000 design competition:

An architectural competition was held under the direction of Mr. Arthur Bohn of Indianapolis in October, 1931, the jury of award consisting of Mr. Edgerton Swartwout and Mr. Raymond Hood of New York, and Mr. Milton J. Ferguson of Brooklyn.

Swarthwout and Hood were both New York-based architects and Ferguson was the librarian of the Brooklyn Public Library and the former librarian of the California State Library. The judging of plans took two days and was held in the chambers of the Indiana House of Representatives. Following the judging, all of the plans were exhibited for two days. The firm of Pierre and Wright won the architectural competition and the \$2,000 cash prize, with Walter Scholer of Lafayette receiving second place (\$1,500), and Joe E. Wildermuth of Gary receiving third (\$1,000). Honorable mentions, plus \$500 cash prizes, were given to Harrison & Turnock, Burns & James, and McGuire & Shook, all of Indianapolis. A total of thirty-four Indiana architects, including Leslie F. Ayres, who worked with Pierre and Wright a great deal of the time, submitted thirty-eight designs for the project. The rules of the competition only allowed Indiana architects to submit plans for the building. However, Paul Cret, a nationally-known architect and the designer

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of the 1914 Central Library of the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library, was paid to submit a design to the competition.

A newspaper clipping from Fort Wayne, Indiana, Pierre's hometown, states: "The jury, composed of architects of national prominence, pronounced the Pierre & Wright design 'undoubtedly the best set of plans submitted, from a practical and artistic standpoint.'"<sup>2</sup> The selection of Pierre and Wright for this important project was noted in numerous professional publications. Architectural Forum (July 1932) included drawings of the front elevation and floor plans and upon completion a lengthy article containing photographs appeared in American Architect (June 1935).

In January 1932 several houses and the LaSalle Hotel were demolished on the site and bids for the construction of the building were received by the Commission on March 22, 1932. On October 19, 1932 the cornerstone, which held a time capsule containing a number of objects including a "photostat[ic] copy of the winning architectural design by Pierre & Wright," was laid with full Masonic rites.<sup>3</sup>

A 1934 newspaper article discussing the construction of the building stated: "Whenever possible, all work was done by Indiana contractors, and because of civic pride, there was perfect collaboration of architects and artists, contractors and craftsmen and suppliers of materials."<sup>4</sup> The exterior is clad in Indiana limestone and has slightly larger-than-life bas-relief sculpture depicting segments of the state's history running across the top of building's facade. This decoration was carved by Leon Hermant of

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<sup>2</sup>"Winning Library Design Selected," unidentified Fort Wayne, Indiana, newspaper clipping, circa 1931. Edward D. Pierre Collection, Manuscript Division, Indiana State Library, Box 3, scrapbook "Architecture Vol. 4, Publicity".

<sup>3</sup>"Corner Stone Laying of State Library and Historical Building," Library Occurrent, vol. 11, number 9, January-March 1933, p. 19-22.

<sup>4</sup>Humbert D. Pagani, "Indiana's New State Historical Library Is Finest of Its Kind in United States," Indianapolis Star, 23 September 1934.

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Chicago, Illinois.<sup>5</sup> The interior is Monte Cassina sandstone from a quarry at St. Meinrad, Indiana, and is a stone which previously had been used only for the Catholic monastery and academy located in St. Meinrad.

Noted New York-based artist J. Scott Williams (circa 1877-November 4, 1975)<sup>6</sup> wrote in American Architect (June 1935) that:

Such harmony between architecture and decorative art was no accident. It was evolved from a collaborative desire to serve the citizens and commonwealth by producing both beauty and efficient utility -- the best of all memorials to the history of a great state.<sup>7</sup>

Williams had been commissioned to create the stained glass windows in the main reference room/hall of the building<sup>8</sup>, which were produced by Henderson Brothers, 791 First Avenue, New York City and the head craftsman was Stephen Carl Bobolsey.<sup>9</sup> Williams stated that over 4,000 pieces of glass were cut for the project, but only about 3,500 were actually used and the windows have eight different widths of lead. Also, Williams painted the murals in the

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<sup>5</sup>Indiana State Library and Historical Building, Indianapolis: publisher unknown, 1934. Also see, file "Indiana State Library 1939," Indiana Clipping file, Indiana State Library, list entitled "SOME IMPORTANT DATES IN THE BUILDING OF THE INDIANA STATE LIBRARY," undated, which states that the architectural sculptor was chosen 27 July 1932.

