

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

1210

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Ogilvie Hardware Company Building, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, LA

Page 1

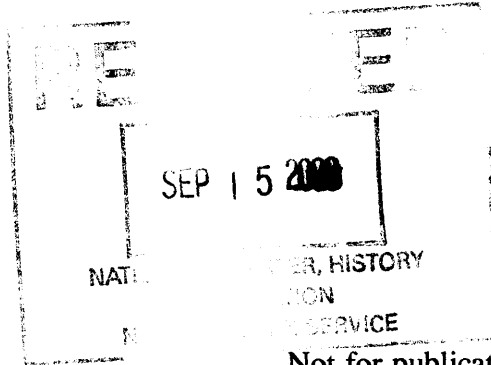
United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Ogilvie Hardware Company Building

Other Name/Site Number:



Not for publication: NA

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 217 Jones Street

City/Town: Shreveport

Vicinity: NA

State: Louisiana Code: LA County: Caddo Code: 017 Zip Code: 71101

3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria.

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

Nationally: Statewide: Locally: X

Handwritten signature of Gerri Hobdy

Handwritten date 8/28/00

Signature of Certifying Official/Title Gerri Hobdy, LA SHPO, Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

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

Signature of Commenting or Other Official/Title

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Ogilvie Hardware Company Building, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, LA

Page 2

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this 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):

Edson H. Beall
Signature of Keeper

10/12/00
Date of Action

5. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property
Private: X
Public-Local:
Public-State:
Public-Federal:

Category of Property
Building(s): X
District:
Site:
Structure:
Object:

Number of Resources within Property
Contributing
1
1

Noncontributing
buildings
sites
structures
objects
0 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 0

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: NA

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NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Ogilvie Hardware Company Building, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, LA

Page 3

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: commerce/trade

Sub: warehouse

Current: vacant

Sub: not in use

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: no style

Materials:

Foundation: concrete

Walls: brick (vener)

Roof: other: tar and gravel

Other:

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NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Ogilvie Hardware Company Building, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, LA

Page 4

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The Ogilvie Hardware Company Building is a 93,000 square foot warehouse on the southern edge of downtown Shreveport. Built in 1926 adjacent to a railroad spur to house a wholesale hardware business, it is now severed from downtown by Interstate 20 and is isolated amid various elevated roadways. The virtually unaltered building is of reinforced concrete and hollow tile with a brick veneer.

The 90 foot by 206 foot warehouse has four stories and a basement. The building's distinctive character is achieved by vast bands of windows, stretching across each elevation, uninterrupted by vertical supports. This was made possible by a type of construction referred to at the time as "drop-head cantilever." Essentially, a reinforced concrete floor cantilevers out from the internal structure, supporting the skin of the building, thereby eliminating the need for vertical supports. The warehouse's strong horizontal character is relieved at each corner by a single strongly vertical bay which protrudes slightly from the main wall plane and culminates in a shallow curving parapet. These corner "pavilions" are marked by pilaster-like vertical strips, and the parapet's curving shape is accented by a molded brick course. The pavilions do not correspond to any change in use on the interior (i.e., a staircase). Instead, they are merely cosmetic to mark the corners and to give each elevation a beginning, middle and end in the classical sense. (In a later generation of warehouses the bands of windows would have continued all the way across.) The multiple-pane steel windows are inset with chicken wire and feature central panels that tilt open. The warehouse has an inset loading dock (i.e., behind the wall plane) which encompasses the entire rear (where the rail spur was located) and wraps around most of the eastern side. The northeast pavilion contains the building's sole pedestrian entrance, which is set within a fairly massive concrete surround. A similar surround on the other side of this elevation marks a window. A relatively high concrete wall, with windows above, stretches between the two pavilions. (This is where the building's offices were located.) Atop the roof is a large neon sign with the company name.

On the interior each floor is a vast hypostyle space pierced by two shafts, each containing a freight elevator and staircase (the latter with original fire doors). The articulation of the numerous cast concrete posts gives the interior its distinctive character. All identical, they feature a faceted shaft and a very pronounced, faceted capital which spreads outward to support the weight of the building (see photos). The posts show the imprint of the wooden molds in which they were formed. This is particularly noticeable in the capitals, where the mold was made of pieces of wood placed in a contrasting horizontal/vertical pattern (see detail). Walls on the interior are finished off in hollow tile, as are the elevator shafts.

Assessment of Integrity

The Ogilvie Hardware building survives virtually unaltered from its 1926 construction, even retaining all of its original windows, fire doors, etc. The only changes have been modernization of the office space which stretches across the front (dropped ceilings, modern counters) and the partitioning off of two or three corners of warehouse space with low walls. These spaces are very small. In terms of the size of each floor, they are an optical zero.

