

56-1574

Wisconsin Word Processing Format (Approved 1/92)



United States Department of Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Blommer Ice Cream Company  
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number	1502 West North Avenue	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Milwaukee	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Milwaukee	code 079
			zip code 53205

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

*Diana J. Lechner*  
Signature of certifying official/Title

7/19/2017  
Date

State Historic Preservation Office - Wisconsin  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Blommer Ice Cream Company

Milwaukee

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

**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.
  - See continuation sheet.
  - removed from the National Register.
  - other, (explain:)

*Colson H. Beall*

8.31.17

*[Signature]*

Signature of the Keeper

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
- structure
- site
- object

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

contributing	noncontributing
1	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	total

**Name of related multiple property listing:**  
(Enter "N/A" if property 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)  
INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)  
VACANT/not in use

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Commercial Style  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/Italian Renaissance

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)  
foundation CONCRETE  
walls TERRA COTTA, BRICK  
roof SYNTHETICS  
other

**Narrative Description**

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

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

INDUSTRY  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1910-1929  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Esser, Verner, H.  
Esser, Herman, J.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Name of Property

Milwaukee  
County and State

Wisconsin

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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

### Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- 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:

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre

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

1 16 424142.42 4767952.89  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

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

<b>name/title</b>	John Cramer	<b>date</b>	April 14, 2017
<b>organization</b>	MacRostie Historic Advisors	<b>telephone</b>	312-786-1700
<b>street &amp; number</b>	53 West Jackson Blvd., Suite 1142	<b>zip code</b>	60604-3606
<b>city or town</b>	Chicago	<b>state</b>	IL

Blommer Ice Cream Company

Milwaukee

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

**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.)

<b>name/title</b>	Mark Teper	<b>date</b>	April 18, 2017
<b>organization</b>	Galst Foods Properties, LLC	<b>telephone</b>	( 414-659-0080
<b>street &amp; number</b>	2420 West Woodbury Lane	<b>zip code</b>	53209
<b>city or town</b>	Milwaukee	<b>state</b>	WI

**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.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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### Setting and Site

The Blommer Ice Cream Company building is located on the north side of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, approximately 2 miles northwest of downtown. The building is prominently located at the northwest corner of North Avenue and 15<sup>th</sup> Street, with primary façades facing both streets. An east-west alley runs behind the building, to the north. The building occupies over half of the block bounded by North Avenue to the south, the alley to the north, 15<sup>th</sup> Street to the east and 16<sup>th</sup> Street to the west. The west portion of this block, outside of the boundaries of and not on the same parcel as, the nominated property, is occupied by a small, 2 ½ story frame building surrounded by a paved lot; this small building has not historically been associated with the Blommer Ice Cream Company.

The Blommer Ice Cream Company building is among the tallest existing buildings along this stretch of North Avenue and has a distinctive presence in the neighborhood. North Avenue is a main, east-west thoroughfare, lined with commercial development, while the adjacent blocks to the north and south are primarily single family residential. The neighborhood has many vacant lots where buildings have been demolished, especially along North Avenue.

### Exterior

The Blommer Ice Cream Company building is rectangular in plan and was built in sections that range from one to three stories. The building sections were completed in 1910, 1927 and post-1969. Each building section has a flat asphalt roof surrounded by a raised parapet and is built on a concrete foundation. The first section, completed in 1910, is located along 15<sup>th</sup> Street. Originally addressed as 803 15<sup>th</sup> Street, this section is two stories tall, set on a raised basement, and measures approximately 50 by 60 feet.<sup>1</sup> The street façade is utilitarian in design and is clad in white glazed brick. The building addition completed in 1927 is located to the south and is composed of two rectangular sections with frontage on both North Avenue and 15<sup>th</sup> Street. Upon completion, this section of the building served as the factory's main address, at 1502 W. North Avenue. The street façades of this addition were designed in the Commercial Style with Italian Renaissance detailing and are clad in cream-colored terra cotta, providing a clean, modern appearance. The corner section of the 1927 addition was built to provide office, sales, and storage space and is three stories tall, set on a raised basement. This section measures approximately 60 by 75 feet. The west section of the 1927 addition was built as a garage and is two stories tall, measuring approximately 90 by 95 feet. Finally, a one-story, rectangular addition was completed at the rear of the building, after 1969.<sup>2</sup> This section is utilitarian in design, built of

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<sup>1</sup> The address of this building is listed as 809 15<sup>th</sup> Street on the 1910 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map; however the company's newspaper advertisements listed the factory at 803 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

<sup>2</sup> Per Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1969.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

---

concrete, and is only visible from the alley and from 16<sup>th</sup> Street to the west.

*South Façade*

Fronting on North Avenue, the south façade is clad in cream-colored terra cotta and is composed of the three-story office, sales and storage section at the east corner and the two-story garage section extending west. The design of this façade also carries across the building's 15th Street façade to the east.

The south façade of the corner section is three bays wide and is framed by wide end piers, narrow central piers and a raised parapet with a shaped profile. The parapet is capped with a molded band of scroll ornament and features a central cartouche design and notched corners accented with sculptural scroll ornament. Historically, "BLOMMER ICE CREAM CO." was spelled out across the parapet in three-foot-high, gold-leafed letters.<sup>3</sup> This signage has been removed. Below, each façade bay is composed of large rectangular window openings and terra cotta spandrels recessed between multi-story piers that create tall frames around each bay. These frames have molded edges and concave corners, and are trimmed with rope molding. Small, foliate ornament is centered at the top of each frame and within each spandrel. The main entrance is located within the easternmost bay. This entrance is framed with a terra cotta surround ornamented with egg and dart trim and a projecting cornice featuring scroll ornament. A rectangular transom opening is located above the door surround. West of the main entrance, each bay has three small, rectangular basement windows at grade.

The two-story garage section extends five bays to the west and is composed of tall, continuous piers that frame recessed bays of large rectangular window openings with terra cotta spandrels and parapet panels. The piers are edged with rope molding and extend to the top of the flat parapet, which has a molded edge. The west end bay has a shaped parapet. Centered within each spandrel and parapet panel are rectangular, decorative panels each with a scrolled foliate design. An overhead, garage door is located within the easternmost bay of the garage façade. A pedestrian entrance is located within the westernmost bay.

All window, door and transom openings at this façade have been filled in with concrete masonry units. Existing doors are non-historic, steel units. As documented in original drawings and historic photographs, the large window openings were designed with divided light sash, set in groups of three or four, depending on the size of the opening. Windows at the first floor included divided light transoms. Basement windows were also divided light. The main entrance was designed with a single door surrounded by a leaded glass transom and sidelights. The transom opening above the terra cotta

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<sup>3</sup> Esser, Verner H. "The Advertising Value of Beauty and Sanitation in Industrial Buildings," *The Milwaukee Journal*, 26 June 1927.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 3

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

---

entry surround was designed with an ornamental iron grille set in front of black glass panels. While original window and door openings have been removed and filled in, the existing masonry openings retain their historic size and proportions and the historic terra cotta surrounds have not been altered. The historic appearance of the windows and doors are documented in photographs and can be recreated.

*East Façade*

Fronting on 15<sup>th</sup> Street, the east façade is composed of the three-story corner section, completed in 1927, and a two-story section to the north, completed in 1910. Both of these sections are set on raised basements.

The corner section of the façade is clad in cream-colored terra cotta and is a continuation of the design of the south façade. This section is four bays wide and is composed of tall, continuous piers that divide recessed bays of large, rectangular window openings with terra cotta spandrels. These piers end at the third floor window heads and a flat parapet wall extends above. The south end bay of this façade projects slightly and matches the design of the south façade with tall, continuous piers that are flush with the raised parapet above and create a multi-story frame around the recessed window openings and spandrels. This frame has molded edges, concave corners and is trimmed with rope molding. Small, foliate ornament is centered at the top of the frame and within each spandrel. The parapet at this end bay has notched corners that hold sculptural scroll ornament. Large architectural letters advertising the Blommer Ice Cream Co. were historically located above the third floor windows. This signage has been removed. Other ornamentation includes rope molding at the edge of each pier, bands of molding and scroll ornament at the top of the parapet, and spandrel panels ornamented with foliate designs. This section of the façade has no door openings and each bay has a wide, rectangular basement window opening at grade. As documented in original drawings and historic photographs, all window openings historically held groups of three, divided light windows. First floor windows included divided light transoms. All window openings have been filled in with concrete masonry units; however, the existing masonry openings retain their historic size and proportions and the historic terra cotta surrounds have not been altered. The historic appearance of the windows is documented in photographs and can be recreated.

The façade of the 1910 section to the north is clad in white glazed brick. This façade is two stories tall, set on a raised basement and with a raised parapet that has a flat profile. Individual window openings are regularly spaced across the façade, with smaller basement windows located at grade and set in line with the windows above. All window openings are rectangular. A pedestrian door opening is located within the south end of the façade and a large, vehicular door opening occupies the north bay of this façade. The building's concrete structure is exposed at the head and at the north jamb of the vehicular door opening. All window and door openings have been filled in with concrete masonry units;



**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 4

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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however, the existing masonry openings retain their historic size and proportions. The masonry jambs, head and sill of each opening has not been altered. Above the second floor window openings, the parapet has been replaced with concrete masonry units.

*North Façade*

The north façade faces the alley and is composed of the 1910 building section to the east and the post-1969 section to the west. This façade is utilitarian in design, with no decorative treatments.

The 1910 section is two stories tall. Here, the building's concrete structure is exposed, with concrete piers and a wide beam extending across the façade between the first and second floors. Above this beam, the façade is of brick, with rectangular window openings regularly placed across the second floor. The second floor window openings and each structural bay at the first floor have been filled in with concrete masonry units; however, the existing masonry openings retain their historic size and proportions. Above the second floor window openings, the parapet has been replaced with concrete masonry units.

The post-1969 section of the building is one story tall and is composed of concrete masonry unit walls. This façade has no windows.

*West Façade*

The west façade faces the adjacent lot and is composed of the post-1969 building to the north and the 1927 building section to the south. With the exception of a one-bay, terra cotta return at the third story of the building, this façade is largely utilitarian in design, with no ornamental features. The post-1969 section of the façade is one story tall and is of concrete masonry units with a large, vehicular door opening that has a retracting overhead door. The 1927 section of the façade is composed of a plain brick wall. A square louver is cut into this wall near the center of the façade. The one-story, terra cotta return is located at the third story of the 1927 office, sales and storage section of the building. This small return repeats the third floor design from the south façade and the first bay of the east façade.

**Interior**

The interior of the building is primarily composed of large, open industrial spaces that were designed for the production, storage, and shipment of ice cream. The building's concrete structure is exposed throughout the interior, which features massive concrete columns and beams. Columns are both square and circular, with varying cap profiles depending on location. Floors and ceilings throughout are also of concrete. Walls are of brick, clay tile and concrete masonry unit. A freight elevator and utilitarian stair are located near the rear of the 1927 section of the building where the three-story and two-story

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 5

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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section meet.