<sup>6</sup>Obituary, Library Occurrent, vol. 25, number 5, February 1976, p. 186.

<sup>7</sup>J. Scott Williams, "A State's Memorial to History," American Architect, June 1935, p. 11-24.

<sup>8</sup>Carl F. Ogle, "History, Indiana's Industries Worked Into State Library Murals: J. Scott Williams, A Globe Trotting Painter, Does Job," Indianapolis Star, 24 June 1934.

<sup>9</sup>J. Scott Williams, memo entitled "Glass and Mural Panels For Indiana State Library & Historical Building," undated. File "Indiana State Library 1939," Indiana Clipping file, Indiana State Library.

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reading rooms which are 18' by 9' and the two in the exhibition hall which are 19' by 8'4". Williams, born in England, was educated in Chicago at the Art Institute and began his professional career in 1907 as a pen and ink illustrator for books and magazines.<sup>10</sup> Williams was selected for this commission at the urging of Indiana State Librarian Louis J. Bailey after Bailey had seen Williams's work at the University of Illinois. It is unknown what, if any, influence Williams may have had on the design of the exterior decorative carving of the Indiana State Library and Historical Building. Williams worked with Pierre and Wright on several other Indiana commissions, including Fendrick's Peasant Room Restaurant, probably the stained glass stair hall windows at Ralph Teetor's Hagerstown house, two murals at Milo Stuart Memorial Hall at Arsenal Tech High School, and the initial designs for the Monument Circle Christmas display in 1945.

Extensive correspondence between Williams and Pierre located in the collections at the Indiana State Library indicates that the two men developed a good working relationship and a friendship. The correspondence documents the creative process from early discussions concerning the project's concept through issues centered on installation and illustrates how the architect worked in cooperation with the artist to appropriately decorate an important public building.

Pierre was asked to submit designs for an archives addition to the building in 1947 and 1948 as well as designs for enlarging the State Library in June 1951 (Edward D. Pierre & Associates commission #596). The 1951 drawings completed by Pierre for this project indicate that Ammerman, Davis & Stout of Indianapolis would have been the mechanical engineers and Walter H. Wheeler of Minneapolis would have been the structural engineer.<sup>11</sup> However, this construction project did not occur until 1976 under the direction of the architectural firm of Burkhart, Shropshire,

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<sup>10</sup>Obituary, St. Louis Dispatch Post, November 1975, included in the Indiana Biographical Series, compiled by the Indiana State Library, vol. 82, p. 79, c. 3.

<sup>11</sup>Edward D. Pierre & Associates, plans for an addition to the Indiana State Library and Historical Building, 15 June 1951. Edward D. Pierre Collection, Manuscript Division, Indiana State Library, folder of miscellaneous blueprints.

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Boots, Reid &amp; Associates.

Pierre and Wright received a number of other civic commissions ranging from buildings for the Indianapolis Public School system to small neighborhood fire stations for the Indianapolis Fire Department. Several of the projects won local and state architectural competitions in which the firm enjoyed participating in with regularity. Other commissions were public works projects intended to boost the economy and to enhance public services. One privately developed and financed commission which could be viewed as a civic commission is Perry Baseball Stadium constructed in 1930-31, now called Bush Stadium, located in Indianapolis.

The architectural firm of Pierre and Wright was one of the most important in Indianapolis during the second quarter of the twentieth century. The two partners had a significant and lasting impact on the city and its built environment. Pierre and Wright entered into partnership on August 1, 1925. During their years of partnership, Pierre handled the clients and the design portions of the operation and Wright oversaw the business aspects and construction. Contemporary Indianapolis architectural firms of the period included Rubush & Hunter, McGuire & Shook, Robert Frost Daggett, Arthur Bohn, D. A. Bohlen & Son, and Herbert Foltz. All of these firms worked in similar architectural styles. A review of the active participants of the Indiana Society of Architects and the Indianapolis Construction League indicate that there was much professional interaction among these Indianapolis architects.

