

NPS Form 10-900  
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

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

## 1. Name of Property

historic name C. W. Miller Livery Stableother name/site number Huron Street Garage

## 2. Location

street & town 75 West Huron Street☐ not for publicationcity or town Buffalo☐ vicinitystate New York code NY county Erie code 029 zip code 14202

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Ruth X Perpoint DSHPO 9/27/07  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- ☐ entered in the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

C. W. Miller Livery Stable, Buffalo  
Name of Property

Erie County, New York  
County and State

### 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ public-local  
☒ private  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(check only one box)

- ☐ district  
☒ building(s)  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register**

N/A

### 6. Function or Use

**Historic Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

commercial/business

**Current Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

vacant

### 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	stone
walls	brick
	Medina sandstone (floors 1 & 2)
roof	asphalt
other	metal truss

### Narrative Description

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

C. W. Miller Livery Stable, Buffalo

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

**8. Significance****Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References****Bibliography**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Engineering

Transportation

Commerce

**Period of Significance**

1892-1894

**Significant Dates**

constructed in 1892-1894

**Significant Persons**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N.A.

**Cultural Affiliation**

N.A.

**Architect/Builder**

Lansing &amp; Beierl

C. W. Miller Livery Stable, Buffalo  
Name of Property

Erie County, New York  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

### UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 183477 4755841  
Zone Easting Northing

2  
Zone Easting Northing

3  
Zone Easting Northing

4  
Zone Easting Northing

☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

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

### Boundary Justification

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

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Francis R. Kowsky & Martin Wachadlo, edited by Mark Peckham

organization historic preservation consultants

date June 4, 2007

street & number 62 Niagara Falls Blvd

telephone 716-836-6069 / 716-949-6169

city or town Buffalo

state NY zip code 14214

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

#### Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

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

name/title Hurondel I, Inc.

street & number 3907 North Buffalo Road

telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Orchard Park

state NY zip code 14127

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

*C.W. Miller Stable  
Buffalo, Erie Co., NY***NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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**DESCRIPTION**

The C.W. Miller Livery Stable is a six-story masonry building located on the north side of West Chippewa St. in downtown Buffalo, mid-block between Franklin St. and Delaware Ave. Built between 1892 and 1894, the building is approximately 60 feet wide on Chippewa St. and 265 feet deep. Walls are built of brick above a massive stone foundation. The façade features three major vehicle bays surrounded by cut sandstone walls, an arcade of pilasters and round arches, and an attic story of rectangular windows. Decoration includes terra cotta moldings and spandrels. The remaining exterior walls are utilitarian in construction and character. Wood floors are suspended from steel trusses in the attic with hanging pin connected eye bars and I-beams designed to limit obstructions at each floor. Ramps, modified in the 1920s, provide vehicular access between floors. The six-story terra cotta Curtiss Building (1913) is immediately adjacent to the Miller building on the east. North of the Curtiss Building along Franklin Street are two two-story commercial buildings (c.1920) and a parking lot. Surface parking lots occupy the areas adjacent to the building on the west and north and across the street to the south.

The six-story façade is divided into three horizontal zones. The two-story base zone is faced with red sandstone laid in ashlar with recessed joints and features three major bays separated by two minor stone bays. These narrow minor bays, which read as piers, have in them single sash windows placed one above the other. Modern garage doors fill two of the major bays at the first floor. The center bay, formerly a carriage entrance, now is sealed with a metal frame plate glass window. Above the three major openings on the ground floor, moldings of tongue and groove design frame simple rectangular metal spandrels. The second floor major bays feature rows of windows in groups of four, each separated from the other by a wooden Tuscan half colonette. All of the original front windows on this level are intact and, like all the windows on the façade, are glazed with two-over-two lights. A cyma recta cornice molding crowns the two-story base level.

The façade above the two-story base is composed of red face brick with molded brick and terra cotta trim and continues the five-bay vertical division of the base. The third through fifth floors are treated as a unit, with three groups of paired windows placed beneath double arches, separated by single windows, which creates an interrupted arcade. Vertically, all of the windows are separated by recessed spandrels of plain and molded brick; those on the fourth and fifth floors have sills of terra cotta decorated with egg and dart molding. The terra cotta arches also feature egg and dart moldings in the soffits, as well as bead and reel moldings on the voussoirs. All of the arcade arches have a molding at their springing that reads as a belt course across the width of the façade. On the sixth floor, triple windows alternate with single windows in a continuation of the five bay divisions of the lower stories. These windows are framed with egg and dart terra cotta moldings and are linked by a continuous sill. The elevation is terminated by a plain entablature and cornice in place of a richly decorated entablature with brackets, swags, and a projecting cornice lost many years ago. A brick chimney rises above the roofline on the right or eastern side of the building. Most of the windows on the front of the building above the second floor have been removed and the openings sealed with plywood sheets.

The three other sides of the building have common brick walls with no ornamentation. The side walls, facing east and west, feature widely spaced fenestration. On the first, fourth, fifth, and sixth floors, the windows are single, four-over-four sash type beneath segmental arches. On the second and third floors where the horse stalls were located, the windows are paired, with I-beam lintels and stone or concrete sills. Some of these windows were modified in the distant past. The surviving glazing is also four over four. The rear of the building features a row of seven windows on each floor, six evenly spaced, with the vertical row on the east set somewhat apart from the others. The window at the lower right side of the first floor has been replaced with a double door. The surviving windows here are six over six. On the roof, two wood and corrugated metal penthouses housed the elevator shafts and four glazed skylights terminated four interior light shafts.

The interior of the stable consists of wood floors with white-washed brick walls, the bottom five of which are unencumbered by any significant internal divisions. The first four floors are connected to each other by driving ramps in the forward part of each level. Two elevators at the rear and a stairway and small elevator near the southwest corner link all of the floors. The floors above the first floor, which is supported by columns in the basement, are suspended from a series of eleven transverse riveted steel trusses on the sixth floor extending the width of the building. These trusses rest on brick-enclosed steel piers rising from the basement. Pin-connected eye bars hanging from these trusses support the wooden floors below. This system provides unobstructed space on the first floor and on the other levels, only the thin metal suspenders interdict the space.