Historically, finished spaces were limited to the main entrance and adjacent stair within the 1927 section of the building. These spaces remain intact. The main entry vestibule has plaster walls and ceilings and features an arched opening and vaulted ceiling. Walls are ornamented with yellow, glazed-tile wainscoting that includes a playful band of small, colorful tiles. The adjacent stair serves the basement through third floors. The stair structure is of steel, with ornamented newels, simple wrought iron balusters and a wood handrail. The lower level of the stair is treated with the same tile wainscoting as the main entrance vestibule.

### **Integrity**

Overall the building is largely intact at the interior and exterior and appears as it did historically when occupied by the Blommer Ice Cream Company. The only major addition not built by the Blommer Ice Cream Co. is the post-1969 addition, which is only one story and is located at the rear of the building. This addition is only visible from 16<sup>th</sup> Street and from the alley. Non-historic alterations are limited to window and door replacement and infill. Despite these alterations, all window and door openings retain their historic size and proportions and all masonry surrounds at the primary façades are intact. Photographs have been found that show the historic appearance of these openings. The building retains historic integrity and clearly conveys its appearance when built and occupied by the Blommer Ice Cream Company.

At the interior, the plant's open factory spaces, garage and shipping areas all remain intact. As a building designed for the efficient production, packaging and storage of ice cream for wholesale distribution, these spaces make up most of the building's interior. Decorative finishes were limited and were reserved for the main entrance, adjacent stair and small office and corridor spaces at the first floor. The layout and decorative finishes within the main entrance vestibule and adjacent stair are intact; however, the corridor and small office spaces and checker's room at the south end of the first floor no longer remain. The company's administrative functions were largely conducted in the larger general office that occupied the south half of the second floor within the three-story section of the 1927 building. (See Figure 10, Second Floor Plan. See also Figure 13, a view of the general offices from 1927.) This 1927 photograph shows that the general office was not finished much differently than the open factory space. This office was utilitarian in design, with a large open plan and exposed concrete structure. This space was partitioned from the adjacent factory space with a plain wall that was finished in plaster. No decorative trim is visible in the historic photograph. The walls appear to have had a simple wall base and the floors appear to have been of a resilient tile or sheet material with a checkered pattern. The open layout of this space remains. The floor is currently covered with carpet.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 1

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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### **Summary**

The Blommer Ice Cream Company plant is locally significant under National Register Criterion A in the area of Industry for its association with the Blommer Ice Cream Company, a leading commercial producer and wholesaler of ice cream in Milwaukee in the early-twentieth century. The Blommer plant epitomizes the evolution of ice cream from a summertime treat produced locally in small batches to a year-round commodity manufactured in highly specialized and mechanized facilities and shipped regionally. This history is demonstrated through Conrad Blommer, an early pioneer in Milwaukee's ice cream industry who built and transformed a small Milwaukee retail ice cream and candy store into one of the region's largest producers and distributors of ice cream by the late 1920s. The existing factory at 1502 W. North Avenue exemplifies the evolution and growth of the Blommer Ice Cream Company, from its roots in Conrad Blommer's late-nineteenth century confectionery business to the construction of a large ice cream factory employing the most modern sanitation practices and technology. The Blommer Ice Cream Company plant remains as the best surviving example in Milwaukee of an early-twentieth century factory devoted entirely to the production of ice cream.

Originally constructed in 1910 and expanded in 1927, the building served as Blommer Ice Cream Company's main factory and offices throughout the company's history. The building is an excellent example of a factory designed for the production of ice cream, with large open factory, garage, and shipping spaces designed for the efficient production, packaging, storage, and distribution of ice cream. Through high-quality architectural treatment, the building was also designed to serve as advertising for the company and to inspire consumer confidence. Clad in cream-colored terra cotta, the exterior design reflected the modern and sanitary facilities and production practices housed within. The period of significance for the building extends from 1910 when the first section of the building was completed, until 1929, when the Blommers left the business.

### **Ice Cream Making in Milwaukee during the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

The manufacture of ice cream was one component of the greater Wisconsin dairy industry. In 1900, the southeast corner of the state was focused on milk and cream production. While most dairy production in southeastern Wisconsin shifted during the late-nineteenth century away from cheese production to more profitable cream and butter products, urbanized areas such as Milwaukee saw a great decrease in both cheese and cream production, due in part to urban growth. In Milwaukee, there was instead an increase in the production of food products derived from cream, including ice cream. The lucrative production of ice cream due to increased demand for the frozen treat attracted companies from both the

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 2

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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dairy industry and other industries alike, including confectionaries like Blommer.<sup>4</sup>

In 1908, Milwaukee ice cream manufacturers listed in the Bulletin of the Merchants and Manufacturers Association of Milwaukee consisted of: Ferdinand P. Adler, Conrad Blommer, Luick Ice Cream Company and the Geo. C. Mansfield Company. By 1919, there were 7 ice cream manufacturing firms operating in Milwaukee. These firms employed 210 persons and produced \$2,970,000 worth of product. Throughout the 1920s the demand and production of ice cream in Milwaukee continued to grow. Milwaukee ice cream manufacturers that attended the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual convention of The National Association of Ice Cream Manufacturers in Cleveland, Ohio in October of 1922 consisted of: Bendfelt Ice Cream Company, Blommer Ice Cream Company, Luick Ice Cream Company and the Geo. C. Mansfield Company. The number of Milwaukee ice cream manufacturers peaked at 9 in 1924 and by 1925 total ice cream sales in the city were valued at just over \$3.5 million.<sup>5</sup>

Between 1923 and 1935 the production of ice cream in the state of Wisconsin as a whole increased from six million gallons per year to nearly nine million gallons per year, demonstrating the growing market for the commodity.<sup>6</sup> During this time, the market for ice cream was primarily in urban areas where modern refrigeration was more accessible; however, with delivery of electrical service to rural areas, the market for ice cream was expected to expand.<sup>7</sup>

The Blommer Ice Cream Company was among the largest ice cream producers in Milwaukee and by 1926 had four branch factories with regional distribution throughout the entire southern half of Wisconsin and in Northern Illinois. Early ice cream manufacturing in the late-nineteenth century was generally a small-scale enterprise undertaken by caterers and small retailers; however, by the early 1900s, demand for ice cream encouraged existing dairy operations such as creameries and milk plants to add equipment for ice cream production. The Blommer Ice Cream Company stands apart from these other dairy operations as an ice cream business that evolved from the confectionery industry rather than an add-on to an existing dairy facility. With roots in Conrad Blommer's late 19th century confectionery business, the Blommer Ice Cream Company developed into a thriving operation devoted entirely to the production of ice cream.

The Blommer Ice Cream Company entered into the manufacture and wholesale distribution of ice cream upon their incorporation in 1909. As described in the company's bond issue from 1927, ice

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<sup>4</sup> Wyatt, Barbara, Ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986. Dairy Expansion, pp 11-1– 11-7.

<sup>5</sup> *Business Milwaukee: A Trade Review of 1919*, Compiled by First Wisconsin National Bank, Milwaukee, multiple editions, 1919-1927.

<sup>6</sup> *Wisconsin Industrial Studies: Research Nos. 1-6*. (Madison, WI, 1938), 17.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 3

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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cream soon evolved from a summer treat to a daily food. The company prospered by producing a high quality product and by increasing production to meet customer demand. Their production increased from 25,000 gallons of ice cream in 1909 to 525,000 gallons in 1926. The new factory completed in 1927 had the capacity to produce 1,500,000 gallons.

**History of the Blommer Ice Cream Company and its Milwaukee Plant**

The business was first started in 1902 at Conrad Blommer's confectionery shop at 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Walnut in Milwaukee and was later incorporated in 1909 by Conrad Blommer (1851-1932) and his sons. The company was incorporated with \$50,000 in capital and officers were as follows: Conrad Blommer, president; Alois Blommer, vice president; William C. Blommer, treasurer; and George C. Blommer, secretary. With formation of the company, the Blommers entered into the manufacture and wholesale distribution of ice cream and construction was announced for a new, modern ice cream factory located at 803 15<sup>th</sup> Street, on the site of the former Blommer family farm.<sup>8</sup> This factory was to be equipped with a 30-ton refrigerating plant and a 4-ton ice making system, provided by the Vilter Manufacturing Company.<sup>9</sup>

A native of Milwaukee and descended from pioneer Milwaukee County settlers, Conrad Blommer was recognized as a pioneer in the Milwaukee ice cream industry.<sup>10</sup> He had opened his first candy store and ice cream parlor at 1001 Walnut Street (old address), ca. 1870 and remained in business there for approximately 37 years.<sup>11</sup> When Conrad Blommer first entered the ice cream business, modern refrigeration was not yet available and ice was used to keep the product cold. Demand for product depended heavily on the weather and thus Conrad Blommer's early success hinged in large part on his ability to accurately forecast the weather and to regulate production accordingly.<sup>12</sup>

After construction of its plant in 1910, the Blommer Ice Cream Company's early growth and success is evidenced by improvements made to its new plant and construction of branch factories. The company not only worked to keep up with demand, but also to keep their plants furnished with the most modern equipment and facilities. In 1915, the existing factory at 15<sup>th</sup> Street in Milwaukee was improved with the addition of another ice cream hardening room and the installation of 950 feet of ammonia piping

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<sup>8</sup> *Business Milwaukee: A Trade Review of 1919*, Compiled by First Wisconsin National Bank, Milwaukee, multiple editions, 1919-1927.

<sup>8</sup> The address of this building is listed as 809 15<sup>th</sup> Street on the 1910 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map; however the company's newspaper advertisements listed the factory at 803 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

<sup>9</sup> *Ice and Refrigeration* (February 1910), 125.

<sup>10</sup> *Milwaukee Sentinel*, 14 July 1932.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> "New Blommer Building Shows Quarter Century of Progress," *The Dairy World* (July 1927), 31.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 4

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

---

supplied by the Vilter Manufacturing Company.<sup>13</sup> In 1919, the company purchased the former Chambers Creamery Company in Grand Rapids, Wisconsin, and converted the factory into a modern ice cream plant that served as a branch factory.<sup>14</sup> Located adjacent to Wisconsin Rapids, Grand Rapids is approximately 20 miles southwest of Stevens Point. Just a couple of years later, in early 1921, the Blommer Ice Cream Company announced plans to establish another branch factory in Kenosha, Wisconsin, approximately 40 miles south of Milwaukee.<sup>15</sup> At the time, the Blommer Ice Cream Company was described as a large Milwaukee-based industry and the Kenosha plant was to be built “along the lines of the large factory and would be equipped with the most up-to-date and sanitary machinery for the manufacture of ice cream.”<sup>16</sup> The company planned this expansion to meet the increased demands of customers in the area and the new plant would serve customers in Kenosha and Racine.<sup>17</sup> The Kenosha plant was completed in 1922 and in 1925; the company established a branch factory in Lake Geneva.