The first significant commission the newly formed firm received was for Williams Creek Estates model homes sponsored by the Indianapolis News. The Williams Creek Estates commission pushed Pierre and Wright into the spotlight of Indianapolis architecture and exposed the firm to the clientele who would use their professional services for the next two decades. Pierre and Wright also designed numerous commercial structures. Most of these were located in the northern portion of Indianapolis, at key intersections of residential neighborhoods. One of these was a Kroger Store at 46th and College Avenue which opened in 1932. The Kroger Store was called a drive-in grocery because it was surrounded by automobile parking and was a new building type on the American streetscape. The building is believed to be the first of its type in Indiana and the forerunner of modern free standing stores and restaurants, which today are common place.

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In 1940, Pierre and Wright served as associate architects with Finnish-born architect Eliel Saarinen (1873-1950) for the Tabernacle Church of Christ, later known as First Christian Church, in Columbus, Indiana. Pierre and Wright supervised construction of the building and were probably selected partly because Saarinen needed a licensed Indiana architect for the project.

Throughout their careers, Pierre and Wright were interested in and worked for affordable housing and were involved in efforts to rid cities like Indianapolis of slums. Also, the firm was involved with the Purdue Housing Research Foundation at Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, and developed numerous examples of affordable, quality housing through the Indianapolis Home Show and the Indianapolis Construction League.

The firm designed the 1941 Indianapolis Home Show house, which won wide acclaim, but World War II delayed its further development. In 1946, at the conclusion of the War and following the termination of the partnership, the United States Gypsum Company produced a color booklet which spotlighted the house.<sup>12</sup> This booklet nationally showcased Pierre and Wright's design and advocated its economical uses of materials and space. The two bedroom house with attached garage, small porch, large windows, low pitched hip roof with wide overhanging eaves, and combination living room and dining room was a forerunner of the modern ranch-style home.

During the Second World War, Pierre and Wright helped organize Indiana's architects into a collective to work for the war effort. At this point the firm did business, at least part of the time, under the name of Allied Architects and Engineers and obtained several important contracts. Among the commissions awarded to Allied Architects and Engineers were Air Force bases at Columbus and Peru, Indiana, the Ammunition Depot at Madison, Indiana, and Hawthorne Village, a 750-unit housing project, in Indianapolis.<sup>13</sup> To date, very little information concerning Allied Architects and

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<sup>12</sup>A House for Today and Tomorrow / No. 2 of Selected Popular Home Series, United States Gypsum Co., 1946. Hendrickson Miscellaneous Papers, blue spiral notebook.

<sup>13</sup>Untitled newspaper clipping, Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette, 4 October 1942. Edward D. Pierre Collection, Manuscript Division, Indiana State Library.



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Engineers has been located.

Both Pierre and Wright were awarded fellowships in the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in April 1951. Wright for his service to the Institute plus his work in legislative affairs, revisions in the state building code, and reform of schoolhouse and tenement laws, Pierre for his contributions for the advancement of architectural design and for the assistance he offered to young architects.<sup>14</sup> This honor had previously been bestowed on only two other Indiana architects: Robert Frost Daggett, of Indianapolis, and Ennis R. Austin, of Osceola.<sup>15</sup>

The architectural firm of Pierre and Wright was disbanded for unknown reasons in 1944. Probably the many years of economic depression during the 1930's and the Second World War in the 1940's put financial and personal strains on the firm and its partners. Also, during this period in American history there were tremendous changes in the architectural profession. Also there seems to have been philosophical differences between the two men.

Edward Dienhart Joseph Pierre (May 22, 1890-March 27, 1971) was born and raised in Fort Wayne, Indiana. At the age of 15 Pierre entered the office of a local architect, John M. E. Riedel, where he was employed as an office boy and draftsman. In 1911 and 1912 Pierre began his college preparatory work at Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana. In 1912 Pierre transferred to the Armour Institute of Technology in Chicago, today known as the Illinois Institute of Technology, where he received a Bachelor of Science Degree in 1915.<sup>16</sup> In addition Pierre worked in the architectural offices of Robert C. Ostegrem, Chicago, and R. S. Lindstorm, Chicago, while studying at the Armour Institute.

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<sup>14</sup>A.I.A. press release packet, Washington, DC, 29 April 1951. Hendrickson Miscellaneous Papers, file "A.I.A. Fellowship".

