

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

STATE: Nebraska
COUNTY: Douglas
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: Tires Inc. Warehouse
AND/OR HISTORIC: Christian Specht Building

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 1110 Douglas Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Omaha		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Second	
STATE: Nebraska	CODE: 31	COUNTY: Douglas	CODE: 055

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Tires Inc.		
STREET AND NUMBER: 1102 Douglas Street		
CITY OR TOWN: Omaha	STATE: Nebraska	CODE: 055

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Register of Deeds, Douglas County Courthouse		
STREET AND NUMBER: 18th and Farnam Streets		
CITY OR TOWN: Omaha	STATE: Nebraska	CODE: 31

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic Preservation in Nebraska		
DATE OF SURVEY: 1971	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Nebraska State Historical Society		
STREET AND NUMBER: 1500 "R" Street		
CITY OR TOWN: Lincoln	STATE: Nebraska	CODE: 31

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

☐ Excellent☐ Good☒ Fair☐ Deteriorated☐ Ruins☐ Unexposed

(Check One)

☐ Altered☒ Unaltered

(Check One)

☐ Moved☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Christian Specht Building was erected in 1884 by Christian Specht, owner of Western Cornice Works and manufacturer of metallic and galvanized iron cornices. The iron front was designed by Dufrene & Mendelssohn, the most noted Omaha architects of the time. It was then manufactured in Mr. Specht's foundry with galvanized iron.

The building has a frontage of twenty-two feet facing south on Douglas Street. It has a total of three stories with the staircase in the back part. Erected as a commercial warehouse type building, it has a completely open plan in all three floors. Besides the galvanized-iron store front, the structure is brick and the wood panel floors are supported on wood joists. The architectural style is the north Italian mode of Renaissance Revival. There are three bays of arched windows alternated by Corinthian columns on all levels. The two corners of the facade are defined by more massive iron pilasters. Belt courses separate each story and ornamental elements of slightly differing patterns are used in each story. A cornice crowns the building effecting a strong contrast of light and shade. Above the cornice there was an ornate balustraded parapet which has been removed.

The interior has not gone through much remodeling and is in good condition. A freight elevator was installed at the back for warehouse use. The iron front has been painted over many times and the paint is peeling. Some wood-panel soffits under the architraves are deteriorating. The iron fronts on upper levels are tilting slightly to the west.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian

☐ 16th Century

☐ 18th Century

☐ 20th Century

☐ 15th Century

☐ 17th Century

☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

erected in 1884

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal

☐ Prehistoric

☐ Historic

☐ Agriculture

☒ Architecture

☐ Art

☐ Commerce

☐ Communications

☐ Conservation

☐ Education

☐ Engineering

☐ Industry

☐ Invention

☐ Landscape

Architecture

☐ Literature

☐ Military

☐ Music

☐ Political

☐ Religion/Phi-

losophy

☐ Science

☐ Sculpture

☐ Social/Human-

itarian

☐ Theater

☐ Transportation

☐ Urban Planning

☐ Other (Specify)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

With the coming of the Industrial Revolution, use of cast-iron was introduced into the field of architecture. The high strength, light weight, and minimal size of cast-iron structural members gained high popularity in the building industry. Esthetically, ornamental elements of the time could be cast with iron to the utmost detail with sharp outline and a high degree of accuracy. Duplication of the ornament was also fast and economical by simply using the same mould again. Cast-iron store front was a product combining traditionalism in ornament with radical innovation in structure. The whole iron front could be prefabricated in the foundry and assembled on site, thus speeding up the time of construction of the building. The slim size of the columns and large span of iron beams enabled maximum glass area for display of merchandise and the glass industry is thus stimulated.

It was not in America but in Europe that the greatest masterpieces of iron construction of the 1850's were built. Yet Great Britain and Europe saw few all-iron building facades. This was in large part due to the danger of iron member's collapse at exposure to the extreme heat of urban conflagrations. This hazard, however, was only made real to America by the fires in Boston and Chicago in the 1870's.

