

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Thos. Corrigan Building

and/or common Corrigan Building

## 2. Location

street & number 1828 Walnut

not for publication

city, town Kansas City

vicinity of

state Mo. 64108

code 29

county Jackson

code 095

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Alan J. Bronfman

street & number 1828 Walnut, Suite 100

city, town Kansas City

vicinity of

state Missouri 64108

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of Recorder of Deeds  
Jackson County Courthouse, Kansas City Annex

street & number 415 East 12th Street

city, town Kansas City

state Missouri 64106

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Missouri State Historical Survey has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date May, 1982 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Mo. Department of Natural Resources  
Historic Preservation Program, P.O. Box 176

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Exterior

The building is basically rectangular in plan and massing, consisting of ten stories, a one-and-one-half story tower housing elevator machinery and water tanks projecting above the northeast corner, and a basement level which projects under the sidewalks to the east and south. It is 115 feet from east to west and 99 feet 1/8 inch from north to south. An open loading dock area is notched into, and extends the full width of, the west side of the building on the first floor. This area is one structural bay deep, and is presently open on its south end on to 19th Street.

The reinforced concrete framing is reflected on the north, east, and south facades, the east facade being divided in three equal bays and the north and south into four. The bays of the east and south facades are identical in form and detail, with the exception of the northernmost bay on the east facade which marks the principal entrance and which extends into a tower above the bulk of the structure. Each exterior column on these two facades is expressed in a massive Flemish-bond brick pilaster which extends from base to cornice line, giving a strong vertical expression to the building. The verticality is broken by a continuous tan terra-cotta cornice line that doubles as the third floor spandrel. An unadorned shield decorates this cornice at each pilaster, returning emphasis to the vertical. A second terra-cotta horizontal replaces the tenth floor spandrel, forming a sill below each window bay and allowing the tenth floor extent of each pilaster to read as a capital in effect if not in form. An unadorned rectangular terra-cotta panel is set into each pilaster at this level, furthering the emphasis.

No true cornice exists, the vertical repetition being ended by a simple stone cap that does not project beyond the wall line. A vertical thickening of this cap over each pilaster only serves to continue the vertical thrust.

A thin moulding of terra-cotta edges each pilaster and enframes each window bay. Within each bay the unadorned brick spandrels are slightly recessed and visually thin, extending only from a low interior sill to the bottom of the concrete edge-beam at each floor line. Thus, the overall impression is one of vertical strips of window between the vertical pilasters.

The windows themselves are very large and handsomely proportioned. They are multi-panel industrial sash in steel frames, with three windows in each bay separated by two steel mullions. Visually each window is approximately the same width as a pilaster, so that the four bays of the south facade take the rhythm 1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1. Each window contains 25 vertical panes, 5 x 5, with an operable sash center panel of 6 panes. These operable panels are staggered in location, the central one in each bay being set one pane higher. The result is a subtly pleasing variation and yet another vertical emphasis.

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The tower bay varies from the others only in that the steel mullions separating the windows are replaced by two terra-cotta mullions extending in front of the spandrels the full height of the bay. These mullions become an extension of the moulding edging the bay, quickening the vertical rhythm and adding visual weight to the corner. The tower extending above the bay is essentially a flat brick plane between extensions of the two adjacent pilasters. The pilasters are here elaborated in an interplay of vertical and horizontal elements reminiscent of Prairie style articulation. The termination of the tower wall plane between these two pilasters takes the form of a flattened pediment. A single window (rather than three) centers in this wall, flanked by vertical, rectangular panels of terra-cotta. Above this window is a shield, an enlargement of those at the third floor level, but adorned with the monogram "T.C."

The west, or rear, facade contains windows and wall area in the same proportion as on the east and south facades, but is completely unadorned save at the southernmost pilaster where the design wraps around from the south facade. The windows are set into a flat plane of brick, with brick mullions replacing those of steel. The northernmost window was omitted in favor of a fire escape with doors to each floor. On the first floor is an open loading dock set into, or under, the building. Originally much of the interior loading dock wall was glassed in above a range of doors, but it is now much altered.

The north wall, as noted above, consists of the exposed concrete frame with a brick infill. Originally each floor had 6 small, metal framed, double-hung windows illuminating the stair-well, restrooms, and elevator shafts. To these in more recent years have been added a number of other openings, of varying size and seemingly at random. Even the tower element is unadorned, and the conclusion seems inescapable that this was intended to be a party wall for some future construction that never occurred.

