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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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United States Department of the 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 F.N. Burt Company Factory

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 500 Seneca Street [ ] not for publication

city or town Buffalo [ ] vicinity

state New York code NY county Erie code 029 zip code 14210

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 as 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.)

Ruth L Pierpont DSHPO 1/7/13
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

[✓] entered in the National Register
[ ] see continuation sheet
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register
[ ] see continuation sheet
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register

[ ] removed from the National Register

[ ] other (explain)

Signature of the Keeper date of action

for Edson H. Beall 3.6.13

F.N. Burt Company Factory
Name of Property

Erie, New York
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

[X] private
[ ] public-local
[ ] public-State
[ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

[X] building(s)
[ ] district
[ ] site
[ ] structure
[ ] object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	**TOTAL**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Historic Resources of the Hydraulics/Larkin Neighborhood

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY / PROCESSING / EXTRACTION
Manufacturing facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/ Warehouse

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
walls Brick, Concrete, Glass
roof Wood, concrete, steel
other

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

Narrative Description of Property[1]

In 2009 an extensive survey of the Hydraulics neighborhood was commissioned by Chaintreuil | Jensen | Stark Architects. This survey resulted in the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form (MDPF) Historic Resources of Hydraulics / Larkin Neighborhood, Buffalo, Erie County, NY. For individual nominations to be added to the MPDF the registration requirements state: *Industrial architecture which retains significant historical associations and/or architectural distinction, and which retain integrity of architecture, construction, form, materials and detailing, satisfy the requirements for individual listing.*

OVERVIEW

The former F.N. Burt Box Factory is located at 500 Seneca Street, approximately a mile and a half southeast of Buffalo's city center, within one of the earliest industrial areas of the city now called the Hydraulics/Larkin Neighborhood.[2] The F.N. Burt factory building consists of an initial building and nine additions, including both mill type and reinforced concrete construction, erected over the first quarter of the twentieth century. Despite concrete block inflll and deteriorated window openings, the factory retains its original fenestration, circulation pattern, some windows and original wood flooring.

The initial factory building, constructed in 1901, is located at the corner of Seneca and Hamburg Streets, and subsequent additions extended the factory footprint westward towards Spring Street. The first series of additions included four buildings, B and C in 1903, D in 1910 and E in 1916. These buildings were designed by the local engineering firm Niederpruem & Company. Buildings B, C, and D have brick masonry bearing walls, wood framed construction and wood sash double hung windows. Building E was the first use of reinforced concrete in the factory building.

The second series of additions occurred in 1926, when the company expanded with four buildings: F, G, H, I, a garage and an addition to the boiler house (building E). These structures were designed by the local firm Plumer and Mann, Engineers and Architects. These portions of the factory are reinforced concrete construction with brick spandrels and large steel sash windows.

The westernmost building on the site is a high bay garage of brick and steel frame construction with a steel truss roof structure. The western portion of the city block is used for parking and deliveries.

EXTERIOR

The principal north and south elevations illustrate the chronology of building expansion from east to west (**Photos 1, 4** and Section 11-1).

Principal Facade

Seneca Street/South Elevation

The south elevation consists of five visually distinct sections. The easternmost portion is four-stories and six bays that appear to comprise a single building, but in fact the eastern three bays belong to the original 1901

[1] The majority of the description is revised from the Part 1 submitted by Bob Stark of Chaintreuil | Jensen | Stark Architects.

[2] The F.N. Burt Factory was identified as a historic resource in the Multiple Property Documentation Form of the Hydraulics/Larkin Neighborhood that was prepared by the Clinton Brown Company in 2009.

building and the adjacent three bays to the 1903 addition **(Photo 2)**. Brick piers define the bays from the brick load bearing walls, and recessed brick infill spandrels emphasize the verticality of the piers. At the top of the bays, there is a brick parapet supported by corbelling to the plane of the piers. Within each bay, the upper floors are marked by three four-over-four windows wood windows with sandstone sills and metal lintels. The original wood windows remain on the third and fourth floors in each bay, while the first and second floor windows of Building A are filled in with concrete block and the second floor windows of Building B have been replaced. An historical rendering shows that the first floor of each bay originally had the same windows, but currently, they are all filled with concrete block, excepting the entrance in the middle bay of Building A. At street level, the grade declines to west, revealing the limestone base of the building.

The next section of the façade is Building E, which was constructed in 1916 and expanded in 1926. This section is also four-stories in height and consists of two bays defined by three brick piers, which rest on a continuous limestone base. All original windows have been replaced with concrete block. The brickwork on this façade is simpler than the earlier buildings and the larger window openings suggest the beginning of the daylight factory construction of the larger 1926 additions. The original two-story 1916 addition was built to house a boiler that heated the growing factory building. This addition also included a large brick chimney in the interior courtyard that is now partially collapsed. The entire rear of the two-story powerhouse is deteriorated. In 1926, two additional stories brought the building to its current four-story height. This addition is the first portion of the factory constructed of reinforced concrete. While the brick on the upper two floors is distinguishable from the first floors, the façade does not reflect the different construction techniques.

The remaining three sections of the façade were constructed in 1926. Building F is a four-story reinforced concrete addition consisting of three bays clearly articulated in the building facade by the exposed vertical concrete piers. The concrete floor slabs are also visible creating a typical daylight factory concrete grid with brick spandrel infill from floor to sill and large window openings to the floor above. No original windows remain, and all of the openings are filled with concrete block. The grade continues to drop from east to west, revealing a full lower level to the west.

Together, Building I and Building G compose a nine bay six-story reinforced concrete construction addition. Vertical exposed concrete piers and floor slabs visually define the structural bays and floor levels. Typical brick spandrels to sill level and large factory window openings are consistent on floors two through five. No original factory windows remain and window opening are filled with concrete block punctuated by intermittent small vinyl windows. At the sixth floor the bays have brick sills and piers defining smaller scale window openings, though like the lower floors, the original windows have been removed and openings are filled with concrete block. A continuous brick parapet extends across the entire façade, broken only by two brick penthouses that indicate the location of interior vertical circulation. There is a large staircase in the easternmost bay of Building G and an elevator in the central bay of this section.

At street level, there is a pedestrian entry located immediately west of the central elevator bay. In contrast to utilitarian factory aesthetic that dominates the factory, it is a classical entryway of carved green granite. Two doric columns stand directly on flat pavement (the stylobayte) without a base. The vertical fluted shafts are topped by a smooth capital that supports a square abacus the carries the horizontal entablature **(Photo 3)**. This

ceremonial entrance allowed company executives access to the adjacent elevator for transport to the company offices on the sixth floor.

Rear façade
Myrtle Avenue/ North elevation

The north elevation of the F.N. Burt Factory consists of six buildings: the Building A from 1901, Building C from 1903, Building D from 1910 and Buildings H and I and a garage from 1926 **(Photos 4, 5)**. The shift in construction technology between the first three and the latter three is clear in the aesthetic of the façade. The eastern three buildings express the mill style construction of load bearing walls while the western three buildings express their reinforced concrete structure, which became popular for factory design in the 1920s.

Buildings A, C and D extend from east to west approximately half the length of the block. The additions have identical detailing to Building A, which creates a unified elevation four-stories in height with fifteen bays across that sits on a limestone base. Like the south façade, the site slopes downward from east to west. The bays are defined by brick piers and brick spandrels with limestone sills and cast iron lintels that frame openings for triple banks of wood sash double hung windows. Original windows on the upper three floors remain in poor condition. The second floor windows are in-filled with concrete block. The rough-cut limestone base of the building contains window openings of the same size and proportion of the upper floors, and these openings have also been filled in with concrete block. Large limestone lintels span the lower level window openings and form a strong horizontal datum separating the building base from the stories above. An overhead door at the westernmost bay of Building C protects a tunnel that provides access to the interior courtyard.

West of the mill style buildings on Myrtle Ave. are the 1926 era constructions, Buildings H & I **(Photo 5)**. Building H is five stories high and five bays wide, and mirroring Buildings F, G and I on the southern façade, it is typical concrete frame factory style construction with brick spandrels and large "daylight factory" window openings. No original windows remain and all of the openings are filled with concrete block. The street level bays provide high clearance for loading docks, with five large overhead coiling truck doors providing access to indoor loading docks. Building I is six stories high and three bays wide. At street level, the openings are in-filled with concrete block and a double man door provides access to a stairwell in the westernmost bay. The stairwell is expressed on building façade with a vertical brick infill between the concrete piers. The infill passes in front of the floor slabs, which are expressed in the other bays, with small double hung windows stacked vertically at the stair landing levels. Adjacent to Building I, there is a one-story, high bay brick garage with a large window that is filled with concrete block and two overhead doors.

Secondary Elevations
Hamburg Street / East Elevation

The Hamburg Street elevation of the factory consists only of Building A. The four-story building is divided into eleven bays by projecting brick piers and recessed brick infill spandrels **(Photo 6)**. The two end bays and the center bay are emphasized by slightly wider piers that extend to higher parapets. Within these vertical elements, the slightly projecting piers only extend to the third floor, where they meet limestone caps that align with the

limestone sills of the fourth story windows; together, these limestone elements create a strong horizontal line that works to diminish the height of the façade and highlight the verticality of the three prominent bays. It appears that each of the window openings, one per floor within each bay, were originally filled with two six-over-six windows, though the openings on the two lower stories have been filled with concrete block. There are original wood double hung windows in poor condition on the third and fourth floors. All the window openings have limestone sills and cast iron lintels. The brick and stonework appear to be in relatively good condition, but there is significant deterioration in the cast iron lintels. The site drops off from north to south, with a rough-cut limestone base emerging from grade.

