

**United States Department Of The Interior
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**Upper Downtown Canton Historic District
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Upper Downtown Canton Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for significance in the areas of commerce and transportation, and under Criterion C for architecture. The significance of commerce in the development of the proposed district is because downtown Canton was the commercial center for the ever expanding manufacturing industries that placed the city on the world map. The significance of transportation in the development of the proposed district stems from the expansive industrial, economic and population growth experienced by Canton during the second half of the 19th century with the arrival of the railroads, and the as well as the automobile era in the 20th century. By the 1850s Canton established itself as the transportation hub of Stark County. The significance of architecture is because the buildings within the proposed district typify prominent architectural styles of late 19th to mid-20th century small-town Ohio, as well as impacting the development of Canton by virtue of their design and function. Some of the earliest surviving buildings include impressive examples of stone hewn Romanesque Revival and High Victorian Gothic. Later styles include low and mid-rise commercial and high-rise constructions with Romanesque Revival, Renaissance Revival, Beaux-Arts Classical, Art Deco, and Early Modern influences. These varied architectural styles provide a tangible connection to Canton's evolution as the county seat and the commercial and industrial center of Stark County. Historic uses for the buildings remaining today include government, retail, offices, banks, apartments, hotels, restaurants, churches, theater, fraternal halls, and social clubs/associations. From the 1870s through to the present day, these local businesses and industries have driven not only Canton's economy, but have affected larger economies outside Canton. The period of significance begins in 1881 with the oldest building (217 Market Avenue N., 60) in the district and ends at 1955 (Scott Building, 50), in line with the National Register fifty-year guideline for establishing historical significance. Although the district exhibits some loss of architectural resources, the area included of the boundary includes strong examples of Canton's architectural heritage.

The Upper Downtown Canton Historic District includes 34 blocks that radiate outward to the north, east, and west from Canton's Public Square, incorporating two north/south commercial corridors along Market Avenue and Cleveland Avenue. Canton's main street, Market Avenue, provides the anchor to the district between 6th Street N. and 2nd Street S. The second anchor street is Cleveland Avenue between 6th Street N.W. and 3rd Street S.W. The western edge of the district is bounded by McKinley Avenue and Dewalt Avenue; the eastern edge by Walnut Avenue and Piedmont Avenue. The district includes the original public market space of Canton, known as Public Square, at the intersection of Tuscarawas Street and Market Avenue with origins dating to the original town plat developed in 1805. The entire district falls within the original town boundary of 100 blocks centered on Public Square which ran from Wells to Savannah streets and 6th Street N. to 6th Street S.

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The Early Settlement History of Canton

The establishment of Canton was a result of the Treaty of Greenville, signed on August 3, 1795, where native peoples released all claims to the area that is now southern and southeastern Ohio. Following the treaty, congress passed a new land act in 1796 authorizing surveys of the Ohio territory. A land office opened in Pittsburgh, and attorney James Ross and surveyor Bezaleel Wells acquired a section of land along the Ohio River in Jefferson County (1797) and established the town of Steubenville, Ohio. As a result of the success in Steubenville as a profitable new village, Wells gained respect from the community and was appointed Judge of Probate for Jefferson County and elected a member of the Ohio State Constitutional Convention. Wells began buying quarter sections of land in an area about twenty-five miles west of New Lisbon, the seat of Columbiana County (1803). The northern part of the state was already undergoing establishment as a result of the Connecticut Land Company's desire to settle the Western Reserve.¹

In 1805 Bezaleel Wells settled Canton, the first town to be in the area that later became known as Stark County (1808). According to his design, the plat contained 100 blocks distributed into four equal quadrants by the intersection of two major thoroughfares, Market Avenue and Tuscarawas Street, the center of which made a public square that retains its original proportions today. The original, rectilinear plat is contained within the downtown area today, bordered to the east and west by Wells and Savannah streets, and by Sixth Street N. and Sixth Street S. The lots were large by the standards of that time with especially wide roadways. The first settlers in Canton were friends and acquaintances of Wells from Baltimore and Steubenville. Canton was selected as the county seat in 1809, which, along with the arrival of the first railroads in the early 1850s, established Canton as the commercial and industrial center of Stark County. By 1822, Canton was large enough to be incorporated as a town. The 1830 Census for Canton lists a population of 1,257 people, about 200 more than Cleveland at the same time. A decade after the opening of the Ohio and Erie Canal, the 1840 Census recorded Canton's population at 2,136.

Canton during the Canal Years (1828-1851)

When the Ohio & Erie Canal was built along the banks of the Tuscarawas River in 1828, the canal town of Massillon was founded. Almost immediately, the shipping emphasis in Stark County shifted west to Massillon from Canton. Concerned about the impact of the new canal on business, a group of Canton businessmen growing in prosperity and influence spent time and money trying to connect Canton to the canal system but the effort failed. Despite the location of the canal, Canton began to thrive as prominent families had their local beginnings there, new businesses were becoming established, and many new products were being invented and

¹ Stark County Historic Inventory. Stark County Regional Planning Commission. 1986 Update.

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manufactured there. Examples include John Saxton, Andrew Meyer, Isaac Harter, George Belden, George Deuble, and John Laird.

In 1814 at the age of 22, John Saxton visited Canton looking for a favorable place to start and publish a newspaper. Saxton established *The Ohio Repository* (later *The Canton Repository*) with the first issue rolling off the presses in March of 1815. In addition to being the long-standing publisher of the fifth oldest newspaper in Ohio, Saxton served the community on the boards of many companies and organizations. In addition, Saxton's daughter, Ida, became the wife of William McKinley.²

After providing "valuable assistance to the United States Army during the War of 1812 by furnishing them with brass and copper supplies and not requesting payment until peace and prosperity returned,"³ Andrew Meyer (1760-1848) arrived in Canton in 1818. Meyer, who purchased land in and around Canton, purchased 3000 acres of land west of downtown Canton where he developed Ohio's then-largest wheat farm, Sweet Spring Farm. A lake on the property originally named for Canton founder Bezaleel Wells was renamed Meyer's Lake. Meyer's grandson Edward eventually improved the shoreline of the lake and, with his cousin Joseph A. Meyer, developed two tourist hotels there. Edward Meyer became the owner of the Yohe Hotel/St. Edward Hotel (NR, 2004) (32) in 1903.⁴

In 1822 at age 12, Isaac Harter arrived in Canton an indentured servant to a local businessman. His service ended ten years later and by 1854 he had founded the Isaac Harter & Sons Bank. Harter's son George took over in 1866, creating the George D. Harter Bank (77), which eventually was located at 126 Market Avenue N. in 1922.⁵

George Belden arrived in Canton in 1827 and got a job setting type and running the press at *The Canton Repository* for John Saxton. Belden was admitted to the bar in 1833 and soon became Stark County prosecutor. He went on to become a judge, rising through the ranks to U.S. District Attorney for the N.E. Ohio District. His son H. S. Belden started the manufacture of paving brick and went on to found Belden Brick Company in 1885. Along with other brick companies, Belden "boosted Canton and the vicinity into the world's greatest center of brick manufacturing"⁶ by the turn of the 20th century.

George Michael Deuble, a German immigrant and clockmaker by trade, came to Canton in 1831. Deuble established Canton's first permanent clock and watch repair shop in his home in 1833, which was the founding of the oldest jewelry store in the country under same name and ownership. Deuble made the four dial clock on Stark Count Courthouse (77).

² Kane, Ruth, Ed., *The Stark County Bicentennial Story, 1776-1976*, Vol. I, p. 159.

³ NRN, St. Edward Hotel, 2004, Statement of Significance, p. 4.

⁴ Ibid, p. 1.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Bicentennial, Vol. I, p. 165.