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In 1895, in an article in *The Engineering Record*, the architects supplied a detailed description of the building and catalogued the functions of the seven interior levels:

The basement is occupied by the power, light, heat and mechanical plant and the blacksmith, woodworking, and horseshoeing shops and is also used for shelter of omnibuses, baggage wagons, van, etc. The first floor is devoted to the accommodation of vehicles hitched up ready to go out, and also contains the public and private offices, locker rooms, toilet rooms, etc. The second and third floors are covered with horse stalls, access to which and to the basement is had by inclined planes [ramps]... The fourth floor is for storing vehicles not in daily use. The fifth floor has rooms for harness, drying-rooms, and rooms for various kinds of carriage works, and the sixth floor is for hay and grain storage in the rear and for the storage of sleighs in the front half. All repairs, trimming, painting, and varnishing are done on the fifth floor.<sup>1</sup>

As originally built, the basement and first, second, and third floors were connected along the eastern side of the building by long ramps of gentle gradient. Circa 1925, after the building became a parking garage, the original horse ramps were removed, and a series of shorter, steeper ramps for automobile use were constructed along the eastern and western sides of the interior. (It is likely that these new ramps reused some of the material from the original ramps.) This series of ramps now runs from the basement to the fourth floor. From the present street entrance in the eastern bay, one has access to a ramp that slopes gently up to the first floor. Originally, a ramp in this area led down to the basement; carriages and horses reached the first floor from the street via a now vanished ramp in the central bay. Also gone from the ground floor entrance area is the office that once occupied the western bay and the long, narrow waiting room for teamsters that stood between the two original horse ramps. Approximately thirty feet in from the street, where the ramp to the first floor begins, a wider, L-shaped ramp descends to the left to the basement. From the western side of the south or front end of the first floor, a wide, L-shaped ramp leads to the second floor. From the western side of the south end of the second floor, another similar L-shaped ramp leads to the third floor. And from the western side of the south end of the third floor, a wide, L-shaped ramp leads to the fourth floor. As in the earliest days of the stable, the fifth and sixth floors are inaccessible by ramps. Three elevators and a staircase also provide access to the floors. The staircase is located in the southwestern section of the building, and wraps around a small passenger elevator, which is protected by a metal-sheathed fire door on each floor. Two elevators at the north end of the building carried horses, vehicles, feed, and equipment. The large elevator at the northeast corner, protected by metal-sheathed fire doors, is intact, but a metal staircase has replaced the smaller elevator at the northwest corner.

The basement encompasses the entire footprint of the building and extends under the sidewalk on the south. The foundation walls, which support the exterior brick walls, are of randomly laid limestone. Metal columns supporting the floor above have been extensively braced by later steel supports. Along the sides of the foundation, walls are pyramidal brick bases for the steel columns encased in brick piers rise to the roof to the sixth floor to support the trusses. The southern section of the basement contains mechanical apparatus, no longer in service, that provided water and other services to the building. Beneath the sidewalk is a boiler, also out of service, manufactured by the local firm of Farrar & Trefts. And the sound of water from a spring that was uncovered during construction being conveyed to the city sewer continuously animates this shadowy quarter of the building.

The second through fifth floors are large open spaces obstructed only by the slender steel suspension bars. The second and third floors originally housed stalls for approximately 250 horses. Chamfered and grooved wood beams inserted between the suspended support bars are a remnant of the stalls that once filled the spaces. The fourth floor was originally used for carriage storage, and the fifth floor, once divided by partitions that are no longer there, housed the repair shops.

The sixth floor is the most interesting space in the building. Here, in the loftiest space within the stable (this floor is half again as high as all the others), is a magnificent display of structure. Visible are the eleven riveted steel trusses, with their reinforcing cross bracing tie rods and solid timber beams that sustain the load of floors two through five by means of suspension bars.<sup>2</sup> Separating the northern section of the floor, where hay waited to be broken up (the electric machine used in this process sits forgotten in a corner on another floor) and dropped down a shoot to the horses on the lower floors, from the southern part, where sleighs resided until the return of

<sup>1</sup> "The Miller Stable, Buffalo, N.Y.," *The Engineering Record* 31 (Jan. 12, 1895): 116.

<sup>2</sup> The Carnegie steel works in Pittsburgh manufactured these trusses. One beam yet bears the shipper's hand written chalk marking, "C. W. Miller's."

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winter, is a workmanlike, tongue and groove partition. The untreated wood of this divider has, with age, like the surrounding unpainted brick walls, acquired a mellow patina. A second dividing wall installed later in the southern end of the space is a makeshift affair that appears to have been built with surplus windows. The roof admits four skylights which originally stood above light and ventilation shafts that extended downward to the third floor. The shafts have been removed and flooring continued across them at each level.

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**SIGNIFICANCE**

The C.W. Miller Stable in downtown Buffalo is significant under Criterion A in the areas of transportation history and commerce and under Criterion C in the areas of architecture and engineering. Designed by Lansing and Beierl and built between 1892-1894, the six-story building incorporated innovative structural solutions that accommodated the circulation needs and specialized functions associated with urban livery in a vertical program. The design of the building addressed lighting, heating, plumbing, waste removal, and fire suppression with the latest available technologies while outwardly creating a distinctive façade compatible in scale and style with the commercial architecture of downtown during this period. At the time of its construction, the Miller stable attracted national attention in the engineering press for its system of construction and the ample accommodations it provided for horses and the storage of carts, carriages, and sleighs. Charles W. Miller (1837-1921), a prominent Buffalo businessperson who had made his fortune in urban horse transportation businesses, invited many out-of-town guests, including representatives from the New York City press and influential railroad executives, to Buffalo to celebrate the opening of his state-of-the-art facility. The local press hailed it as a "palace for horses" and claimed that it was the finest stable in the United States. It was certainly the most important stable ever built in Buffalo. Today, the C. W. Miller Livery Stable is one of the last surviving livery stables in downtown Buffalo<sup>1</sup>.