The ground floor elevations of the east and south facades essentially reflected the upper floors. From the sill line downward, the building rests on an unadorned cut stone base. The center window of the tower bay was replaced by a double door with an arched fan light over it, forming the building lobby entrance. Centered in the middle bay of the east facade was a second double door topped by a rectangular fan light. The flanking windows in this one instance were plate glass rather than industrial sash. This was the entrance to the lobby of the Gateway Station Post Office. A rectangular terra-cotta panel was set into the second floor spandrel of each of the three east bays, each bearing lettering and reading (from north to south) "THOS. CORRIGAN BUILDING," "GATEWAY STATION," and "U.S. POST OFFICE."

On the south, or 19th Street, facade, a double door was set into the easternmost bay next to the corner pilaster, providing a second entrance to the post office lobby. Single doors providing basement access were set into the two middle bays. The westernmost bay on the first floor was spandrelled and windowed like the others, but this was a mere screen for the post office loading dock behind. The windows of this level on the south contained wired glass for security for the post office work area.

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Interior

As noted, the building is of reinforced concrete construction, the framing being of some interest. The structure and corresponding exterior articulation is in three equal bays from north to south and four equal bays from east to west. The exterior columns are square in section while all interior columns are circular with splayed capitals. The columns diminish in size from floor to floor, though the upper diameter of the capitals remains constant. The columns on the lower levels are quite massive, indicating that the building was originally intended to be capable of serving a warehouse function.

Little or none of the original interiors remains. Photos indicate that the original building lobby was quite plain, while no record has been located of the post office lobby interior. The upper floors were always subject to change, and had been designed for maximum flexibility and heaviest potential use.

Condition

The condition and maintenance of the building are good. The only exterior alterations of any consequence have occurred on the ground floor. At some point prior to 1946, the window screen wall in the westernmost bay of the south facade was removed, allowing for greater vehicular access to the loading dock area. In 1959, the eastern ground floor facade was altered with plate glass replacing all windows, the pilasters visually widened, and planters placed below the new windows. The building lobby entry remained in the same location, though in new materials. A shallow, metal-faced canopy was extended along the length of the east facade immediately above the new windows. A more formal entry from the loading dock area was also added at this time. These changes were designed by the architectural firm of Fullerton and McCamis.

At approximately this same time, panels were placed over portions of the windows (still in place) on the remainder of the east facade and on the west facade. These screen dropped ceilings and floor HVAC units, and may have been added when the interiors were redone in 1958 by the General Services Administration and the Gladstone Drafting and Design Service. No similar alterations were made to the south facade, although the ground floor windows are now large plate glass. The alterations to the north facade are of little significance and are noted above.

Many interior changes have occurred over the years. The most significant was in 1959 when Fullerton and McCamis, in conjunction with their exterior work, added a mezzanine level above the lobby, the width of the lobby bay and extending from front to rear. This change assumes importance if it is ever desired to restore the main facade to its original appearance.

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Site

The building is located at the northwest corner of 19th Street and Walnut Avenue, and occupies the whole of its site. In addition, the basement extends under the whole of its site. The basement also extends under the sidewalks to the east and south. This extension was originally illuminated by sidewalk lights, which are no longer extant. Parking facilities to the west and east have been added to the property, but are not pertinent to this nomination.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1920–1921 **Builder/Architect** Fogel Const. Co./Keene & Simpson, Architects

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Thos. Corrigan Building is significant according to criteria of eligibility B and C, to wit: (B) it is associated with Thomas Corrigan, an entrepreneur who contributed substantially to the growth and development of Kansas City as a major metropolitan area; and (C) it is a representative example of architect-designed, utilitarian warehouse construction from Kansas City's post-World War I period of vigorous commercial and economic expansion.

The Corrigan Building is significant in the category of ARCHITECTURE as a commercial design of the Kansas City firm of Keene and Simpson featuring exterior articulation of skeletal form and utilizing spare Arts and Crafts detailing to emphasize the verticality of the design. It is significant in the category of COMMERCE as it reflects the period of tremendous commercial and economic growth that occurred in Kansas City in the 1920's. The building is significant in the SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN category due to its association with Thomas Corrigan, Kansas City building contractor and real estate investor who figured prominently in the establishment of an extensive cable-car system in the 1880's, thereby promoting the rapid growth and expansion of the city.