In the *History of Milwaukee, City and County*, published in 1922, the Blommer Ice Cream Company was described as follows: “The company ranks among the best known manufacturers of ice cream in Wisconsin and the quality of its product is attested by all. The firm has built up its business entirely on the reputation won by its output and today it is among the most prominent and successful ice cream manufacturer in the upper Mississippi valley.”<sup>18</sup> By 1923, the Blommer Ice Cream Company was producing an estimated half million gallons of ice cream per year out of its factory on 15<sup>th</sup> Street in Milwaukee.<sup>19</sup> This represented approximately 8% of the estimated 6 million gallons of ice cream produced in all of Wisconsin that year.<sup>20</sup>

The company’s continued growth and success soon necessitated the construction of a large addition to its Milwaukee plant. Completed in 1927, this addition was built to the south of the existing 1910 factory and upon completion became the company’s main address at 1502 W. North Avenue. Clad in cream-colored terra cotta and thoughtfully designed in the Commercial style, with Italian Renaissance style detailing, this new factory addition served as an advertisement for the company with an exterior presentation that not only represented their confidence and their product but also reflected the modern and sanitary production facilities housed within. The plant’s grand opening was held over three days,

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<sup>13</sup> *Ice and Refrigeration* (February 1915), 115.

<sup>14</sup> *The Ice Cream Trade Journal* (May 1919), 62; *The Creamery and Milk Plant Monthly* (June 1919), 36.

<sup>15</sup> “Blommer Company Expands,” *The Creamery Journal* (February 1921), 28.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> “George C. Blommer,” *History of Milwaukee, City and County, Volume 2*, (Chicago, Milwaukee: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1922), 227.

<sup>19</sup> George O. Jones, *History of Wood County, Wisconsin*, (Minneapolis – Winona, Minnesota: H.C. Cooper, Jr. & Co., 1923), 156.

<sup>20</sup> *Wisconsin industrial Studies: Research Nos. 1-6*. (Madison WI, 1938), 17.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 5

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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June 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> and was announced with invitations sent to the trade and a four-page spread in the Sunday *Milwaukee Journal*.<sup>21</sup> Coincidentally, the three day opening turned out to be the hottest days of that month.<sup>22</sup> Six to seven thousand guests visited the plant for free ice cream on the first day of its opening.<sup>23</sup>

The new factory addition received high praise and the Blommer Ice Cream Company was applauded for having “spared no expense in making this new plant at Fifteenth and North Avenue the most beautiful and the best equipped their years of experience and money could design and build.”<sup>24</sup> The architect of the addition, Verner H. Esser, wrote an article about the building’s design that was published in *The Milwaukee Journal* and was titled “The Advertising Value of Beauty and Sanitation in Industrial Buildings.”<sup>25</sup> In this article he describes his design intent as follows:

...If a manufacturing plant is imposing and artistic, it conveys the thought of permanency. It radiates the idea that the manufacturer has enough confidence in his article to spend a large sum of money to create a permanent and lasting home for his product.

In what better way can the public judge the purity and wholesomeness of a product than by the surroundings in which it is manufactured. If everything possible has been done to make this product under the most modern and sanitary conditions, it stamps this as an article of the highest quality. This is especially essential in the manufacture of food products.

These are the things I strove to accomplish in designing the Blommer Ice Cream Co. Plant. My idea was to create a building that combined beauty with sanitation. A building that would attract the public eye and advertise the Blommer Ice Cream Co. products. In this the Blommer Ice Cream Company concurred with me. They said to spare no expense to make this the finest ice cream manufacturing plant in America.<sup>26</sup>

Artistic treatment of the building was largely concentrated at the exterior façade, while the interior was

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<sup>21</sup> “New Blommer Building Shows Quarter Century of Progress,” *The Dairy World* (July 1927), 31; and “Blommer Ice Cream Section,” *The Milwaukee Journal*, 26 June 1927.

<sup>22</sup> “New Blommer Building Shows Quarter Century of Progress,” *The Dairy World* (July 1927), 31.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> “Blommer Ice Cream Section,” *The Milwaukee Journal*, 26 June 1927.

<sup>26</sup> Verner H. Esser, “The Advertising Value of Beauty and Sanitation in Industrial Buildings,” *The Milwaukee Journal*, 26 June 1927.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 6

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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utilitarian in design, with large open floor spaces arranged to best facilitate the production and storage of ice cream. These factory and garage floor spaces featured the exposed concrete structure of the building with brick walls and clay-tile partitions. A noteworthy exception is the entrance vestibule and adjacent stair, which featured tile wainscoting, accented with small colorful tiles that are evocative of candy and ice cream. This tile was supplied by Midwest Tile Art Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The entrance vestibule and adjacent stair also had plaster ceiling and wall finishes. The stairs had a simple balustrade with ornamented newels and wood handrails.

The new factory addition was laid out with offices, sales, storage, and production in the three-story section and a garage at the first floor of the two-story section. Offices were located at the front of the three story section, on the first and second floors, while the third floor was devoted entirely to the supply department, where sugar and other ingredients were stored. The mixing and freezer department were located at the back of the second floor, behind the offices. Blommer's ice cream products were "practically untouched by human hands" from receipt of raw materials through delivery of the finished product.<sup>27</sup> Cream was brought to the plant in glass-lined tanks, delivered by truck, and was then pumped into refrigerated, glass-lined tanks located on the second floor. From there the product was pumped into various sterilizer, mixing and storage tanks after which it was transferred to freezers on the second floor. A hopper system was used to deliver the ice cream from the second floor freezers down to the first floor filling rooms where it was put into containers. The filling room was separated from the lobby with a plate glass partition, allowing visitors to witness for themselves the sanitary processes under which the ice cream was handled.<sup>28</sup> The empty cans returned by customers were received at the loading dock and then put into a can washing machine. From there, the cleaned cans were delivered to the filling machine by conveyor. The filled cans were then conveyed to the hardening room, where the ice cream was stored at 10 degrees below zero.<sup>29</sup> Finally, the ice cream containers were delivered by conveyor from the hardening room to the loading platform where it was put onto trucks for delivery.

Shortly after construction of its new factory in 1927, the Blommer Ice Cream Company joined with two other large dairy concerns: the Bendfelt Ice Cream Company and the Waukesha Milk Company, to form the Wisconsin Creameries, Inc. The consolidated company boasted resources of over \$2 million and a capacity to produce \$5 million in business per year.<sup>30</sup> After creation of the Wisconsin Creameries, Blommer Ice Cream continued to operate out of their factory at 15th and North Avenue in Milwaukee. Through consolidation, the companies did not lose their individual identities; rather they continued to sell their products under their own brands. By September of 1928, Wisconsin Creameries

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<sup>27</sup> "Blommer Ice Cream Section," *The Milwaukee Journal*, 26 June 1927.

<sup>28</sup> "New Blommer Building Shows Quarter Century of Progress," *The Dairy World* (July 1927), 33.

<sup>29</sup> "New Blommer Building Shows Quarter Century of Progress," *The Dairy World* (July 1927), 33.

<sup>30</sup> "Blommer Co. Merged With Two Concerns," *Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune*, 17 December 1927.



**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 7

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

---

was valued at \$2.5 million with Blommer in control of 38 percent of the corporation's stock.<sup>31</sup>

This consolidation represents a larger trend that was happening at the time within the dairy industry, where butter, milk, and ice cream producers were joining to share costs and increase their market. Merger of Milwaukee dairy and ice cream companies had begun in the summer of 1926, when Luick Ice Cream Company, the largest manufacturer of ice cream in the city, was absorbed by the National Dairy Products Corporation.<sup>32</sup> Then, in 1927, the Mansfield Ice Cream Company was acquired by Gridley Dairy Company, the largest distributors of milk in Milwaukee.<sup>33</sup> In December of 1927, the Trapp Brothers' Dairy Company, one of Milwaukee's large milk distributing concerns, consolidated with the National Dairy Products Corporation.<sup>34</sup> After the Trapp Brothers' merger and the formation of the Wisconsin Creameries Incorporated within the same week, the Cedarburg Dairy Company remained as the only independent milk distributing concern in the vicinity. This lasted until September of 1928, when Cedarburg Dairy, valued at \$400,000, was merged with Wisconsin Creameries.<sup>35</sup>

In early 1929, plans were announced for merger of the Wisconsin Creameries, Incorporated with the National Dairy Products Corporation, a nationwide consolidation of companies operating in 14 states.<sup>36</sup> At this time, Wisconsin Creameries, Incorporated, consisting of Blommer Ice Cream Company, Bendfeldt Ice Cream Company, Waukesha Milk Company and the recently acquired American Ice Cream Company of Madison, represented the largest Wisconsin-owned dairy products company in the state.<sup>37</sup> Merger between Wisconsin Creameries, Incorporated and the National Dairy Products Corporation was completed in April 1929.<sup>38</sup> The merger was reported to be not a selling out of any of the companies, but a rather a combination of assets and facilities in order to develop additional markets for the individual companies.<sup>39</sup> Conrad Blommer and his sons continued to operate the Blommer Ice Cream Company at 1502 W. North Avenue until 1929 when their interests were acquired by Wisconsin Creameries.<sup>40</sup>

Also of note, the Blommer family has long been influential in the candy and ice cream industry. In addition to Conrad Blommer's early involvement in the confectionery and ice cream industry and founding of the Blommer Ice Cream Company in 1909, Conrad Blommer's grandson, Henry Blommer

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<sup>31</sup> "Blommer Buys Building for New Ice Cream Plant," *Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune*, 12 September 1928.

<sup>32</sup> "Trapp Dairy Co. Unites with Chain Organization," *The Milwaukee Journal*, 16 December 1927.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> "Trapp Dairy Co. Unites with Chain Organization," *The Milwaukee Journal*, 16 December 1927.

<sup>35</sup> "Creamery Makes Another Merger," *Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune*, 24 September 1928.

<sup>36</sup> "Planned Merger Involves Local Ice Cream Plant," *Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune*, 19 January 1929.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> "Dairy Merger is Completed," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, 6 April 1929.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> "Blommer, Ice Cream Maker, Dead, Aged 80," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, 14 July 1932.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 8

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

---

(1904-1992), went on to found the Chicago-based Blommer Chocolate Company, with his brothers Aloysius (1909-1987) and Bernard (1905-1965) in 1939. A significant local company, Blommer Chocolate remains in business today and celebrates their roots in the Blommer Ice Cream Company founded in Milwaukee.

Wisconsin Creameries remained at 1502 North Avenue until 1934. The building was vacant from 1935 to 1936. In 1937 plans were announced to remodel and reopen the building for new tenants. International Liquor Corporation was to occupy the first and second floors and the Lisbon Avenue Garage, owned by Nick Tylicki was planned to occupy the west end of the first floor.<sup>41</sup> Both companies signed 5 year leases. International Liquor remained in the building from 1937 until at least 1942. From 1944 to 1956 the building was occupied by Verifine Dairy Products, Western Rawhide & Belting and the Meinerz Creamery. From 1957 through 1960 those earlier occupants were joined by Hinthier Bottle Exchange, Andre Laboratory, Osceola Distributors and Reddi-Wip of Wisconsin. Per Sanborn maps, the rear addition appears to have been completed after 1969. The building is currently vacant.