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NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Ogilvie Hardware Company Building, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, LA

Page 5

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Applicable National

Register Criteria: A X B__ C__ D__

Criteria Considerations NA

(Exceptions): A__ B__ C__ D__ E__ F__ G__

Areas of Significance: commerce

Period(s) of Significance: 1926-1950

Significant Dates: 1926

Significant Person(s): NA

Cultural Affiliation: NA

Architect/Builder: Clarence King, architect
Werner Company, Inc., general contractor

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NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Ogilvie Hardware Company Building, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, LA

Page 6

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

The Ogilvie Hardware Company Building is locally significant in the area of commerce because it represents Shreveport's very important railroad era commercial history. Shreveport would not have been a regional commercial center in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had it not been for its status as a railroad hub. The most obvious visual reminders of this significant chapter in the city's commercial history would, of course, be warehouses built along the rail line. The Ogilvie Hardware Company Building is being nominated as a rare surviving example of its type. Ogilvie Hardware continued to operate as a wholesale railroad-dependent business up to and past the current 50 year cutoff (1950).

When Ogilvie Hardware was built in 1926, Shreveport was Louisiana's second largest city. Steamboat traffic on the Red River had long been replaced by railroad freight transport. By 1904 there were no less than seven railroad lines converging upon the city. They ran in many different directions in much the manner of spokes on a wagon wheel, or as one source termed it "like the tentacles of a giant octopus."

This excellent railroad network enabled Shreveport to become a major distribution center for what is known as the Ark-La-Tex region. Cotton remained very important to the local economy, with Shreveport being exceeded only by Memphis and Dallas as interior cotton markets. There were several years in the early twentieth century when freight receipts reached 250,000 bales. Railroads also made possible various other important businesses, most notably the lumber industry and numerous wholesale concerns. A 1904 publication boasted that the city's wholesale merchants "cover a tributary field spreading in all directions from 100-300 miles of almost undisputed territory." By 1937 the city had 162 wholesale concerns doing a gross annual business of \$30,000,000 and employing 2,015 people.

Wholesalers, of course, built their warehouses near or next to the various rail lines and spurs, often taking their shape from the track alignment. Today about a dozen railroad-related warehouses survive in the city - some fairly small, and some, like Ogilvie's, quite large. Generally, they are located in one of two places. There are three or four relatively small railroad-dependent wholesale concerns in the downtown along Commerce Street dating from c.1900 to c.1930. On the southern edge of downtown is a small railroad warehouse district of several buildings. The only one that even begins to approach the Ogilvie building in size is the Taylor Wholesale Grocers and Cotton Factors Warehouse/Lee Hardware Company building. Other warehouses in the area include the 1930s Pittsburgh Plate Glass Warehouse and a few buildings labeled on the 1935 Sanborn map as oil well supply warehouses. (Shreveport experienced a phenomenal oil boom in the early twentieth century.) The Ogilvie warehouse is located to the southeast of the aforementioned warehouse district and separated from it by Interstate 20. In its day it was one of several in the immediate area.

The company, then called Thomas-Ogilvie, started in business in Shreveport in 1910 in a one story building. The candidate was the firm's third home; its construction, noted company president Russell J. Ogilvie, was necessitated by the "consistent and rapid" growth of the business. The roughly 93,000 square foot building represented an investment of about \$210,000. The *Shreveport Magazine*, in September 1926, reported that the contract had been awarded and that construction would start immediately. (The company changed its name to the Ogilvie Hardware Company at some point during the historic period.)

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NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Ogilvie Hardware Company Building, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, LA

Page 7

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Ogilvie Hardware operated its wholesale business in the building until 1999. Today buildings of this size and in this type of location are something of "white elephants" on the real estate market. And, of course, if no re-use can be found for them, their future is indeed uncertain. Of the dozens of good size railroad-related warehouses that once existed in Shreveport, only about 10-12 survive today. A notable success story in adaptive re-use is the above referenced Lee Hardware Building (63,000 square feet), which has recently been converted into apartments. The Ogilvie Building (93,000 square feet) is currently on the market. National Register status is being sought because the 20% tax credit would be a critical incentive to prospective buyers.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Thomas-Ogilvie Hardware Co. Builds New Home," *Shreveport Magazine*, September, 1926.

Sanborn Insurance Company maps, Shreveport, 1935.