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Historical Data

The Thos. Corrigan Building was completed in 1921. It was named in honor of one of four brothers who came to Kansas City in the late 1860's from their native Canada. Beginning as laborers, they soon became involved in the city's post-Civil War building boom. Profits from the construction business were placed into real estate and in 1875 two of the brothers, Thomas and Bernard, acquired the controlling interests in a number of the city's street railway lines. In 1886, they purchased exclusive rights to the patents on a cable system. In 1886, they consolidated their holdings into the Metropolitan Street Railway system, then sold their controlling interest to Robert Gillham for \$1,250,000. They subsequently turned to railroad building in the southwest, though never completely severing their ties to the M.S.R.

The Corrigan Building was developed for the four daughters of Thomas Corrigan. When first proposed in 1919, the structure was intended to be five stories in height, but it was increased to ten stories on the strength of the Post Office lease. Col. Thomas C. Bourke, grandson of Thomas Corrigan, supervised the project and handled the leasing arrangements. The final working drawings were dated December 12, 1919-January 15, 1920.

The Gateway Station Post Office was the principal tenant from 1921 to 1931. From roughly 1935 until 1947, the building was occupied by the Donnelly Garment Company with only minor alterations. In 1947, Donnelly Garment moved to 3500 East 17th Street, and the Veteran's Administration leased the entire 125,000 square feet. Working drawings done at this time show that the old post office lobby was still in place at this time, and was enlarged by the V.A.

In 1958, the V.A. moved to other quarters. Ownership now lay with Corrigan Properties, Inc., a syndicate of the Tschudy and Bourke families, heirs of the Corrigan family. Col. Bourke was still managing and leasing agent at this time, through his Hardy Phoenix Company. Faced with no tenants and a structure essentially gutted by the General Services Administration, Col. Bourke developed the parking to the west of the building and made the other internal and external changes enumerated in the description section (Item #7). Subsequent to these changes, the Associated Midwest Gift Organization was a major tenant.

In January, 1977, the Corrigan Building was purchased from Col. Bourke by the present owner, Alan J. Bronfman, president of Distributors, Inc., for relocation of the firm.

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Architect

The architectural firm of Keene & Simpson (later Keene, Simpson and Murphy) played a prominent role in the growth of Kansas City for nearly fifty years. Primarily designers of commercial structures such as the Thos. Corrigan Building, they also participated in the planning of several of the area's most prominent public buildings. Among the works credited to the firm are the following:

1. Scottish Rite Temple, Linwood and the Paseo, 1930
2. Truman Courthouse, 112 West Lexington, Independence, Mo., 1932-33  
(with David Frederick Wallace)
3. Jackson County Courthouse, 415 East 12th, 1934 (with Wight & Wight and Frederick C. Gunn)
4. Commerce Tower, 911 Main, 1965.



## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Blueprints and original drawings:

1. Keene & Simpson Architects, Job No. 100, blueprints dated 10/22/19, 12/12/19 - 1/15/20.  
This is a full set of the original construction drawings.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Approx. .26 acres

Quadrangle name "Kansas City"

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 461 and 462, McGee's Addition, a subdivision in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title 1. Larry K. Hancks

organization Restoration Associates, a division of  
Solomon Claybaugh Young Architects, Inc. date October 19, 1981

street & number 20 West 9th telephone 816/842-2292

city or town Kansas City state Missouri

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☒ state ☐ local

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

Director, Department of Natural Resources and  
State Historic Preservation Officer

date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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2. Veterans Administration, prints dated 8/29/47, 9/26/47, 11/14/47, 4/9/48. These are for interior alterations only.
3. Gladstone Drafting and Design Service, prints, drawings and sketches dated 6/1/58. These are for interior alterations only (heating, plumbing, and electrical).
4. General Services Administration, prints dated 7/58. These are for interior alterations only, showing "restoration," i.e. removal of all V.A. interior work.
5. Leasing plans of all floors dated 8/28/59.

Photos:

1. Photo dated June, 1946 showing west and north elevations.
2. Interior photo (same date as above?) showing east and north walls in building lobby.
3. Interior photo (during V.A. occupancy) showing west wall and stair in building lobby.

Article, Kansas City Star, October 18, 1959.

Article, Kansas City Star, January 16, 1977.