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The business of bridge building became a major industry for Canton starting in the mid-19th century as well as laying the foundation for Canton as a major steel center. In 1840, John Laird owned one of Canton's earliest foundries, which soon expanded into bridge building, establishing one of the first iron bridge companies in the United States. In 1866 his company became the Wrought Iron Bridge Company, and by 1867 had built 18 bridges, 11 of which were in Stark County. By 1881, the manufacture and building of steel bridges was Canton's third largest industry.⁷ Laird's company was eventually purchased by the American Bridge Company in 1899. Another bridge interest, the Canton Bridge Company, was established in 1891 and was purchased in 1925 by Massillon Steel Joist Company.

Canton and the Agricultural Equipment Industry

Stark County was attractive to frontier settlers because of fertile lands and excellent supply of water. Farming in the early days was arduous because the settlers broke and worked the land by hand. Canton's early industrial trend towards the manufacture of farm machinery was sparked by the fact that in 1850, two years before the coming of the railroad, 60 percent of the land in Stark County had been improved and most of it was used for farming.⁸ Stark County's industrialization began with manufacture of plows in 1836 when Joshua Gibbs of Canton patented an improved Barshare plow which was the first plow to be manufactured west of the Alleghenies. With Gibbs' development, Canton commenced a century of plow manufacturing, eventually earning recognition throughout the country as "Plow City." Another important Canton manufacturer was John Ball whose company produced "Red Jacket" plows. These were considered superior to others because of the interchangeable parts or options available to the farmer, giving him two or three plows. Two other firms that added to Canton's plow fame were the Princess Plow Company which made wood and steel beam plows, and the Universal Plow Company, which made interchangeable steel and chilled iron plows.⁹

Canton's largest and most famous manufacturer of agricultural equipment, which included reapers, mowers, and threshing machines, was C. Aultman & Co. (1859-1893). Established by Cornelius Aultman in 1859, the company was an outgrowth of another venture, Ball, Aultman & Co. (1850-1865). Ball, Aultman & Co., which was started in Greentown, Ohio in 1850 by Cornelius Aultman, Ephraim Ball, Lewis and Jacob Miller, and George Cook, was moved to Canton in 1852 to take advantage of the proximity to new railroads being built through Canton. In its first season in Canton, the company made twenty-five "Hussey" reapers; by 1856, 660 machines a year were being manufactured. In addition, Cornelius Aultman patented his "Buckeye" mower in 1856, which became an immediate success and the center of the firm's production. In 1858, Ball separated from the partnership and established Ball and Company in

⁷ Bicentennial, Vol. I, p. 176.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

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Canton to make his own "Ohio" reaper-mower which he placed in competition with C. Aultman and Company's "Buckeye" mower. By 1865 the company was producing 8,000 "Buckeye" machines a year and was Stark County's largest industry. As the Aultman Company grew, so did Canton. With shipments across the country and many exports abroad, records show that by 1871 C. Aultman & Company had become the "largest reaper and mower concern in the world,"¹⁰ as well as being known as "the reaper capital of the world."¹¹ Growth in the manufacturing of agricultural equipment in Canton continued well into the early 20th century.

The Arrival of the Railroads (1851-1880)

Like many other cities in the United States, Canton experienced expansive industrial, economic and population growth during the second half of the 19th century with the arrival of the railroads. The first to arrive was the Pittsburgh, Ft. Wayne & Chicago Railroad, later the Pennsylvania Railroad, which went through Canton just south of downtown in 1852, initiating one of the most significant growth periods in the city's history. Canton was further connected to the outside world by two additional railroads in 1879 and 1880, enhancing its status as the transportation hub of the rapidly developing Stark County. Construction of the Valley Railroad, later the Baltimore & Ohio, was completed in 1879. The Connotton Valley, later the Wheeling & Lake Erie, still later the Nickel Plate and then the Norfolk & Western, was completed from Dellroy to Canton in May, 1880. It was later connected to Cleveland on the north and Coshocton on the south.

Canton also attracted diverse industries due to its proximity to other industrial centers of the rust belt such as Cleveland, Akron, Youngstown, Pittsburgh, Toledo, and Chicago. A WPA Survey of Canton refers to Canton as being located in the "The Ruhr Valley of America," comparable to the industrial corridor of Germany. The city was connected to the outside world by several railroads, and later, the Lincoln Highway [along Tuscarawas Street; the Lincoln Highway was designated in 1928].¹² By 1880 Canton was the undisputed manufacturing and transportation hub of rapidly growing Stark County. As business starts increased and companies prospered in Canton so, to, did the ever growing, skilled, stable labor market. Just before the arrival of the railroads in 1850, Canton's population stood at 2,500. By 1880, when the railroads were completed, the population was 12,258. The industries headquartered around the city manufactured goods that afforded Canton a successful reputation as a major industrial center known throughout the world.¹³

Reflecting the prosperous, growing city, the Stark County Courthouse (NR, 1975) (77) was built in 1870 in the center of downtown Canton on Public Square at the northwest corner of Market

¹⁰ Bicentennial, Vol. III, p. 120.

¹¹ Bicentennial, Vol. I, p. 176.

¹² Witter, Herman R. Canton. Canton, OH: Herman R. Witter, 1922.

¹³ Ibid.

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and Tuscarawas. During this period most of Canton's commercial growth was still focused along Tuscarawas, much of it to the east of the proposed district. Little of that physical history remains today having been replaced with 20th century buildings or lost to demolition. The buildings that make up the proposed historic district are primarily those that housed service businesses that supported the population of a growing manufacturing hub.

New Industries Established

Access to new markets and the ease and speed of transporting both raw materials and finished products provided by the railroads spurred tremendous growth in the manufacturing and service sectors of the Canton business community. The companies that drove the business and economic growth were manufacturing interests located outside the downtown area and the proposed district, on tracts of land that allowed construction of sprawling factories. Many of those companies were founded in Canton, while others relocated to Canton to be near the railroads. Like C. Aultman & Co., many of these manufacturing interests eventually were known throughout the region, the country, or the world as being the "biggest or the best" in their industry, which was often linked to invention and patenting of new or improved products. Other examples include Diebold Lock & Safe Co., Blizzard Manufacturing Co., Berger Manufacturing Co., Canton Steel Works, and the Metropolitan Brick and Paving Company.

The Diebold Lock & Safe Co. relocated to Canton from Cincinnati in 1872 because of the proximity to the railroad and selling job done by Canton booster and Canton City Water Works director, Louis Schaefer, on Diebold founder, Karl Diebold. The move to Canton came just after Diebold's reputation was boosted by the discovery that in the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, 878 Diebold safes remained intact with their contents undamaged. By 1874, Diebold had become the largest lock and safe manufacturer in the United States.¹⁴

In 1874, Canton's Blizzard Manufacturing Co. was the first firm in the nation to patent an ensilage cutter which blew chopped feed into a silo in a steady blizzard-resembling blast. The first plant was a small manufacturing building at 1414 Tuscarawas (outside the district) founded by Joseph Dick. It produced feed and ensilage cutting machines, and had a foundry division which produced gray iron castings of every description. The business grew until by 1909 it was the largest of its kind in the state with a worldwide market. Blizzard cutters were preferred by state and federal agricultural schools in at least 23 states and as far away as the University of Hawaii. The business remained in Canton until it declined when the entire approach to silage and its handling changed after WWII.¹⁵

The Berger Manufacturing Company began in 1866 and later became the Republic Steel Corporation. By 1913 it was the largest sheet metal producer in the world, manufacturing steel lockers and shelving in the 1950s. The company was responsible for coordination of the early steel industry by overseeing many smaller companies in Stark County. The company

¹⁴ Bicentennial, p.187.

¹⁵ Bicentennial, p. 188.