The C. W. Miller Livery Stable is the most potent extant reminder in Buffalo of the observation of Clay McShane, an historian of horse-drawn transport, that the "amount of work horses were required to perform in the mid-nineteenth-century city was extensive and grew dramatically before the twentieth century opened."<sup>2</sup> The horse became more and more important as an urban beast of burden beginning in the 1830s, when horse-drawn vehicles began to replace hand carts as the means by which goods and freight moved about the streets of American cities. By the close of the Civil War, major cities depended primarily on the horse power for the delivery of freight, for public transportation, for the distribution of food, and for fire, police, and other municipal services. By 1900, there were five horses for every eighteen people in Buffalo, a trend that mirrored a nationwide transportation phenomenon.

The era of the horse-drawn livery business could be said to have begun in 1839, when William Herndon founded in Boston the first express delivery company. The ancestor to such present-day businesses as United Parcel Services, Herndon's carts drawn by two or more horses greatly improved the delivery of goods from ships and trains to businesses and homes. Before long, states McShane, Herndon's teamsters "displaced the cart men and rendered the human-pushed wheelbarrows obsolete."<sup>3</sup> The growth of railroads from the 1840s to the 1880s in the East and Mid-West fostered the spread of livery businesses like Herndon's in other cities.

In addition to moving goods, equine power became the chief means of locomotion for people within cities. Horse drawn vehicles for hire--cabs or hacks--had become a fixture on American streets by the 1850s.

<sup>1</sup> Other surviving stables in Buffalo include the Lenhard Livery and Boarding Stable at 177 Elm St. (1891) and the White Brothers Livery Stable at 430 Jersey St. (1889).

<sup>2</sup> Clay McShane, "Gilded Age Boston," *New England Quarterly*, 74 (June 2001), 276

<sup>3</sup> McShane, *loc. cit.*, 278.



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Horsecars or street railways allowed people to move about cities more rapidly than before as well as to make possible home life in neighborhoods far away from where they worked. Private horse-drawn carriages also grew fashionable with well-to-do and middle class citizens, prompting the construction of drives in parks and urban parkways. The parkways that Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux planned for Buffalo in 1868, which were arranged primarily with non-commercial carriages and horseback riders in mind, were the first in an American city and are still among the most notable examples in the United States<sup>4</sup>.

The career of Charles W. Miller in Buffalo reflects the progress of horsepower in American cities in the nineteenth century. In 1855, Miller took over the omnibus business that his father, J. S. Miller, had established eight years earlier on Main Street connecting the docks on the waterfront with Cold Spring, some three miles inland. "It was the day of pay-as-you leave," reported a local newspaper, "and the passengers guided the driver when alighting by a pull on a strap attached to the driver's foot, one pull for the right side of the street, two for the left."<sup>5</sup> After five years, young Miller sold the line but stayed on to manage the service until 1864. In that year, he bought the first of several stables and began his career in the livery business. Miller's success was assured in 1872 when he signed a contract with the New York Central Railroad to transport goods and passenger baggage to and from the trains that were arriving in Buffalo with greater and greater frequency. A man of energy and ingenuity, Miller radically improved the haphazard system of baggage transfer that had prevailed before his time and soon enjoyed the rewards of flourishing trade. "The simplicity of the system in being able to check baggage from the house straight through to destination appealed to the public from the start after the chaos which had reigned previously and the new system found instant and lasting favor with the public," Miller proudly remarked.<sup>6</sup> Adding cabs to his fleet of two-horse wagons and opening a downtown office where one could purchase railway tickets and, at the same time, arrange for baggage to be picked up, Miller soon became the proprietor of the most important livery business in Buffalo. In 1892, riding the crest of a wave of success, Miller determined to erect the largest and best equipped livery stable in town.<sup>7</sup>

Choosing a site on West Huron Street in the downtown business district, Miller engaged a young architect, Williams Lansing of the firm of Lansing & Beierl, to design the six-story building being nominated. Thinking on a grand scale, Miller planned his new stable to include up-to-date facilities for 250 horses, 200 drivers, and over 150 vehicles (thirty of which were baggage wagons).

The accomplishment of Miller's ideal stable was, however, fraught with both financial and material difficulties. In January 1893, when construction had only just begun, Miller's existing stable burned to the ground, forcing him to acquire an interim location for his business. The tragedy increased the need for work on the new stable to go rapidly. But the discovery of a bed of quick sand many feet deep at the site presented Lansing with unforeseen problems in the laying the foundations. Indeed, some in town faulted Miller as arrogant for even thinking of going ahead with the project at this location. Rising to the challenge, Lansing

<sup>4</sup> Olmsted Parks and Parkways Thematic Resources National Register nomination, 1982.

<sup>5</sup> "Miller's Sale Ends Tradition of Old Buffalo," *Buffalo Express*, July 18, 1918.

<sup>6</sup> "Miller's Sale."

<sup>7</sup> According to the title search, Charles W. Miller purchased the property from various parties from December 1892 through August 1893. In 1900, Miller transferred title to the C. W. Miller Transfer Co., who in turn sold the property to the Susquehanna Transfer Corporation. The property was purchased by Anna Weber in 1922, and she held it until 1960. Subsequent transfers were: 1960 to 75 West Huron Street, Inc.; 1986 to Chase Manhattan Bank; 1993 to Key Bank of New York; 2003 to Hurondel I, Inc.; and 2003 to Huron Parking Services, Inc.

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overcame for his client the dilemma presented by the wet ground by resting the building on one thousand wooden pilings and by providing for a pumping system to remove the constant flow of water from an underground spring. In arriving at this solution, Lansing relied in part on Newcomb Carlton (1869-1953), whose name appeared as the consulting engineer for the mechanical plant, which would have surely included dealing with the ground water problem. A recent graduate of the mechanical engineering program at Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey, Carlton had come to Buffalo in 1891 to begin a career that would see him appointed in 1899 as Director of Works for Buffalo's Pan-American Exposition (where, in 1901, he would help carry President McKinley, wounded by an assassin's bullet, to the safety of a nearby residence). Eventually, Carlton would rise to president of the board of the Western Union Telegraph Company and take his place in the history of communications alongside that of Cyrus Field.<sup>8</sup>

The Miller stable enterprise with which young Carlton was associated attracted national attention in the professional press. Undoubtedly, in the hope of securing future clients in Buffalo and elsewhere, the architectural firm of Lansing & Beierl supplied the readers of *The Engineering Record* a lengthy description of the new building. Specially, concerning the foundations, they explained the system of construction that is still in place:

*The construction of the stable entailed a considerable amount of difficulty owing to the character of the soil. It was necessary to excavate about 12 feet below grade in order to get in the footings. The soil was composed entirely of quicksand, carrying water, and as our excavation tool us about 5 feet below the sewer it was necessary to pump continuously from the time the excavation was a depth of about 6 feet. The last 2 or 3 feet the digging was done in cold weather, so that the banks were frozen to a considerable depth and it was not necessary to sue sheet piling except in one or two cases where closest adjoining buildings were endangered. The quicksand was 51 feet deep and rested on a bed of limestone. The piles were beech and maple, 25 feet long, this being the greatest length that was possible to drive. These were afterward cut off from 4 to 6 feet, leaving an average length of pile in the ground of about 20 feet. Concrete was put in around the pile heads and the oak grillage was covered with 3-inch maple plank, on which we laid dimension stone of an average thickness of 14 inches. The pressure from the columns was distributed by means of 15-inch steel beams, 12 feet long, laid on top of the stones, bedded in cement, and filled out with concrete.<sup>9</sup>*

The stable also employs another uncommon structural feature. Above the first story, each of the five long wooden floors is suspended from eleven transverse metal trusses resting on steel columns encased in brick piers that rise from the basement through the full height of the building. These trusses and their cross bracing tie rods are exposed on the sixth floor, which is surely one of the most striking historic workspaces in Buffalo (Fig. 7). Thus, the outer brick walls support only their own weight; they are not load-bearing. This system had the advantage of producing a ground floor unobstructed by any interior supports (Fig. 3). On the upper floors, the slender metal suspenders, which take up very little room, and circular truss rivets are left exposed (Fig. 6). This

<sup>8</sup> Carlton is noted as "the consulting engineer for the mechanical plant" in "The Miller Stable, Buffalo, N.Y.," *The Engineering Record*, 31(1895), p. 116. For Carlton's career, see "Newcomb Carlton Dies at Age of 84," *New York Times*, May 14, 1953, p. 67, and Charles Penrose, *Newcomb Carlton, 1869-1953, of Western Union* (New York: Newcomen Society in North America, 1956), 118; 18.

<sup>9</sup> "Miller Stable," *loc. cit.*, p. 116.

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method of construction may have been used in other utilitarian structures, but it appears to be unusual for stables. The recently shuttered Claremont Stables in New York City, for example, also erected in 1892<sup>10</sup> employed a more traditional structural system consisting of load-bearing walls with internal cast iron columns or wooden piers supporting each floor.

In addition to its significant engineering, Lansing designed the Miller Stable with a distinctive façade combining elements of the Romanesque Revival style with neo-classical details inspired by the Renaissance Revival. The façade is divided horizontally into a massive two-story stone base, an arcaded three-story body and substantial attic story terminating the composition. Fully evolved, this system of design, which Louis Sullivan immortalized in his 1896 essay, "The Tall office Building Artistically Considered," is notably represented in Buffalo by Adler & Sullivan's Guaranty Building (1894) and D. H. Burnham's Ellicott Square Building (1895). Williams Lansing and Max Beierl began their careers in the office of Green & Wicks before establishing a partnership shortly before their commission for the Miller Stable. Other significant surviving commissions of this partnership include the Lafayette Street Presbyterian Church (1894-1896); the Connecticut Street Armory (1896-1899); Our Lady of Perpetual Help Roman Catholic Church (1897-1898); Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (1902-1905); the original design for the new campus of Canisius College (1908-1911) and numerous residences and commercial buildings.

With Williams Lansing and Newcomb Carlton (the stable may also have been the first important undertaking of his career) to advise on solutions to mechanical problems, "Charlie," as Miller liked to be addressed, realized his dream of creating a first-class building that splendidly coordinated the many aspects of a large and complex equine delivery operation. In addition to the twelve-foot-wide ramps accessing the basement and first floor (vehicles and horses going to and from the basement used the descending ramp entered from the street through the eastern bay entryway; vehicles and horses going to and from the first floor used the ascending ramp entered from the street through the central bay entryway), the ground floor originally contained a long, narrow room for drivers between the ramps, and an office in the western bay. In the rear of the first floor, vehicles already hitched to horses waited ready to go at a moment's notice. The second and third floors, which were accessible from the ground floor and basement by ramps, were arranged with stalls for horses. There was also an area for washing down the animals on both the second and third floors. In the center of all levels above the second floor, four 10' x 15' open shafts rose to skylights that lighted and ventilated the long rectangular floors. (These light wells have been floored over; however, the skylights remain.) The fourth and fifth floors were planned for storing and maintaining coaches. On the fifth floor, craftsmen painted and varnished vehicles and boys washed blankets and then dried them in a heated blanket room. Hay and feed were kept in the rear portion of the sixth floor, while the front section of the top story provided space for storing sleighs, a popular rental item during Buffalo's snowy winters. The blacksmith shop, power plant (steam provided heat for the entire building and drove electric generators that supplied current for 350 incandescent lights and a sump pump system), and an area for storing heavy wagons were located in the basement (Fig. 5). Two pumps were located in the basement to pump ground water into the municipal sewer. The basement also contained two hydraulic pumps that operated two elevators. The larger elevator carried feed between the basement and sixth floor; the smaller elevator ran between the first floor and the roof and transported coaches and sick horses. Both elevators are extant.

<sup>10</sup> 173-177 West 89<sup>th</sup> St., National Register 1980.

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Combining architectural distinction with well-thought-out functionalism, the Miller Livery Stable expressed the importance of the urban livery complex in American cities. It was a fitting monument to the owner who had pioneered this service business from modest beginnings to an enterprise that merited national attention. The building was surely the envy of the owners of the other eighty-eight livery and boarding stables listed in the city directory of the time. Touting the Miller Livery Stable as the finest edifice of its kind in the East, the local press christened it a "palace for horses."