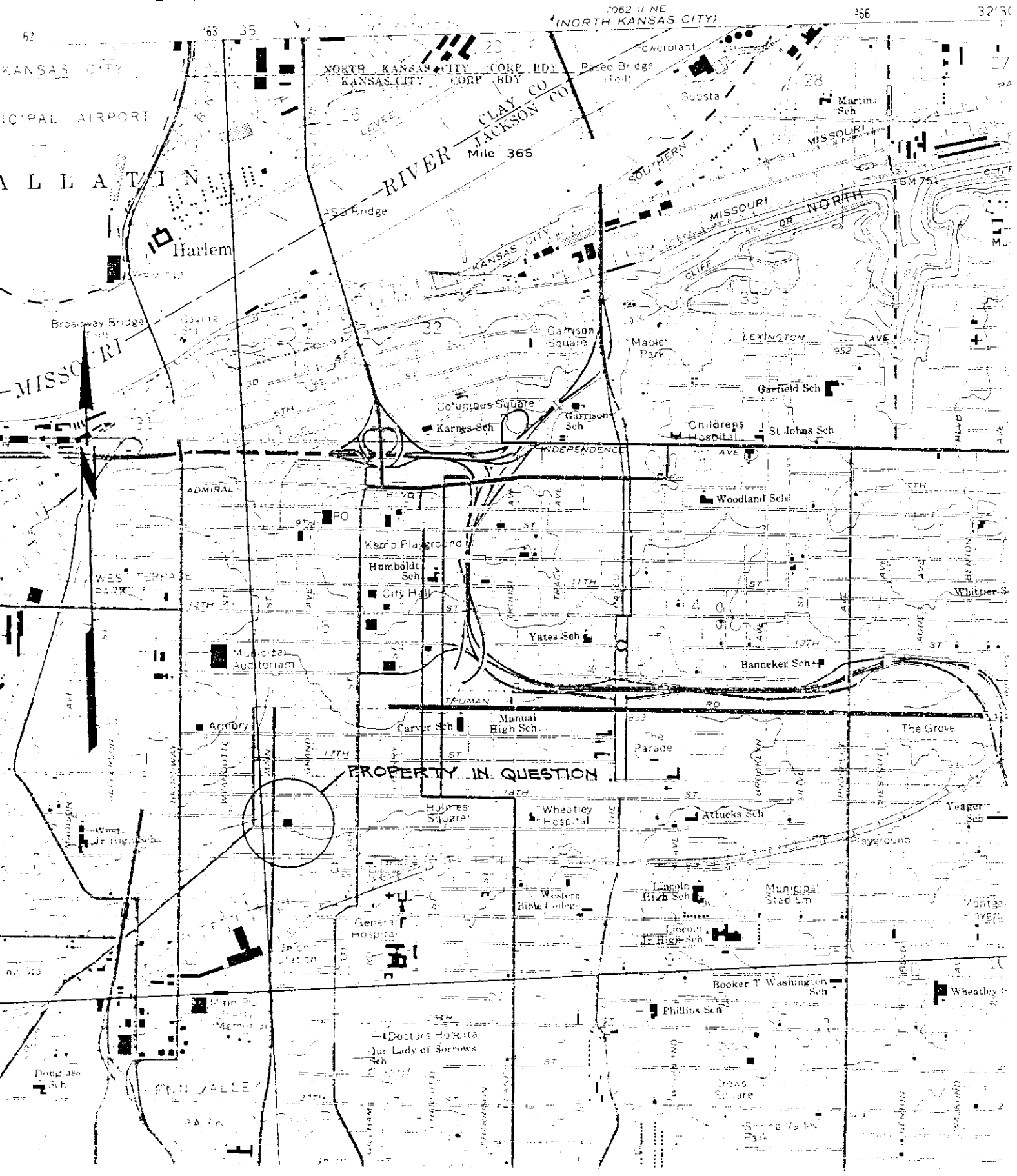
All of the above are now in the possession of the current owner.

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2. James M. Denny, Section Chief  
Nominations-Survey and State  
Contact Person May, 1982  
Department of Natural Resources 314/751-4096  
Historic Preservation Program  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City Missouri 65102

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP:  
THOS. CORRIGAN BUILDING  
1828 WALNUT, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI  
UTM REF. ZONE 15, EASTING 363/120, NORTHING 43/27/820