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incorporated in 1889 and in 1921 joined a merger between the United Furnace Company, and the United Alloy Steel Corp. By 1926 the United Alloy Steel Corp joined with the Central Steel Co. of Massillon and became the Central Alloy Steel Co. In 1930 Republic Steel Corp of Youngstown merged with Central Alloy Steel Co. and the new entity retained the Republic Steel Corporation name. Products over the years included metal roofing, cornices, steel ceilings, a galvanizing department, and fireproofing specialties. In 1909, 40 train car loads of products were shipped out per day and over 400 tons of coal was used in daily operations. Branch houses were located in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, St Louis, Minneapolis, and San Francisco. In 1921 the capitol reached \$10 million, slightly higher than Timken Roller Bearing Company at \$8 million the same year.¹⁶

Another key company in Canton's early development as a steel center was the Canton Steel Works. The company produced machinery steel, patent rolled spring steel, square and round edged steel, gun barrel and setscrew steel, cast and German tool steel, and polished machinery steel. The company was incorporated as The Bolton Steel Co. in 1881, reorganized as the Bolton Iron and Steel Co. in 1888, and reorganized again as the Canton Steel Co. in 1893. By then the company specialized in high tempered red steel and mining drills and was the largest company of its kind in country. The company was bought out by the Crucible Steel Co. in 1903.

In 1892 Canton served as the center of the brick industry in the Unites States. Attracted by the quality of clay and shale in this area, several brick paving companies were established. Many of these were merged into the Metropolitan Brick Company, which was the country's largest paving brick firm between 1900 and the 1920s. In 1902 the company's capital exceeded \$7.2 million, establishing it in the early 1900s as one of the largest paving brick manufacturers in the world. The Metropolitan Brick and Paving Company located its downtown business office in the Zollinger/Folwell Building (63) just north of the Stark County Courthouse.¹⁷ Stark County, Ohio was recognized as "The Paving Brick Capitol of the World" when in 1923 the company shipped over 92 million pavers around the country. Harry Renkert worked his way up the ranks of the company and eventually became the president. The Renkert Building (44), designed by Walker and Weeks and constructed in 1914, was the first skyscraper in Canton. Notable of its façade treatment is the unconventional employment of Metropolitan paving bricks over each of its 10-story elevations.¹⁸ Other buildings in the proposed district that demonstrate paver-style face bricks include the Cadillac Apartments (11) located at 206 6th Street NW and the similar apartment building with London Hair Design (17) in its east storefront located at 219 5th Street NW.

Looking back on the early years of Canton's 19th century development, author John H. Lehman wrote in his 1916 book A Standard History of Stark, County, that "Canton, with her two hundred factories of various grades, but altogether making her a great industrial center, realized her

¹⁶ Heald. Vol III., pp 47-52.

¹⁷ History of the Canton Fire Department. Canton, OH: 1900. Advertisements.

¹⁸ Brown, Gary. The Canton Repository. 1-7-85

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destiny slowly during the first half century of her existence. It was early recognized that her geographical position, almost equidistant from the great coal fields of Pennsylvania and Virginia and the rapidly growing districts bordering the Great Lakes, was most favorable to the founding and development of a manufacturing town, when the transportation facilities should become adequate to receive the fuel and disburse the goods. The discovery of good brick clay in the vicinity of the county seat added to the advantages of the place as a residence, the town early became widely known for the solid character of its merchants and professional men, and its newspapers, its schools and its churches upheld its good reputation through all the earlier years."¹⁹

Commercial Expansion in the Late 19th Century

Beginning in the 1880s the commercial center of Canton expanded north and southward along Market Avenue and Cleveland Avenue, a trend that continued through the 1950s. Expansion was aided in the starting in the 1890s by the introduction of electric street cars that eventually ran out from Public Square along Market, Cleveland and Tuscarawas. The buildings that remain on Market and Cleveland Avenues, which typically range in size from three to five-story commercial blocks with high-rise buildings in a few blocks, compose the core of the proposed historic district. One to three-story buildings located along the numbered streets and secondary avenues (Dewalt, Court and Piedmont) complete the district. Some buildings have storefront alterations that demonstrate retail evolution from the late 19th century through the 1950s, when Canton began to experience outward commercial migration. In the last fifty years several anchor buildings located within the district were razed to make room for parking areas and new commercial blocks and infill development.

With the exception of the Stark County Courthouse (NR, 1975) (77), many of the earliest buildings in the downtown commercial area were replaced over time by late 19th and 20th century buildings. The earliest commercial buildings in the proposed district sit along Market Avenue N and include 213 Market Avenue N. (61), 217 Market Avenue N. (60), and the Malline Block (19). Renovated in 2003, 213 Market Avenue N. (61) is a small, three-story commercial block built in 1881. While the building retains its original scale, massing and proportion, which is a plus for the block and the street, the recent renovation blurred the historic architectural elements with the new, which accounts for its non-contributing status in the proposed district. Adjacent to the north is 217 Market Avenue N. (60), a contributing small, three-story commercial building that was renovated in 2002. The upper stories of the existing building actually date from the 1920s when the building was reconstructed on the foundation and partial ground floor of the original 1881 building. The 1920s reconstruction introduced Chicago style windows with leaded, stained glass transoms on the 2nd and 3rd floors. The storefront was remodeled many times over the history of the building, with the current renovation respecting the proportions and architectural elements of a traditional commercial storefront. A contributing building constructed

¹⁹ Lehman, A Standard History of Stark County, Ohio, p. 345.

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in 1887, the recently rehabilitated Italianate style Malline Block (19) is the earliest large commercial block in the proposed district. The original builder of the Malline Block, Ignatius Malline, worked as a carpenter in Canton in 1888.²⁰ “The first businesses in the Malline Block were the Troy Laundry Company and Zeiter-Smith grocers. Seth Cook and Orange Barrass founded the Troy Laundry Company in 1888. “They furnished the building with the latest laundry machinery from Troy, NY. Troy Laundries existed all over the country”.²¹ Troy Laundry later moved to the non-contributing Troy Laundry Co. Building (20) when it was built in 1915. The second and third floors of the Malline Block were used from 1890 to 1904 as the First Masonic Temple by the freemasons, Canton Lodge No. 60. In 1914, the building was renamed the Wyndam Building, but has historically been known as the Malline Block.

Other buildings constructed during this period include two churches, First Methodist Episcopal Church (NR 1979) (83) and Trinity Lutheran Church (NR, 1985) (69). Located at 230 Tuscarawas Avenue W., the First Methodist Episcopal Church (NR 1979) (83) was constructed in 1883 in the High Victorian Gothic style. Designed by Frank O. Weary of the Akron firm Weary and Kramer, Weary was particularly active in Ohio during the 1880s designing a number of public buildings. Native son and a Methodist all his life, President William McKinley was a member and trustee of the church for many years before his death in 1901. His funeral services were held in the church and his wife, Ida Saxton McKinley, donated four stained glass windows to the church in the memory of her husband. The Parish Hall was added to the rear of the church in 1924.

Trinity Lutheran Church (NR, 1985) (69) is significant as the oldest surviving building in Canton designed by Guy Tilden, the city’s most famous and leading architect of the time. The Romanesque-Gothic style church is also significant as a good representative of Tilden’s work. Tilden was active in Canton from 1885 to the mid 1920s, the period of Canton’s greatest growth and development.²² “A versatile architect of the traditional school who operated successfully in a number of styles, Tilden’s prolific output included commercial, residential, industrial, education, and religious buildings.”²³

The Canton Board of Trade and the Dueber Hampden Boom

At the time Trinity Lutheran Church was conceived and Canton was growing as a manufacturing center, the arrival of the Dueber Hampden Watch Company in 1886 gave added impetus to Canton’s business and population growth, making the city known worldwide as the location of two major industries – the largest watch factory in the world [Dueber], as well as the largest producer of reapers and mowers [Aultman].²⁴

²⁰ Canton City Directory, 1888.