### **Architecture**

The clean, modern exterior of the building was designed both as an advertisement for the company and as an architectural expression of the modern and sanitary facilities that were installed within the plant. This is especially true of the 1927 terra cotta façade, but the selection of white glazed brick at the 1910 façade is also significant as it reflects the same modernity and sanitation, on a more modest scale.

#### *Styles: Commercial and Italian Renaissance*

The 1927 section of the building was designed in the Commercial style, with Italian Renaissance style detailing. The Commercial style is characterized by an outward expression of the building's internal structure through tall continuous piers that frame recessed bays of large window openings with spandrels. While this style is more commonly applied to taller buildings, it is clearly displayed at the façades of the 1927 section of the Blommer Ice Cream Company building. The building's architect, Verner Esser, described the style of the subject building as Italian Renaissance, which is displayed through the restrained, formal treatment and symmetry of the rectangular façades and in the ornamental detailing that includes cartouche and foliate designs.

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<sup>41</sup> "Building to Be Opened Up," *Milwaukee Journal*, 19 August 1937.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 9

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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*Architects: Verner H. and Herman J. Esser*

The 1927 section of the Blommer Ice Cream Company building was designed by Verner H. Esser, while working in the office of his father, Herman J. Esser. Both Verner and Herman Esser were listed as the architect in newspaper announcements for the building; however, Verner Esser is listed as the architect on architectural drawings for the building and in the newspaper articles that described the building's completion. Correspondence held in the records of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), indicate that Herman Esser had retired from architectural practice in 1927.<sup>42</sup>

Verner H. Esser (1891-1970) graduated from Cornell University in 1917 and by 1921 he was working in the office of his father, prominent local architect Herman J. Esser.<sup>43</sup> Verner Esser eventually established his own office, Verner H. Esser Architects and came to specialize in residential architecture. He retired from architectural practice in 1960.<sup>44</sup> Of note, is the relationship between the Essers and the Blommers. Verner's sister, Viola was married to Henry Blommer, who was the grandson of Conrad Blommer and was also one of the founders of the Chicago-based Blommer Chocolate Company.

Herman J. Esser (1865-1957), a noted Milwaukee architect, was born in Madison in 1865 and studied at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. After graduating in 1888, Herman Esser worked with various architects in New York before returning to Milwaukee in 1890.<sup>45</sup> As one of the city's earliest college-educated architects, he joined the architectural firm of Henry C. Koch and Company as a full partner.<sup>46</sup> In 1899 Esser left the Koch firm to pursue work as an independent architect. Herman Esser was a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) from 1901 until his death. Throughout his career, Herman Esser was responsible for a range of prominent industrial and commercial buildings, including a number of shoe manufacturing plants in Milwaukee.<sup>47</sup> Among his better-known Milwaukee commissions are the Robert A. Johnston Company building (1920; 4023 W. National Avenue; extant; City of Milwaukee Landmark), the Gimbel Brothers Department Store (1923; 101 W. Wisconsin Avenue; extant; contributing building within the West Side Commercial Historic District), and the original A.O. Smith Company industrial buildings (ca. 1920-1930; 3533 N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street; some factory

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<sup>42</sup> The AIA Historical Directory of American Architects, <http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/>, accessed 19 December 2014.

<sup>43</sup> *The American Contractor*, 7 May 1921, page 70, lists Verner at the same address as the 1919-1920 *Polk's Directory* lists for Herman Esser's office.

<sup>44</sup> Verner H. Esser, obituary, *The Milwaukee Journal*, 8 February 1970.

<sup>45</sup> Department of City Development. "Historic Designation Study Report. Edmund Stormowski Duplex." (City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 2002),9.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Box Factory Progressing: Movement Launched by Shoe Manufacturers," *Boot and Shoe Recorder* (November 15, 1919), 103.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 10

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

---

buildings extant, although most have been demolished).<sup>48</sup> Herman Esser died in his Milwaukee home January 1957.

**Comparable Buildings**

The Blommer Ice Cream Company building is an excellent surviving example in Milwaukee of an early-twentieth century factory devoted entirely to the production of ice cream. Based on preliminary research, the only other extant ice cream manufacturing buildings in Milwaukee from this period are: the Luick Ice Cream Company at 1325 N. Van Buren Street, at the northern edge of downtown, and the George Mansfield Company located at 1300 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, just northwest of downtown. Of these, only the George Mansfield Company building retains architectural integrity. Other major competitors of Blommer included Bendfelt Ice Cream, which had a modern, terra-cotta clad building at 207 E. Capitol Drive, extant ca. 1935.<sup>49</sup> This building no longer exists.

The Luick Ice Cream Company Building was built ca. 1921. Founded in 1897 and specializing in ice cream by 1903, the company grew to become one of the largest ice cream manufacturers in the United States<sup>50</sup> In 1920, the Luick Ice Cream Company sold 1.5 million gallons of ice cream.<sup>51</sup> The Luick Ice Cream Company building was renovated for housing beginning in 2001. This renovation significantly altered the building's exterior façades and the building no longer retains architectural integrity.

The George Mansfield Company building was constructed in 1907 and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRIS #16000476) in 2016 for its association with a commercial dairy.<sup>52</sup> The George Mansfield Company was at one time among the largest creameries in the country and was best known for its butter production. Originally founded in Johnson Creek, the company opened a Milwaukee branch in about 1896 and soon after added the wholesale manufacture of ice cream to their business.

**Conclusion**

The Blommer Ice Cream Company plant is locally significant under National Register Criterion A in the area of Industry for its association with the Blommer Ice Cream Company, a leading commercial

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<sup>48</sup> *Milwaukee Sentinel*, 18 January 1957. And *The Milwaukee Journal*, 17 January 1957

<sup>49</sup> Milwaukee Public Library Digital Collections, Milwaukee Historic Photos, "Bendfelt Ice Cream"

<sup>50</sup> Milwaukee Public Library Digital collections and "C.B. Schmidt scoops challenges at old ice cream facility" *Milwaukee Business Journal*, 24 March 2002.

<sup>51</sup> Milwaukee Public Library Digital Collections

<sup>52</sup> George Mansfield Co. Building, Wisconsin Historic Preservation database (AHI#109065) and Part 1 (NPS project number 28458).

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 11

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

---

producer and wholesaler of ice cream in Milwaukee in the early-twentieth century. The plant epitomizes the evolution of ice cream as a summertime treat produced locally in small batches to a year-round commodity manufactured in highly specialized and mechanized facilities and shipped regionally. The building served as the company's main factory, including offices, sales and storage, from when it was built in 1910 through 1929 when the company was acquired by National Dairy and the Blommers left the business. The Blommer Ice Cream Company building remains an excellent surviving example in Milwaukee of an early-twentieth century factory devoted entirely to the production of ice cream.

The building is an excellent example of an ice cream factory designed not only to house the most modern and sanitary production facilities, but also to serve as an advertisement for the company. The first section of the building, completed in 1910, is relatively modest, but was designed with a white, glazed brick façade, implying cleanliness, and was outfitted and improved over time with modern ice cream equipment. The impressive, 1927 section of the building is clad in cream-colored terra cotta and its artistic treatment was intended to inspire confidence in the company and to reflect the modern and sanitary production facilities contained within. Tile detailing in the main entrance vestibule and adjacent stair at the interior is accented with small colorful tiles, evocative of candy and ice cream.

The present appearance of the building reflects the historic appearance when occupied by the Blommer Ice Cream Company. Exterior alterations are limited to infill of window and door openings and removal of the Blommer Ice Cream Company signage. The interior of the building retains its large, open factory spaces, garage and shipping facilities as well as decorative treatments at the main entrance vestibule and adjacent stair. The building retains sufficient integrity to represent its history in ice cream manufacturing and the period when the Blommer Ice Cream Company occupied the building. The period of significance for the property is from 1910, when the Blommer Ice Cream Company building was constructed on the site, through 1929, when the Blommers left the business.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 1

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 2

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 3

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 1

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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**Verbal Boundary Description:**

The Blommer Ice Cream Company building is located on the north side of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, approximately 2 miles northwest of downtown. The building is prominently located at the northwest corner of North Avenue and 15<sup>th</sup> Street, with primary façades facing both streets. An east-west alley runs behind the building, to the north. The building occupies over half of the city block. The nominated property is the entire parcel for the property, tax parcel number 3242301100, bounded by North Avenue to the south, the alley to the north, 15<sup>th</sup> Street to the east and approximately 30 feet of paved area to the west.

**Boundary Justification:**

The boundaries encompass the entire parcel of land associated with the Blommer Ice Cream Company building in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section photos Page 1

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

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**Name of Property:** Blommer Ice Cream Co. Building

**City or Vicinity:** Milwaukee

**County:** Milwaukee      **State:** Wisconsin

**Photographer:** Danielle Euer

**Date Photographed:** February 2015

**Description of Photograph(s) and Number:**

- 1 of 14: South and east elevations, looking northwest
- 2 of 14: South elevation, looking northeast
- 3 of 14: East elevation, looking southwest
- 4 of 14: East and north elevations, looking southwest
- 5 of 14: North elevation, looking southeast
- 6 of 14: North and west elevations, looking southeast
- 7 of 14: West elevation, looking southeast
- 8 of 14: First floor main entrance stair, looking south
- 9 of 14: Main stair, looking southeast
- 10 of 14: Typical first floor view, looking south toward garage entrance
- 11 of 14: Typical first floor view
- 12 of 14: Typical upper floor view
- 13 of 14: Typical upper floor view
- 14 of 14: Typical upper floor view (post-1969 rear addition)

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section **figures** Page 1

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

---

**List of Figures**

**Figure 1:** Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1949, showing the complete building (note that by this date the building is no longer occupied by the Blommer Ice Cream Co.)

**Figure 2:** Current aerial view annotated with construction dates and site boundaries outlined in blue

**Figure 3:** View of the south and east façades, 1927 (*Milwaukee Sentinel*, June 26, 1927, advertising the open house for the new building)

**Figure 4:** View of the south and east façades, ca. 1937 (Milwaukee County Historical Society)

**Figure 5:** View of the south and east façades, ca. 1940 (Milwaukee County Historical Society)

**Figure 6:** Original south elevation drawing for the corner section of the building (Sheet 6: Verner H. Esser, Architect, "Office, Sales & Storage Building for Blommer Ice Cream Co. at 1502 North Ave.," August 26, 1926)

**Figure 7:** Original first floor plan at the corner section of the building (Sheet 2: Verner H. Esser, Architect, "Office, Sales & Storage Building for Blommer Ice Cream Co. at 1502 North Ave.," August 26, 1926)

**Figure 8:** Original second floor plan at the corner section of the building (Sheet 3: Verner H. Esser, Architect, "Office, Sales & Storage Building for Blommer Ice Cream Co. at 1502 North Ave.," August 26, 1926)

**Figure 9:** Original west elevation drawing with interior elevations at entrance (Sheet 9: Verner H. Esser, Architect, "Office, Sales & Storage Building for Blommer Ice Cream Co. at 1502 North Ave.," August 26, 1926)

**Figure 10:** Interior view showing the general office space, 1927 (note that the office space was not finished much differently than the open factory space; *Milwaukee Journal*, June 26, 1927)

**Figure 11:** Interior view of the Blommer Ice Cream Co. Building, 1922 (*The Ice Cream Trade Journal*, November 1922; part of an advertisement for Elyria Enameled Products Co. The advertisement states: "Would you like to better the sanitary features of your plant and decrease your cost of operation? The Blommer Ice Cream Company and hundreds of other progressive manufacturers have done so by standardizing on Elyria Storage Tanks and Pasteurizers.")