Spring Street/ West Elevation

Building I and the garage compose the west elevation on Spring Street **(Photo 7)**. Building I is nine bays wide and six stories high, and it exhibits the same reinforced concrete factory construction visible from the north facade. Floors one through five are typical brick spandrel and large daylight factory window openings. All original factory windows have been replaced with concrete block infill. The sixth floor bays are filled with brick spandrels and brick piers with three double hung wood windows per bay. These windows exhibit various states of deterioration. The northernmost bay of Building A is filled with brick, reflecting the stairwell inside. The garage is flush with the northern side of Building I and extends into the third bay. The one-story structure has a door at its northern edge and three windows with concrete sills across the façade.

Interior Courtyard elevations

The pre-1926 structures form an interior courtyard **(Photos 8, 9)**. Brick walls are flat with no piers or corbelling and the window openings are framed with limestone sills and cast iron lintels. Paired double hung wood windows look into the courtyard. The brick walls appear to be in good condition, but the windows and lintels are in poor condition. The brick chimney in the interior courtyard that is partially collapsed **(Photo 10)**.

Interior Description
Buildings A, B, C, D **(Photos 11, 12, 16, 17)**

The interiors of the original 1901 factory and the buildings added until 1910 are large open spaces required for flexibility of use in accommodating the growing box manufacturing process. Brick bearing walls are exposed on the interior. A simple grid of timber columns and beams support wood framed flooring. Large wood sash, double hung windows allow light and ventilation into the shallow floor plates. Very few defined office or dedicated spaces are apparent in these buildings. On each floor, large openings in the bearing walls with sliding fire doors connect the various additions on each floor. There are two means of vertical circulation between floors, and to the roof, in the pre-1926 portion of the factory: a large steel framed stair and an elevator. Both the stair tower, which is located in the exterior courtyard, and the elevator tower appear to be original to Building A.

Timber framed construction in the pre-1926 buildings is generally in good condition, though a roof leak at south end of Building A has caused rotting and contributed to the collapse of a column bay through the floors below.

Many wood framed windows remain in place on the upper floors, but they are in an advanced state of decay. The original wood factory flooring is intact and in fair condition.

Building E

The first two floors of the "boiler building" were added to the building in 1916. The north part of this part of the building is unobstructed, retaining a double height. This area housed the boiler and mechanical systems for the factory building. The remnants of the large smokestack are nested in the exterior corner Buildings B and E. During the 1926 plant expansion, two upper floors were added to the building with square cast columns supporting the centerline. This addition was the first structure in the factory to utilize reinforced concrete construction.

Buildings F, G, H, I **(Photos 10, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20)**

While they are identified as separate structures, these additions are part of a continuous factory expansion in 1926. The interiors of buildings F and G are typical of early twentieth century fireproof factory construction. Two-way concrete slabs are supported on an open column grid of round reinforced concrete columns with round mushroom shear caps. The first and second floors of these buildings provide expansive storage space.

Day lighting to the factory was originally provided through large factory steel sash windows with operable hopper panels that provided ventilation. These have been removed on the exterior of the building and are filled with concrete block. The second through sixth floors have smaller floor plates and are open in the center of the block to form an interior courtyard that maximized day lighting. The interior courtyard on floors three through five was, at a later date, framed over with steel construction to form a three story interior space. Original steel framed multi-panel factory windows with operable hoppers are intact in numerous openings around the center court. Several large freight elevators are distributed throughout the factory building. Interior stairways are cast-in-place concrete with pipe railings enclosed in fireproof construction.

The sixth floor of Buildings G and I form an L-shaped penthouse that houses open office space, executive offices and meeting spaces. Original plaster walls and doorways remain in poor condition. Double hung wood sash windows provide light and ventilation to the office suite.

F.N. Burt Company Factory
Name of Property

Erie, New York
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

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

[X] **A** Property 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.

[X] **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that 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 boxes that apply.)

[ ] **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

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance:

1901-1959

Significant Dates:

1903

1910

1916, 1926

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Niederpruem & Co., Engineers

Plumer & Mann, Architects

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

[X] 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 Building 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 repository: _____

Statement of Significance:
500 Seneca is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of industry as the headquarters of the F.N. Burt Company, a successful box manufacturer that contributed to the dense, mixed use character of the Hydraulics/Larkin Neighborhood, the city's earliest manufacturing district dating from the 1820s. The construction of the F.N. Burt facility in 1901 coincided with the redirection of the neighborhood economy after the Hydraulic Canal was filled in. As railroad transportation reshaped manufacturing networks, opportunistic companies located in the Hydraulics/Larkin district to benefit from the proximate juncture of rail lines and clustering of various local enterprises. The F.N Burt Company located on Seneca Street—a major thoroughfare of the neighborhood—as it shifted from printing to box making, an endeavor well positioned between rail lines and consumer markets. F.N. Burt enlarged the factory and headquarters over the subsequent decades as the business grew. The company developed a national presence, becoming the largest provider of cigarette boxes and later cosmetic containers. It remained economically viable by responding to changing demand, for instance by redirecting production to shell cartridges and medical packaging during World War II. The company relocated to suburban Cheektowaga in 1959, but the extant factory and headquarters at 500 Seneca represents the character of the neighborhood that fostered its initial development before the area's decline in the mid-twentieth century.

The building is additionally significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture as an example of daylight factory design and the work of renowned local engineering firms Niederpruem, Gibbs & Schaaf Company and Plumer and Mann. The former company constructed the earliest buildings in the factory building and the latter erected the reinforced concrete addition in 1926.

The period of significance related to these criteria is 1900-1959, from the initial construction of the F.N. Burt factory until the company relocated to Cheektowaga, abandoning the factory and the Hydraulics/Larkin Neighborhood. Other notable dates are 1903, 1910, 1916, and 1926, when the company added to the factory building.

Hydraulics/Larkin Neighborhood
The MPDF includes a thorough history of the Hydraulics/Larkin Neighborhood. The area serves as an excellent metaphor for the Buffalo's industrial history; it emerged as the center of industrial activity out of the canals, boomed with the advent of rail travel, then slowed with the development of cars and drastically declined at the hands of several freeway bypasses.

The area is named after the Hydraulic Canal, which is located at the east end of the Hamburg Canal on the east side Buffalo and connects to the Erie Canal on the other. It was one of the earliest distinct "neighborhoods" in the city. The Hydraulic Canal was designed to provide electricity to factories that sprung up in the wake of various canal openings. Just as shipping developed around the Erie Canal, production developed around the Hydraulic Canal, and by the mid 1840s it also contained a large bustling residential component to house factory workers. The Larkin Company, makers of soaps, and the largest manufacturer in the district until it finally closed down in the 1940s, arose out of this area in the mid nineteenth century.

Though by the 1840s, canals fell out of favor with the public, the area continued to grow. Often associated with outbreaks of disease, such as the cholera outbreak of 1849 that killed almost 900 people, many canals filled in by the latter half of the nineteenth century, and in 1883 the Hydraulic Canal was filled in as well.

While the canals were the most efficient means of travel at the turn of the nineteenth century, the railroads replaced them as the most reliable method of transporting goods over great distances. Because the Hydraulics district was already established as a major production center in the city, it became a center junction for many of the rail-lines in Buffalo. Giant warehouses emerged in the area, and the slaughterhouse industry developed around the rail line as well, the most notable of which was John F. Kammen's.

Similar to the way that Canals became obsolete, the advent of automobiles and truck shipping signaled the beginning of the end of rail travel throughout much of the country. With many of the factories aging, and shipping easier to achieve outside of large cities, many of largest and oldest companies left the neighborhood. For instance, Spencer-Kellog and Dupont relocated in 1952. As jobs left, people left as well.

The construction of I-190 also created physical and psychological barriers from the area to the rest of the city. In 1959, with the opening of the freeway, F.N. Burt moved its factory to Cheektowaga, where it could have newer facilities and still cheaply move its goods to the city. In 1983 the company sold once again, separating into two individual firms, one of which, Burt Rigid Box, INC, still operates in Cheektowaga and is one of the largest manufactures of convoluted round boxes in America.[3]

F.N. Burt Company History

History of the Company and Development of the Site

F. N. Burt was established by Frederick Northrup Burt in 1886 as a printing company that specialized in labels and small paper goods. Frederick Northrup, or F.N., was the son of Henry Whiting Burt, a renowned Buffalo businessman, and grandson of General David Burt, who served as a representative to the Native American tribes of the area.[4] A sales register from 1889 lists the following shipments; "German American Bank: 6000 credit slips. Art Alliance: 3200 admission tickets. George P Briare: 1000 Dinner bills of fares."[5] The transition to box production occurred sometime in the next decade, as indicated by an advertisement in the 1893 Buffalo City Directory describing them as "Manufacturers of Fine Paper Boxes and Folding Cartons."[6] At that time, they were located at 247 and 459 Washington Street, in the heart of one of Buffalo's industrial and manufacturing areas, but in the coming decade, Burt made the strategic decision to move closer to the shipping depots near Exchange Street.