²¹ Troy Laundry Co., OHI, 1976.

²² NRN, Trinity Lutheran Church, 1985.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Inventory, p. 41.

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The Canton Board of Trade was formed in 1885, with its ultimate purpose to encourage commerce and offer inducements to new industry to come to Canton. Upon forming, its immediate purpose was to entice the Dueber Watch Case Works Company of Newport, Kentucky to move to Canton. The sparkplug in the organization was Charles A. Dougherty, a former dentist turned real estate broker. John Dueber let it be known that he would move his \$1.5 million watch making industry, together with the Hampden Watch Company of Springfield, Massachusetts which he was buying, to the first city that would offer him \$100,000 and a site. Dougherty sprang into action. As director of the new board of trade he led a fund raising campaign and raised the money needed in three months to entice Dueber to Canton.²⁵

The Meyers family, owners of the Meyer's Lake area, donated 20 acres from their wheat farm on the south side of Tuscarawas Street W. (outside the district) for the site of the new company. Meyers and the Board of Trade also laid out 742 adjacent lots for worker housing. Canton City Council agreed to build a railroad spur from the Pennsylvania Railroad, and donated an additional five acres of park land for company and employee use. Ground was broken in 1886 and under the combined firm name Dueber Hampden, company soon became the largest watch manufacturer in the world. Meanwhile Canton experienced its biggest business and population boom to date. The Dueber Hampden firm brought an estimated 5,000 newcomers to the city, which in turn brought others to serve the new workers and their families. The housing business was especially stimulated causing realty prices to soar.²⁶

The effect of the Dueber Hampden boom is best expressed in the census figures. In 1880 the population stood at 12,258; by the 1890 census the population was 26,189, more than doubling in a decade. The Dueber Hampden firm prospered until the great depression. After the closing, the buildings were used by the Timken and Hoover companies for storage.

After the significant population boom in the 1880s, Canton grew to 30,677 by 1900. During the last decade of the 19th century, commercial buildings continued to be constructed in the proposed historic district. Located at the corner of 2nd Street N.E. and Piedmont Avenue, the Bechel-Doumulin Co. Building (66) is a contributing small, c. 1890s commercial building with a brick and stone façade and rusticated stone lintels. The Sanborn Map notes that the building housed a candy making operation in 1897.²⁷ The storefront was modified in 1925.

A visitor to Canton during the town's formative years in the late 19th century might have chosen between a number of hotels. The Yohe Hotel/St. Edward Hotel (NR, 2004) (32) is the only remaining building in the district that functioned as an early hotel. Professor George W. Yohe, a prominent educator in Canton and Stark County, built the hotel in 1891 as the Yohe Hotel on the corner of Market Avenue N and 4th Street NE where patrons could stay for 2 dollars a day.²⁸

²⁵ Bicentennial, Vol. I, p. 153-198.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Canton Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1897.

²⁸ History of the Canton Fire Department. Canton, OH: 1900. Advertisements.

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Located on the site of the former county jail, the polychromatic masonry and stone piers from the original construction remain along the first floor south elevation. Purchased by Edward J. Meyer in 1903, the name of the hotel was changed to reflect the new ownership. "Among improvements to the hotel made by Meyer was the pressed metal projecting cornice with dentil row, added during the early 1900s to reflect the Classical Revival architectural influence prevalent at the time."²⁹ The building retains its original integrity after a recent rehabilitation.

Built c. 1895 with alteration c. 1922, the Dewalt Building (NR, 1982) (79) in feeling and scale "suggests the architecture of Canton's more considerable past, and its name recalls the contributions to this past made for nearly 150 years by the Dewalt family who built this building as well as a series of earlier related structures that stood on this site, a family whose ownership of the property dates from 1840."³⁰ "The present version of the building's façade dates from the period in the 1920s when the construction of a new building, the Harter Bank next door, apparently encouraged the Dewalts to undertake a facelift to keep up the of the building to keep up with the fancier surroundings."³¹ Both the Dewalt Building and 217 Market Avenue N. (60) represent a transition in early commercial style architecture in Canton as each building was altered in the 1920s.

Canton architect Guy Tilden designed the Belmont Building (now Bender's) (NR, 1987) (85) in 1899. Built as a tavern located on a then-narrow passageway dubbed "Whiskey Alley" (now Court Avenue) for its many barrooms, "its design reflects the beginning of Tilden's shift from medieval to more modern styles."³² Built of red brick with stained glass windows on both the Court Avenue and 2nd Street S.W. elevations, the building conforms in scale and massing to the adjacent earlier buildings (c. 1887) to the north. The Belmont Building retains an original wood bar, its cabinetry built by the Charles Find Cabinet Company, and a separate ladies entrance to the restaurant located along 2nd Street SW. When purchased by Edward Bender in 1908 the tavern/restaurant was expanded to the adjoining barber shop and livery. Although not designed by Tilden they are historically an integral part of Benders.³³ Bender's Restaurant is distinguished as the oldest restaurant in Canton.

William McKinley

Canton's association with the twenty-fifth president, William McKinley (1897-1901), who held office during the Spanish-American War and expanded the U.S. territories to include Puerto Rico and Hawaii,³⁴ gave national recognition to the growing community. Born in Niles, Ohio in 1843, McKinley moved to Canton in 1867 after being admitted to the bar and beginning his law practice as a young partner of Stark County Judge George W. Belden. McKinley was very active in politics, campaigning for Rutherford B. Hayes for Ohio Governor in 1867 and for

²⁹ NRN, St. Edward Hotel, 2004, Statement of Significance, p. 1.

³⁰ NRN, Dewalt Building, 1982, Statement of Significance, p. 1.

³¹ Ibid.

³² NRN, 1987, Guy Tilden Thematic Resources, Section 7, p. 2.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ NRN, Saxon House, 1979.

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Ulysses S. Grant for President in 1868. McKinley was elected Stark County Prosecutor in 1869, an office he held for one term before returning to private practice. In 1871 he married Ida Saxton, daughter of *Canton Repository* owner, John Saxton. From 1876 to 1890, McKinley served seven terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. He was elected Governor of Ohio in 1891 and served two terms.

Canton came into the national political spotlight in 1896 when the Republican National Committee selected McKinley as their nominee for President. With his wife in failing health, McKinley's "front porch campaign" was executed from his home in Canton that was once located north of the proposed district along Market Avenue N. The house was demolished in the 1930s. Nominated to run for a second term with Teddy Roosevelt as his running mate in 1900, they beat William J. Bryant and Adlai E. Stevenson. Both campaigns brought scores of people to Canton to hear McKinley speak, as well as focusing national attention on the growing and prosperous city. McKinley was inaugurated for the second time on March 4, 1901. Assassinated on September 6, 1901, McKinley died on September 14, 1901 and was brought home to Canton to be buried. Funeral services were held at the First Methodist Church (83) where McKinley and his wife, Ida Saxon McKinley, had been members for years. After his assassination, his body was held in the church and then in a vault at Westlawn Cemetery until interned in the McKinley Monument after its completion in 1907. Four windows in the church were donated by Ida in memory of her husband.³⁵

Expansion as a Steel Center

As previously noted the manufacture and building of steel bridges was Canton's third largest industry by 1881. This spurred the establishment of many other steel and metal manufacturers that called Canton home from the end of the 19th century through the first three decades of the 20th century. The Canton Malleable Iron Co. was incorporated in 1890 as a result of moving Pittsburgh Malleable Iron Works to Canton where it operated well into the 1970s. The Berger Manufacturing Co. established in 1893 was Canton's largest tin fabricating firm. The Canton Rolling Mill manufactured sheet steel from 1894 until the plant was sold to a subsidiary of U.S. Steel in 1901. Founded in 1897, the Canton Roll & Machine Company was eventually acquired by U.S. Steel. Cantonian James Carnahan founded several manufacturing interests in Canton, all later acquired by Republic Steel Corp. Those included the Carnahan Stamping and Enameling Co. and the Carnahan Tin Plate Mill in 1901, and the United Steel Co. in 1902. Established in 1910 the Canton Sheet Steel Company was also acquired by Republic Steel. Carnahan also helped in the organization of The Hercules Motors Corp. (NR, 2005), makers of engines for tractors and cars, which was located on former C. Aultman & Co. site along the Pennsylvania Railroad just south of downtown. In 1916, United Alloy Steel Corp. was organized and Carnahan's United Steel Co. was purchased for \$16 million. United Steel Co. merged with Massillon Central Steel in 1926 to form Central Alloy Corp. In 1930 Central Alloy and other Canton holdings were merged with the Republic Steel Company of Youngstown, Ohio to form

³⁵ Albacete, 1984. p 17.