The cast-iron front made its debut in a building at Pottsville, Pennsylvania, designed by John Havaland in 1830. From 1850-1880, the so-

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(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

Significance (cont'd)

called "cast-iron age", commercial buildings with cast-iron fronts were constructed throughout the United States. These early cast-iron fronts were very fresh and straightforward in their design, showing a direct grasp of the functions that had to be fulfilled. They were logical and expressive in the way the attenuated Grecian Doric columns and flat entablatures were used to form an external frame. Often they were erected by the foundries which produced their parts, with no architects taking a share in the work. Later the facade designs were handled by architects. The design became richer and heavier, generally with Renaissance or Baroque arcading. A bristling profusion of engaged columns, panels, arch mouldings and keystones, knobby pedestal and entablature blocks, statues and powerful consoles gave it an excessively agitated appearance. Something of this restlessness, which perhaps reflects a struggle of the picturesque taste against confining rectangularity, continued to characterize iron-fronted buildings well into the 1880's.

By the time steel-frame and concrete buildings were developed, iron-fronts were obsolete. The Christian Specht Building is a rare specimen still in use today.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Files; Nebraska State Historical Society

Morrison, Hugh. Early American Architecture.

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780.

Giedion, S. Space, Time and Architecture.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE			
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0 , "	0 , "	41°	15'	32"
NE	0 , "	0 , "	95°	55'	51"
SE	0 , "	0 , "			
SW	0 , "	0 , "			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/16 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Persijs Kolberg, Curator of Historic Sites

ORGANIZATION: Nebraska State Historical Society DATE: 3/19/74

STREET AND NUMBER: 1500 "R" Street

CITY OR TOWN: Lincoln STATE: Nebraska CODE: 31

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

National ☐ State ☒ Local ☐

Name _____

Title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

Date _____

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

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

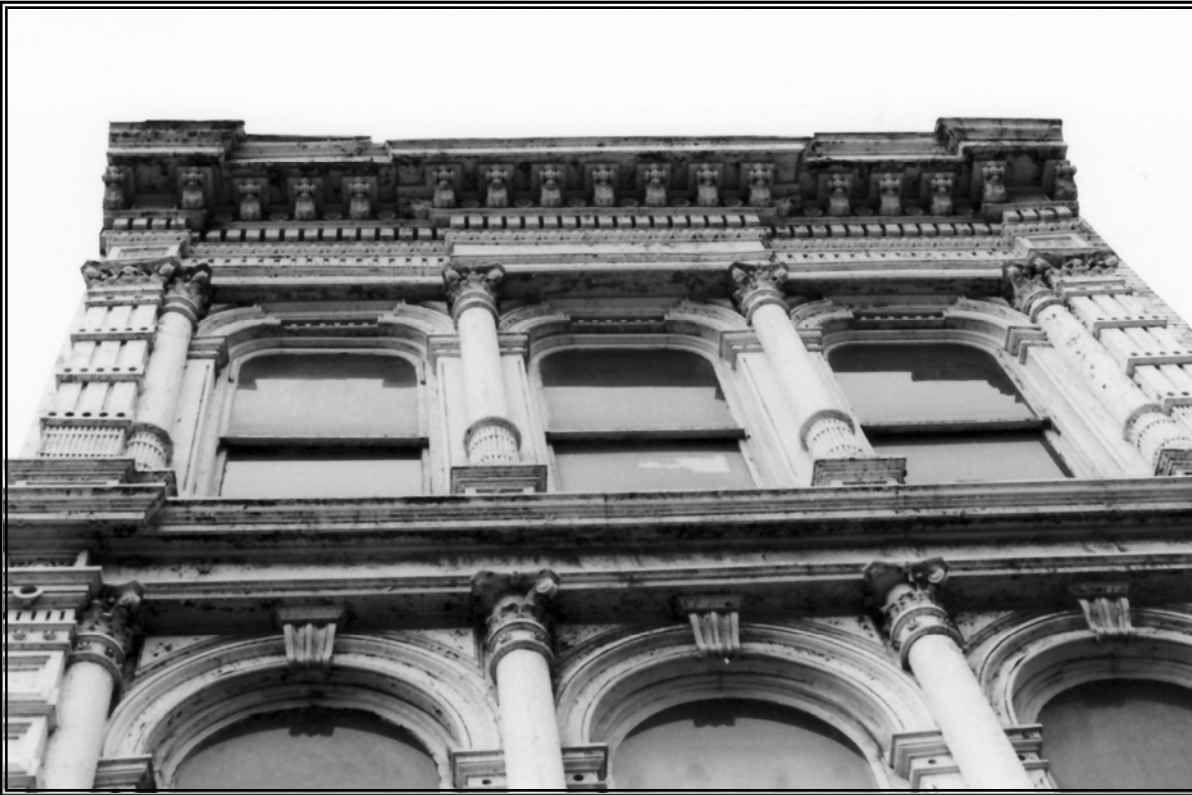
Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