In 1901, the first phase of construction began on the 400,000 sq. ft. box factory at the corner of Seneca and Hamburg Streets. The factory produced small oval and circle boxes, which were the company's most successful

[3] The Paperboard Packaging Council Century Club, "Burt Rigid Box, INC," ppcnet.org
[4] Henry Martyn Burt, "Henry Whiting Burt," in *Early Days in New England: Life and Times of Henry Burt of Springfield and Some of his Descendants. Genealogical and Biographical Mention of James and Richard Burt of Taunton, Mass, and Thomas Burt, M.P. of England.* (CW Bryan Company, Springfield Mass; 1893), 479.
[5] "January," F.N. Burt files at the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society Storage facility. Accessed 8/7/2012.
[6] 1893 Buffalo City Directory.

and profitable products, likely due to the difficulty of constructing them. During those early years after moving to 500 Seneca, the F.N. Burt Company experienced tremendous growth. In January 1902, the company had $23,53051 in their "Accounts Receivable" and by July it reported $118,627.59.[7]
Additionally, the expenditures for office and outside labor increased dramatically, from $144 and $343.07 respectively in January to $1,125.75 Office and $2,632.44 a few months later. Perhaps due to this increased production, the company expanded its facilities with two buildings in 1903. The 1913 Sanborn map indicates that the third and fourth floors of Building B and the entirety of Building C were used for "paper box making."

In 1906, F.N. Burt issued 3,000 stocks as part of its incorporation. Mr. Burt himself claimed 2,994 shares and one each was sold to his wife Katrina C. Burt, his son Henry V. Burt, Lyndon C Palmer, and Mary R. Cass, William J Gunnell, and Duane B. Tuttle.[8] During the company's first Board of Directors meeting on September 4, 1906, these seven stockholders decided that the company seal would be a Buffalo with word "Burt" on its body, encircled by the words "F. N. Burt Co. Incorporated 1906," and that their factories would include 500 Seneca, 1502 Niagara, 1133 Main Street.[9] Investment in the factories is apparent from the "President's Report" from April 7, 1908, which outlines company assets for "Factory 'A'"(500 Seneca Street) valued at $84,786.19, with plant and machinery for the building being valued at $98,723.66.

The following years were filled with optimism for the company, and for good reason. By December 31, 1907, the cash on hand had increased from $2,125.66 to $16,699.38, and inventory (merchandise) had increased by $76,000 to $176,700.90. In sixteen months, the total assets had increased to $625,900.26, with $490,358.19 in liabilities, or a net surplus of $126,824.39. In that year, much to the satisfaction of stockholders, stock values rose over forty percent a share.

The 1908 President's Report outlined some of the other goings on at the company. Throughout 1907, the company had invested heavily in expanding their facilities, creating new patents, and in equipping their new warehouse at 74 Lloyd Street. It also revealed why the company continued to produce setup boxes instead of folding, noting that by producing small boxes, they were not restrained by geographic limitations like other setup box companies. In fact, producing small and ornate packaging had been incredible successful, reducing transportation and manufacturing costs, that it allowed them to have as "near a monopoly in our particular lines as it is possible to obtain," and indeed, by 1909, FN Burt was producing 98% of all cigarette boxes in the United States.

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[7] In January 1902, Mary Cass received $100.00, only five dollars less than Mr. Burt himself. This may have been due to the recent expansion, as the company also was only paying $144 and $343.07 for office and outside labor respectively. By July of the same year, however, the company reported $118,627.59 in their "Accounts Receivable," and while that fluctuated over the next few years, the amount paid to labor ($1,125.75 Office and $2,632.44 Outside) shows that the company experienced dramatic growth in those early months of expansion. Mr. Burt began seeing returns as well, as his pay increased to $1,144.27, though Ms. Cass remained at $100.00 for July.

[8] Mr. Burt contributed $469805.04 (over twelve million dollars today) to the company before its incorporation, perhaps explaining why he took so much of the initial stocks.

[9] The Board also established the following mission statement: "To maintain, conduct and manage in the state of New York and elsewhere the business of manufacturing, producing, purchasing, selling and dealing in all kinds of paper boxes, and paper box machinery....To carry on the businesses of printers, lithographers, stereotypers, electrotypers, photographic printers, photo-lithographers, engravers, book-binders and dealers in or manufacturers of any other articles or things of a character similar or analogous to the foregoing of any of them or connected therewith."

The next President's Report noted that the company continued along this trend of growth. There was another year of net gain for the company, and the three months of first quarter of 1909 showed consistent profit margins above previous marks. Ideas about expanding to include a Canadian plant, or consolidation with other box making and printing facilities, find their way into the report as well.

Part of Burt's vision for expansion was realized later in 1909. At the beginning of the August 24th Director's meeting, his wife Katrina made a motion that, conditional to a sale to the Canadian firm Moore Corp, F.N. Burt incorporate with the Morton Co., the Merchants Counter Check Book Co. and the Carter Crume Co. Lt, to form an interest known as F.N. Burt Company LTD.[10] Part of Moore Corp's reason for acquiring F.N. Burt was that it was unable to meet its own demands for box shipping for shipment of sales books, which they produced in factories in Toronto and Niagara Falls.[11] By purchasing one of the largest box manufacturers in the United States, and consolidating under Burt's name, they were able to expand their own business, while benefitting greatly from the well-known Burt brand. The company further expanded the factory at 500 Seneca the following year, constricting Building D, which was used for shipping and paper box making. Six years later, they added Building E, a two-story boiler room that heated the factory.

The Moore takeover came at the highpoint of setup box manufacturing. By 1909, the box-making industry was firmly established throughout the country. From 1849, when the census first began distinguishing "paper box" from paper manufacturing, the industry increased from 82 to 949 facilities, 360 of which entered the industry from 1889 onward. In the 30 years leading up to 1909, over 20,000 workers joined the workforce, which totaled 39,514 by the 1910 census. In total, the industry produced $54,450,015 in 1909, a 300% increase from 1889.[12]

In 1919, the census began differentiating between different types of manufacturing, but setup boxes, the ones sold by F.N. Burt, were the most numerous, with 865 Manufacturers, employing 34,000 of the total 55,000 workers employed in box manufacturing. Setup box manufacturers reported over $93 Million worth of production for 1919, as well as $52,184,477 in profits.[13] The growth of F.N. Burt in this period mirrors this national trend. Within the first year of the company's sale, their monthly "Accounts Receivable" skyrocketed. From April 1908 to April 1910, their ledgers reported an increase of $31,000, and another $20,000 by December 1910. In just eight years, they had increased their monthly intake by almost 500%.[14]

With the sale of the company, Mr. Burt took a less commanding role in the company. Mary R. Cass was selected as the company's General Manager, overseeing all three factories in the Burt enterprise. Cass began working with the F.N. Burt Company as a "do everything" worker in 1891-92 when the company was a single shop with a printing press. After fifteen years of service, she was promoted to the level of vice president. In

[10] Poor's Manual of Industrials: Manufacturing, Mining, and Miscellaneous Companies, Poor's Railroad Manual Company, 1913, 100
[11] FundingUniverse.com, "Moore Corporation Limited History," excerpted from *International Directory of Company Histories,* Vol.4 St. James Press, 1991.
[12] 1910 US Census, "Boxes, Fancy and Paper," 433-434
[13] 1920 US Census, "Manufactures: Paper and Printing," 152
[14] F.N. Burt Files, BECHS Overflow Resource Center

1909, with the change in ownership, the company was worth at least $2,750,000 and Cass was one of the highest salaried female executives in the country.[15]

Under Mary Cass, the value of F.N. Burt skyrocketed. She oversaw several expansions of the factory, as well as the expansion to other factories throughout Buffalo. F.N. Burt became one of the leading suppliers of cases for cosmetics, cigarettes, and other industries. By 1921, the company employed 2,5000, and was worth almost $3,000,000. Celebrations for her 25th and 30th anniversaries with the company represented her high esteem in the company and Buffalo's business arena.[16] In 1921, at her 30th anniversary, she was the only woman at the event, and the praise of Samuel Moore, the president of the company, reveals how highly she was regarded; "She is the embodiment of good judgment. The fact that all you men have come here tonight, and many have come a great distance, is tribute enough to her success."[17] After serving as general manager for twenty-four years, Cass retired in 1935. She died a decade later and is buried in Forest Lawn Cemetery.[18]

When Cass was named General Manager at the sale, Samuel Moore became President. The following years saw the company expand even further. The three factories in Buffalo were joined by one factory in Toronto, and over the eighteen years following the sale, the main factory at 500 Seneca was expanded greatly. The biggest additions occurred in 1926, when Buildings F, G, H and I were constructed, along with a garage and a two-story addition to Building E. These spaces provided more storage, manufacturing, shipping and office space. Likely, the increased production of folding boxes necessitated the additional space.

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[15] "Successful in Business but a Woman "For A' That"," *The Rotarian* 7(4) 1918. Available Online: http://www.500seneca.com/public/images/history/MaryCassRotarianArticle.pdf

[16] "A Remarkable Woman," *The Paper Box Maker and American Bookbinder*, 23-24, 1914, 6.

[17] "Tribute to Woman who has Made big Mark in Business," in The Buffalo Express, February 4, 1921, 8.

[18] At a time when most men did not even know how to drive, Mary Cass was an avid motorist. She played golf, and never married, but according to a 1918 *Rotarian* article, she still enjoyed the "womanly" pleasures of dancing, and going to the theatre. Not only was Mary Cass a strong role model for women during a difficult battle for suffrage, but also she promoted women's activism beyond the office. She was one of the founding members of the Zonta Club, a women's advocacy group that began in Buffalo in 1919 and today has more than 30,000 members in 63 countries. Recently, the YWCA of Buffalo recognized Mary Cass's contribution to the advancement of women's rights. She is one of twelve women considered pioneers in their field that were included in the award given to YWCA "Corporate Award" recipients. Dorothy Markert crafted a quilt with all twelve faces, celebrating their accomplishments.