Whether Miller realized it or not, when his new stable opened, he had built a state-of-the-art facility for a soon-to-pass-away mode of transportation. Automobiles were already making their way through the streets of Buffalo in the 1890s, although their owners were a relatively few well-to-do individuals. In 1908, however, Henry Ford brought out his Model T, the vehicle that would make the new invention affordable to the masses. By 1918, when Booth Tarkington published his novel *The Magnificent Ambersons*, he could state that "automobiles have come and almost all outward things are going to be different because of what they bring." As if heeding Tarkington's words, in that year, C. W. Miller, the "great innovator," sold his luxurious stable.<sup>11</sup>

By the end of World War I, the problem of finding parking spaces for automobiles was becoming a serious concern for American cities. "American's Worry About Parking Cars and Not About World Politics," ran a headline in *The New York Times* in 1923, as many old livery stables around the country were being or were about to be converted into parking garages. This was the fate of the Miller Livery Stable, a transformation that permitted the structure to survive to the present day. In the 1920s, the building, rechristened the Huron Street Garage (and later known as the Hertz Garage), was converted for auto storage. The original ramp configuration changed (although it appears that timbers from the original horse ramps were reused) to fit the new turning radius of machines, and an additional ramp linked the third floor to the one above. (Access to the fifth and sixth floors remained by elevator and stairs only.) New owners removed the stalls and other features for the care and feeding of horses and decked over the light wells to allow for more parking space. (Their outline is easily ascertainable in the framing of the ceilings.) The expanses of virtually unobstructed space on each floor easily accommodated the demands for automobile storage, and the early elevators (upgraded) and stairways continued to provide a useful secondary means of movement between floors. Eventually, with the flight of commerce and business to the suburbs, even a multi-story private parking garage was no longer a viable business in downtown Buffalo. The building ceased being used as a parking garage about the year 2000.

The C.W. Miller Stable is a significant landmark in the history of transportation in Buffalo and represents the successful nineteenth century integration of distinctive architectural design and practical engineering. Although obsolete for current transportation needs, the building's inherent strengths are again recognized and can support new and innovative uses.

<sup>11</sup> "Miller's Sale Ends Tradition of Old Buffalo," *Buffalo Express*, July 18, 1918, in *Local History* scrapbook, vol.1, pp. 56-57, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library.



C.W. Miller Livery Stable.  
Buffalo, Erie Co., N.Y.

building plans published  
in the Engineering Record,  
1895.

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# THE ENGINEERING RECORD.

VOLUME XXXI, No. 7.

cleaning and wrought-iron hangers and all are provided with  
cleaning screws at every change of direction.

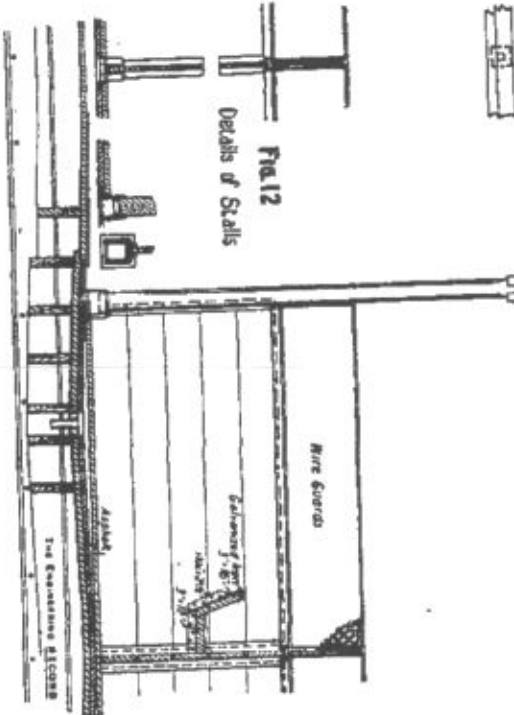
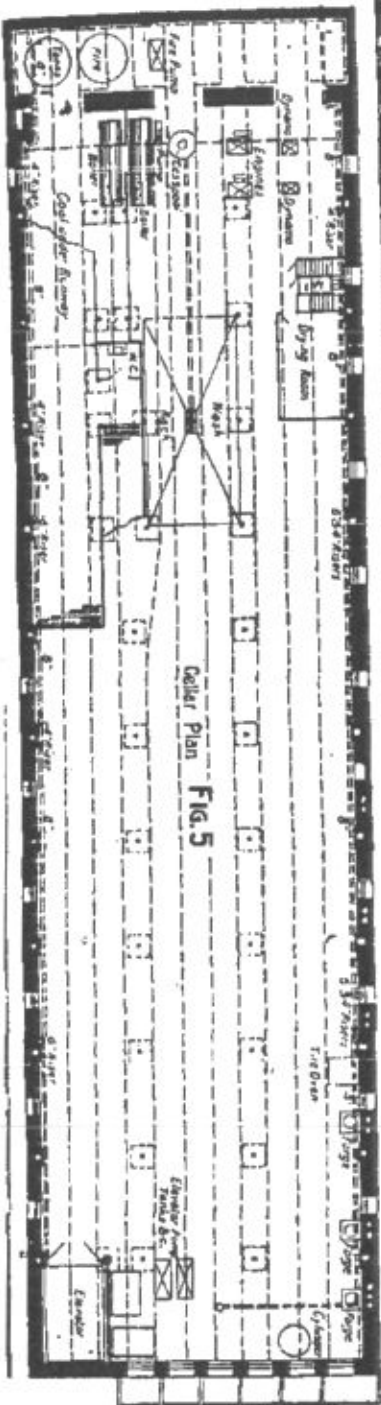
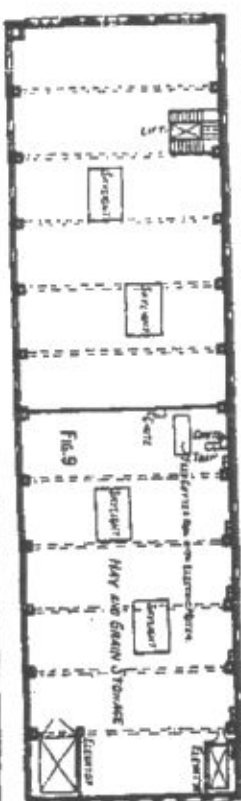
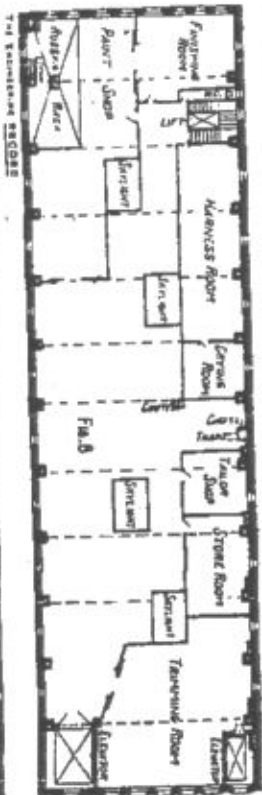
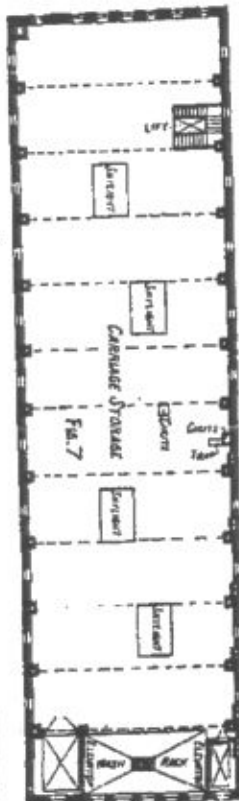
The building is equipped with a complete duplicate plant  
for pumping the ground water from the basement, which  
it is necessary to do continuously, and for pumping the  
street water through the building. The boilers, engines,  
dynamoes, and elevator pumps are all in pairs, so that the  
plant will not be subject to stoppage on account of any