Fricker, Donna. Downtown Shreveport Historic District National Register Nominaton, November 1996.
(This nomination, based upon fieldwork and primary source research, provides the historic context for Shreveport's railroad history and related warehouses.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA

- 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 (Specify Repository): company catalogs at LSU-Shreveport Archives

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NPS Form 10-900

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Ogilvie Hardware Company Building, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, LA

Page 8

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: approximately 1 acre

UTM References: **Zone Easting Northing**
 15 430300 3596900

Verbal Boundary Description: See attached sketch map.

Boundary Justification:

Boundaries follow property lines of the parcel of land historically associated with the warehouse.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: National Register staff

Address: Division of Historic Preservation, P. O. Box 44247, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

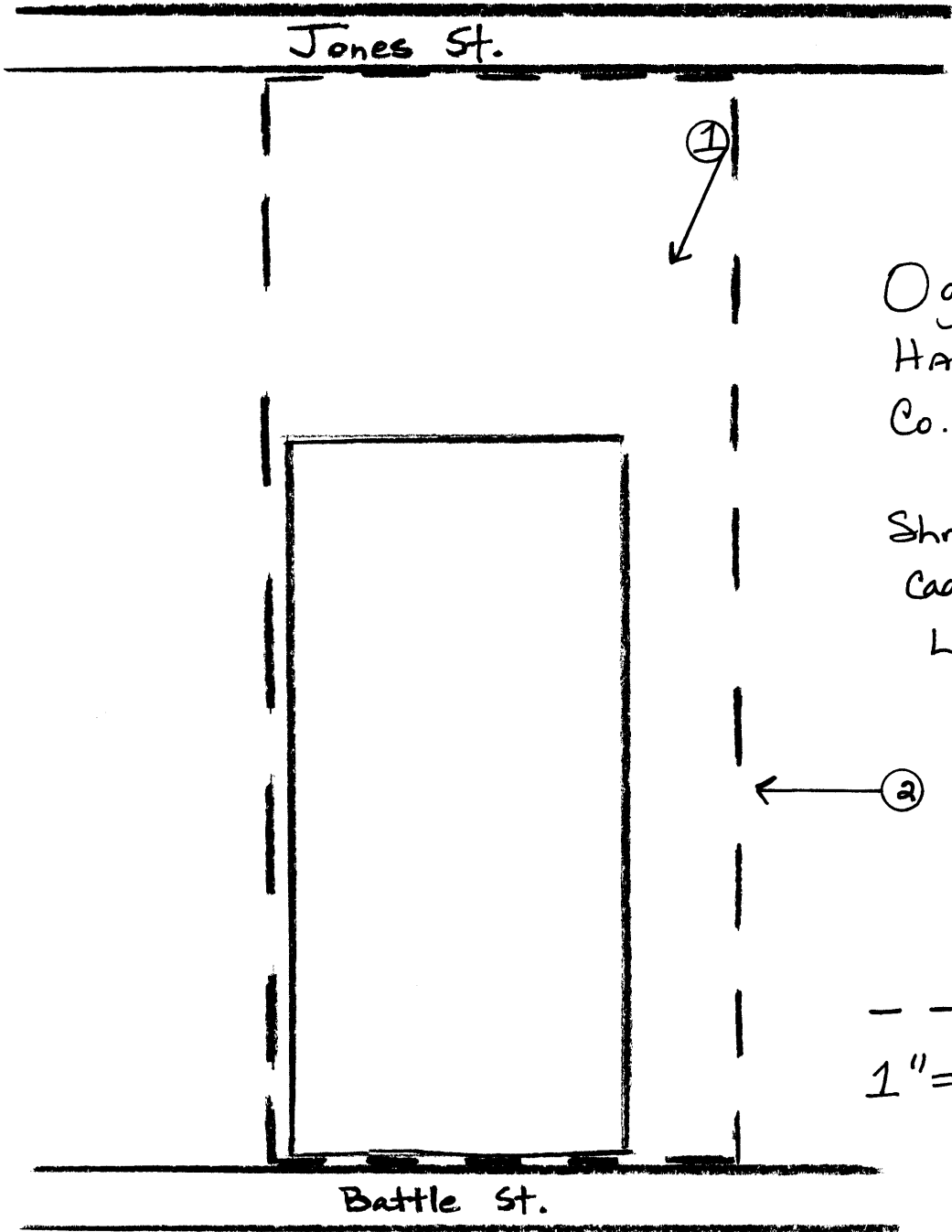
Telephone: (225) 342-8160

Date: June 2000

PROPERTY OWNERS

Burt Ogilvie
Ogilvie Hardware Company, Inc.
P. O. Box 31104
Shreveport, Louisiana 71130-1104
(318) 868-3818

Jones St.



Battle St.

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