<sup>15</sup>"Two Indianapolis Architects Will Receive Awards," unidentified Indianapolis newspaper clipping, circa May 1951. Edward D. Pierre Collection, Manuscript Division, Indiana State Library, Box 1, scrapbook "Vol. 1 - Key; Theme".

<sup>16</sup>Rabb & Herschell, An Account of Indianapolis and Marion County. Dayton, OH: Dayton Historical Publishing Co., 1924, vol. 4, p. 596-597.

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Following graduation, Pierre worked as a draftsman in the office of Detroit architect Albert Kahn (1869-1942), the preeminent American industrial design architect of the period, from June 1915 to September 1917.

Pierre served in the United States Army Engineers Corps during World War I from 1917 to 1919. After his military service, Pierre worked briefly with the Indianapolis firm of McGuire and Shook but opened his own practice in 1920. Pierre was accepted as a member of the Indiana Society of Architects on December 19, 1919 and later became a licensed Indiana architect, certificate number 208, on January 3, 1930. Pierre's first independent commission was for the Farmers State Bank (comm. #321) in St. Paul, Indiana. Commissions for several other small banks followed, including Pierre's second commission, the Farmers State Bank in New Ross, Indiana.

During the years of partnership with Wright, Pierre took a leadership role in the Indianapolis community and served in many volunteer capacities. Community planning was one of the recurring themes of Pierre's career. As early as 1937, as chairman of the Balanced Employment Committee of the Construction League of Indianapolis, Pierre had submitted the "Indianapolis Plan" to the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works. He envisioned the plan as a model for rebuilding America. The Federal government endorsed the plan, which was to be tested on the local level; however, today, its effectiveness is unknown. In February 1957, Pierre presented to the National A.I.A. Board of Directors a plan which would "make the Hoosier state and its cities the most beautiful and best planned in the nation." This multi-year plan was to be completed by Indiana's 150th anniversary in 1966.

After 1944, Pierre seems to have spent a vast amount of his time and energy working on his many interests, which included universal quality housing, history, urban planning, strong citizenship, and cultivating American youth. He combined all of these varied interests into his own master plan for Indianapolis and the country for he saw these issues as being interrelated and that they must be addressed as a whole in order to obtain significant results. He continued to work primarily on small architectural commissions, until his death as Edward D. Pierre Associates.

George Caleb Wright (April 25, 1889-February 27, 1973) was raised in Libertyville, Illinois and attended the University of

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Illinois. According to most published sources, he received a bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of Illinois in 1912. Evidently, though, his course work centered on electrical engineering and he did not complete the degree.

Following his departure from the University of Illinois, Wright moved to Chicago and was employed by the International Harvester Company from 1912 to 1918 as a draftsman and later job engineer for building projects such as the Weber Wagon Works and the McCormick Plant. During World War I, Wright was construction supervisor for the Fort Sheridan Hospital, which was being constructed by the United States government. From 1918 to 1923 he served as draftsman, superintendent of construction, and finally as specification writer for the architectural firm of Nimmons, Carr, and (Clark C.) Wright in Chicago.<sup>17</sup> Clark Wright was George Wright's older brother. Years later, in approximately 1931, when Nimmons, Carr and Wright designed the Indianapolis Sears Roebuck & Co. store at North Alabama and Vermont Streets, Pierre and Wright were hired to serve as associate architects.<sup>18</sup>

The reason why George Wright chose to relocate to Indianapolis from Chicago is unknown. One probable reason was that Wright wanted to open his own architectural practice, but did not want to do that in Chicago because his older brother's established firm located there. Upon moving to Indianapolis in 1923, Wright was employed in the office of architect Herbert Foltz. In 1925 he entered into partnership with Pierre. Wright became a registered architect in Indiana, certificate number 12, on October 11, 1929.

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<sup>17</sup>A.I.A. press release packet, Washington, DC, 29 April 1951, Hendrickson Miscellaneous Papers, file "A.I.A. Fellowship". Also, Hendrickson Miscellaneous Papers, gray folder "1941-44", supplemental materials submitted to the National Resource Plan Board, 1942.