break in the machinery. There are three vertical cyl-  
inder hydraulic elevators; two large ones for handling  
coaches, wagons, feed, etc., one smaller one for taking  
barrenets, blankets, etc., to harness and drying rooms.

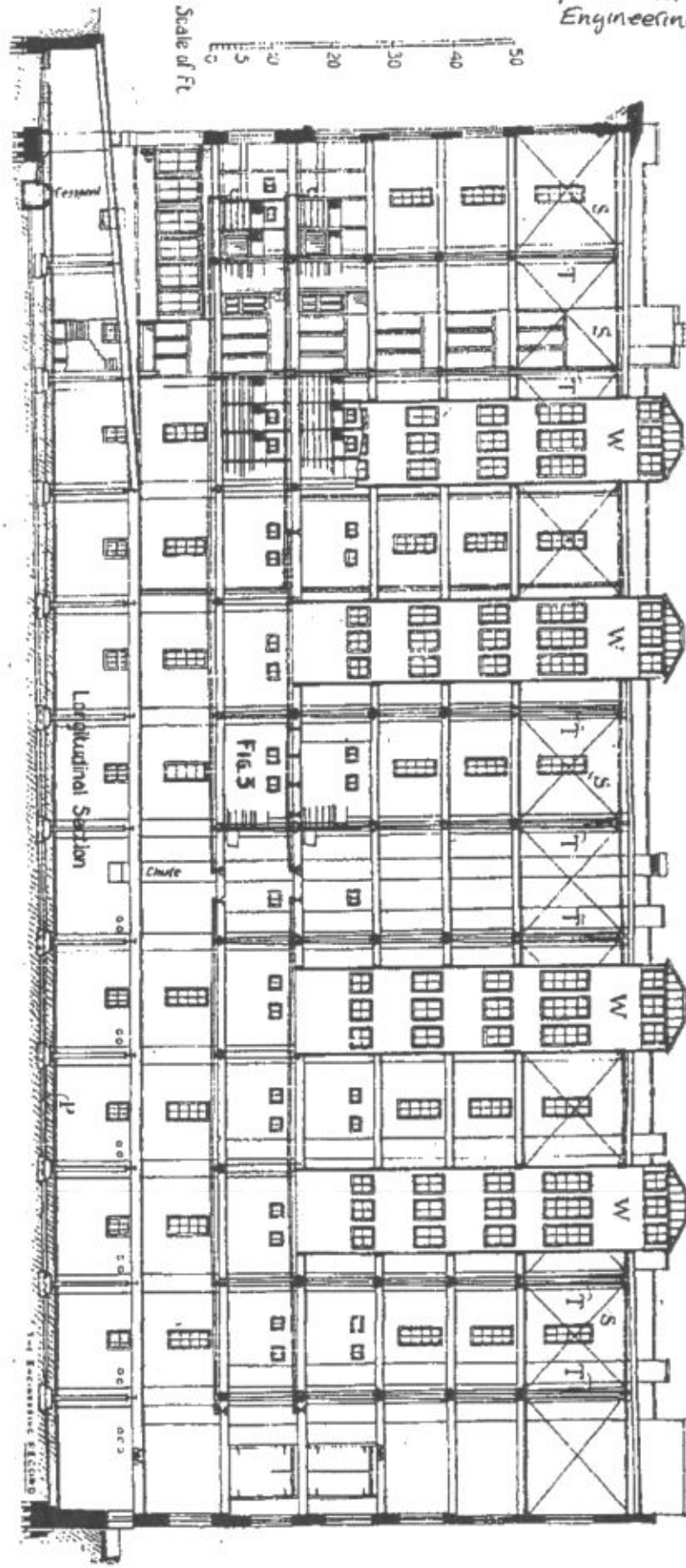
Two 45 horse-power Babcock & Wilcox boilers supply  
steam for the two 7x9-inch McIntosh & Seymour engines  
driving two 20-horsepower Eddy, type H, dynamoes for the  
incandescent lighting system, the building being wired for

about 350 lamps of this kind. The exhaust steam from  
the engine, pumps, etc., is collected in a 6-inch pipe  
which conveys it through a Kiley grease extractor and  
then into an 80 horse-power water-tube feed-water heater.  
A 6-inch exhaust pipe leads from the heater to the roof.  
The vertical exhaust pipe consists of a Kiley back-pressure  
valve on a level of the fifth floor, and just below this the  
connection is made with the heating system. The build-  
ing is heated by the one-pipe system, a supply pipe being  
carried around the ceiling of the fifth story, and from this  
pipe descending risers drop to the various radiators, wall  
coils, etc.