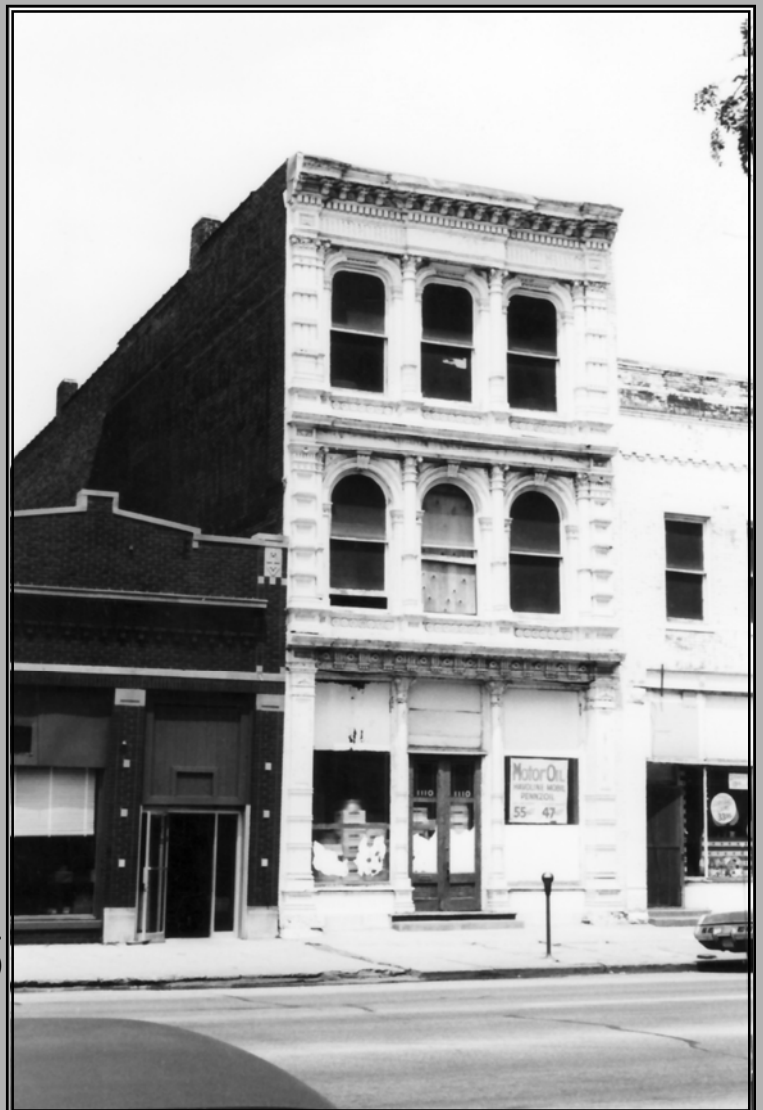
SEE INSTRUCTIONS



South façade, looking north. Date: 1971 (NSHS H673-5-3387)



Detail of south façade, looking north. Date: 1971 (NSHS H673.5-3392)



South & west facades, looking northeast.
Date: 1971 (NSHS H673.5-3392)