See "Successful in Business but a Woman "For A' That"," *The Rotarian* 7(4) 1918.; Zonta International, "Who we are," Available Online at: http://www.zonta.org/; "Quilts, pillows and other textiles, designed, hand screened and sewn by Dorothy Markert," 2009 (Dorothymarkert.com).

Western New York was at the center of the Woman's Suffrage movement that began with Elizabeth Stanton in 1948 in Seneca Falls, and Buffalo became a particularly pronounced center of the movement at the turn of the twentieth century. In 1908, the 60th Anniversary of the first "Woman's Right's Convention" was held in Buffalo, and the influx of women and organizations exceeded the capacity of the hosting YMCA. Additionally, in 1914, a great number of the 25,000 suffragists in the city took part in the women's suffrage parade that travelled down Main Street. Of particular note for that event was the police escort following the parade, ensuring a peaceful procession when past demonstrations had become violent. See Ida Husted Harper and Matilda Joslyn Gage, *History of Woman Suffrage: 1900-1920,* (Fowler & Wells 1922), 213; Western New York Heritage Press, "Western New York's Woman's Suffrage," wnyheritagepress.org.

Manufacturing trends:
Though FN Burt produced primarily setup boxes through the 1920s, they began assembling more folding cartons beginning in the 1930s. Folding cartons were cheaper to assemble, and since they could be shipped flat, easier to meet demand.[19] Part of this was due to market pressure, however, as the company had seen a steady decrease in orders from cigarette companies. Many of the cigarette companies were switching to folding cartons as cheaper alternatives to the rigid setup boxes, and this corresponded with F.N. Burt sales plummeting from over $1 million worth of sales in 1929, to only $88,000 in 1940. By 1951, however, the company had seen a revival of their setup cigarette boxes, selling over $1.6 million of their high-quality packaging.

Many of their shipments fluctuate very dramatically. On their year-by-year trend analyses, "Face Powder, Rouge, Perfume, Etc," shipped $1.2 million in 1929, before dropping to 900,000 in 1938, before climbing back to $1.5 million in the post-war years. Companies like Armand Cos cosmetics, and HH Ayer Inc and Richard Hudnut perfumes, were a few of Burt's biggest buyers in 1938, and by 1951 were joined on the ledgers by other big name cosmetic companies such as Lady Esther, Maybelline, Avon, and Revlon. Similar trends are seen in their candy and "patent medicines" box lines, and the decline in orders during the 1930s may have been associated with the Great Depression.

F.N. Burt was quick to provide boxes for new industries and companies. Zippo used Burt as its exclusive box manufacturer from the butane-lighter company's founding through Burt's split in 1989.[20] Latex, which was invented in the early 1920's, was quickly adopted for use as prophylactics. Burt only shipped $457.10 worth of "latex" containers in 1929, but grew steadily leading up to World War II, and by 1951, was doing over a half-million dollars in sales for prophylactic packaging. In 1951, Julius Schmid, Youngs Rubber Co., and LE Shunk Latex all were some of Burt's largest buyers for that year. Similar to the way that Mr. Burt moved to be closer to the manufacturing and shipping center of Buffalo, his company continued to prove that it would keep up with new and emerging industries.

The company was also willing to innovate itself in order to best capitalize off market changes. During World War II, when military needs made metal container production impossible for cosmetic manufacturers, FN Burt began making elaborate, stackable, paper-based "powder towers," where the powder could be mixed in a variety of round boxes. Listed as "Conversion Items" on the FN Burt records for sales trends, the company saw incredible returns on these products; for instance, the production of paper lipstick tubes earned the company $109,960.41 in 1942, which increased 500% by 1944. Similarly, the production of the "powder towers" skyrocketed from $109,555.09 in 1942 to earning over $2.5million for the company over the next two years. Aspirin containers, as well as an innovative threaded cardboard jar-lid, created almost $500,000 worth of sales for the company in 1943, and nearly as much in 1944. All of these, however, trailed off by 1946, before disappearing entirely from the ledgers in 1947.

World War II also produced several military contracting jobs. Though the company was already one of the biggest box suppliers to Allied Products Inc prior to the war, during World War II, it was supplying boxes to many other chemical companies, including Empire XXX Chemical Co, Federal Laboratories Inc, and Grove

[19] "F.N. Burt: Heavyweight in Boxing," *The Buffalo News Magazine*, December 14, 1980.
[20] Interview with Russell Hurd, President and CEO of Burt Rigid Box, July 27, 2012.

Laboratories Inc. They produced ointment boxes for Medical Depot, and "Nitro Cellulose Caps and Disks," (essentially flammable paper), as well as stock drug containers for the U.S. Army. [21]

Box Manufacturing in the Twentieth Century

Leading up to the nineteenth century, storage and transportation of goods was largely limited to wooden barrels and crates, with finer things (cigars and candy, for instance) often being shipped in small wooden boxes. The development of paperboard, or thick-stiff paper assembled from woodpulp, changed the box-making world, as well as the world of shipping.

The first paperboard setup boxes appeared in Philadelphia and Boston in the early 1800s. One of the most prominent early manufacturers was the Dennison family in Boston in 1839. While it was used for many types of boxes, one of the earliest, and most popular designs was the shoebox, where the box's basic design (paperboard rectangle with separate rectangle cover) allowed for individual packaging. Logistically, the rigidness of these boxes, as they were assembled prior to shipment to the companies that would use them, limited their usefulness beyond local companies. Many corporations often had their own box manufacturing lines to meet their shipping needs.[22] By the turn of the 20th century, setup boxes were used mainly for high-end products like greeting cards, gifts, jewelry, while many cheaper products, cigarettes, cereal, and small cosmetics switched to the folding cartons that developed near the end of the 19th century.[23]

Unlike the set-up box, which could not be broken down (the sides and bottoms were glued into their shape already), the folding carton was able to be shipped flat, and assembled by retailers. The unique design, which allowed the base and top to be folded into the box, was initially cut and folded by hand, as the process was too complicated for mechanized manufacturing. Robert Gair, one of the pioneers of the folding carton, stumbled onto a time-saving solution by accident in 1879. An operator of his paper bag manufacturing line mistakenly cut 20,000 seed bags incorrectly, but revealed a method to cut and fold the paperboard simultaneously.

With this innovation, the folding carton exploded throughout the 1890s, with retailers like Bloomingdales and the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company shipping their products in small, individually packaged, amounts. Much of this explosion was tied to the folding carton's easy shipping capabilities; after production, they could be flattened down, shipped, and assembled by the company. This dramatically changed how goods were shipped, as prior to this, goods were often delivered in bulk. National Biscuit Company began selling their Uneeda Biscuits in cartons in 1896, a huge (and welcome) change from their "cracker barrels" that exposed their product to moisture, odors, and vermin.[24] Cigarettes, which had long since abandoned their soft-paper packaging for rigid setup boxes, began adopting the folding carton as a happy-medium of cost, product protection, and ease of shipping.

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[21] It is unclear whether they made machine gun parts in conjunction with Buffalo Arms, or if they just supplied the boxes, but they produced over $100,000 worth over a two-year period.

[22] A popular story concerning the Moore Corporation, the company that eventually purchased the F.N. Burt Company, is that prior to buying out Burt, they had their security guard assembling boxes in the gatehouse.

[23] Diana Twede and Susan E.M. Selke, *Cartons, Crates and Corrugated Board: Handbook of Paper and Wood Packaging Technology,* (Lancaster: DEStech Publications, 2005) 40-41.

[24] Ibid., 42.

With this new, easy-to-ship, packaging available, many companies chose to ornately decorate the folding cartons, using them as a way to advertise their product, not only in displays at the department and grocery stores, but also when consumers would visit each other's homes.[25] At the end of the 19th century, folding cartons and setup boxes were the main way goods were packaged and sold throughout the country.

Construction Methods

Slow Burn Post and Beam

Slow burning factory construction developed as advancements to the earlier textile mills. Heavy timber floors and thick supporting beams both withstood more weight and burned slower than their predecessors, making the system more suitable for urban manufacturers. While not fireproof, the slower burning time allowed a better chance of survival among those within the building and more time for fire fighting. In this construction method, the post and beam grid system on each level carries the weight of the floor above.

Reinforced Concrete

Reinforced concrete construction emerged as a cutting edge method for factory construction in the 1920s because of the improved fireproofing, lighting, and spaciousness it affords compared to post and beam systems. By embedding steel rods in concrete, reinforced concrete combines the tensile strength of steel and the compression strength of concrete.

A typical reinforced concrete construction consists of various reinforced concrete members—i.e., walls, slabs, and columns—that join to support and transfer loads to the building foundation. In these exposed frame construction systems, the spaces between exterior piers are filled with steel sash windows.

[25] Ibid., 46.

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"Tribute to Woman who has Made big Mark in Business," *The Buffalo Express*, February 4, 1921, 8.

Twede, Diana and Susan E. M. Selke. *Cartons, Crates and Corrugated Board: Handbook of Paper and Wood Packaging Technology.* Lancaster: DEStech Publications, 2005.