**Figure 12:** Basement Floor Plan

**Figure 13:** First Floor Plan

**Figure 14:** Second Floor Plan

**Figure 15:** Third Floor Plan

**Figure 16:** Site Plan

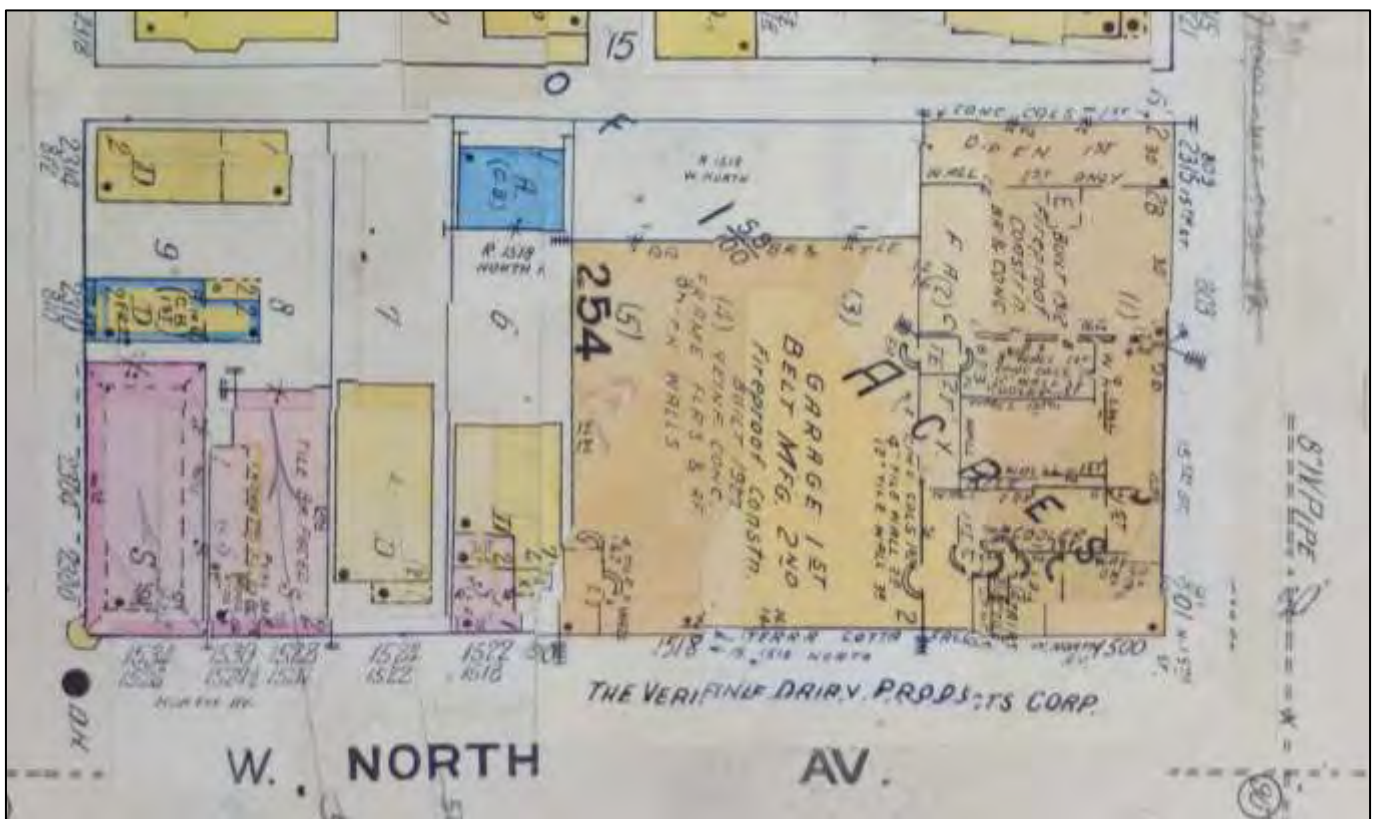
**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Section figures Page 2

**Figure 1:** Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1949, showing the complete building (note that by this date the building is no longer occupied by the Blommer Ice Cream Co.)



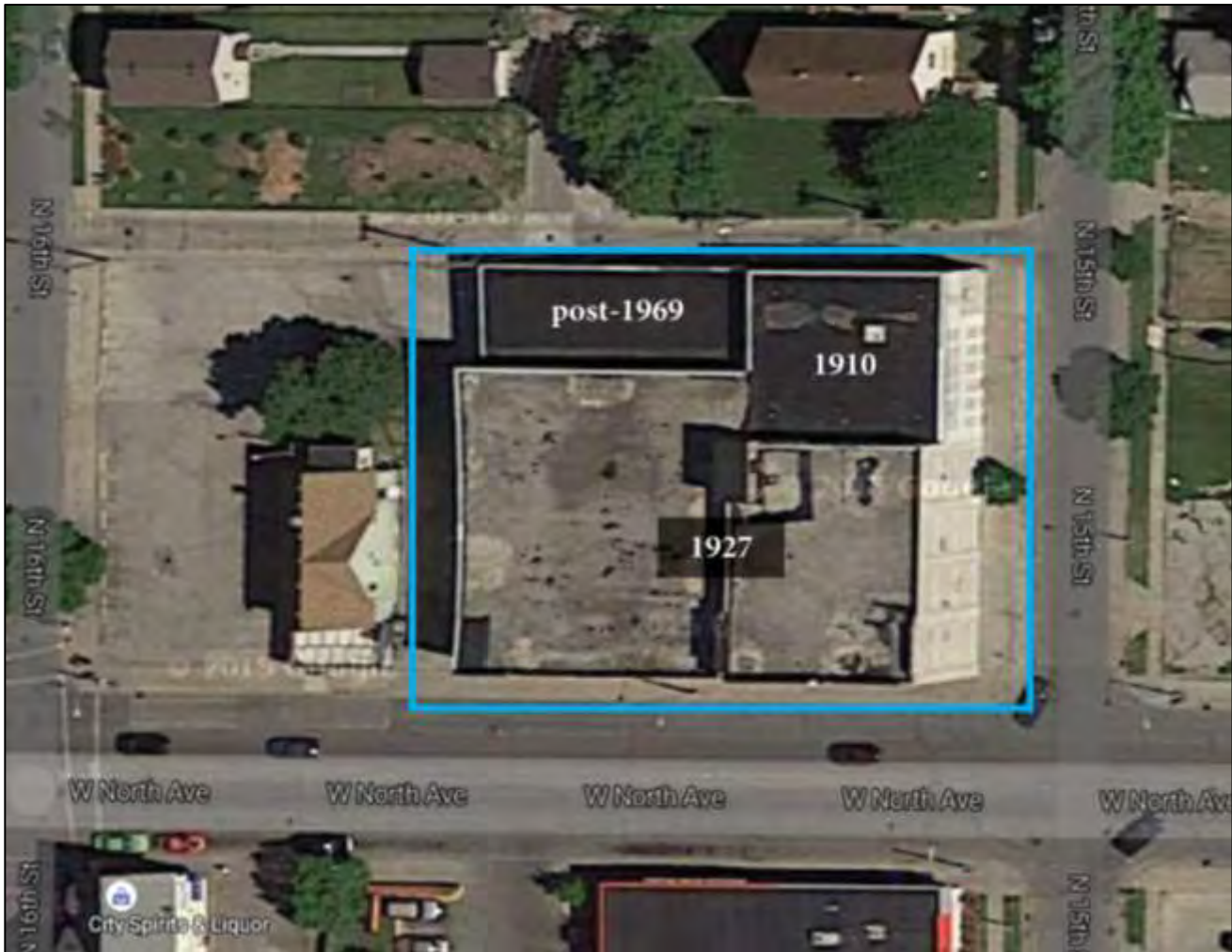
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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

Section figures Page 3

**Figure 2:** Current aerial view annotated with construction dates and site boundaries outlined in blue



**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 4

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

**Figure 3:** View of the south and east façades, 1927 (*Milwaukee Sentinel*, June 26, 1927, advertising the open house for the new building)



**Figure 4:** View of the south and east façades, ca. 1937 (Milwaukee County Historical Society)



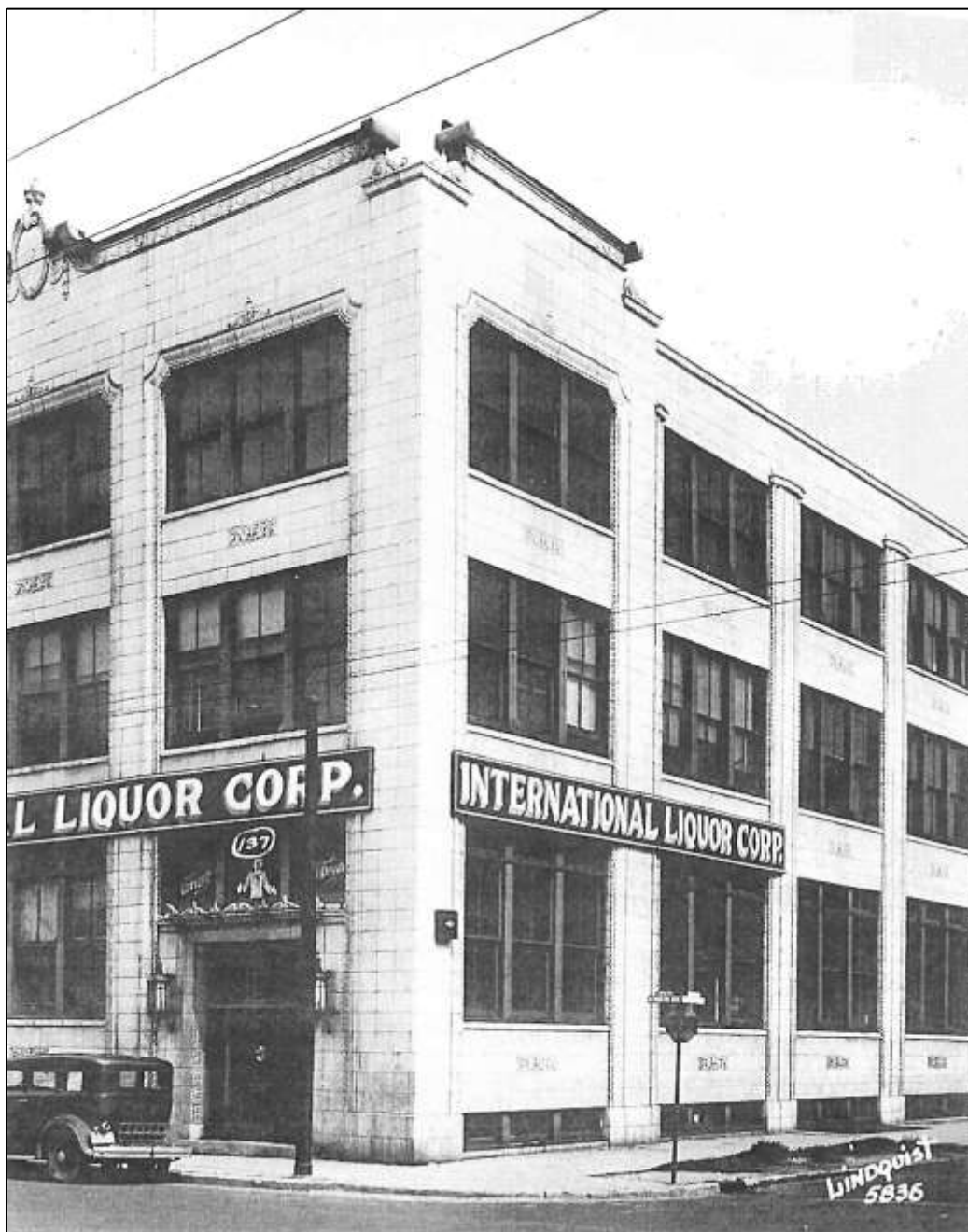
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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 5

