NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME
HISTORIC The Werner Company
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER 109 North Union
CITY. TOWN Akron
STATE Ohio

3 CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT
OWNERSHIP PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH PUBLIC ACQUISITION
STATUS OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS ACCESSIBLE
PRESENT USE AGRICULTURE MUSEUM
COMMERCIAL PARK
EDUCATIONAL PRIVATE RESIDENCE
ENTERTAINMENT RELIGIOUS
GOVERNMENT SCIENTIFIC
INDUSTRIAL TRANSPORTATION
MILITARY OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME Ralph E. Monk
FAMOUS REALTY CO.
STREET & NUMBER 109 North Union 2136 BICKMORE AVENUE
CITY. TOWN Akron DAYTON VICINITY OF
STATE Ohio

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Summit County Building
STREET & NUMBER 72 South High Street
CITY. TOWN Akron
STATE Ohio

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
DATE
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY. TOWN
STATE
This is a three-story brick building with steep gabled roofs in an eclectic German medieval idiom. The most outstanding feature is the large stepped gables that are found at five places around the building. The massiveness of the brickwork is reinforced by the multiple sandstone courses that run in horizontal bands from the basement to the pinnacles of the gables. The masonry character is further emphasized by the alternating bands of brick and stone which form the voussoirs over the doorways and windows. Stone pinnacles cap the lowest and highest steps of the gables. At the southwest corner of the building, a square four-and-a-half story tower is placed at a 45 degree angle to the rest of the building. The top store of the tower slightly overhangs the lower stories, and it has stone and brick turrets at each corner. All of the windows are rectangular, except that there are blind round arches above the gable windows. The main entrance to the building is placed half a storey above grade level, and six stone steps lead to the door. Corner buttresses flank the arched doorway that extends in a small vestibule structure. Large voussoirs radiate above the fanlight over the doorway. The corners of the building have stone quoins which are the broken continuation of the banded courses mentioned above. The brickwork is Flemish bond.

The interior appears to be in a later architectural style than the exterior. The entrance leads into a large, high rectangular hall. It is surrounded by an arcade of both elliptical and round arches with heavy keystones, resting on square fluted columns. These are executed in dark stained woodwork, which contrasts with the plaster walls of the vestibule. The floor in the center of the hall contains a damaged stone mosaic. Opening from one side of the hall is a wide balustraded staircase to the upper floor. The stairwell is lit by a skylight. Arranged around the central hall are corridors and well-lit administrative offices, but they are architecturally undistinguished compared with the rest of the building.
SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD
PREHISTORIC
1400-1499
1500-1599
1600-1699
1700-1799
1800-1899
1900-

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE
ARCHAEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC
ARCHAEOLOGY-HISTORIC
AGRICULTURE
ARCHITECTURE
COMMERCE
COMMUNICATIONS

CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW
COMMUNITY PLANNING
CONSERVATION
ECONOMICS
EDUCATION
ENGINEERING
EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
INDUSTRY
INVENTION

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
LAW
LITERATURE
MILITARY
MUSIC
PHILOSOPHY
POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
OTHER (SPECIFY)

RELIGION
SCIENCE
SCULPTURE
SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
THEATER
TRANSPORTATION

SPECIFIC DATES 1895-1909

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Franck Meade, Cleveland *

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This was the administration building of a business which claimed to be the largest and most complete book factory in the United States in 1900 and which published the New Werner Edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica. It is an excellent example of eclectic architecture in the German idiom and an unusually elaborate structure for a publishing house of its date and place.

Paul E. Werner was born in Wurtemberg, Germany, in 1850 and immigrated to the United States in 1867. In 1874 he purchased the Akron German-language newspaper Germania. He later founded the Sunday Gazette and the Akron Tribune. In 1884 he disposed of the newspapers but continued in the printing business, establishing the Werner Printing and Lithographing Company in 1886.

In 1892 Werner was publishing art books, dictionaries, texts and the New Werner Edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica. The latter was evidently an unauthorized reprint of the famous 9th edition, compiled between 1875 and 1889. Scribner's, the American agents, obtained court orders banning the distribution of unauthorized reprints. Meanwhile, Werner's company was reorganized as the Werner Company in 1893, and the existing administration building was erected in 1895. By 1900 the factory was printing such quantities of books and educational materials that a history of 1908 relates statistics in the familiar terms of how many books would reach around the earth, etc. However, in 1908 the company experienced many financial difficulties, among which were the legal battles with Encyclopedia Britannica, resulting in a loss of $1,000,000. In 1909 the company failed.

During the World War, Werner became vastly unpopular due to his pro-German sentiments. He moved to Kansas City in 1914 and remained there until 1926. He was brought back to Akron by friends and was given a dinner in his honor by F. A. Seiberling. He once again published the Akron Germania until his death in 1931.

*Illustrations of the Work of Meade & Garfield, Cleveland, O.*

Interstate Architect & Bldr. (May 1902).
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES
Karl H. Grismer, Akron and Summit County (Akron, 1952), 692.
William B. Doyle, Centennial History of Summit County, Ohio
(Chicago, 1908), 811-812.
The Circle of Knowledge - Encyclopedias Past and Present
(Chicago, 1968), 20.
Akron City Directories, 1894-1896.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one

UTM REFERENCES

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

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FORM PREPARED BY
NAME / TITLE: Eric Johanniesen, Preservationist

ORGANIZATION: Western Reserve Historical Society
DATE: December 1975

STREET & NUMBER: 10825 East Boulevard
TELEPHONE: 216-721-5722

CITY OR TOWN: Cleveland
STATE: Ohio

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665). I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE: [Signature]
TITLE: State Historic Preservation Officer
DATE: 10-8-76

FOR NPS USE ONLY
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST: [Signature]
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE: [Signature]
unt on the American Continent, All Graphic Arts and Trades.
The Largest General Printing and Establishment on the American Comprising All Graphic Arts

Factory and Office Bu
January 5, 1977

Mr. Ralph E. Monk
402 Merriman Rd.
Akron, Ohio

Dear Mr. Monk:

I am pleased to inform you that the Werner Company, 109 N. Union, has been entered in the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior.

The nomination was made in connection with a state plan to identify and document prehistoric and historic places in Ohio which qualify for National Register status under provisions of the National Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board.

Enclosed is information explaining the purposes and goals of the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Thomas H. Smith
State Historic Preservation Officer
Director, Ohio Historical Society

THS:jp
enclosure

X.c: Mayor of Akron
Tom Fisher, Regional Preservation Officer
The Ohio Historical Society

Ohio Historic Preservation Office

National Register of Historic Places File Checklist

The following materials are contained in this file of the National Register form for:

Name: Werner Company Building

County: Summit

☑ Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form

☐ Multiple Property Nomination form

☑ Photograph(s)

☑ Photograph(s) (copies)

☐ USGS map(s)

☑ USGS map(s) (copies)

☑ Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

☑ Correspondence

☐ Other

CES: 9/01