Figure 13 shows an elevation of the building and the  
method of connecting the radiators. The returns drop  
into a main return in the basement, a water-seal being  
provided at their junction. Live steam reduced in pres-



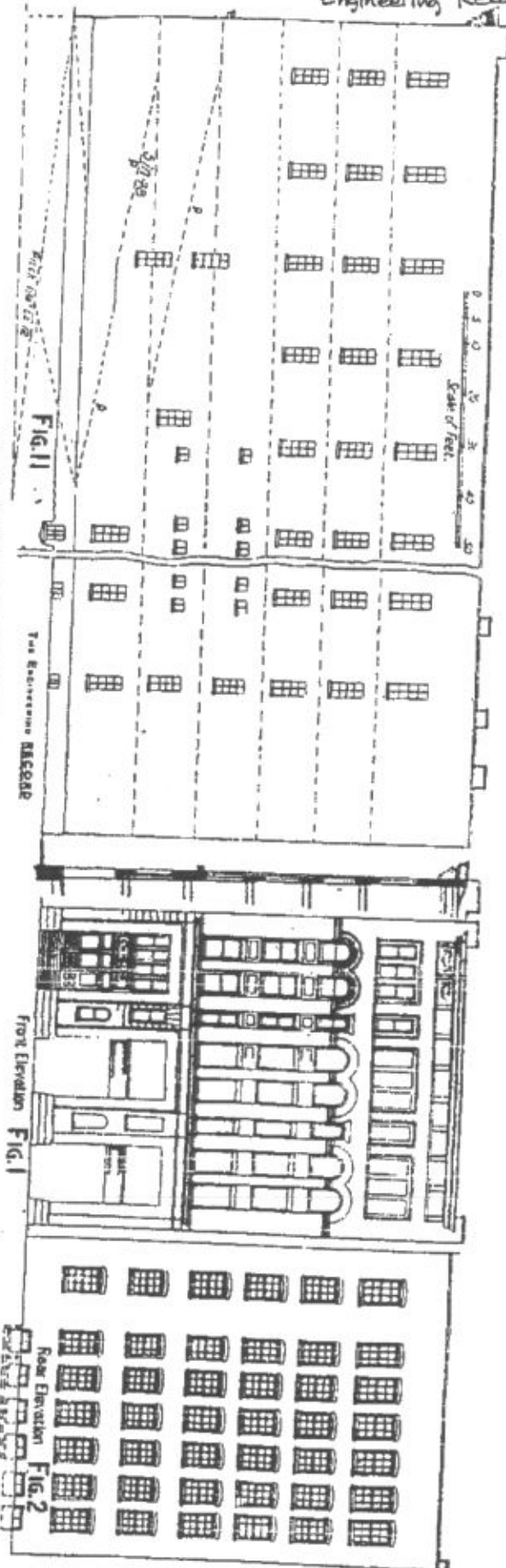
Buffalo, Erie Co. NY.  
longitudinal section  
published in the  
Engineering Record, 1895.





... Livery Stable  
Buffalo, Erie Co., N.Y.  
Elevations published in the  
Engineering Record, 1895.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE MILLER STABLE, BUFFALO, N. Y.



C. W. Miller Livery Stable  
Buffalo, Erie Co., N.Y.



C. W. MILLER'S COACH, COUPE AND BAGGAGE  
EXPRESS STABLES.

VIEW OF MILLER'S STABLES, 75 WEST HURON, C. 1896

SOUVENIR 10th CONVENTION NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
BUILDERS. 1896

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

C. W. Miller Livery Stable  
Erie County, New York

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Section number 9 Page 1

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Erie County, New York

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"Palace for Horses: Charles W. Miller's New Stable on Huron Street," *Buffalo Courier*, March 8, 1894.

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The National Register boundary includes the stable building and the urban lot on which it stands.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary is coterminous with the historic property boundary.

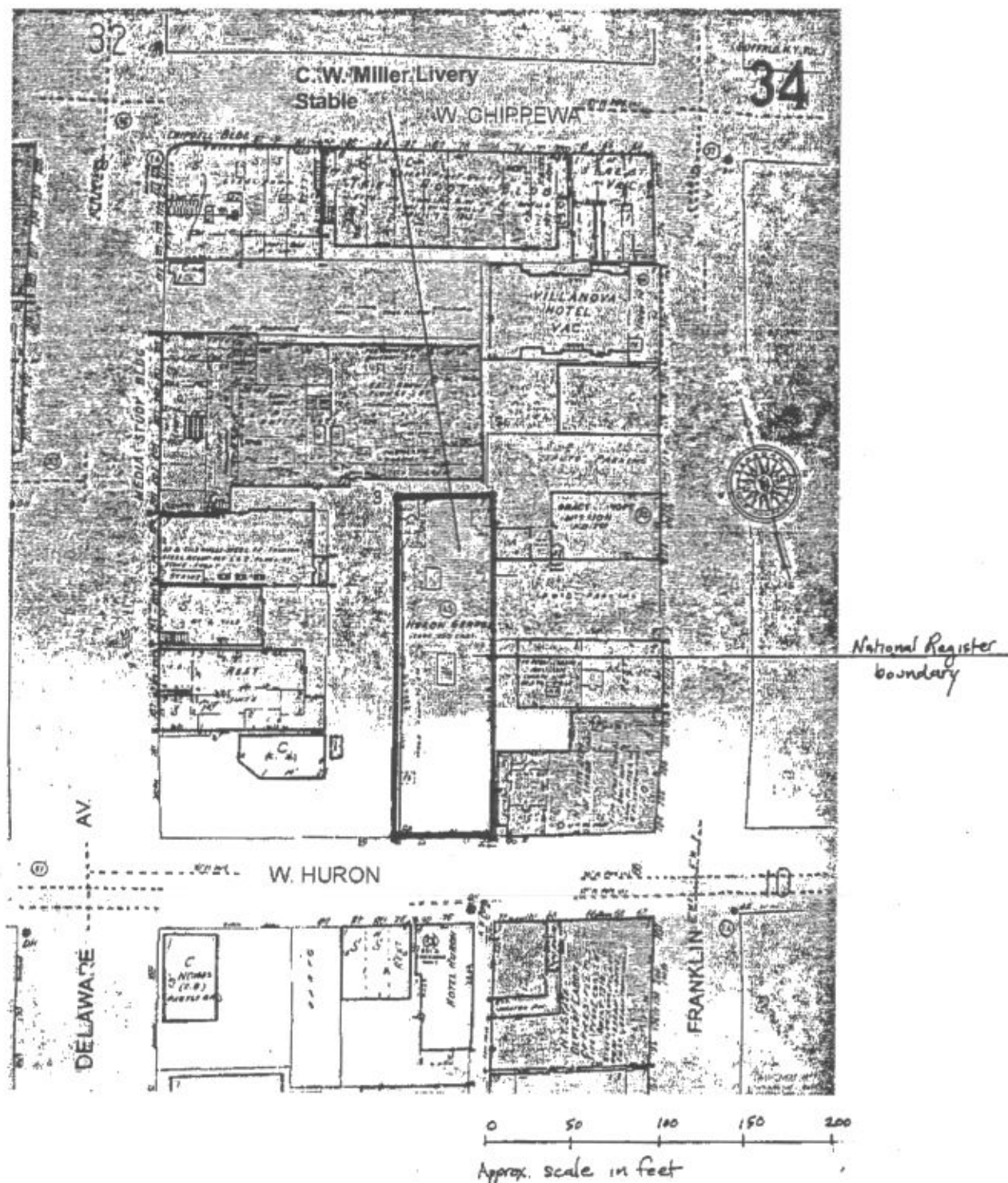
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C. W. Miller Livery Stable, Erie County, New York