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the Republic Steel Corp. Assets included the just-developed stainless steel production formula pioneered by Canton's Central Alloy Co.

Continued Industrial Expansion during the Board of Trade Era

The Canton Board of Trade, after its initial spectacular success in business enticement, remained a factor of the city's growth for almost 30 years, bringing many industries, large and small to the city. Frequently during that period, land was donated to the board by civic-minded owners. The donated land was usually divided into lots, which were sold and the proceeds used to finance the start of many new businesses and industries. One of the many firms which the board was influential in bringing to Canton was the Timken Company, and for that alone the Board of Trade might be credited with having a hand in drawing the blueprint for Canton's future in the 20th century.³⁶

The Timken Company was founded as a carriage manufacturer in 1899 by Henry Timken, who soon after developed and patented the Timken anti-friction, tapered roller bearing. At the urging of Gordon Mather, a member of the Board of Trade, Timken's sons, Henry H. (H. H.) and William moved the company to Canton in 1901 where it expanded over the next century to become a global company and a leader in the roller bearings and steel industries, as well as a major force in the early automotive supply industry. Timken's carriage and wagon axles business gradually gave way to the manufacture of automotive axles, a part of the business that relocated to Detroit, and roller bearings that were manufactured in Canton. Timken had established its own tube and steel mills by 1916 and was Canton's largest employer by 1919 with 3,500 employees.³⁷ By 1918, Timken had secured a contract with Henry Ford's motor company for truck axles. By the mid-1920s, 80 percent of all motor vehicles produced in the United States were using Timken bearings.³⁸ The company began to focus more on creating new avenues of growth by hiring a sales force of professionally trained engineers, which proved to be an extremely effective formula for expanding the market for Timken bearings. Ultimately, non-automotive applications would grow to be the largest segment of bearing sales after World War II.³⁹ Timken grew through the decades after World War II as a worldwide manufacturing leader and a model American corporation that was emulated by other business organizations and companies. After the Second World War the company perfected its own steel production, producing other products for use in the trucking and railroad industries. Today their bearings and specialty alloy steel products are critical to a wide variety of high-performance equipment used throughout the world, including high-speed printing presses, construction equipment, cars, trains, planes and spacecraft. The Timken Company played an active role in the development of Canton by sustaining its industrial economy through the present day.⁴⁰

³⁶ Bicentennial, Vol. I, p. 195-197.

³⁷ Bicentennial, Vol. I, p. 222.

³⁸ The Timken Company. From Missouri to Mars a Century of Leadership in Manufacturing. 1999. p. 12.

³⁹ The Timken Company, p. 13.

⁴⁰ The Timken Company. From Missouri to Mars A Century of Leadership in Manufacturing. 1999. pp. 4-26.

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Commercial Expansion - The Early Progressive Era to the Great Depression (1900-1930)

The Canton population increased from 30,677 at the turn of the century to 50,217 in 1910. Timken's arrival in Canton a decade earlier sparked other associated business expansion and manufacturing in the early automotive supply industry. From 1900 to World War I Canton's progress was geared to the developing Timken Company and the steel industries.⁴¹ Ford Motor Company's association with Canton dates to the first decade of the 20th century although the auto firm did not become a corporate citizen until after World War II.⁴² Early friendships formed by Henry Ford with local industrialists gave business to local manufacturers like Timken, Hercules Motors Corporation, and The United Steel Co. Again, as manufacturing expanded so did the city. Canton's population grew to 87,091 by 1920, and to 104,906 by the start of the Great Depression.

In 1903 Canton's *City Directory* listed three automobile dealers. By 1916, 58 companies in Canton were serving and supplying the automobile industry – truly a revolution in transportation in 13 years.⁴³ Canton celebrated its Centennial in 1905 as the industrial boom continued. Paralleling the expansion of Canton's downtown commercial area during this time was the ongoing work of the Board of Trade. The Chamber of Commerce idea, originated nationally by President Howard Taft in 1912, began to take hold and in 1914 the Canton Chamber of Commerce was founded to carry on the Board of Trade's work. The first officers of the Chamber of Commerce Board were H.H. Timken, Henry Harter, H.M. Geiger, William Saxton and Louis Dueble.⁴⁴ Timken and the steel industry continued to be the major employers as the industrial boom continued after World War I, followed closely by the growing automobile industry. Growth was also measured by the Canton Public School system's construction of 12 new schools between 1918 and 1928.⁴⁵

Fifty of the 89 buildings within the proposed district boundaries were constructed between 1900 and 1930. While not all 50 buildings contribute to the proposed district, it does demonstrate commerce expansion in the retail and service sectors that paralleled the varied and still growing manufacturing interests in Canton at the time. Within the proposed district, construction was focused primarily along Market Avenue N. and Cleveland Avenue N.W. While the typical building materials of brick and stone are found throughout the proposed historic district, terra cotta, both glazed and unglazed, is a prominent building material that graces entire façades and varied architectural details. And what would be a somewhat unusual application of paver-style bricks used as face brick anywhere else is easily explained in Canton, the "paving brick capital of the world."⁴⁶

⁴¹ Bicentennial, p. 230.

⁴² Bicentennial, p. 228.

⁴³ Heald, Edward Thorton. The Stark County Story. Printed from broadcast on WHBC, Canton: Vol. 3, p. 282.

⁴⁴ Bicentennial, Vol. I, p. 197-198.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 234.

⁴⁶ Bicentennial 153-198.

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Commercial Expansion - Market Avenue Area

Lasting architectural examples of the banking history of Canton remain in the proposed district signifying the strength of financial institutions as the twentieth-century unfolded. In 1910 there were nine banks in downtown Canton including First National Bank, City National Bank, Central Savings, Savings Deposit, Farmers Bank, Dime Savings Bank, Peoples Savings, and The Savings & Loan Co.⁴⁷ By the 1980s all of the smaller banks had been purchased by national companies. The remaining bank buildings in the proposed district are located near the Public Square and include the First National Bank Building/Central Trust Co. (86), First Federal Savings and Loan Building (84) (built in 1938) and the George Harter Bank Building (78). Only two of the remaining bank buildings currently house banks.

The Central Trust Company (86), then called the First National Bank, was organized in 1863 and received the 76th charter issued by the United States to a national bank.⁴⁸ In the 1920s the First National Bank had many significant presidents including H.H. Timken, of Timken Roller Bearing Co., W.G. Saxton, descendant of the father of *The Canton Repository* newspaper; and Frank Case, developer of dental chairs and equipment and founder of the Harvard Dental Company located in Canton. Now occupied by Bank One, the First National Bank Building (86) at 101 Market Avenue S retains its integrity as a significant Beaux-Arts Classical Revival high-rise. The building was designed by architect Frank L. Packard of Columbus. The penthouse level was home to the Canton Club for over 70 years as a social and political center in Canton. Its first floor banking hall retains its original finishes, designed by Gentuilmomo Studios of New York City.⁴⁹ The building is the tallest building in Canton with few alterations.