<sup>18</sup>"Testing Soil for Building," unidentified Indianapolis newspaper clipping, circa 1931, Edward D. Pierre scrapbook (#3-253) "Key Vol. 1", Drawings and Documents Archives, College of Architecture and Planning, Ball State University. The ARCHIE (ARCHitectural Index Enormous) data base at the Indiana Historical Society, Indiana Division, provided an architectural firm and date for this project.

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Following the end of the partnership with Pierre, in 1944, Wright formed a new firm, in association with Kurt Vonnegut, Sr., called Vonnegut & Wright. Later the firm became Vonnegut, Wright & Yeager, then Wright, Porteous & Lowe, and today is Wright, Porteous & Lowe/Bonar. Wright served as president of Wright, Porteous, and Lowe from 1955 until he retired in 1961.

In 1955 Wright was elected the first president of the Indianapolis (Marion County) Metropolitan Plan Committee. It was during his tenure as president that the comprehensive zoning plan for Marion County was developed. Wright served as the Indianapolis Building Commissioner from 1963 until 1969. Also, Wright was instrumental in writing the Indiana State Building Code and in establishing the Indiana Administrative Building Council.<sup>19</sup>

Pierre and Wright, during their nineteen-year partnership, designed and constructed many excellent buildings in and around Indianapolis and Indiana. Their skill and talent as architects is evident in the quality of construction and the many architectural styles in which they worked. Pierre and Wright ended their partnership at a time when architectural offices were becoming larger and more specialized. Individual architects worked less as artists and more as businessmen and facilitators for construction projects. Wright went on to lead an architectural firm which designed and built some important Post-War structures in Indianapolis. Whereas, Pierre choose to operate a small office with himself as the principal architect. In the decades following the separation, Pierre primarily generated plans for houses and spent a great deal of his time on his other interests.

Pierre and Wright are generally considered to be Indianapolis architects because that is where they were based and many of their works are located there. However, the firm designed buildings throughout the entire state of Indiana and several buildings are early proto types of national building trends. The best example of their work together is the Indiana State Library and Historical Building. The classically proportioned Indiana State Library and Historic Building with stylized Art Deco detailing is Pierre and Wright's greatest design triumph and the one commission which gave them the most national exposure. The 1934 booklet Indiana State

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<sup>19</sup>"George Wright Appointed Building Commissioner," Indiana Architect, February 1963, p. 7.

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Library and Historical Building summarizes their architectural achievements:

The plan and design for the Indiana State Library and Historical Building, guided by a fine imagination and drawn with a firm hand, avoids completely the confused expression so common to many similar buildings. Although the exterior is Greek in many of its details, and a classic simplicity and dignity pervade the entire structure, any evidence of a slavish copying of ancient forms is wholly missing. Its beauty is a matter of proportion rather than applied ornament.

From the great cove at the ground line, which sweeps the foundation up to the wall above, the building rises with a straight forwardness and purity of line which makes it a worthy contemporary of the growing list of fine public buildings which have been erected during the last decade.

The value of restraint in architectural design has been truly appreciated--restraint has indeed been deemed a paramount virtue, but at no point has its practice resulted in bareness; incident and charm still remain.

An addition was added to the building in 1976 under the direction of the Indiana State Library and Historical Building Expansion Commission which was created by an act of the Indiana General Assembly in 1973. The \$4,985,072 addition was a cooperative effort by the Indiana Historical Society, the state and federal government. The addition added 87,053 square feet to the existing 120,000 square feet and was designed by Burkart, Shropshire, Boots, Reid & Associates, Inc.

The Indiana State Library and Historical Building, the most significant Pierre and Wright designed building, is worthy of preservation and listing in the National Register of Historic Places for several reasons including, its excellent architecture which represents a specific period in American history, its connection with Pierre and Wright and the art work by J. Scott Williams, and its importance to the citizens of Indiana.