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

**Figure 5:** View of the south and east façades, ca. 1940 (Milwaukee County Historical Society)



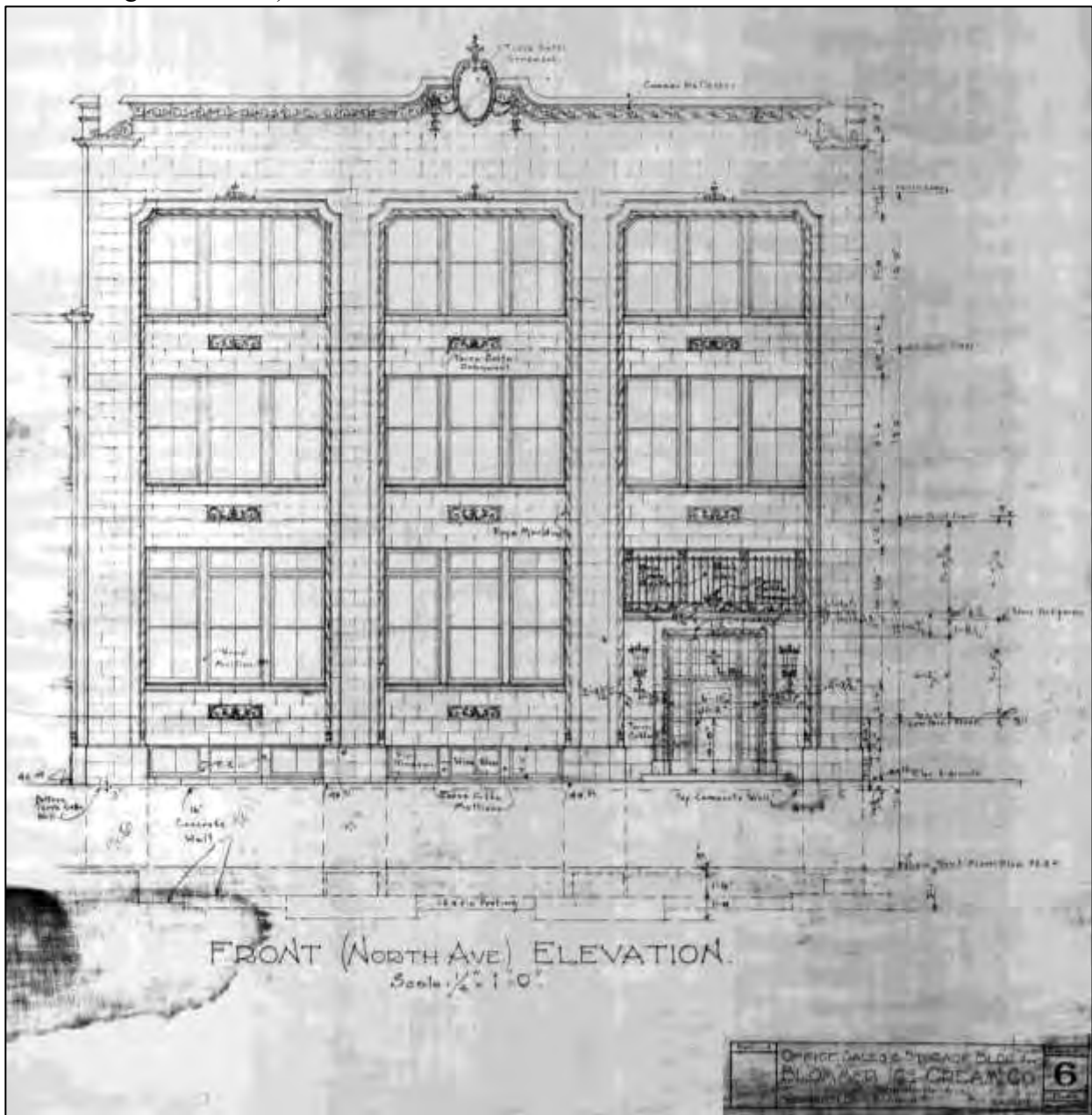
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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 6

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

**Figure 6:** Original south elevation drawing for the corner section of the building (Sheet 6: Verner H. Esser, Architect, "Office, Sales & Storage Building for Blommer Ice Cream Co. at 1502 North Ave.," August 26, 1926)





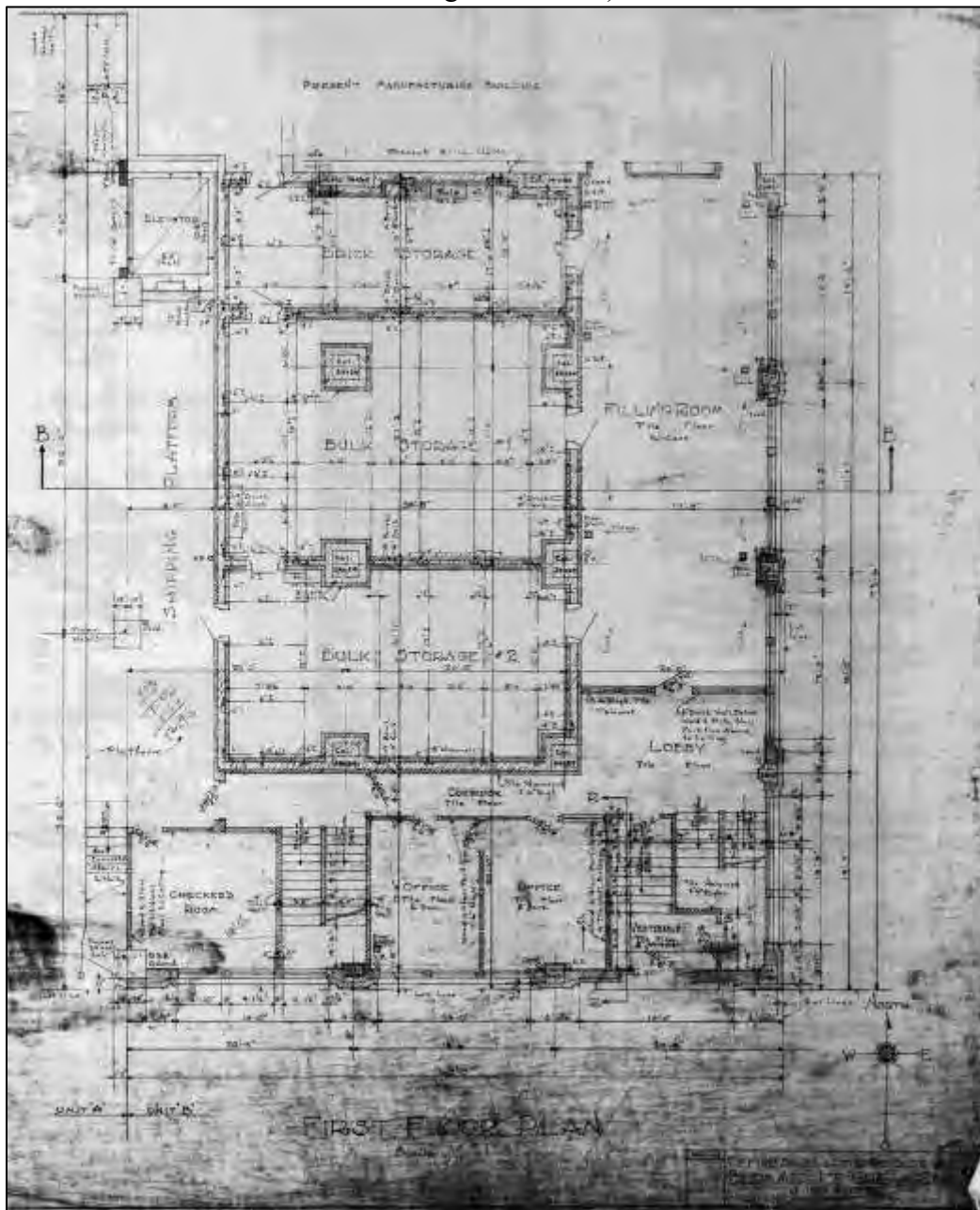
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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 7

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

**Figure7:** Original first floor plan at the corner section of the building (Sheet 2:  
Verner H. Esser, Architect, "Office, Sales & Storage Building for Blommer Ice  
Cream Co. at 1502 North Ave.," August 26, 1926)