The George D. Harter Bank (78) organized privately in 1866 and incorporated in 1891. The Harter Bank merged with the City National Bank of Canton in 1922 to become one of the largest banks in Northeast Ohio at that time. The three-story building along Market Avenue North is a good example of a Bank Vault building type.⁵⁰ The vault connects to a thirteen story tower and impressively contributes to the character of Public Square. Key Bank occupies the George Harter Building (78) today.

In the block immediately north of the Stark County Courthouse (NR, 1975) (77) and Public Square, the Zollinger/Folwell Building (63), the News Depot Building (62), and the Northmark Building (59) stand with two earlier 19th century buildings located at 213 (61) and 217 Market Avenue N., the latter of which was partially reconstructed in the 1920s. The Zollinger/Folwell Building (63) is the largest of the buildings at five stories; the others range from two to three stories. Construction materials consist of brick, terra cotta and stone. William R. Zollinger & Company began in 1887 as a small dry goods store in Canton called Holderman-Keplinger Company that later changed to Holderman-Zollinger Company. William took over the business

⁴⁷ Lehman, John H, Ed. Standard History of Stark County Ohio. Lewis Publishing Company, Vol. 1, 1916. p. 102.

⁴⁸ Witter, p. 20.

⁴⁹ Albacete, 1989, p.84.

⁵⁰ Longstreath, Richard. The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture. 2000.

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in 1892 with new partners named W.H. Folwell and N.T. Folwell. In 1900, the Folwell brothers assisted in the financing of the Folwell Building that stands along Public Square.⁵¹ JC Penney stores began occupation of the Folwell Building in 1934.⁵² JC Penney's oversaw multiple interior and exterior renovations, with the exterior receiving applied tiles to conceal an arched first and second floors and upper floor infill windows, making the building non-contributing. The adjacent and contributing News Depot Building (62) (c. 1910s) mirrors the original arched windows of the Zollinger/Folwell Building (63). The contributing Northmark Building (59) constructed in 1900 reflects the extensive use of glazed terra cotta on the façade above the storefront.

Despite its non-contributing status, the Parisian Building portion of the Parisian/Millennium Building (64) has a Moorish Revival terra cotta façade with Art Deco details. Parisian Stores came to Canton in 1913 and built a large building along Market Avenue N after a design by local architects H.A. and R.V. Lorentz. The original storefront remains along Market Avenue and was recently restored for use by the Canton Chamber of Commerce. The adjacent Millennium Building incorporated the Parisian Building along its rear and side elevations through exterior alterations.

Across 3rd Street N.E, fronting on Market Avenue is the contributing ten-story, Sullivan-esque Commercial style Renkert Building (46), designed by the Cleveland architectural firm of Walker & Weeks and constructed in 1914 for Harry S. Renkert, then secretary and treasurer of the Metropolitan Brick and Paver Company. Known as Canton's first skyscraper, the building is faced entirely in Metropolitan pavers, which provided advertising for the alternative use of the pavers. Kenny's Department store occupied the first four floors of the Renkert Building (44) for many years. Started by J.H. Kenney who began his business with the help of William Taylor of Taylor & Son Department stores in Cleveland, Kenny's was well remembered in the downtown for window displays and Holiday decorations. The remainder of the building was offices including Metropolitan's offices on the tenth floor. Two other contributing buildings in the district are constructed with Metropolitan pavers; the Cadillac Apartment Building (11) on 6th Street N.W. and another apartment building located at 219-221 5th Street N.W. were both built just after the Renkert Building (46) in 1915.

Moving north on Market, both sides of the block between 4th and 5th streets, contain buildings that contribute to the proposed district. Built in 1923, the Miller-Blanchard Co. Building (30), and the C. N. Vicary Building (31) built in 1916, complete the east side of the block next to the earlier Yohe Hotel/St. Edward Hotel (32). The C. N. Vicary Building (31) was built for the Vicary clothing company in 1913 and it retains much of its original integrity as one of the largest contributing commercial terra cotta buildings in the district. The Canton Actual Business College occupied the upper floors in the 1920s. Sears Roebuck and Company occupied the

⁵¹ Witter, p. 25.

⁵² "Stark's Store Opened Here in 1912." The Canton Repository. 1952.

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lower floors of the building from the 1930s to the 1950s.⁵³ Across Market Avenue are the Richman Brothers Building (26), Bon Marché/Dollar Respect (27), and Finney Drug Building/S & A Fashion (28), all of which retain their architectural integrity above the storefronts. The Richman Brothers Clothing Company began in Cleveland in 1878 and came to Canton in 1920. Built in the early 1920's, the Richman Brothers Building (26) retains much of its original integrity. Bon Marché (27) came to Canton in 1927 to operate a high end women's fashion store that began in Paris in the 19th century. The company occupied 425 Market Avenue until the 1950s. Behind Bon Marché (27) and fronting on Court Avenue N.W. is the Court Avenue Building (24). Built in 1901, the building contributes to the architectural integrity of the district and is a record of the smaller structures that lined the secondary north/south avenues within the district.

Citizens of Canton once spent a large amount of leisure time in downtown theaters and restaurants. By 1927 ten motion picture houses operated in downtown.⁵⁴ The old theaters were located along Market Avenue and Tuscarawas Street and included venues like the Alhambra, the Lyceum, the Ohio, and the Lowes, all of which have been razed in the last 30 years.⁵⁵ The Palace Theater (NR, 1979) (5), at the northern extent of the district, is the only surviving theater in Canton. John Ebersson of Chicago designed the Palace Theater in a Spanish Renaissance Revival Style in 1926.⁵⁶ When the Palace Theater opened in 1926 *The Canton Repository* announced "the inauguration of a new standard of excellence and beauty" in the city. The Palace offered both films and vaudeville shows when it opened, and later, live theater was performed there. In the 1930s it was used for the Players Guild, Canton Civic Opera, school and other civic events. In the 1940s stage shows were produced and big bands entertained the crowds.⁵⁷ The building has a grand vertical sign than can be seen from the southern extent of the district and its reproduction marquee updated with digital display.

Commercial Expansion - Cleveland Avenue Area

Remaining commercial buildings along Cleveland Avenue include contributing examples in a number of 20th century revival styles. Built in 1924, the Stern and Mann Department Store Building (72) at 101 Cleveland Avenue is a stunning example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style designed by Abram Garfield. Stern and Mann, founded in 1887, by Henry Mann and his brother-in-law Max Stern when they purchased the Winterhalter Millinery, an established Canton business. Specializing in "millinery and fancy goods," they were the first store in the area to bring in imported goods, which included gowns and lingerie from France, and elegant silk fabrics from Japan and China. By 1924, after years of success in the growing ready-to-wear garment market, the store built its own building and remained downtown until 1990.⁵⁸ Other locations opened in suburban shopping centers during the last 30 years until the business recently folded.

⁵³ Stark County Public Library, clipping files, various retail stores. 1950-1999.

⁵⁴ Heald. Vol. III., p.543.

⁵⁵ NRN, Palace Theater, 1985.

⁵⁶ Albacete, p. 80.

⁵⁷ Bicentennial. Vol. 1, p. 243.

⁵⁸ "Business requires answers to difficult questions." *The Canton Repository*, 12-2-93.

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Built in 1921, Spanish Renaissance Revival details mark the meeting hall and storefronts of the Knights of Columbus Hall (1) at Cleveland Avenue N.W. and 6th Street N.W. Built in 1922, the New Schaeffer Building (43) occupied by Baer's Office Supplies for over 40 years, founded in Canton in 1902, is another prominent contributing building along Cleveland Avenue NW.⁵⁹ It has a Renaissance Revival terra cotta façade with arcaded second floor windows. . Across the street the 1911 W.E. Homer Co. Building (38) is a corner commercial block that features Beaux Arts Classical Revival details on its two primary elevations.