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**Major Biographical References**

**Primary Sources**

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Section 10-Geographical Data-Verbal boundary description

Part of Square 49 of the Donation Lands to the City of Indianapolis, as per plat thereof recorded in Deed Record "S" page 364 in the Office of the Recorder of Marion County, Indiana; also part of Osage Street the same having been vacated per Declaratory Resolution 17753; being more particularly described as follows

commencing at the southwest corner of Square 51 of said Donation Lands; thence North 02 degrees, 00 minutes, 47 seconds East (basis of bearings is the Indiana Plane Coordinate System) along the west line of Squares 51 and 50 a distance of 645.52 feet to a point. Said point being on the south line of a Permanent Easement to the City of Indianapolis, recorded as Instrument No. 83-78291 in said Office of the Recorder; thence continuing North 02 degrees, 00 minutes, 47 seconds East along said west line 60.29 feet to the north line of said Easement; thence on the following four courses along the north and west lines of said Easement; (1) South 87 degrees, 57 minutes, 43 seconds East 307.81 feet to the point of curvature of a curve concave Northwesterly, having a central angle of 65 degrees, 01 minutes, 30 seconds and a radius of 33.00 feet; (2) Northeasterly along said curve an arc distance of 37.45 (said arc being subtended by a chord having a bearing of North 59 degrees, 31 minutes, 32 seconds East and a length of 35.47 feet); (3) North 27 degrees, 00 minutes, 47 seconds East 221.95 feet; (4) North 02 degrees, 00 minutes, 47 seconds East 2.96 feet to the south line of Ohio Street; thence South 87 degrees, 53 minutes, 55 seconds East along Ohio Street, being the north line of Square 49 and 50, a distance of 194.86 feet to the true Point of Beginning of this description; thence South 02 degrees, 09 minutes, 00 seconds West along the west face of the existing Indiana State Library Building 181.63 feet; thence South 87 degrees, 55 minutes 43 seconds East along the south face thereof 233.04 feet; thence along a west face of said building South 02 degrees, 21 minutes, 00 seconds West 3.23 feet; thence continuing along the south face of said State Library Building and beyond the southeast corner of said building to the west right-of-way of Government Way (formerly Senate Avenue), South 87 degrees, 52 minutes, 00 seconds, East 70.14 feet; thence North 02 degrees, 02 minutes, 00 seconds East along the west right-of-way of Government Way 184.86 feet to the southwest corner of Government Way and Ohio Street; thence along the South right-of-way of Ohio Street North 87 degrees, 55 minutes, 00 seconds West 303.18 feet to the Point of Beginning. Containing 1.26 acres, more or less.

The above description is to be used for a general description of the Indiana State Library property and is not intended to substitute for the exact location that a legal survey would describe.



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## Section 10-Geographical Data-Boundary Justification

This boundary contains the entire library building, including the 1970s addition to the rear. The boundary does not include the entire parcel set aside for the library because part of the lots to the rear were later used for an addition to the Indiana State Office Building, which is immediately adjacent to the library. The map included also indicates the exact boundary as described.

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The following information is the same for all photographs:

1. Indiana State Library and Historical Building
2. Indianapolis, Indiana
3. Jeffrey L. Huntington, photographer
4. August 1, 1994
5. Negatives: Jeffrey L. Huntington, P.O. Box 127, Aurora, IN  
47001

- Photograph #1  
Exterior - front facade. Camera facing west.
- Photograph #2  
Exterior - front facade. Camera facing west.
- Photograph #3  
Exterior - front facade. Camera facing southwest.
- Photograph #4  
Exterior - front facade. Camera facing northwest.
- Photograph #5  
Exterior - front facade detail. Camera facing west.
- Photograph #6  
Exterior - front facade detail. Camera facing west.
- Photograph #7  
Exterior - south facade. Camera facing northwest.
- Photograph #8  
Exterior - northwest corner. Camera facing southeast.
- Photograph #9  
Interior - foyer. Camera facing southwest.
- Photograph #10  
Interior - main reference room. Camera facing north.
- Photograph #11  
Interior - detail of plaque. Camera facing west.
- Photograph #12  
Interior - detail of elevator doors. Camera facing north.

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Photograph #13

Interior - detail of card catalogs. Camera facing southwest.

Photograph #14

Interior - detail of bench. Camera facing southeast.

Photograph #15

Interior - detail of stained glass window. Camera facing west.

Photograph #16

Interior - detail of stained glass window. Camera facing west.

Photograph #17

Interior - detail of mural. Camera facing south.

Photograph #18

Interior - detail of chandelier. Camera facing southwest.

Photograph #19

Interior - example of hallway. Camera facing north.