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Zonta International. "Who we are." Available Online at: http://www.zonta.org/

F.N. Burt Company Factory
Name of Property

Erie, New York
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.88

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	189468	4759421	3	18		
2	18			4	18		

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Caitlin T. Boyle and Derek King, Architectural Historians(contact: Dan McEneny – NYSHPO)

organization Preservation Studios date 9-5-12

street & number 257 Lafayette Avenue, Ste 3 telephone 716-725-6410

city or town Buffalo state NY zip code 14213

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 SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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

name 500 Seneca Street LLC c/o Savarino Development

street & number 26 Mississippi Street telephone

city or town Buffalo state NY zip code 14203

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, D.C. 20503

Verbal Boundary Description

The former F.N. Burt Co. box factory is located on the city block bounded by Spring Street, Myrtle Avenue, Hamburg Street and Seneca Street. The factory occupies the majority of the block, abutting the sidewalks on Myrtle, Hamburg and Seneca. The westernmost portion of the block, along Spring Street, is open area formerly used for parking that is surrounded by chain link fencing. The current configuration of the factory was reached in 1926, with the culmination of a series of additions that extended the original factory building, located along Hamburg Street, westward.

Boundary Justification

The F.N. Burt Co. factory attained its current configuration in 1926, within the period of significance, and the company remained on the site, as is, until 1956. The boundary is drawn to include those lands associated with the building's 1901 to 1959 period of significance

Additional Information

Name of Property:	F.N. Burt Co.
City or Vicinity:	Buffalo
County:	Erie County
State:	NY
Name of Photographer:	Michael J. Puma
Date of Photographs:	August 2012
Location of Original Digital Files:	257 Lafayette Ave., Buffalo, NY 14213
Number of Photographs:	20

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0001
North and west facades, camera facing southeast

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0002
South and west facades, camera facing northeast

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0003
Greek Revival entrance, south façade, camera facing north

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0004
South façade, timber frame portion, camera facing north

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0005
East façade, timber frame portion, camera facing west

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0006
North façade, camera facing southwest

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0007
First floor original staircase, reinforced concrete portion camera facing northwest

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0008
First floor, reinforced concrete portion, camera facing southeast

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0009
First floor, timber framed portion, camera facing northeast

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0010
Second floor, reinforced concrete portion, camera facing southeast

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0011
Second floor, timber framed portion, camera facing southwest

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0012
Third floor, timber framed portion, camera facing south

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0013
Third floor, reinforced concrete portion, camera facing west

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0014
Third floor atrium, reinforced concrete portion, camera facing northwest

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0015
Fourth floor, reinforced concrete portion, camera facing south

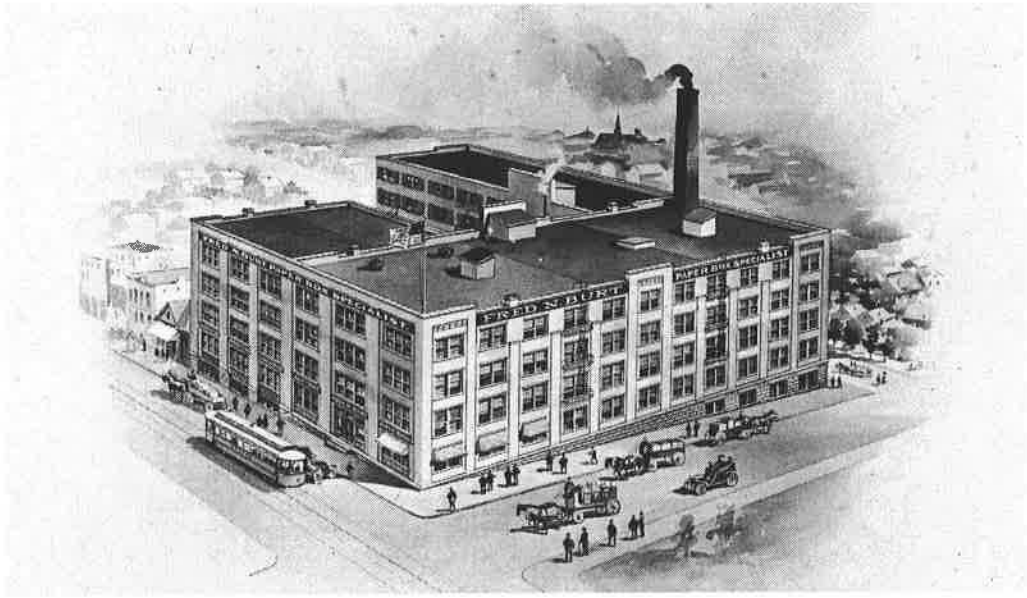
NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0016
Fourth floor, timber framed portion, camera facing northwest

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0017
Fifth floor, timber framed portion, camera facing south

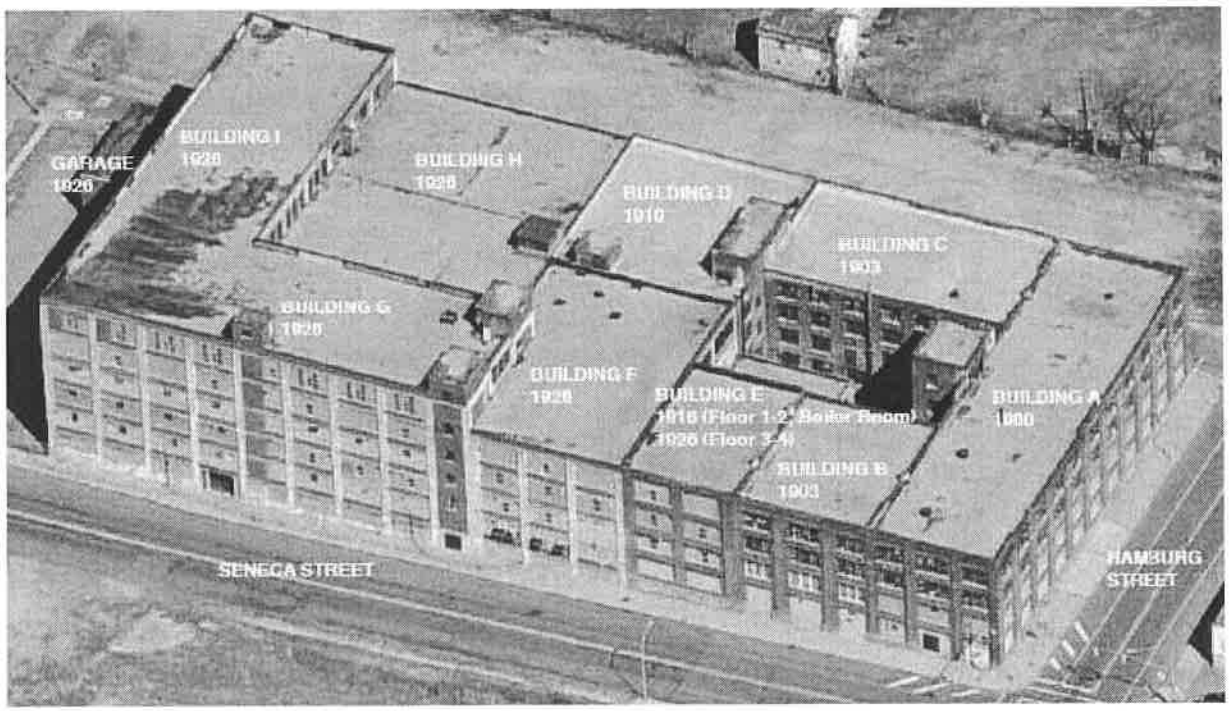
NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0018
Fifth floor, reinforced concrete portion, camera facing northwest

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0019
Sixth floor offices, reinforced concrete portion, camera facing east

NY_Erie County_Hydraulics/LarkinMPS_F.N. Burt Co._0020
Sixth floor office corridor, reinforced concrete portion, camera facing west