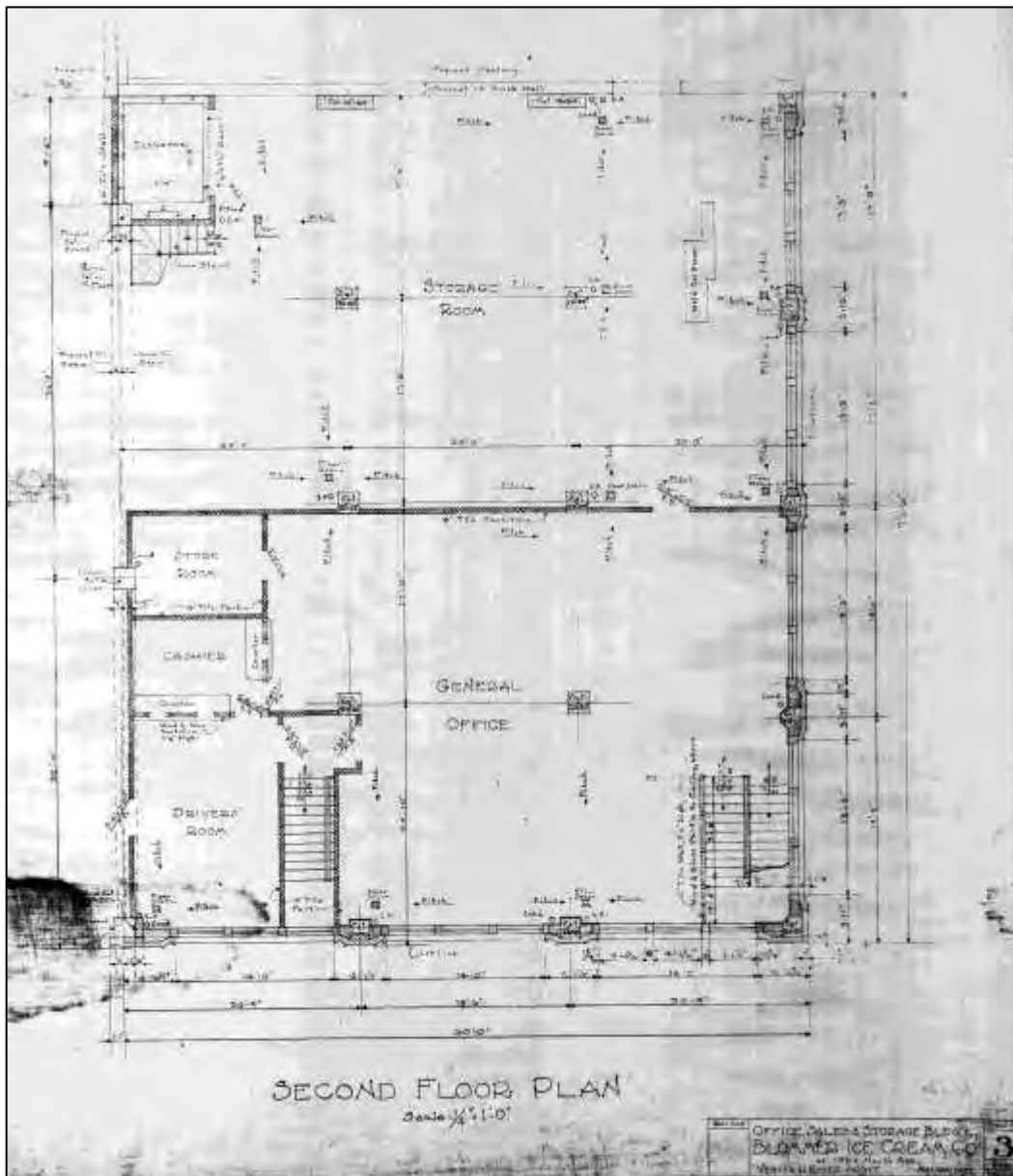
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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section **figures** Page **8**

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

**Figure 8:** Original second floor plan at the corner section of the building (Sheet 3: Verner H. Esser, Architect, "Office, Sales & Storage Building for Blommer Ice Cream Co. at 1502 North Ave.," August 26, 1926)



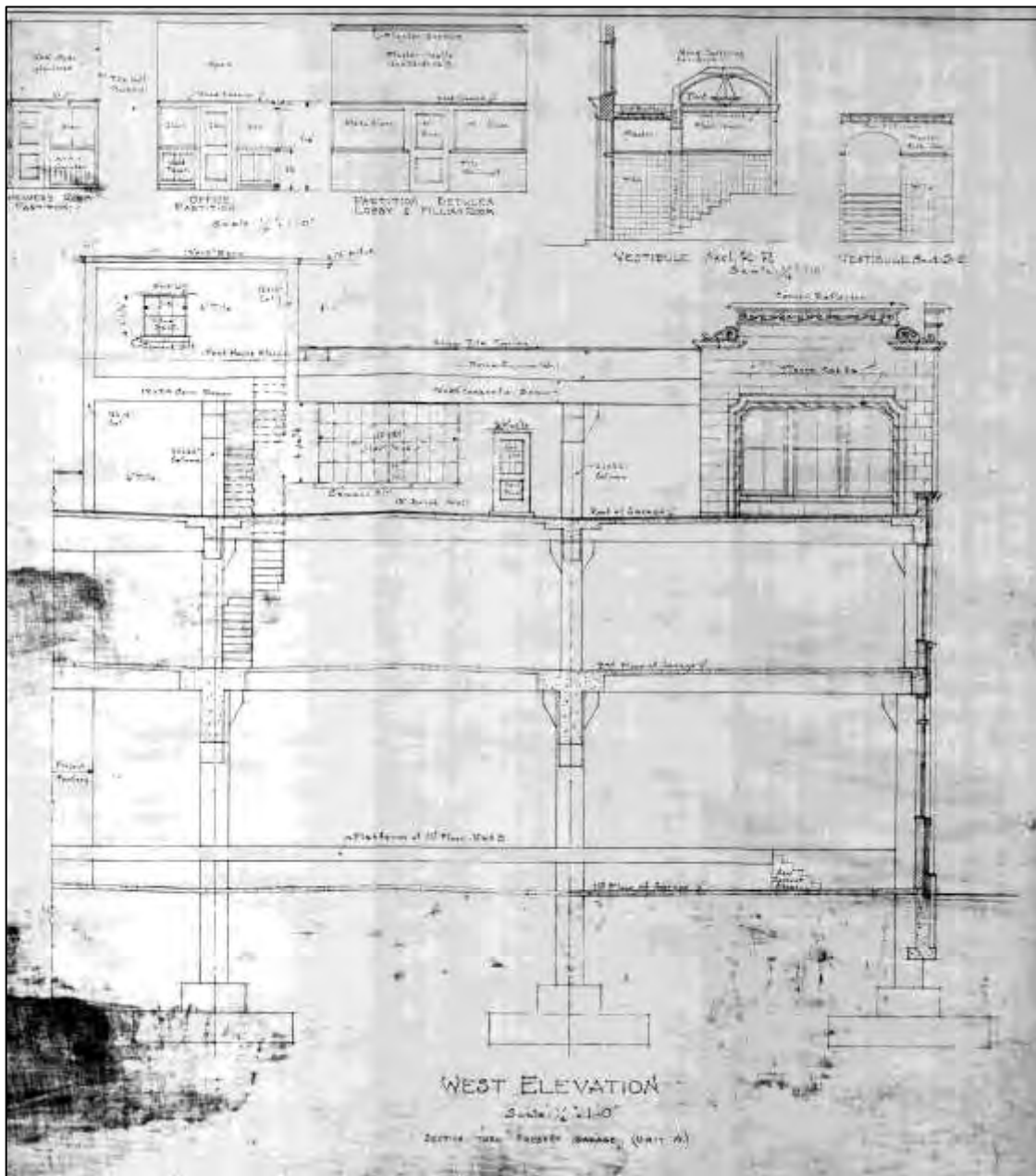
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**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 9

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

**Figure 9:** Original west elevation drawing with interior elevations at entrance (Sheet 9: Verner H. Esser, Architect, "Office, Sales & Storage Building for Blommer Ice Cream Co. at 1502 North Ave.," August 26, 1926)



**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 10

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

**Figure 10:** Interior view showing the general office space, 1927 (note that the office space was not finished much differently than the open factory space; *Milwaukee Journal*, June 26, 1927)



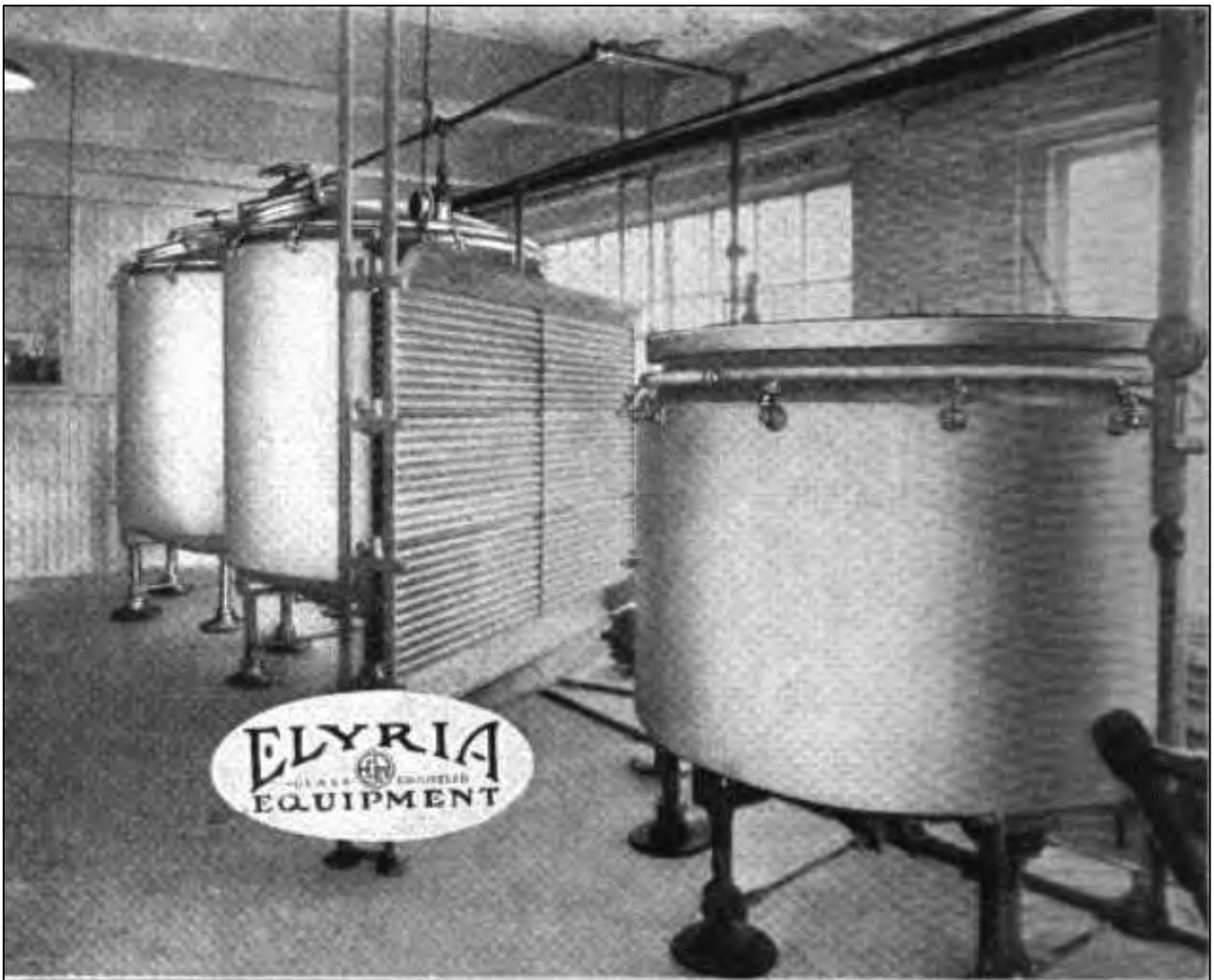
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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 11

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

**Figure 11:** Interior view of the Blommer Ice Cream Co. Building, 1922 (*The Ice Cream Trade Journal*, November 1922; part of an advertisement for Elyria Enameled Products Co. The advertisement states: "Would you like to better the sanitary features of your plant and decrease your cost of operation? The Blommer Ice Cream Company and hundreds of other progressive manufacturers have done so by standardizing on Elyria Storage Tanks and Pasteurizers.")