**Photo Log:**

Name of Property: **Corrigan, Thomas, Building**

City or Vicinity: **Kansas City**

County: **Jackson County** State: **MO**

Photographer: **Steve Burke Huffman**

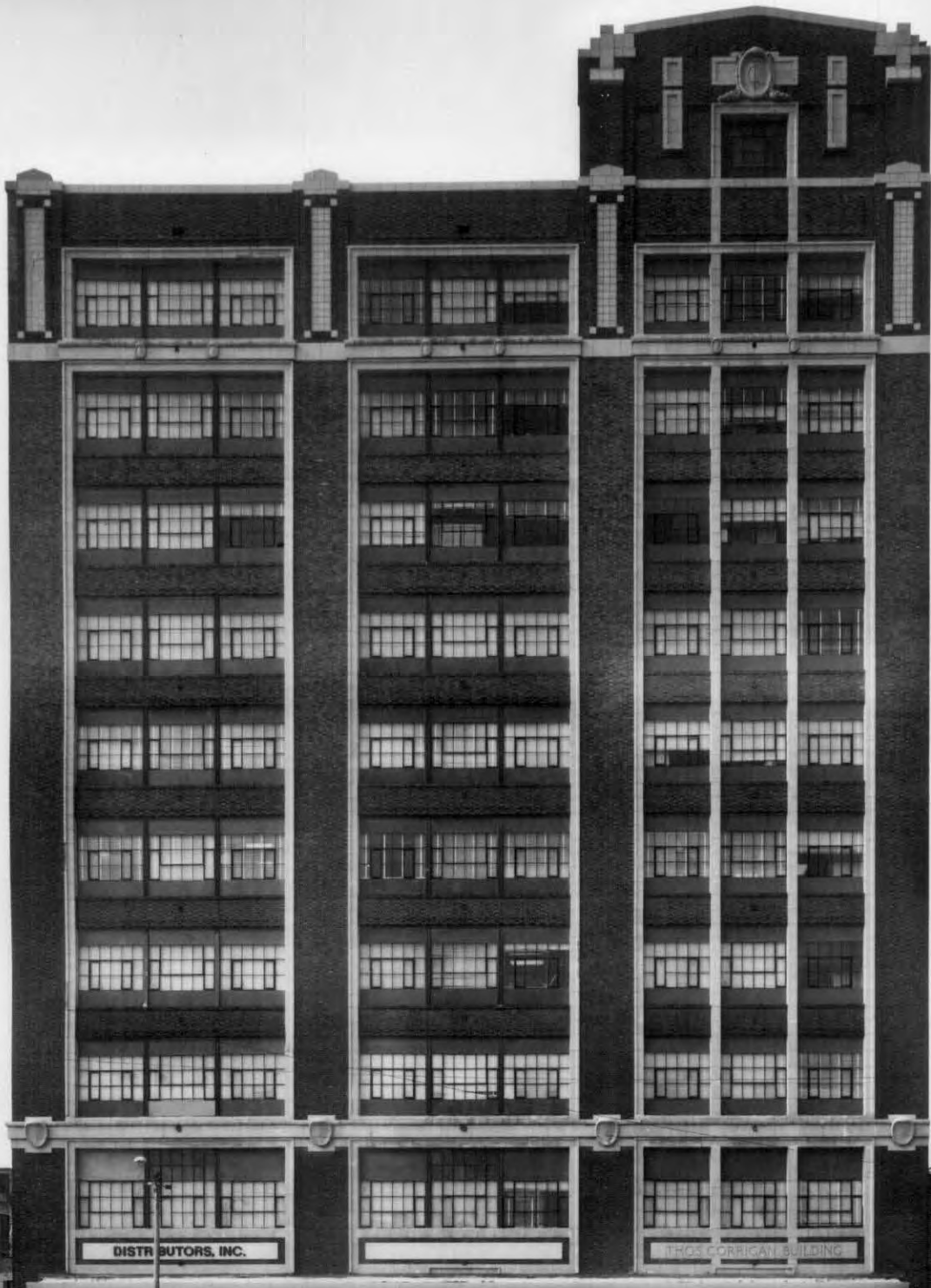
Date

Photographed: **Nov. 1981**

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 8. SE corner.
- 2 of 8. E façade.
- 3 of 8. W façade.
- 4 of 8. NE corner.
- 5 of 8. Detail of E tower.
- 6 of 8. Detail of E entry.
- 7 of 8. Detail of street level, S façade.
- 8 of 8. View from S.





DISTRIBUTORS, INC.

THOS CORRIHAN BUILDING

SUPERIOR



DISTRIBUTORS INC

FRIGIDAIRE

1031 MAIN





SUPERIOR SUPPLY CO.