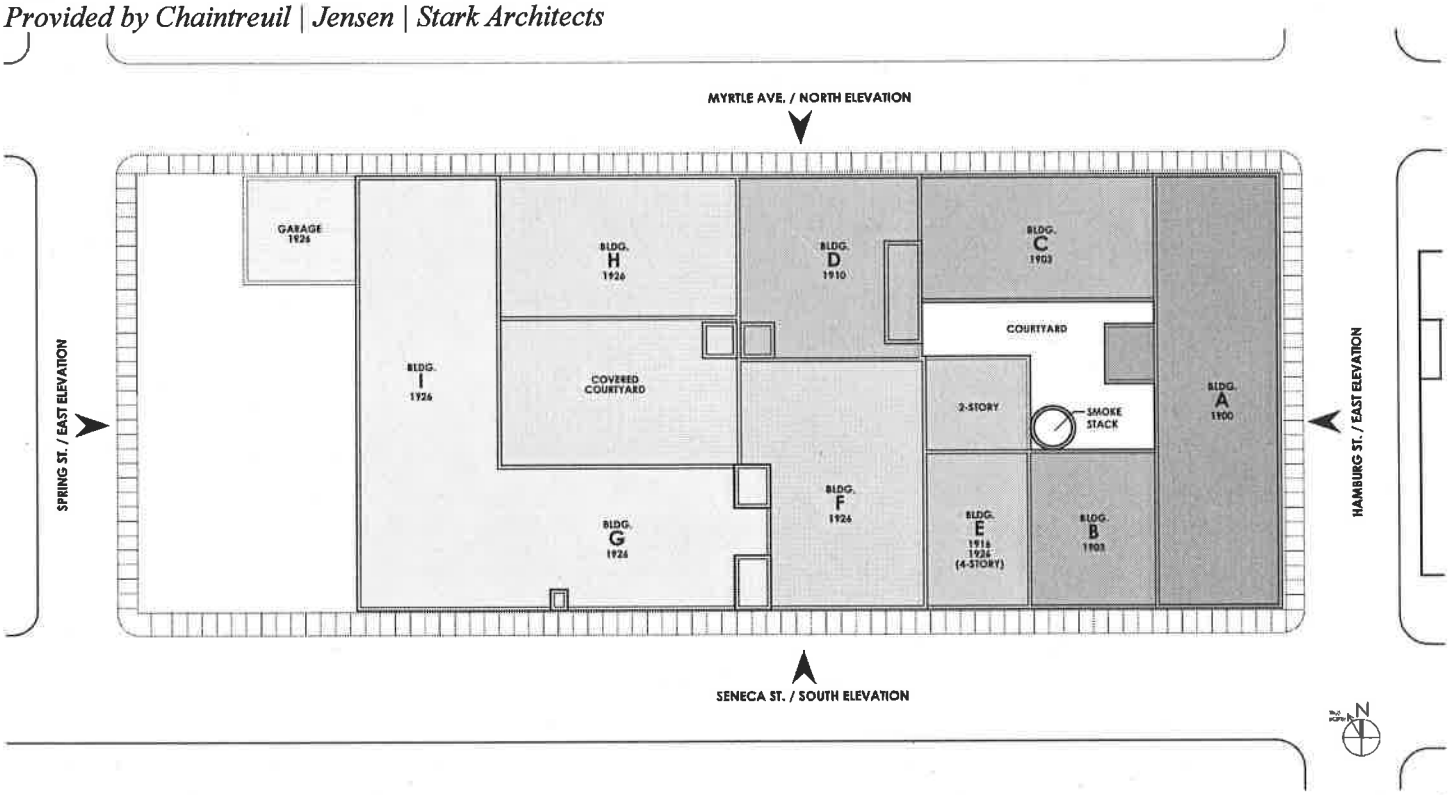


Historical Rendering, Circa 1920's

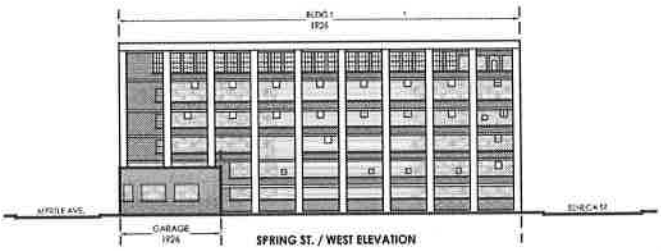


F.N Burt Co. 500 Seneca Street Building Stages *Provided by Chaintreuil | Jensen | Stark Architects*

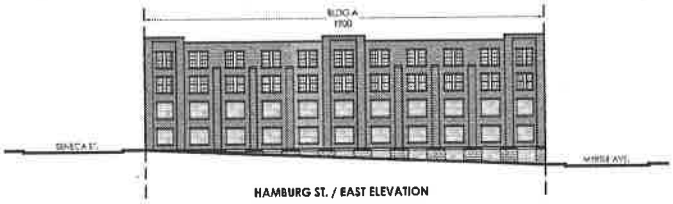
Additions to the F.N. Burt Company Factory
Provided by Chaintreuil | Jensen | Stark Architects



Elevations of 500 Seneca Street
Provided by Chaintreuil | Jensen | Stark Architects



SPRING ST. / WEST ELEVATION



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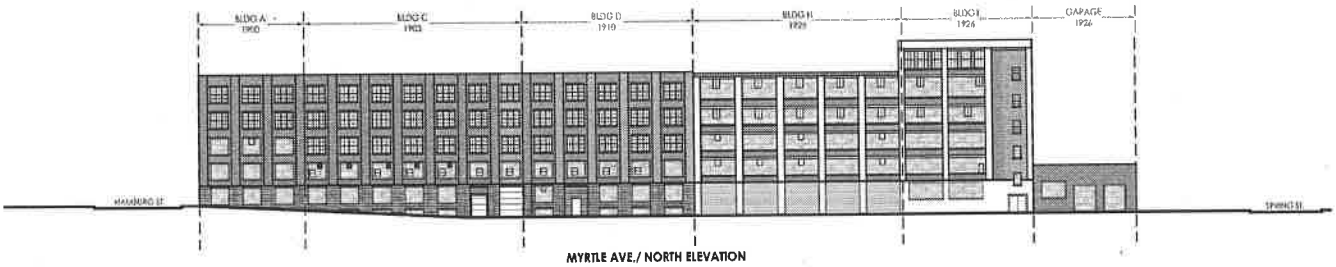
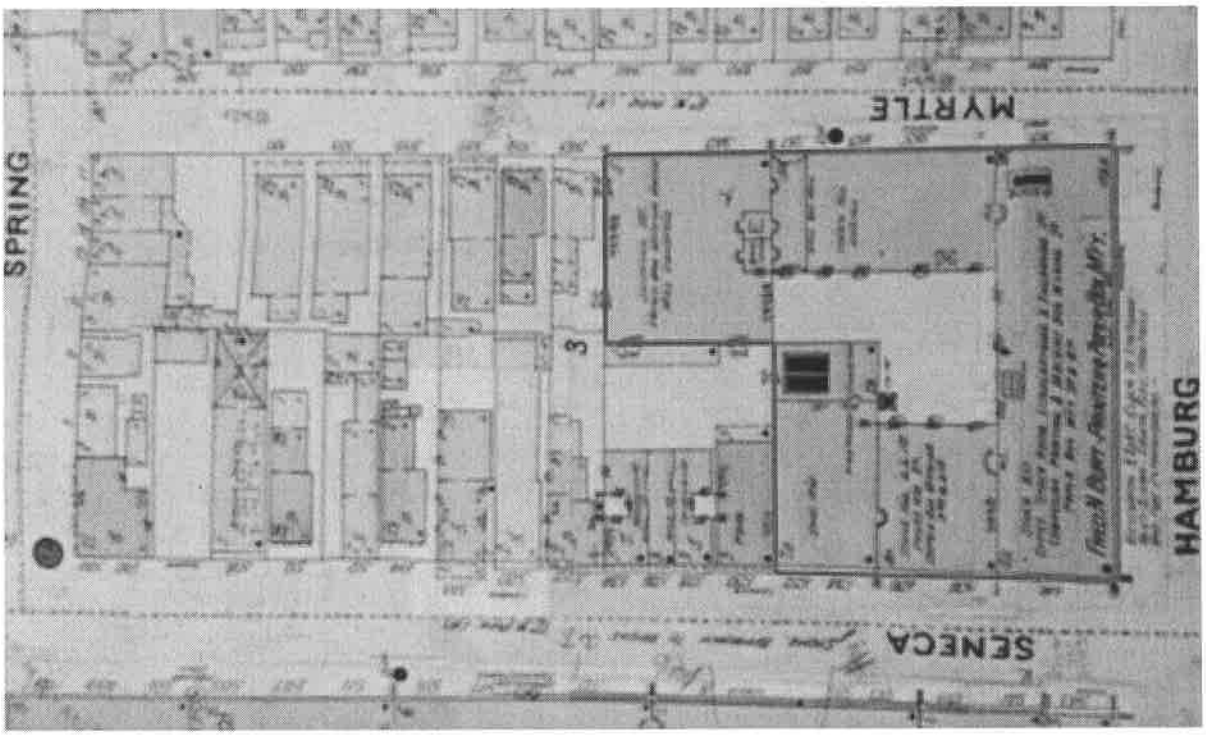