On the east side of Cleveland Avenue N.W. between 3rd Street N.W. and 4th Street N.W., retail buildings include Gassers Jewelers (45) and the adjacent Deco building (44) are contributing Art Deco style buildings with orange brick and Deco inspired parapets. Gasser Jewelers still occupies its 3rd Street NW storefront to which it moved over 60 years ago. These are the only buildings in the proposed district that retain substantial Art Deco fabric. The New Schaeffer Building (43) and the Jackman Building (41), built in 1926, along with the non-contributing but sympathetic Whitmire-King Building (42) complete the retail block.

The block between 5th Street N.W. and 6th Street N.W., the Wilson Building (14), built 1907-1909, and the building housing the Printer/ The Packrat (13), built in 1913 are the remaining contributing commercial buildings on Cleveland Avenue N.W.

Commercial Expansion – Secondary Streets

During the first three decades of the 20th century, commercial expansion occurred on the secondary/numbered streets within the proposed district. Contributing buildings include Primo's Restaurant (40) and the Luntz Building (81), both built c.1910; H.T. and F.E. Grant Building (33), built 1911; Capestrain Jewelers Building (53), Harvard Dental Building (88), and Piper Arcade (89), all built 1921; National Cash Register Co. Building (4) and 600 Market Avenue N. (6), both built 1922; Sears Roebuck & Co./Stark County Offices (47), built 1928 and 1937; and the Dougherty Building (12), built 1929. The Harvard Dental Building (88) is related to the Harvard Dental Manufacturing Co., which located outside the proposed district and listed in the National Register. The Harvard Dental Manufacturing Co. was founded by Frank E. Case, who came to Canton from Ashtabula County in 1850. Case served as patent attorney for the Canton Surgical and Dental Manufacturing Company which, in 1881, pioneered the making of surgical and dental chairs that automatically reclined. Case made further improvements in the chair and patented them as the Harvard Chair, which he began manufacturing in his basement. He left his law practice in 1890 to go into the dental equipment business fulltime. In 1896 Case built the Harvard Dental Manufacturing Building in the Crystal Park area of Canton, advertised as the largest factory in the world devoted to the production of dental furniture. Harvard merged with the Weber Dental Manufacturing Co. in 1937 and continued under that name through the mid 1970s.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Heald, Vol IV., p. 240.

⁶⁰ Bicentennial, Vol. 1, p. 189.

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Social Clubs and Associations

The Knights of Columbus, an active Catholic service organization, commissioned the structure along 6th Street NE (1). The Knights of Columbus began in New Haven, Connecticut in 1881 and was incorporated in 1882. Their name pays tribute to Christopher Columbus, the first Catholic to enter the west. The Canton chapter of the Knights of Columbus was founded on May 8, 1898 as the 341st such organization in the country. There are now over 15,000 such organizations worldwide.⁶¹ The Knights of Columbus chapter located in Canton is affiliated with St. Peter's Catholic Church located just outside the district on Cleveland Avenue N. The 1922 Spanish Renaissance Revival addition to the original hall located at 601 Cleveland Avenue N. strikes the visitor with its impressive proportions, masonry construction, and detailing in wrought iron and paint. The shield of the Knights of Columbus appears in painted terra cotta along each pier above the first floor.

Other active service organizations in Canton include the YMCA, which occupies a contributing building in the district. The YMCA of Canton (50) was founded in 1866 and the current facility was constructed in 1914. Subsequent additions added a natatorium and new gymnasium. The earliest parts of the building include the tower and a three story wing executed in a Sullivan-esque Commercial Style. The most recent addition occurred along McKinley Avenue in 1976.⁶²

The Freemasons of Canton have a number of tangible connections to the district. The Malline Building (19) was used by the Masons, Lodge No. 60, as the First Temple between 1890 and 1904. The Lutz Building (79) is a well executed example of late-Romanesque commercial style in Canton. The 1914 Sanborn map shows the building housed the Eagles Lodge meeting hall and club room on the third floor.⁶³ The Canton Masonic Lodge was first organized in 1821, occupying several other buildings before, in 1885, the Canton Masonic Company was organized to secure new temple. Short of funds, the Malline Building (19) was selected until the Masonic Temple at 836 Market Avenue N. (outside the district) was built 1926.

Utilities

Two significant buildings in the district are associated with public utilities and the development of the modern infrastructure in Canton. The Ohio Bell Telephone Company Building (23), located at 401-429 Cleveland Avenue N.W., and the East Ohio Gas Company Building (71) located west of Cleveland Avenue 332 2nd Street N.W. The Ohio Bell Telephone Company Building, built in 1923 with sympathetic additions in 1940 and 1957, typifies the Neo-Classical style: its proportions are simple, and little ornament adorns its sandstone façade. In 1880, the Akron and Canton Telephone Exchange made possible the first telephone service in Canton; by 1900, 1,200 residents had subscribed. The 1921 merger of the Ohio State Telephone Company with

⁶¹ <http://www.kofc.org/about/history/index.cfm>

⁶² Heald. Vol. IV, pp 743-764.

⁶³ Sanborn Insurance Company Map, Canton, 1914.

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a number of other smaller companies formed the Ohio Bell Telephone Company.⁶⁴ The significance of the East Ohio Gas Building of 1926 partly results from the impact the company had upon adding customers and increasing the supply of natural gas in Northeast Ohio. The Standard Oil Company of New Jersey formed the East Ohio Gas Company in 1898 with the purpose of building a pipeline from the Ohio River northward to serve the high industrial needs in developing industrial centers of Canton, Massillon, Akron, and Cleveland. The number of customers increased from 3,874 in 1899 to 472,904 in 1930. The company contributed to the development of natural gas appliances such as stoves, water heaters, furnaces, and gas refrigerators.⁶⁵

Communications

Included within the proposed district is the Mellet Building (NR, 1983) (70), which housed *The Canton Daily News*. This newspaper, founded in 1833, is the second oldest newspaper in Canton behind *The Canton Repository*, founded in 1815. The building's namesake is Don Mellet, a Pulitzer Prize winning editor who was murdered in 1926 in his driveway for reporting the criminal habits of the underworld and the corruption in the Canton Police Department. In 1928 *The Canton Daily News* moved from the Mellet Building (70) into a new \$1,000,000 facility at S. Market and 5th Street just south of the district boundary. The new facility, located at 500 Market Avenue S, was built in honor of Mellet. The construction of the new building, combined with the limited recovery after the Mellet scandal, caused *The Canton Daily News* to experience financial difficulties by 1930. Brush-Moore Newspapers, owner of the Repository at the time, purchased *The Canton Daily News* in 1930 and merged the two papers as one, retaining the Repository's name.⁶⁶ The Repository Printing Warehouse (22) on Cleveland Avenue N is also in the district as a non-contributing building with a false front.

The Great Depression to the 1950s

During the 1930s Canton's population grew by less than 3,500 people to a total of 108,401.⁶⁷ However, despite the pain of the Great Depression, Canton made significant strides on the cultural front. The Canton Player's Guild was founded in 1932. In 1934, the Canton Art Institute began at the Little Civic Art Gallery in the Canton Public Library. The Timken Foundation was established the same year and the Canton Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1936. By 1950, the population had peaked for the 20th century at 116,912.⁶⁸

A total of 14 buildings constructed between 1930 and 1955, the end of the period of significance, remain in the proposed district. Few buildings were constructed during the Great

⁶⁴ Bicentennial, Vol. 2. p.159.

⁶⁵ Heald. Vol. III., pp 149-155.

⁶⁶ NRN, Mellet Building, 1983.