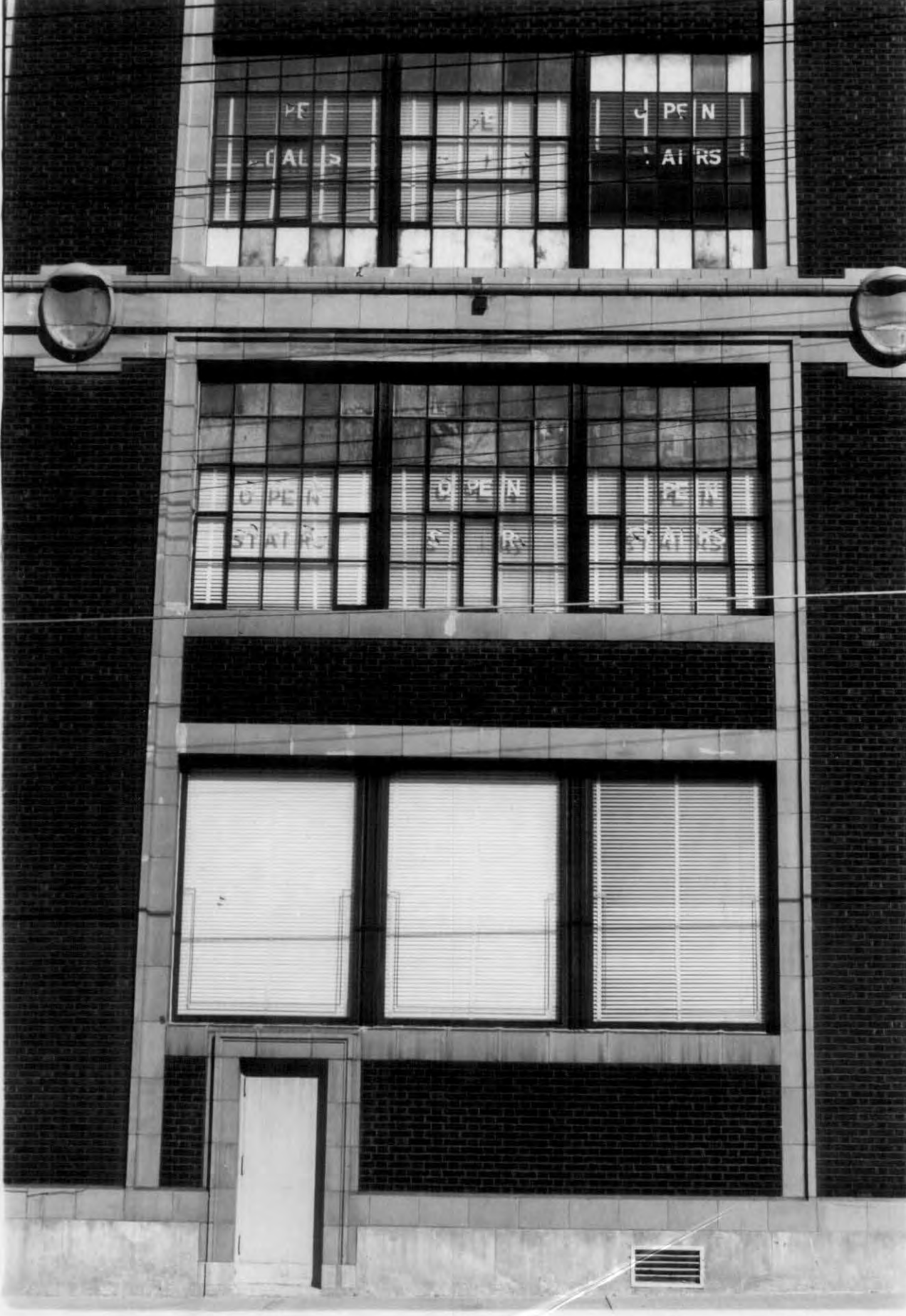
WAREHOUSE





A black and white photograph of the Thos. Corrigan Building. The building features a symmetrical facade with two rows of three large, multi-paned windows. The windows are set within a light-colored stone or concrete frame. Below the windows, a horizontal band of stone or concrete contains the text "THOS. CORRIGAN BUILDING" in large, capital letters. The building is constructed of dark brick, and the overall style is classical or neoclassical. Two decorative, bowl-shaped elements are mounted on the facade, one on each side of the central window row.

THOS. CORRIGAN BUILDING



PE  
CAL  
PEN  
AIRS

OPEN  
STAIRS  
OPEN  
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OPEN  
STAIRS

OPEN  
OPEN  
OPEN

DOOR

VENT