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Section number Map





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*C. W. Miller Livery Stable, Erie County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Section number Photographs Page 1

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Name of Property: C. W. Miller Livery Stable

Location: 75 West Huron Street, Buffalo, Erie Co. NY

Photographs by: Martin Wachadlo, Date: April 2007

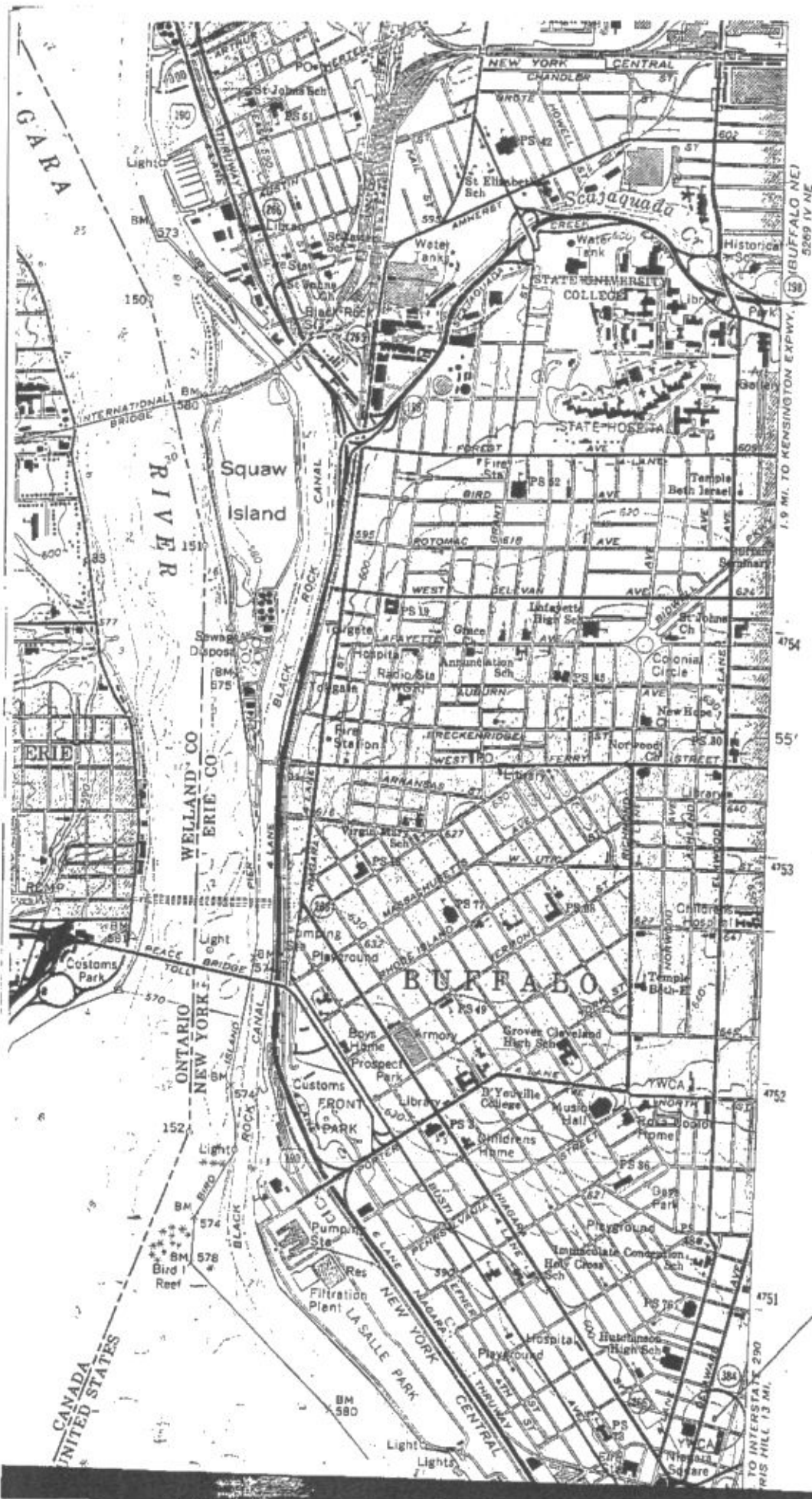
Negatives at: NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Peebles Island, Waterford, New York  
12188

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**Key to Photographs:**

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1. principle (south) façade on West Huron Street
2. principle (south) façade and western elevation from the SW
3. general view of the fifth floor
4. general view of the sixth floor illustrating trusses
5. ramp between third and fourth floors
6. typical skylight



c.w. Miller Livery Stable  
Buffalo, Erie Co., N.Y.  
utm Ref., Buffalo N.W. Quad  
18/1834 77/4755841