⁶⁷ Heald, p. 472.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

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Depression. Most notable were the Onesto Hotel (NR, 1982) (57), Canton Post Office/Frank T. Bow Federal Building (90), and the First Federal Savings & Loan Building (84). Frank Onesto built the Onesto Hotel (NR, 1982) (57) in 1930 after a design by J.C. Stevens of Chicago. The Onesto is listed on the National Register as the last hotel to be built in Canton at the end of its 1920s commercial boom with significant associations to the public life of Canton citizens. A 1958 curtain wall addition sits on top of the 1941 ballroom wing. The addition is called Bliss Tower. The Courtland Hotel Arch (76) exists as the only remaining portion of a once grand hotel designed by Guy Tilden in 1905. The terrazzo floor within the arch reads Hotel St. Francis for the man who purchased the Courtland in the 1940s, Frank Onesto. The Frank T. Bow Federal Building (90) was built in 1933 as the Canton Post Office after a design by local architect Charles Firestone. The renaming of the building occurred in the 1970s as an honor to Frank T. Bow. He was a lawyer and native to Canton who eventually became a U.S. Representative for Ohio between 1951 and 1972 when he passed away in office.⁶⁹ Sandstone with applied Art Moderne details clad the building's two stories. Stylized eagles adorn the roofline and aluminum grills and mounted lighting appear at the corner entrances. The interior hall has large murals from the 1930s depicting industrial scenes of Canton painted by Cleveland artist Glenn Shaw. First Federal Savings & Loan Building (84) has a white marble Art Moderne façade. The First Federal Savings and Loan Association of Canton formed in 1916 and built the current building in 1938. The company operated at the location through 1974 when it merged with the Industrial Savings & Loan Association of Alliance.⁷⁰ The building is currently occupied by Stark County.

World War II Expansion

Canton was geared for war production even before Pearl Harbor. In 1941 the city had 68 industries turning out a record \$145 million a year in goods, much of it for defense. When the war started companies converted production to meet the needs of the war. Timken doubled production to turn out over 100,000 gun barrels and Republic Steel produced alloy steels for armor plate, ordinance, airplane bombs, and submarine engines.⁷¹

The district has multiple examples of early modern architecture and modifications to existing buildings indicative of the early modern movement. Contributing to the proposed district is the building located at 100 Central Plaza (80), which has an Art Moderne influenced style that dates from the late 1940s. Other contributing buildings include the McCrory Building (58), built 1950; 330 3rd Street N.W. (51), built 1953; the Western Union Building (65), built 1954; and the Scott Building (52), built 1955.

⁶⁹ <http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/boude-bowe.html>

⁷⁰ "First Canton Bank Formed in 1815." *The Canton Repository*. July 4, 1976.

⁷¹ *Bicentennial*, Vol. 1, p.273.

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Twentieth Century Architects

The early architecture boom for the City of Canton in the first quarter of the twentieth century brought commissions to significant architects from Stark County and around the Midwest. Contributing buildings in the district include designs by well known architects such as: Guy Tilden, Abram Garfield, Charles E. Firestone, H.A. and R.V. Lorentz, J.C. Stevens of the Chicago firm H. L. Stevenson, and Frank L. Packard of Columbus. Several of Canton's tallest and most noteworthy buildings have been designed by outside architects. Frank Packard of Columbus designed the First National Bank Building (86). Walker and Weeks of Cleveland designed the Harter Bank & Trust (78) and Renkert (46) buildings. The Onesto Hotel (57) was designed by the Stevens Company.⁷²

Guy Tilden

Local architect Guy Tilden executed buildings throughout Stark County between 1883 and 1910. The earliest surviving example of his work is the Trinity Lutheran Church (NR, 1985) constructed in 1885, a Romanesque Revival church with gothic window and door openings. Other Tilden commissions that fall within the district include The Belmont, an 1899 commercial building and home to Benders Restaurant since 1908. The Courtland Hotel, built in 1905 and razed in the 1990s, was designed by Tilden in a Renaissance Revival style. The stone arch (76) that surrounded the entrance to the Hotel sits adjacent to the Stark County Courthouse (77) as the only lasting remnant of the Courtland/St. Francis Hotel. Tilden's influence exists throughout Stark County.⁷³

George Hammond

George Hammond of Cleveland remodeled the Stark County Courthouse (77) in 1895 updating the originally Italianate building designed by H.E. Myer in 1870 to a Second Renaissance Revival style by adding a fourth floor and wide arched windows. Hammond trained in Massachusetts under William Ware, founder of the first American curriculum based on the European Beaux-Arts School. Hammond worked in Boston before moving to Cleveland to begin working independently. In Canton he also commissioned the McKinley High School. Hammond is known for a number of schools, factories, hospitals, and power buildings in Chicago, Kansas City, New Orleans, and Montreal.⁷⁴

Charles E. Firestone

Charles Firestone and Lowell Christman designed the Canton Post Office (90) in 1933. The building was later renamed the Frank T. Bow Federal Building (90) in the 1970s. Charles E. Firestone was born in Stark County. He graduated from Canton's Central High School in 1908 and from the Department of Engineering of the University of Michigan with a Bachelor of

⁷² Architects of Stark County, p. 767.

⁷³ NRN, Guy Tilden Thematic Resources, 1987.

⁷⁴ Van Tassel and Grabowski. The Dictionary of Cleveland Biography. Cleveland: OH, Case Western Reserve University, 1996. p202.

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Science degree in Architectural Engineering in 1914. After a short period of time in Detroit he returned to Canton and became associated with C.V. Pettit. He purchased Pettit's interest in 1919 and practiced alone with an office in the Renkert Building (46) until 1925 when he formed a partnership with Lawrence J. Motter. Fifty-four new school buildings and seventy-three additions were designed by Mr. Firestone and his office, the most significant probably being Timken High School. The firm also designed Fawcett Stadium, which at the time it was built (1937) was the largest high school stadium in the country.⁷⁵

Abram Garfield

Abram Garfield designed the Stern and Mann Department Store Building (72) in 1924. He was the son of Lucretia Rudolph and the 20th president of the United States, James A. Garfield. He was born in Washington, D.C. and moved to Cleveland after his father's death in 1881. He received a B.A. from Williams College (1893) and a B.S. from MIT (1896). His architectural practice began in 1897. In 1898 he formed Meade & Garfield, a partnership that designed many residences in northeast Ohio. From 1905 to 1922, Garfield practiced as Abram Garfield, Architect, adding partners as the firm expanded. He designed many prominent buildings and residences in Cleveland including: the original Babies & Children's and Maternity Hospital (1923); Bratenahl School (1901); and the Woodhill and Seville homes for the Cleveland Metropolitan Housing Authority. He was a founder and first president of the Cleveland School of Architecture (1924-29), and vice-president and vice-chairman of the board (1929-41) when the school became part of Western Reserve University. Garfield became a trustee of Case Western Reserve University in 1941, was elected an honorary lifetime member in 1943, and received an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree from the university in 1945.⁷⁶

Conclusion

The Downtown Canton Historic District retains contributing buildings with connections to the commercial and architectural growth of the county seat of Stark County. Canton was once a thriving industrial community. While the absence of a number of buildings, razed in the last 40 years, creates gaps in some of the blocks included in the district, the downtown retains a unified integrity due to the caliber of architectural styles found in its commercial, religious, public, and financial buildings. The district retains examples of pre-1900 commercial styles buildings with Italianate and Gothic Revival details. Constructions after 1900 include low and mid-rise Commercial style buildings and pre-1930 high-rise constructions with Romanesque Revival, Renaissance Revival, Beaux-Arts Classical, Art Deco, and Early Modern influences.

⁷⁵ Historic Ridgewood. Historic Ridgewood Board of Trustees, 1986.

⁷⁶ <http://ech.cwru.edu/ech-cgi/article.pl?id=GA4>