MYRTLE AVE./ NORTH ELEVATION

SENECA ST. / SOUTH ELEVATION

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
1899, corrected to 1914



1926

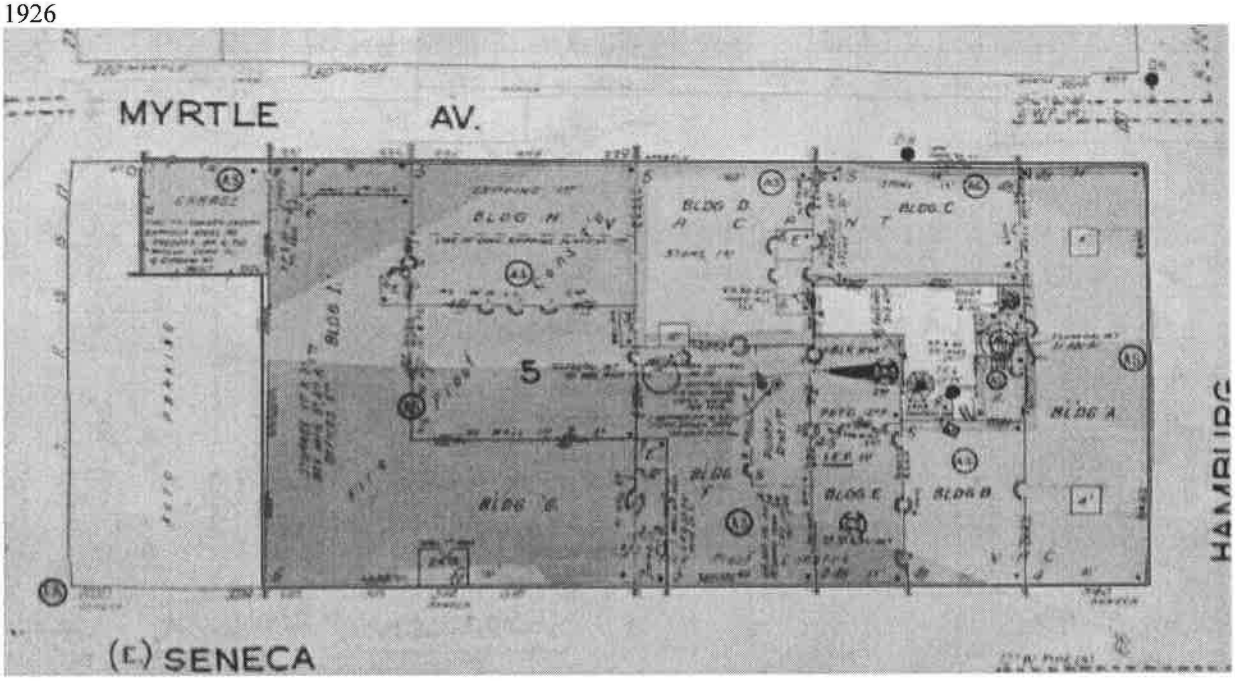


PHOTO KEYS –

N

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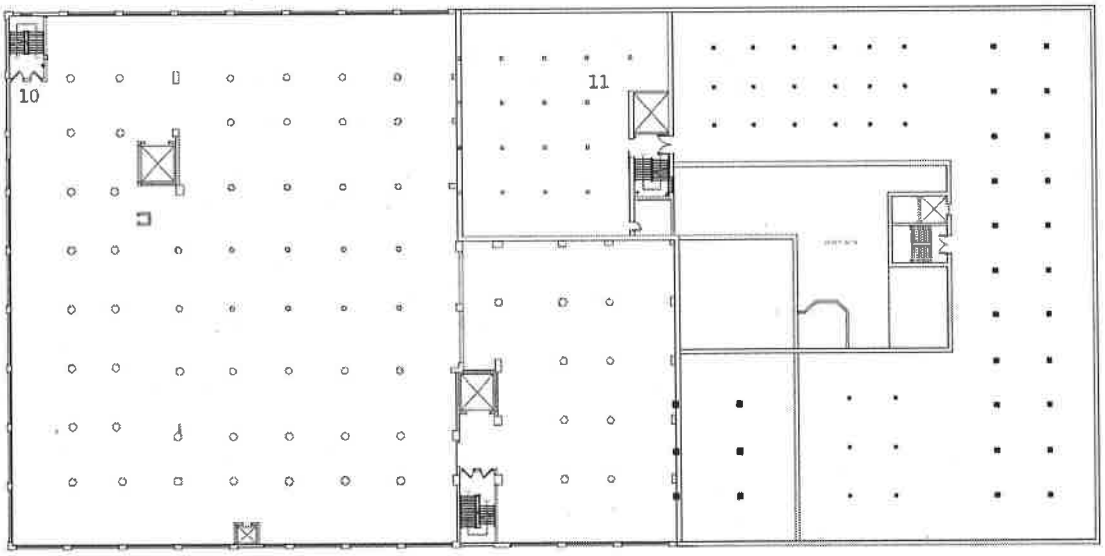
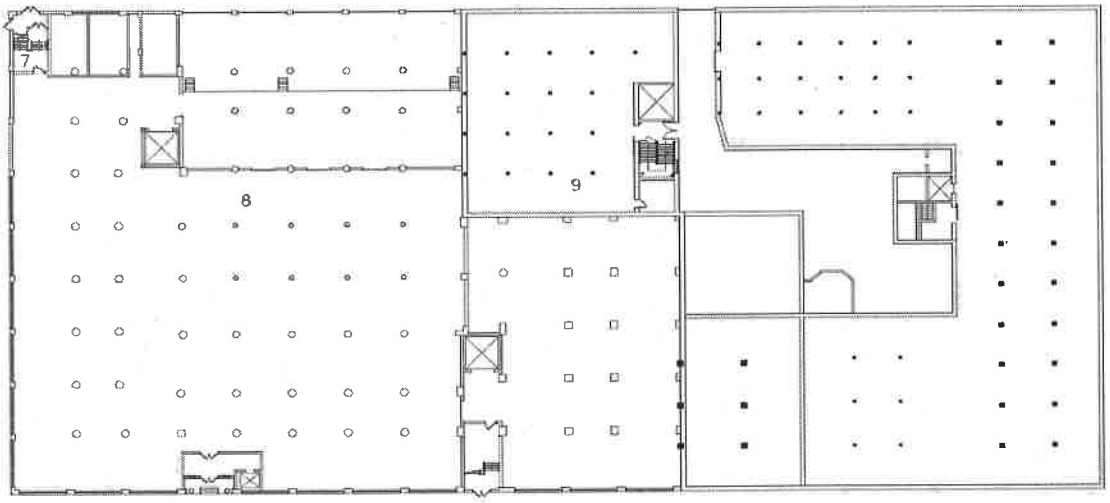


Seneca Street

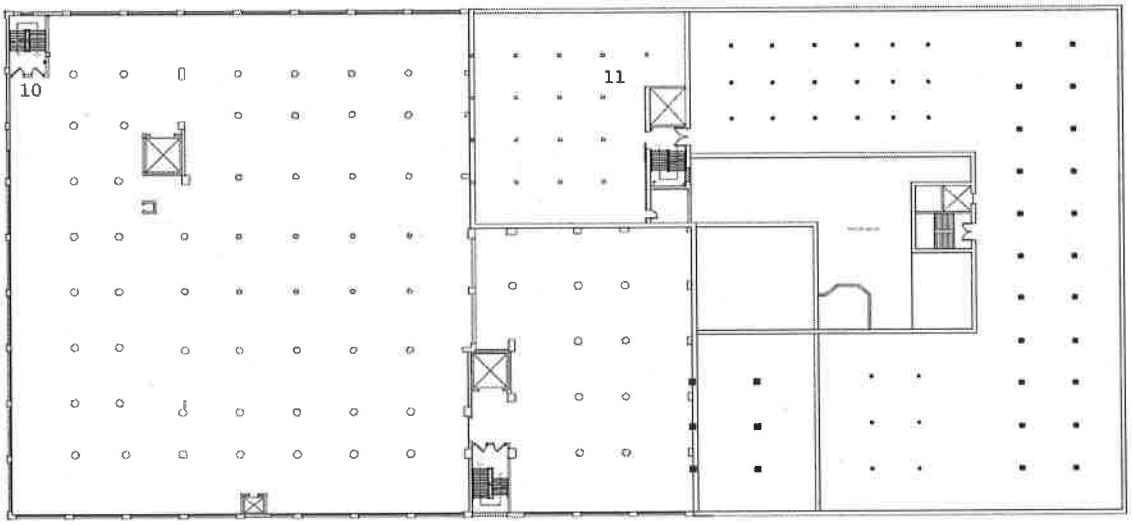
PLAN

FIRST FLOOR



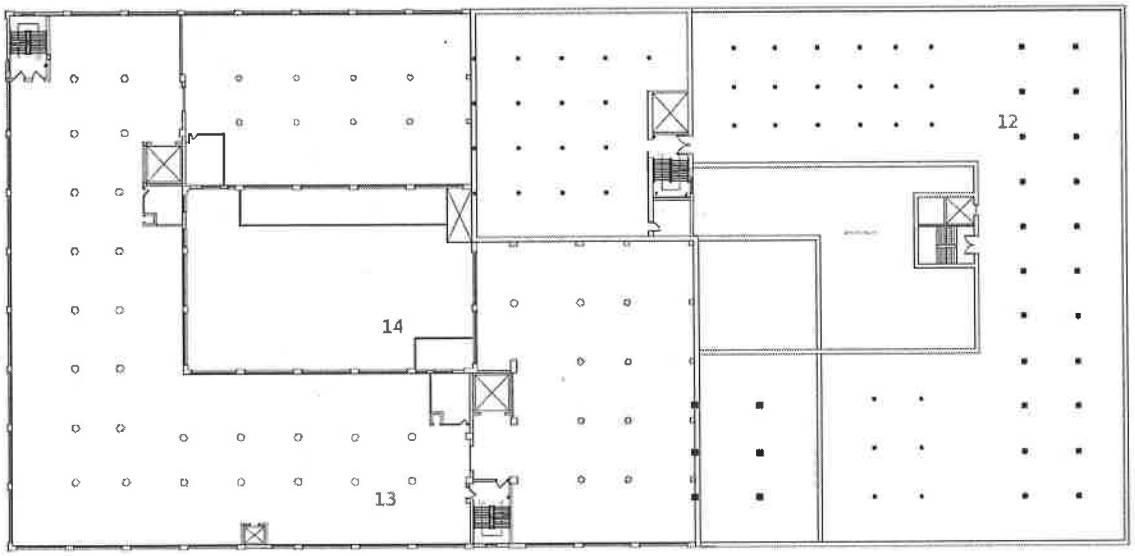
Seneca Street

SECOND FLOOR



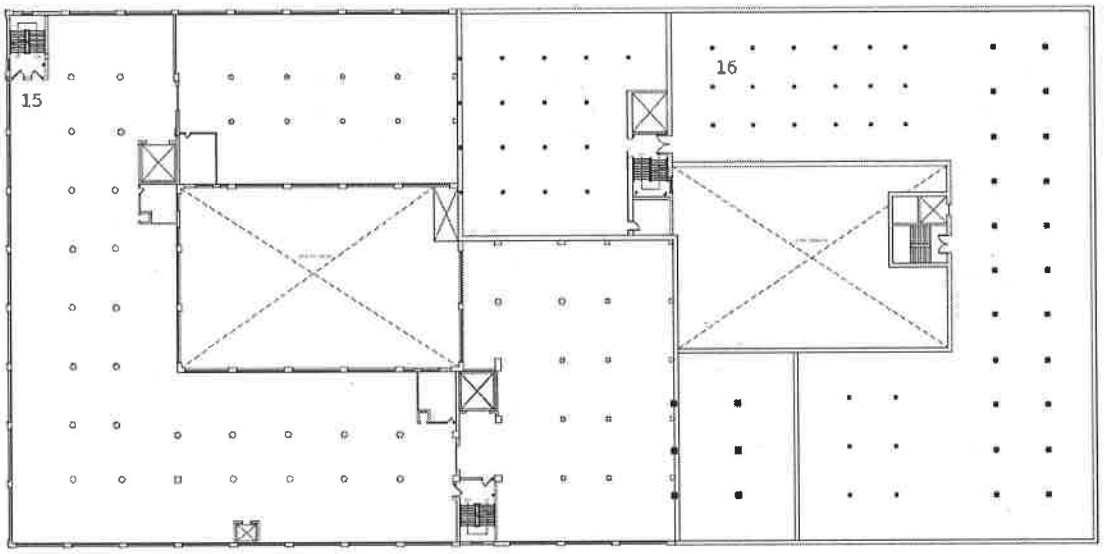
Seneca Street

THIRD FLOOR

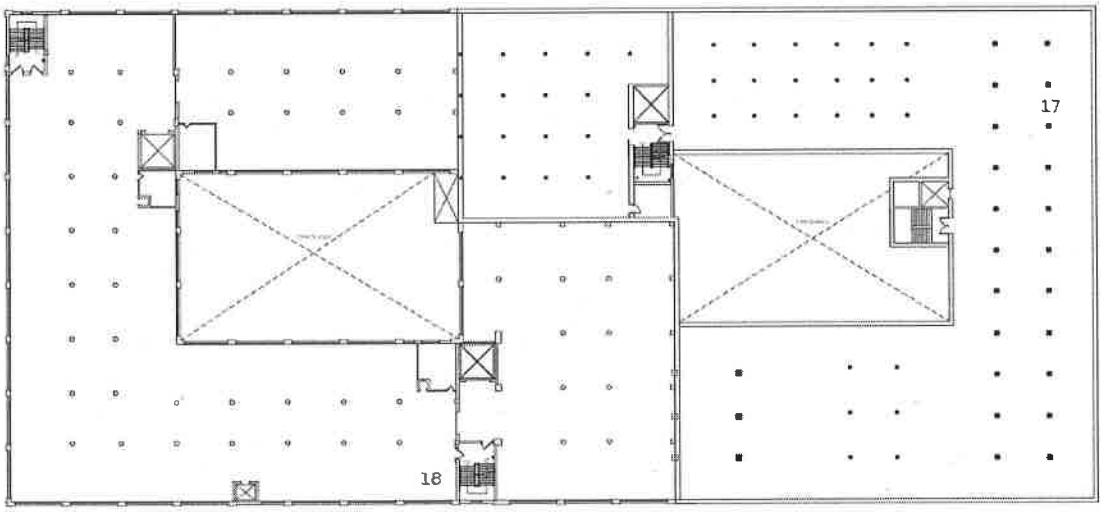


Seneca Street

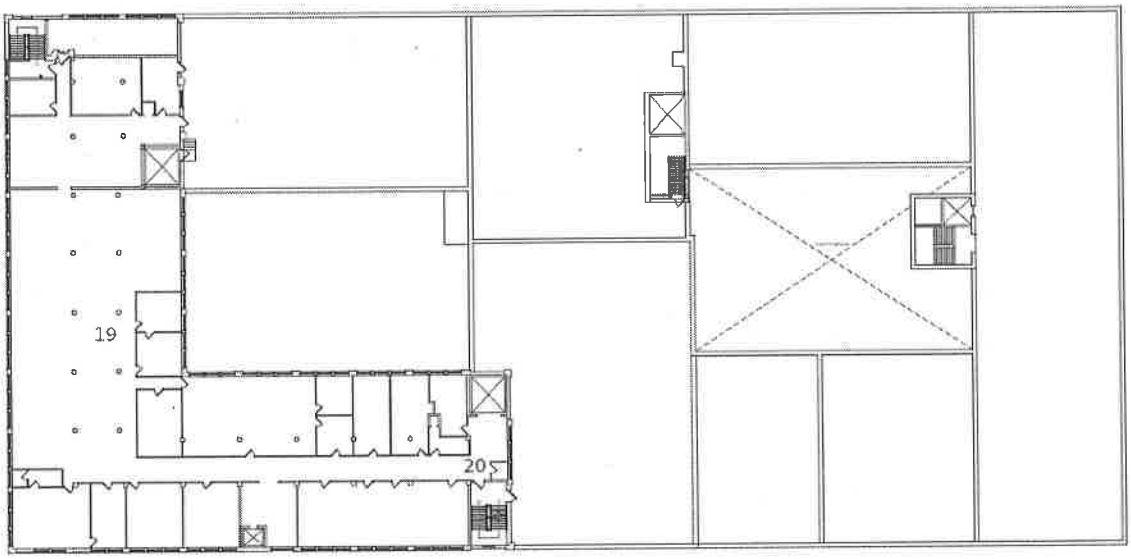
FOURTH FLOOR



FIFTH FLOOR



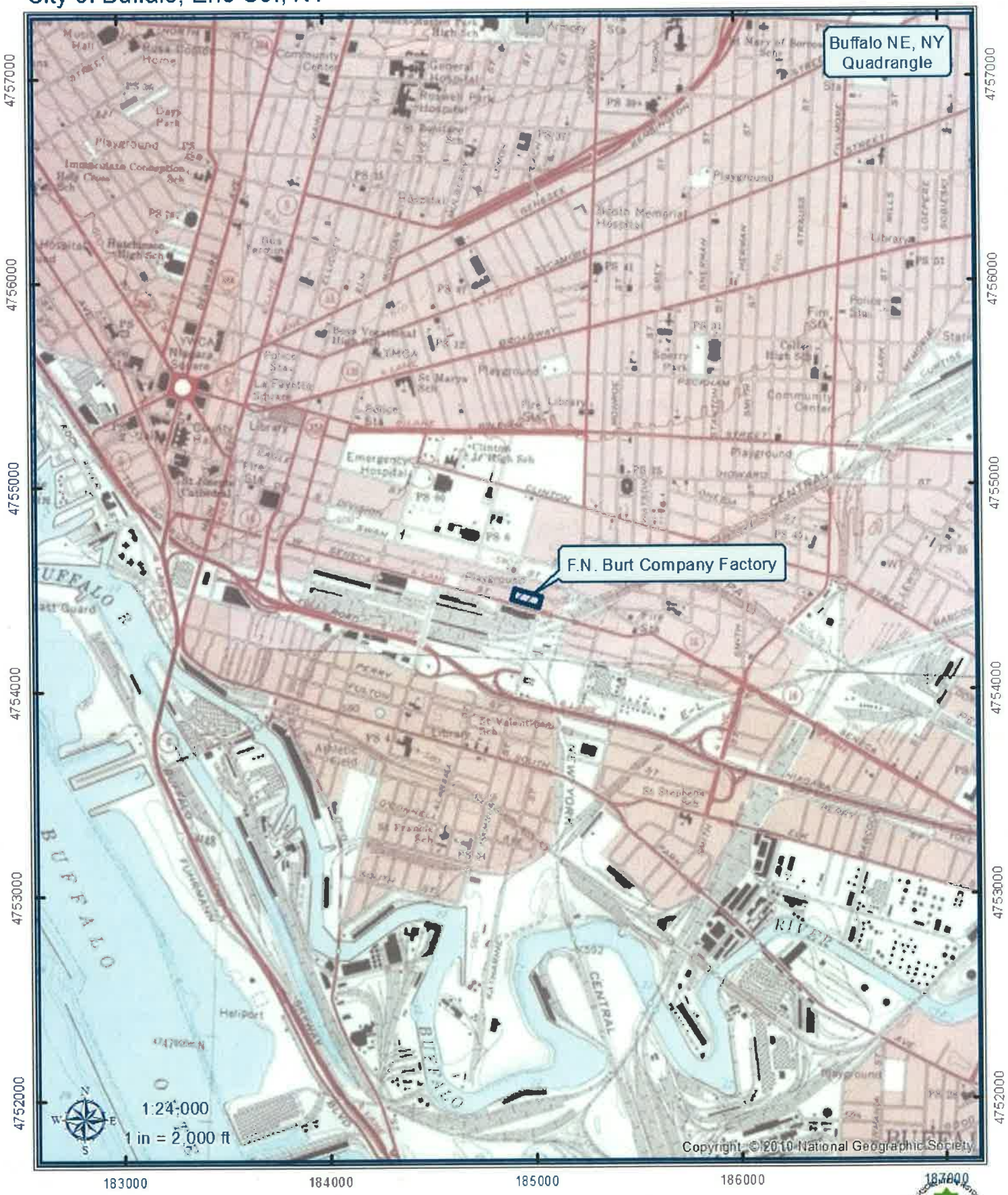
SIXTH
FLOOR



Seneca Street

F.N. Burt Company Factory
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

500 Seneca St.
Buffalo, NY 14204



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

Feet
0 650 1,300 2,600

Burt Company

F.N. Burt Company Factory
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

500 Seneca St.
Buffalo, NY 14204

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

0 140 280 560 Feet

Burt Company

Tax Parcel Data:
Erie Co. RPS
http://gis1.erie.gov/GC/ErieCountyNY

PAPER BOX SPECIALISTS

PAPER BOX

EXIT

WARNING
DANGER

EXIT

EXIT

C
B
C
B

7
G