*An illustration of an Elyria Pasteurizer and two Elyria Storage Tanks in the Blommer Ice Cream Company plant, Milwaukee, Wis.*

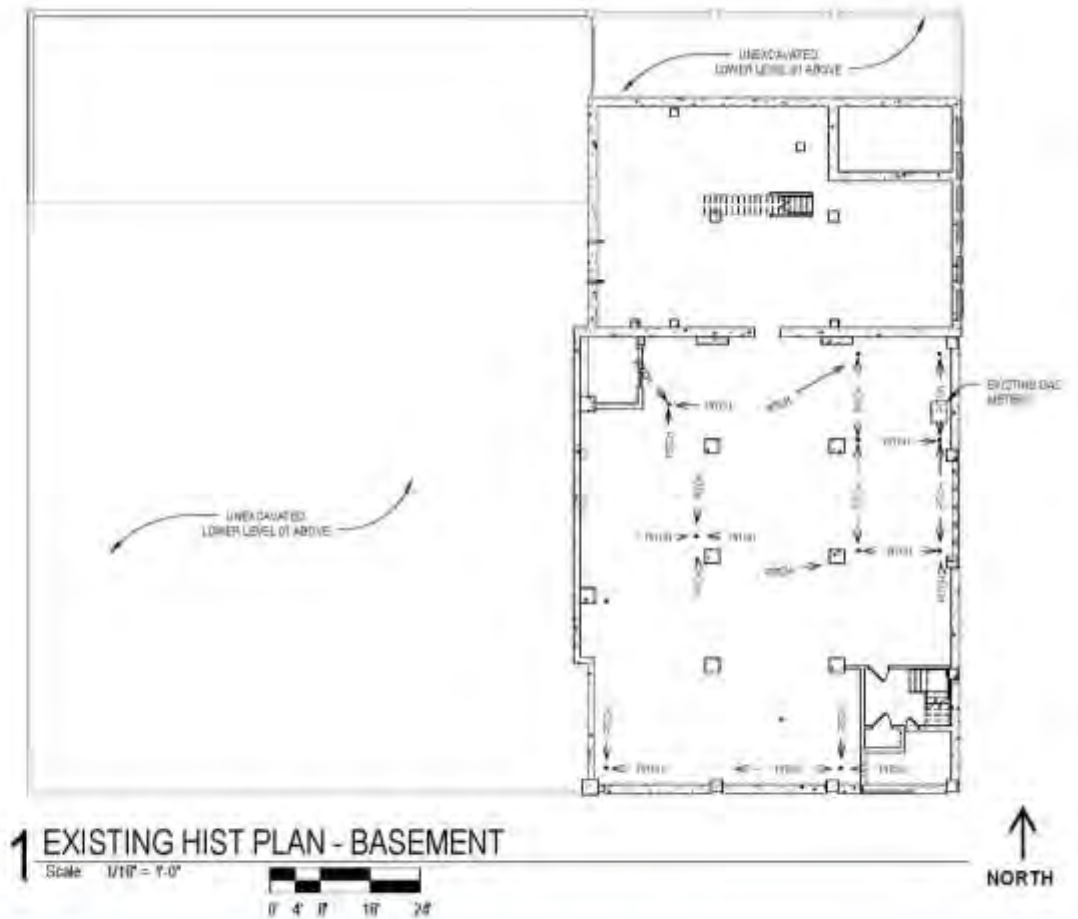
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**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 12

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

**Figure 12:** Basement Floor Plan



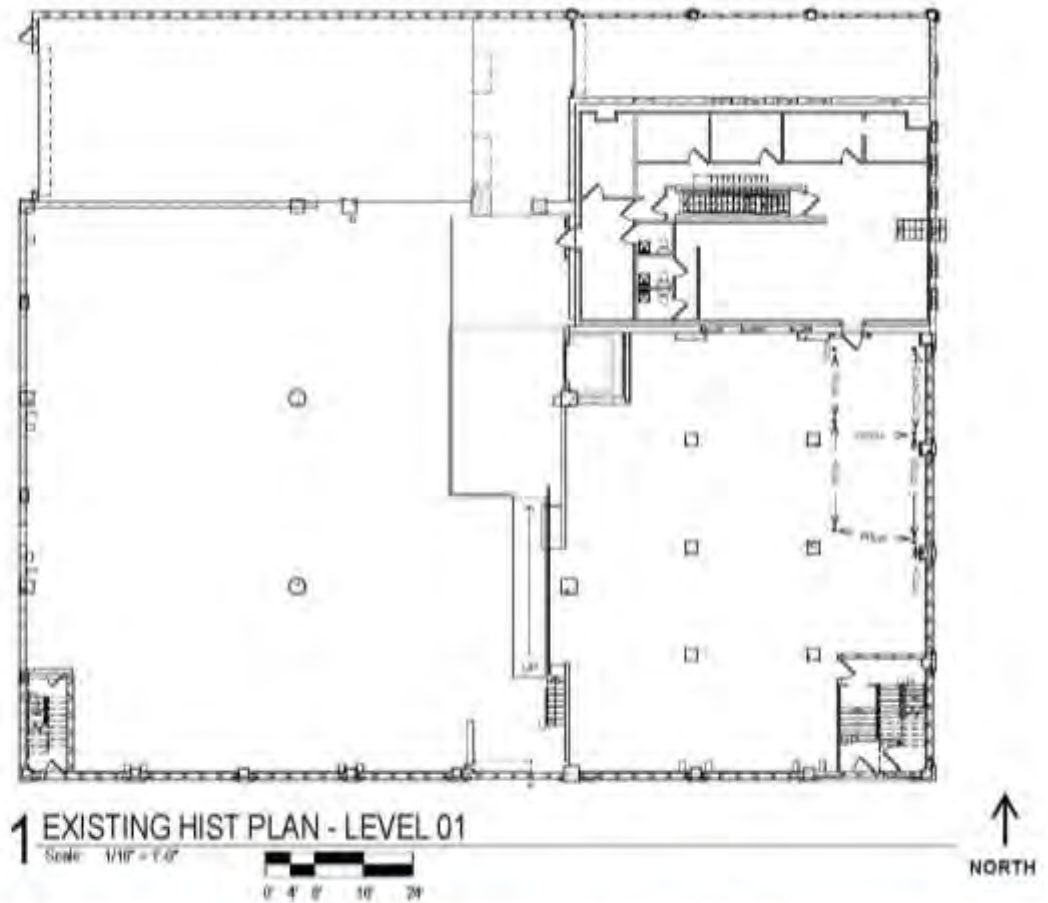
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**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 13

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

**Figure 13:** First Floor Plan



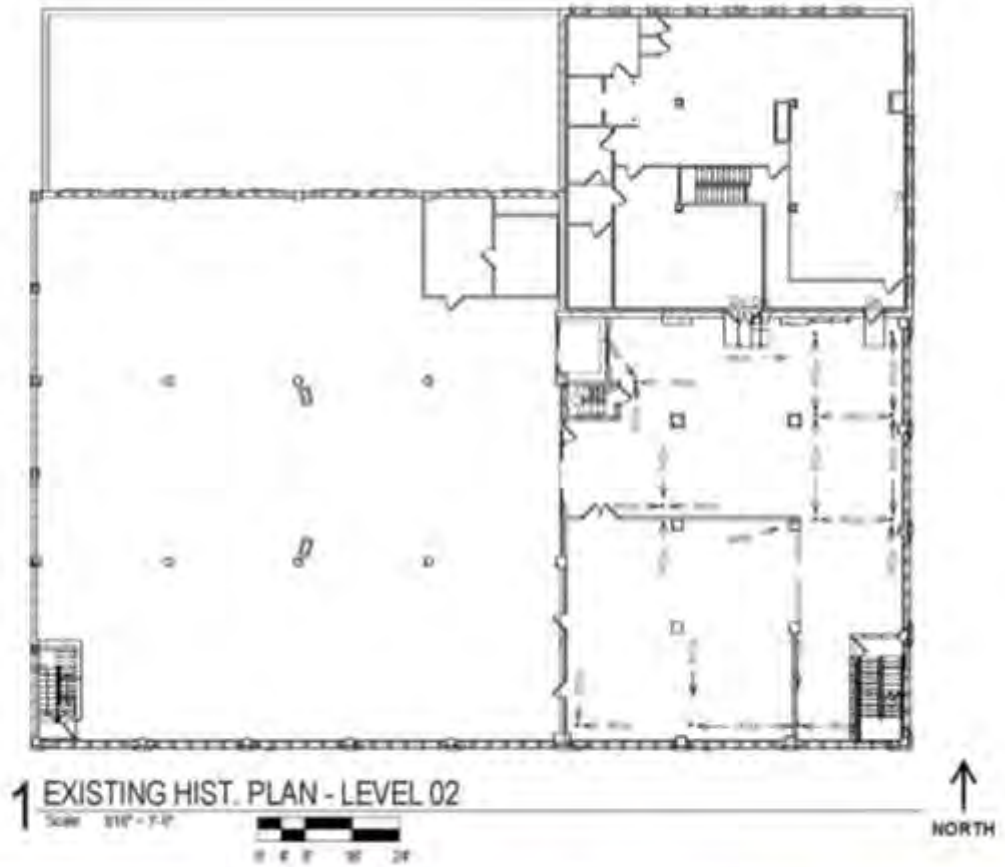
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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 14

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

**Figure 14:** Second Floor Plan





**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section figures Page 15

Blommer Ice Cream Company  
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

**Figure 15:** Third Floor Plan



**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Blommer Ice Cream Company

Section figures Page 16

**Figure 16: Site plan**



**Bloomer Ice Cream Company Building**  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

National Park Service  
NR Photo Key





NO  
ADVERTISING  
ON THIS  
SIDE















NO  
PARKING  
EXCEPT  
FOR  
TRUCKS



EXIT









EXIT









UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 7/21/2017      Date of Pending List: 8/16/2017      Date of 16th Day: 8/31/2017      Date of 45th Day: 9/5/2017      Date of Weekly List: 8/31/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- |                                       |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape       | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver       | <input type="checkbox"/> National        | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other        | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
|                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG             |   |

Accept       Return       Reject      8/31/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary  
Comments:

Recommendation/  
Criteria

Reviewer Barbara Wyatt      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2252      Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

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



WISCONSIN  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY



TO: Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Peggy Veregin  
National Register Coordinator

SUBJECT: National Register Nomination

The following materials are submitted on this Nineteenth day of July 2017, for the nomination of the Blommer Ice Cream Company to the National Register of Historic Places:

- 1 Original National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form
- 1 CD with NRHP Nomination form PDF
- Multiple Property Nomination form
- 14 Photograph(s)
- 1 CD with image files
- 1 Map(s)
- 16 Sketch map(s)/figures(s)/exhibit(s)
- Piece(s) of correspondence
- Other:

COMMENTS:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Please ensure that this nomination is reviewed
- x This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- \_\_\_\_\_ The enclosed owner objection(s) do or do not constitute a majority of property owners
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: