

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name CONTINENTAL BAKING COMPANY FACTORY

other names/site number Wonder Bread Factory; Ward & Ward Factory

name of related multiple property listing N/A

2. Location

street & number 356 Fougerson Street [] not for publication

city or town Buffalo [] vicinity

state New York code NY county Erie code 029 zip code 14211

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 as 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.)

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:

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

removed from the National Register

other (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

date of action

Continental Baking Company Factory

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(check as many boxes as apply) (Check only one box) count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/ manufacturing facility _____

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY 20th CENTURY AMERICAN _____

MOVEMENTS/Renaissance Revival _____

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete _____

walls brick, reinforced concrete _____

roof asphalt _____

other _____

Narrative Description

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

Continental Baking Company Factory

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

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

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. **NPS # 43,162**
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by historic American Building Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance:

1915-1971

Significant Dates:

1915; 1924; 1927; 1930; 1931; 1968; 1971

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Corry B. Comstock (architect); Cramp & Company (general contractor)

Continental Baking Company Factory

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.88 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>677263</u>	<u>4752967</u>	3	<u>17</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

2	<u>17</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u>17</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
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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 Annie Schentag; Kerry Traynor [Edited by Jennifer Walkowski, NYSHPO]

organization kta preservation specialists date 2/11/2021

street & number 422 Parker Avenue telephone 716.864.0628

city or town Buffalo state NY zip code 14216

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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

Estimated Burden Statement: public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503

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Continental Baking Company Factory
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Narrative Description

The Continental Baking Company Factory, located at 356 Fougeron Street in Buffalo, Erie County, New York, consists of one building with three interconnected parts that were all historically and functionally related during the period of significance. The building occupies a large rectangular lot on the north side of Fougeron Street, bounded by the Belt Line/N.Y.C.R.R railroad tracks to the west, Urban Street to the north, and Barthel Street to the east in the Genesee-Fillmore area on the east side of Buffalo, Erie County, New York. This location is about four miles northeast of city hall in downtown Buffalo. The building is located in what was primarily an industrial area with factories and working-class houses, situated directly east of the N.Y.C.R.R. lines and the Belt Line. Today, these rail tracks still exist in proximity to the building as a remnant of this historic connection to shipping and rail networks, owned and operated by CSX Rail. Other industrial buildings in the vicinity continue to function, including the former National Biscuit Company factory (now Milk-Bone) to the west, across the Belt Line tracks.

The complex is set back only a few feet from the rail lines to the west and is set back to accommodate a small concrete sidewalk on Fougeron Street and Urban Street. An asphalt-paved parking lot occupies the eastern portion of the building lot, part of the current tax parcel and historically related to the Continental Baking Company Factory. The Belt Line crosses Fougeron Street on a raised bridge to the west of the building, causing the building to appear set below ground level. The grounds are not landscaped, although the paved sidewalk and parking lot are in disrepair with some stray grass. The building is currently vacant and suffers from continued vandalism and disrepair.

The building has a rectangular massing with a flat roof, constructed of reinforced concrete with brick exterior walls. A five-story rectangular portion faces south, and a two-story rectangular portion extends north. Two small one-story portions are located on the east side of the building. The component henceforth referred to as the Main Factory is five stories high with an extended two-story portion to the north (1915); the component referred to as the Loading Bay is a one-story addition to the northeast (ca. 1930), and the component referred to as the Side Bay is a one-story L-shaped addition to the southeast (ca. 1965). The Main Factory represents the heart of the industrial complex, with the other portions constructed to accommodate increased shipping and sales around the mid-twentieth century.

Overall, the historic factory is a good example of an early twentieth-century industrial building that demonstrates the growth of an industrial bakery business over time. Constructed in multiple stages between 1915 and ca. 1960, the building presents a relatively unified primary elevation facing south towards Fougeron Street, with the original public entrance at the west end and additional entrances to the east. Garage doors are located in their original locations, primarily along the loading bay on the east elevation, with additional

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Continental Baking Company Factory

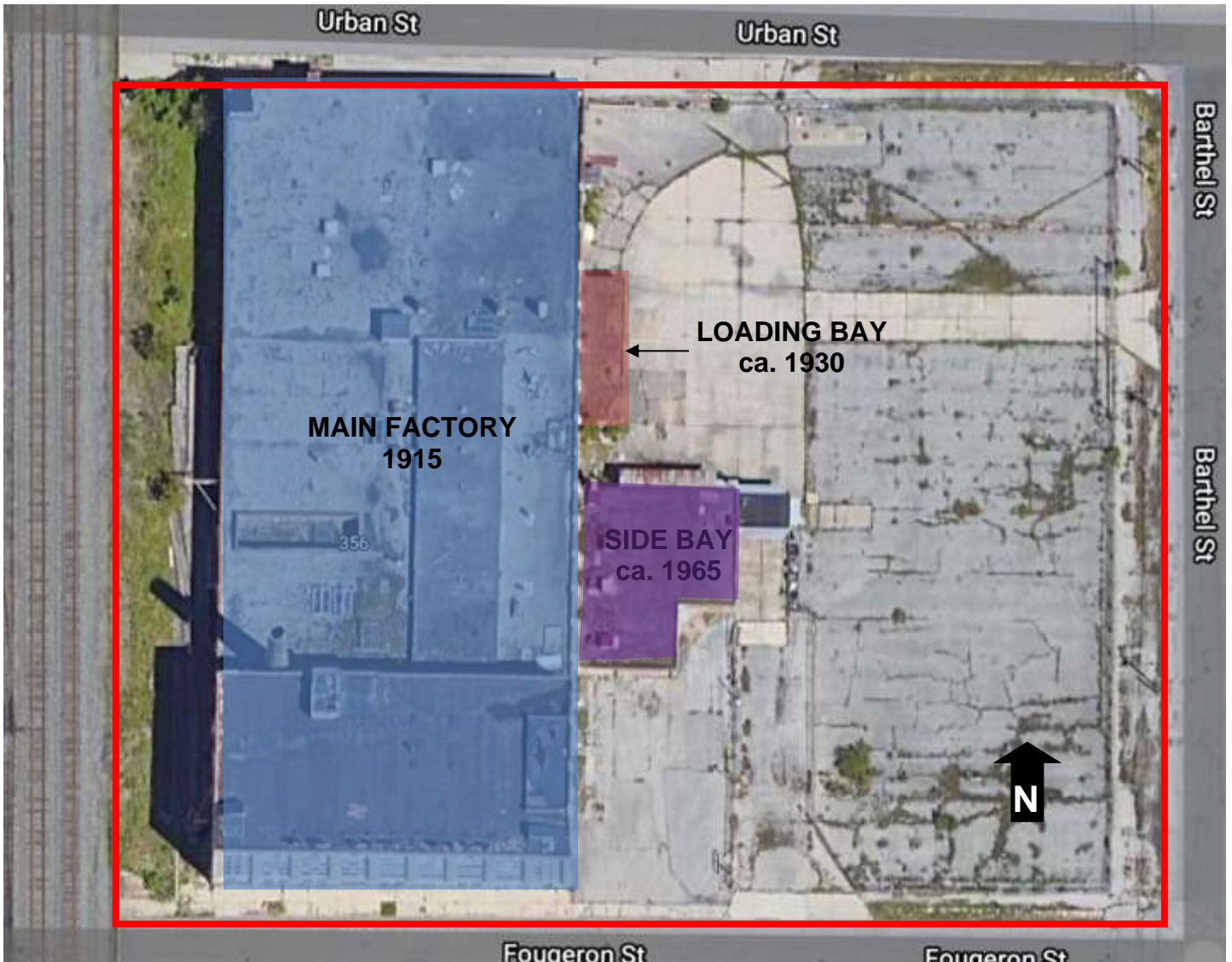
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vehicular access from the southeast addition and from Urban Street to the north. Today the factory has suffered some deterioration, including the loss of some original windows and some damage to the brickwork on the north elevation, but the building retains sufficient architectural integrity in form, materials, and plan to demonstrate its historic affiliation with the baking industry and the type of industrial development that characterized this part of Buffalo during the twentieth century.

Site Map



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Exterior

Overall, the factory is a rectangular brick building with two small one-story additions to the east. The Main Factory has a five-story portion to the south and a longer, two-story portion stretching north to Urban Street. A one-story, one-bay-wide brick addition is located to the northeast, accommodating vehicular access to connect to the loading bay along the east elevation. Another brick addition, added around 1965, with an L-shaped massing, is located to the southeast, containing two garage doors and pedestrian access. The Main Factory features Renaissance-inspired details, with repeating vertical bays of window openings set back behind piers, Roman-inspired round-arched windows framed by ornamental brickwork on the fifth story, and rectangular window openings below. Brick piers divide the bays. Many of the original windows are missing and have been replaced by non-historic aluminum sash, or infilled with concrete, but the overall rhythm remains intact.

The primary elevation is five stories tall, nine bays wide, and designed as the public face of the factory. It faces Fougerson Street to the south, where the primary public entrance occurred in the westernmost bay, with an employee entrance in the easternmost bay. The westernmost entrance has been altered, as historic images indicate there was once a transom and centrally placed door with surround. The building is designed to accommodate the downward sloping grade of the site from east to west, evident in the raised basement visible on this elevation. Four-story brick piers divide the bays, rising to terminate in stepped brick capitals on the fifth floor. Brick round arches frame the fifth-floor window openings, which feature concrete sills. On the four lower floors, rectangular window openings are located in each bay and have concrete sills. The outer bays vary in their fenestration, with a set of three rectangular windows divided by brick mullions on all five floors rather than a single, wide rectangular opening. Ornamental brickwork divides the windows between each floor in all bays with a rectangular motif. The windows on this elevation have all been replaced with non-historic aluminum sash, but the original openings and sills remain intact to convey architectural integrity and rhythm. The flat roofline features tile coping, and the large red metal letters W O D R R A D remain on the roof despite other letters having been stolen. The entire saying once advertised 'WONDER BREAD,' likely dating to the 1930s.

The west elevation faces the Belt Line railroad tracks. It consists of the five-story portion to the south and the two-story portion extending north to Urban Street. The five-story portion is four bays-wide on this elevation, with the same fenestration and rhythm as the south elevation. Brick piers divide each bay, rising to round arches framing the fifth-story window openings. Rectangular window openings accommodate triplet windows on the lower floors, with concrete sills and ornamental brickwork between floors. Variation occurs in the south bay, where the top three floors feature the same brick mullions between windows as in the outer bays on the south elevation. The lower two floors feature a solid brick wall in this bay.

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The two-story portion extends seventeen bays to the north from the five-story portion. Each bay is divided by a two-story brick pier, with a rectangular window opening with a concrete sill on each floor in each bay. Many of the windows have been infilled with concrete or replaced with aluminum sash, but the original openings remain intact to convey the original rhythm and form. A simple stepped brick cornice rises to the flat roofline.

Exceptions occur in the two northernmost bays, where the window openings are divided by brick mullions, similar to the southern bay of the four-story portion. A secondary entrance occurs through a simple metal door on the second bay from the north, accessed via a set of concrete steps with a metal handrail that rises from ground level at Urban Street. A brick smokestack rises far above the roofline, with the words 'Ward's Bread' articulated in black brick, indicating the original factory owners.

The north elevation faces Urban Street and is nine bays wide, continuing the same rhythm, materials, and details as the east elevation. Two-story brick piers divide each bay, with a single rectangular window opening with a concrete sill on each floor. The piers terminate in stepped brick capitals on this elevation, unlike the east elevation but similar to the north elevation. The westernmost bay features the same brick mullions as on the outer bays of the east and north elevations. Tile coping is visible above the stepped brick cornice at the flat roofline. The sloped grade of the site is visible again at this elevation, sloping downhill from east to west. The simple rectangular window openings have been infilled with concrete block, but there is one garage door at the basement level in the fifth bay from the east. A large metal dumping device currently extends out of a second-story window. The west end of this elevation exhibits severe deterioration and loss of brickwork.

The east elevation faces the asphalt parking lot and Barthel Street, consisting of the five-story portion, the two-story portion, and the one-story additions. This elevation functioned primarily as a loading bay with service entrances and is, therefore, more minimally adorned than other elevations. The five-story portion to the south is four-bays-wide, divided by five-story brick piers with stepped brick articulations framing the first story. Windows occur in this portion only on the first two floors, with rectangular openings matching those on the other elevations. The upper three stories of this portion are expressed in a solid brick wall. The southernmost bay contains only a single rectangular window opening with a concrete sill on the first floor, with a brick wall rising to the roofline. The central bays rise higher to form a simple stepped parapet at the roofline on this elevation. The two-story portion extends to the north as it does on the west elevation, seventeen bays wide with each bay divided by a simple two-story brick pier. A window is located in each bay on each floor, as on other elevations. Variations occur on the first floor, where garage doors are located in several bays instead of window openings on this elevation, indicating its function as a loading bay into the garage. The northernmost two bays do not have window openings on this elevation, only solid brick.

A one-story brick addition (ca. 1930) with rectangular massing extends out from the east elevation, stretching north four bays from the fifth northernmost bay. It features a single overhead garage door at its north and south

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end, serving as an extended loading bay. An L-shaped one-story brick addition extends east beginning in the second bay of the two-story portion towards its south end. Two garage doors face south, with a pedestrian entrance facing south at the crux of the L under a metal cantilever. A small rectangular window opening faces south. Two additional garage doors are located, set back, to the east. Six openings face the loading dock to the north. Both of these additions were constructed during the period of significance, physically interconnected and functionally related to the Main Factory.

Interior

The basic plan of the factory at 356 Fougeron Street reflects the primary industrial and office functions of the building, which was originally designed to accommodate the spatial and structural requirements of the machinery used to produce baked goods, particularly breads and cakes. Built in 1915, the building's interior functions essentially as one interconnected space that is divided by floor according to function. The interior reflects the original plan, defined mostly by open, uninterrupted spaces that enabled the insertion of large baking machinery and the free-flowing movement of workers and large batch ingredients. The baking process generally occurred from the fifth floor moving downward to packing and shipping on the first floor, where trucks loaded the products on the east side of the building adjacent to the large parking lot. Rows of round concrete columns, with mushroom capitals featuring ornamental articulations, span every floor to provide the necessary structural support for the machines and workers. Columns in the two-story portion are squared, but many feature similar ornamentation and/or mushroom capitals. Some stages of the baking process required internal divisions, such as temperature-regulated rooms for rising loaves; these are reflected architecturally today where those divisions remain intact.

The first floor included office spaces along the south end of the building, historically accessed from the primary public entrance at the southwest end of the building off Fougeron Street. The office spaces are still intact today, with plaster ceiling moldings and original ceiling heights visible above non-historic dropped ceilings. Plaster partition walls, wood wainscoting, wood window surrounds, and monitor lights are visible in some parts of the office spaces as well. The remainder of the first floor forms a packing and shipping space, with numerous garage doors and loading bays that enabled direct shipping of products at least twice daily. This extensive loading space provides architectural evidence of the shipping functions related to one of the company's logos: "From our ovens to your doors."

Stairs and Stairwells

Stairs and stairwells are located in three places, accessed at the southwest, southeast, and northwest end of the building. The southwest stairwell is the primary stairwell, accessed from the exterior on Fougeron Street and rising to all floors. It has concrete scissor stairs with metal handrails, straight baluster rails, and squared metal

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newel posts. Hexagonal tile is on the first-floor landing, and concrete is on the upper floor landings. The southeast stairwell is similar in form and materials but has fewer embellishments than the public stairwell. The northwest stairwell is a secondary stairwell located in the two-story portion of the building, accessed through a metal door on the west elevation and rising to two floors. It has concrete scissor stairs and metal handrails. Freight elevators are located on the north end of the five-story portion, near the smokestack, and on the north end of the two-story portion.

First Floor

The first floor consists of offices at the south end of the building, occupying the footprint of the five-story portion, and shipping space to the north. Entrance to the offices occurs from the exterior at the southeast and southwest stairwells, and through the shipping room to the west. The office space features a double-loaded corridor that snakes east-west across the floor, with subdivided office rooms to the north and south. These corridors have been altered with non-historic materials, featuring dropped ceilings and floor laminate, but there are locations where the original paneled wood wainscoting, rising halfway up the plaster walls and plaster ceiling molding, with original ceiling height remain intact and visible. Original wood window surrounds are on the south wall, with wood jambs, mullions, and sills in a triplet configuration that indicates the original window configuration throughout the building. Moving south through a wood doorway with transom framing, one enters a shipping area with an open floor plan. Four rows of round concrete columns with articulated mushroom capitals run east-west, providing structural support for the former packing and shipping processes. Garage doors facilitate the loading process on multiple sides, with most occurring on the east wall.

Second Floor

The second floor contains a mostly open floor plan, with rows of columns accommodating the manufacturing process. A rise in ceiling height is visible along the center of the building, which once accommodated bread ovens and provided ventilation. Multiple metal framed skylights illuminate this floor in the two-story portion of the building to the north. To the west, a subdivided space formerly housed the bun ovens. Further west, the employee locker room and toilets are enclosed by plaster walls. Accessed by a corridor along the west end of the second floor, the large employee locker room has stacks of lockers, showers, and a row of toilets, clearly designed to accommodate a large number of employees. A smaller women's room with a few stalls and lockers is located to the north. The locker room space is lit by two metal-framed skylights.

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Third, Fourth, and Fifth Floors

The three upper floors are located at the south end of the building, in the five-story portion. These spaces are characterized by their open floor plans, with three east-west rows of round concrete columns with articulated mushroom capitals and windows on all four sides. Some subdivided spaces occur, where the women's locker room is located at the northwest end of the third floor, a former fermentation room occupies a few bays on the fourth floor, and flour storage was divided along the south end of the fifth floor. The fourth and fifth floors also have elevated platforms occupying the north bay, accessed by a set of concrete stairs with a simple metal handrail. These platforms were historically used as mixing areas, designed to accommodate mixing machinery and be kept separated from other processes. Overall, the open floor plan, structural support columns with ornamental details, and subdivided spaces all attest to the original function and plan of the space.

Integrity

The building still maintains much of its original exterior massing, form, materials, rhythm, and interior plan and conveys a high degree of architectural integrity and understanding of the original historic function as an industrial baking company. Original window openings and interior surrounds remain intact to convey the original condition throughout the building. Original plaster walls, plaster ceiling molding, and wood wainscoting remain intact in some of the first-floor offices. The original character-defining round concrete columns with mushroom capitals remain intact, as does the original floor plan in almost all areas. While the building has suffered some loss of some original historic fabric and deterioration of brickwork due to its vacancy, there is substantial interpretable material and original plan left to convey the historic function during the period of significance.

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Statement of Significance:

Located at 356 Fougeron Street near Genesee Street in Buffalo, New York's East Side neighborhood, the Continental Baking Company (CBC) Factory is significant under Criterion A for Industry and Criterion C for Architecture. The building is architecturally significant as a large-scale industrial baking factory that reflects the advancement of the baking industry during the twentieth century in Buffalo and throughout the country. The building is additionally significant for its affiliations with several baking companies, including the Continental Baking Company, one of several affiliated companies to produce wholesale baked goods at the factory. Today, the building retains substantial architectural details and an interior plan that conveys a historic understanding of the building's original functions and its significant role as a large-scale baking factory.

Significant under Criterion A for Industry, the building was designed as an industrial bakery and occupied by several, related, nationally significant baking companies during the twentieth century. Constructed as the company headquarters for Ward & Ward Inc. in 1915, the factory later became a branch of the Continental Baking Company (1924-1968) and was operated by the Interstate Bakeries Corporation (1968-2004) before its closure in 2004. Numerous new products that became widely popular across America were produced at the plant during this long period, including Wonder Bread (1925), the Twinkie (1930), Sno Balls (1947), Ding Dongs (1967), and Ho Hos snack cakes (1967). During this entire time, the factory was operated as a large-scale industrial manufacturer of baked goods, where numerous breads and cakes were made, packaged, and shipped. The construction and operation of the factory also reflected the general trend towards consolidation and a shift towards large-scale production in the baking industry during the early twentieth century.

Significant under Criterion C for Architecture, the building architecturally expresses ideals typically upheld by the food industry overall. Architect Corry B. Comstock was specifically known for his specialty in industrial bakery designs, and he modeled the Buffalo plant on one he designed for Ward & Ward in Brooklyn in 1910 (demolished 2007). Advertised often as a "snow white temple of bread-making cleanliness," this building was exemplary of the baking industry's emphasis on scientific and sanitary conditions. The Buffalo factory's design features many aspects that articulate the baking industry's emphasis on hygiene, trustworthiness, and food safety via mechanized production. Elements associated with Renaissance Revival style architecture, typically reserved for banks and civic buildings, attempted to communicate tradition and trust among customers. The building was designed to create and exhibit a clean factory environment that could demonstrate the company's commitment to clean food production that would be trustworthy for purchase.

The period of significance begins in 1915 when the building was constructed and ends in 1971, fifty years ago. This era marks the period during which the facility was at its most significant in the national baking industry and encompasses all major changes and additions to the building. The Continental Baking Company was a

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subsidiary of ITT by 1971, and the building continued to operate according to its original function and design until it closed in 2004.

Neighborhood Context¹

The decision to construct the factory building at 356 Fougeron Street was likely informed by the site's advantageous location in direct proximity to railroad lines and street transportation networks. When Ward & Ward Inc. purchased the site in 1914, the area was still largely undeveloped, with some industries beginning to locate in the area by that time. The site offered 700 feet of railroad frontage on the Belt Line and New York Central railroad tracks to the west, enabling industrial receiving and shipping of supplies and products. Throughout the history of this area, the railroad lines played a central role in attracting industries, businesses, and residents to this community on the East Side of Buffalo. The Wonder Bread Factory is located with a National Register-eligible district, the Fougeron-Belt Line district, and it shares a similar historic context to other buildings in the district.

Before the establishment of the Belt Line, the surrounding area was mostly farmland into the 1870s. The Stone and Stewart map from 1866 indicates that landowners such as J. Fougeron, G. Urban, and L. Leechard were listed as owners of structures along what is now Fillmore Avenue, Fougeron, Urban, and French streets, but the Belt Line itself had yet to be constructed in this area at that time. Railroad tracks and Fougeron and French streets were laid out by 1872 and numerous lots had been subdivided. Simon Fougeron cut Fougeron Street through his land before 1872 and commenced subdividing it into plots. George Urban acquired a large area between Fillmore Avenue and Moselle Street, hence the name Urban Street, which appeared later.

In 1883, the New York Central Railroad constructed tracks that encircled the City of Buffalo and connected to the main railroad network. The Belt Line, as it was called, was a fifteen-mile loop that transported people and goods around the city and provided connections to the larger railroad system that connected Buffalo to the rest of the country. Both freight and passenger stations were located near the nominated site, including a passenger stop just a few blocks to the west and the switchyards connecting multiple rail lines directly to the south of the site. Industry and neighborhoods also developed along the Belt Line loop. Located near the Belt Line, this portion of the East Side saw the growth of factories and working-class neighborhoods due to this development. The Belt Line was in operation for approximately thirty years, gradually fading out of existence due to competition from trolley lines and automobiles.

¹ Much of this section has been adapted from "Preservation Ready Survey of Buildings Downtown, Northland and Fougeron/Urban Survey Areas," Prepared for the City of Buffalo, Erie County, New York, by PanAmerican Consultants (December 2013).

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In the 1880s, factories began to appear along the tracks of the Belt Line. The railroads and, later, hydroelectric power drew industry and manufacturing away from the waterfront and the downtown area. In 1889, a planing mill was established on Genesee Street and the Belt Line crossing by Christian Flierl and Henry W. Kreinheder. In addition to millwork, the company also served as a building contractor, erecting such structures as the East Buffalo market, several schools, and the shops of the Gould Coupler Company in Depew. In 1894 Urban Street was cut and several more residences and larger buildings were erected adjacent to the New York Central railroad tracks, including a planing mill and related structures along Genesee Street and two long buildings meeting at a right angle on the south side of Urban Street. As late as 1915, baseball grounds were located along the east side of the railroad tracks between Genesee and Fougeron Street.

In the 1880s and '90s, the establishment of the Belt Line and the redesign of a park known as "The Parade" fostered additional residential development in this survey area. Originally designed in 1871 by Frederick Law Olmsted as a part of his extensive plan for the Buffalo parks and parkways system, the Parade occupied some of the highest ground in the city and was anticipated to be used for military drills and large gatherings of people. When this use failed to materialize, the Olmsted firm was tasked with redesigning the park as Humboldt Park (since renamed as Martin Luther King Jr. Park) to accommodate more traditional community needs and included formal water features such as a large circular fountain, a rectangular basin for aquatic plants, and a large wading pool. Although many of the lots surrounding the Parade/Humboldt Park had been subdivided for development, most residences clustered near Genesee Street and the park. Genesee Street was a longstanding thoroughfare of the area, and Humboldt Park had been completed at the northwest intersection of Walden Avenue and Genesee Street. The combination of factories on the rail lines with modest residential streets stretching away from these lines was typical for working-class communities during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

By the early twentieth century, more industries began to emerge in this area of the city due to its strategic location near the railroad tracks. Businesses in this area included the Buffalo Shirt Company (144 Urban Street); General Electric Company (318 Urban Street); National Biscuit Company (216 Fougeron Street); and Valdutton Hofer Sons Inc. shoe factory (974 Northampton Street). Most of these operations opened facilities in the area near 356 Fougeron Street between approximately 1914 and 1929. All of these buildings remain extant today, in varying conditions.

The National Biscuit Company constructed a large factory directly across the Belt Line railroad tracks to the west of the CBC Factory in 1921. This plant was not affiliated with the Ward & Ward/CBC Factory, but it also recognized the benefits of the area's transportation networks. As a branch factory of the large National Biscuit Company, this building similarly produced baked goods, specializing in shredded wheat, Triscuits, other

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crackers, and cookies. This building was later converted to become the Purina factory, producing Milk-Bone dog biscuits today.

The combination of factories with modest dwellings remains consistent in the area surrounding the Wonder Bread Factory today. The area's working-class appearance remained consistent through and beyond the period of significance and still exhibits this character. Although several businesses have left these factories abandoned or in disrepair, today the architectural character of the street remains overwhelmingly consistent with this history of multiple transportation methods and industries that initially attracted the construction of the Wonder Bread Factory in 1915.

Construction and Early History of the Building (1915-1924)

The nominated building is affiliated with several major companies that developed, produced, and shipped wholesale baked goods from the factory at 356 Fougerson Street, providing hundreds of jobs in this area of Buffalo from 1915-2004. Beginning with Ward & Ward Inc. in 1915, the factory was occupied by several companies that were all affiliated through a set of mergers and acquisitions. A source of local pride in Buffalo, the factory is significant for its association with these companies and their role in the history of the baking industry during the twentieth century.

Ward & Ward Inc. was a family business founded in 1849 by Hugh Ward, in a shop on Broome Street in Manhattan. His son Robert B. Ward continued the tradition, opening a bakery in Pittsburgh in 1878. Having achieved some success, Robert B. Ward and his brother George S. Ward formed R.B. Ward & Company in 1890. Reincorporating as the Ward-Mackey Company in 1898, the company continued to grow, building a large bread factory in Pittsburgh in 1903. In 1909, the Ward brothers reorganized the company into the Ward Baking Company, intending to open bakeries in New York City. Hiring architect Corry B. Comstock to design their Brooklyn factory in 1910, the company promoted its "snow-white temple of bread-making cleanliness."² In 1912, William B. and Howard B. Ward, sons of Robert B. Ward, organized Ward & Ward Incorporated, establishing the company in Buffalo.

Moving the company to Buffalo, Ward & Ward Inc purchased the large site for \$160,000 in 1914, occupying the entire block bounded by Fougerson Street, Urban Street, Barthel Street, and the Belt Line railroad tracks.³ Recognizing the value of the site's access to multiple shipping networks via rail and roadways, many other industries were established nearby around this time. Construction of the Ward & Ward factory began almost immediately, with New York-based Cramp & Company as the general contractor on site.

² "Buffalo Expanding as Baking Center," *Buffalo Evening News*, January 21, 1928.

³ "Ward & Ward, Inc, to Build Bakery at Genesee and Belt Line," *Buffalo Commercial*, March 20, 1914, 12.

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The nominated building at 356 Fougeron Street was designed by architect Corry B. Comstock as the factory for Ward & Ward Inc. in 1915. Constructed at a cost of about \$300,000, the building design reflected values of cleanliness, hygiene, and mechanized, contact-less production, common amongst industrial baking companies in the early twentieth century. When first constructed, the building could make 100,000 loaves, 50,000 cakes, and 20,000 dozen rolls daily.⁴

The building was modeled in part after the Ward Baking Company plant in Brooklyn, NY, which architect Corry B. Comstock had designed in 1910.⁵ Applying many of the same design principles, building materials, and ornamental features to the Buffalo design, Comstock was able to adapt the design to the Buffalo factory, getting construction quickly underway. While this building served as an important precedent in the architect's career, it was demolished in 2007 to make way for Pacific Park. The Buffalo factory thus serves as an even more important example of Comstock's work, remaining intact when others have been demolished.

Ward & Ward made efforts to engage with the Buffalo community on a larger scale. The company gave away 5000 loaves of bread on Christmas Eve in 1915, feeding 20,000 of Buffalo's citizens in need that year. Forming "the largest bread line in the history of the city," the company guaranteed that every free loaf was fresh from the oven of the Fougeron plant.⁶

Like their father's Ward Baking Company, Ward & Ward advertised an industrial process free from human touch, a value system that was prevalent in the early 1900s, around the time the Pure Food and Drug Act was established in 1906. Many industrial food producers emphasized the cleanliness that a fully mechanized production process could offer, proudly boasting of the lack of human hands involved.⁷ "So perfect is the breadmaking machinery," wrote the *Buffalo Courier*, "that only once during the whole process will the white-gloved hands of the bakers touch a loaf until the bread is sealed in its wax airtight wrappers." Employing the slogan "Fresh from Our Ovens to Your Table," Ward & Ward pioneered a system of factory to home delivery by "clean electric automobiles."⁸ This is architecturally evident today on the first floor of the factory, which has an extensive packing and shipping space with multiple loading docks that take advantage of transportation networks in many directions.

⁴ "Wards Have Latest Baking Appliances," *Buffalo Courier*, July 1, 1915, 9.

⁵ "Corry Comstock, Noted Engineer, Takes Own Life," *Pelham Sun*, October 28, 1932, 1.

⁶ "Bigger Loaves for 'Bread Line,'" *Buffalo Enquirer*, December 21, 1915, 3.

⁷ James Harvey Young, *Pure Food: Securing the Federal Food and Drugs Act of 1906* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989).

⁸ "Buffalo Expanding as Baking Center," *Buffalo Evening News*, January 21, 1928

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The factory also utilized the railroad tracks to receive shipments of coal, loading them directly into the basement to feed the boilers. Through this system of coal loading, the plant was able to fuel its extensive machines and steam-heated, temperature-controlled rooms. This also meant that coal never had to pass through a room in which the food was made, further emphasizing hygienic production.⁹ Flour was also unloaded on the west side of the plant from the railroad tracks, placed directly into the basement for storage. The flour storage room in the basement had a capacity of 30,000 barrels of flour.¹⁰

In 1921, Ward & Ward reorganized to form the United Bakeries Corporation. Newspapers still referred to the factory as Ward & Ward's factory by 1922, however.¹¹ The United Bakeries Corporation again reorganized to form the Continental Baking Company (CBC) in 1924.

Architecture in the Baking Industry

In the early twentieth century, architecture played a central role in assuaging public concerns over the industrial production of food. The desire to garner public trust was particularly important to the growing sector of industrial food production, which marked an important shift in the way consumers purchased, made, and ate food within their own homes at the turn of the twentieth century. When factories began making foods that were previously within the control of consumers at home, many citizens expressed concerns regarding the cleanliness, employee conditions, and consistency of operations that occurred behind mysterious factory walls.

The transformation of the baking industry around the turn of the twentieth century similarly influenced the emerging architectural typology of baking factories. By the early 1900s, smaller, family-run bakeries were struggling to compete with larger corporate baking companies that emerged at that time. Previously, bakeries were operated out of small-scale storefronts, typically with space for baking at a small scale in the back of the space. New baking technologies and economic opportunities for corporate consolidation emerged simultaneously in the early twentieth century, making large-scale factory production of breads, cakes, and crackers possible. Furthermore, the shift to large-scale baking factories meant that mass production could make baking products more affordable. This also was promoted as enabling more free time for women, who were typically in charge of household baking: "The housewife of today with her telephone, her many kitchen, and other household help and with modern delivery systems such as Ward & Wards certainly has more time to devote to her children and her social and other interests than did her grandmother."¹²

⁹ "Power in a Wholesale Bakery," *Practical Engineer* 10.16 (August 15, 1916), 688.

¹⁰ "Romances of Business in Buffalo: Ward & Ward Inc.," *Buffalo Evening News*, April 3, 1922, 8.

¹¹ "Romances of Business in Buffalo: Ward & Ward Inc.," *Buffalo Evening News*, April 3, 1922, 8.

¹² "Wards Have Latest Baking Appliances," *Buffalo Courier*, July 1, 1915, 9.

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These changes to the baking industry occurred alongside a changing relationship to food production on a national level, further influencing the role of architecture in shaping public perceptions of the baking factory typology. Mechanized production provided an added allure for customers at a time when health considerations over physical contact with food behind closed doors were a rising concern. Mass production of food not only offered affordable prices but also if designed and monitored properly, could assure a clean baking environment for customers increasingly worried about the conditions of production. As baking factories became an architectural typology during the early twentieth century, customer concerns over the source of their food played a role in ‘softening’ the industrial nature of the factory with a more civic-oriented aesthetic appearance.

To address customer misgivings about food production in a large-scale setting, food factories began to appear to be far more than industrial in style. Seeking to convey cleanliness and corporate honesty through architectural design, architects designed factories that would not only house assembly lines and large machinery but also communicate benign company values to a suspicious public.¹³ These values were largely a product of their historical context, as they emerged in factory architecture almost simultaneously with the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906.

The emphasis on cleanliness, purity, and tradition emerged in direct relation to the Pure Food Movement of the early twentieth century.¹⁴ The public desire for industrial transparency was intensified in the years surrounding the Pure Food and Drug Act, and American citizens increasingly demanded knowledge of their food’s origins.¹⁵ Public tours became a popular practice at food factories during this time, and many companies invited citizens into the factory to witness the production process and sample the goods. Like the architecture itself, factory tours frequently emphasized the cleanliness of the production process inside. On these tours, visitors could marvel at the hygienic environment, pleasant working conditions, and machinery that was able to produce food without being touched by human hands.

When the factory was constructed at 356 Fougeron Street, the food factory had already been well established as an architectural typology. The shift from small-scale family-owned storefront bakeries to large-scale baking factories had already been occurring for well over a decade by that time as well. Completed in 1915, the building is an excellent example of a food factory designed to convey a civic appearance rather than a purely industrial one. Like other food factories built in the early 1900s, the factory conveyed notions of cleanliness,

¹³ Annie Schentag, “Building Clarity: Structural Legibility, Corporate Transparency, and Public Accessibility in Buffalo’s Industrial Architecture,” Dissertation, Cornell University, 2017, 213-290.

¹⁴ For more on this see Oscar Anderson, *The Health of a Nation: Harvey W. Wiley and the Fight for Pure Food* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1958). ; James Harvey Young, *Pure Food: Securing the Federal Food and Frugs Act of 1906* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989).

¹⁵ Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 35.

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employee welfare, and advanced mechanization technology in its architectural design. Light-colored brick, round-arched windows, and neoclassical brick piers softened the appearance of the industrial building, intended to bridge the advanced technology inside with a more stylistically traditional exterior. Similar architectural elements were applied to the exterior of the Shredded Wheat Factory in Niagara Falls (built in 1900, demolished) and the Buffalo Milk Company Factory (National Register-listed), where classically inspired exteriors with white brick emphasized a non-threatening appearance for the food factory. These visual tactics were common for many types of food factories in 1915 by the time the Continental Baking Company Factory was constructed, similarly communicating a welcoming, trustworthy, and clean industrial presence.

History of the Continental Baking Company at 356 Fougerson Street, 1924-1971

The Continental Baking Company (CBC) was formed, as a descendent of Ward & Ward Inc., through a series of company reorganization strategies, in 1924. CBC acquired the Taggart Baking Company in 1925, which had begun to sell Wonder Bread a few years prior in 1921. CBC began producing Wonder Bread at the Buffalo plant after that time, likely installing the 'Wonder Bread' letters on the roofline in the 1930s. By 1927, the Continental Baking Company no longer had any financial ties to the Ward & Ward company.¹⁶ In 1928, the Continental Baking Company had almost 100 plants in over 40 cities and was the country's largest producer of baked goods.¹⁷ The factory at 356 Fougerson Street was one of the most important of these plants, as it had served as the headquarters for Ward & Ward before it underwent these corporate changes.

The baking process inside the plant was organized by floor, moving from the top floor downwards. Flour, unloaded first from the rail tracks in the west and then stored in the basement, was lifted automatically to the fifth floor through a flour lift with a bucket conveyor belt and then sifted and dropped down chutes into large hopper-like scale pans that weighed out the proper quantities. The dough ingredients were measured and then mixed in specialized machinery located on concrete platforms at the north end of the fifth floor. These mixing machines could knead enough dough for 1,200 loaves at a time, passing the dough to another machine that would then cut and roll the dough into loaves.¹⁸ The loaves would then be placed in a rising room on the fourth floor, which was subdivided from the open space by concrete partition walls in a temperature-controlled room. Refrigeration pipes and steam heat coils regulated the temperature, where "even all the air admitted has been washed."¹⁹ Next, the dough left the rising room and was put into machines that shaped the loaves and transmitted them to the final rising closet on the floor below.

¹⁶ "Ward Control Is Eliminated By Baking Company," *Buffalo Evening News*, March 15, 1927.

¹⁷ "Buffalo Expanding as Baking Center," *Buffalo Evening News*, January 21, 1928.

¹⁸ "Wards Have Latest Baking Appliances," *Buffalo Courier*, July 1, 1915, 9.

¹⁹ "Wards Have Latest Baking Appliances," *Buffalo Courier*, July 1, 1915, 9.

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From there, the loaves would be placed in the large rectangular ovens on the second floor, where the temperature of the ovens was uniform, regulated by coils and pipes. Known as the ‘traveling oven,’ the bread-baking oven was installed in the plant in 1919, making it possibly the first baking factory in Buffalo to have one. The oven received its name from the fact that the loaves of the bread travel the entire length of the oven, entering as raised dough and coming out perfectly baked and ready for wrapping. The bread pans were moved through the oven on a looped chain that conveyed them through the entire length of the oven. One newspaper article described the oven as “really a separate building constructed on the [second] floor of the bakery...built of brick and faced with white enameled tile.”²⁰ The journalist more colorfully described the baking process as “a feat of necromancy, as though a giant fairy waved a hand over a great quantity of dough and turned it into a mountain of bread, adding to it the fragrant aroma that makes one long for the crust of the fresh baked loaf.”²¹ The journalist later assured the reader that it was “modern science, not necromancy,” that helped to design the oven. This oven could bake about 4,000-6,000 loaves an hour at full capacity, with consistently controlled heat-producing reliable results. At the time of its installation, Fougeron Street allegedly had “the only oven of its kind in this part of the country.”²² Other industrial bakeries later followed, including the Hall Baking Company on Filmore Avenue near Main Street (extant, vacant), which installed one in the early 1920s.²³ Today, the location of this large oven is still evident in the building on the second floor, where the brick used to encase the oven is located below skylight ventilation designed to accommodate the equipment.

After baking, the bread was moved on conveyor belts to another room where it was properly cooled by a cooling belt. The cooling belt was 300 feet long and the bread remained on the belt for 120 minutes with electric fans constantly blowing cool air over the loaves.²⁴ The loaves would then be wrapped by machines in airtight wrappers, “to keep the loaf fresh until it reaches the table.”²⁵

Once wrapped, the loaves were sent to the shipping and packing station on the first floor, where loaves were placed onto the company’s fleet of white automobiles for delivery. The company emphasized the cleanliness of these automobiles, preferable to horses: “No dirty harness, no odor, no stable--nothing but the utmost freshness and cleanliness.”²⁶ The large shipping area on the first floor attests to the importance of this step, with multiple loading docks and vehicular entry points on the east and north sides of the building.

²⁰ “Power in a Wholesale Bakery,” *Practical Engineer* 10.16 (August 15, 1916), 688.

²¹ “Travelling Oven Makes Baking Easy,” *Buffalo Evening News*, July 26, 1919, 7.

²² “Travelling Oven Makes Baking Easy,” *Buffalo Evening News*, July 26, 1919, 7.

²³ “A Trip Thru a Great Bakery,” *Buffalo Commercial*, September 26, 1922, 10.

²⁴ “Romances of Business in Buffalo: Ward & Ward Inc.,” *Buffalo Evening News*, April 3, 1922, 8.

²⁵ “Wards Have Latest Baking Appliances,” *Buffalo Courier*, July 1, 1915, 9.

²⁶ *Buffalo Express*, September 14, 1915, 3.

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Overall, this multi-step baking process continued for many decades, sometimes updating machinery or including a new product line, such as Ho Hos, which was made on the third floor. The flour lift, mixing platforms, and subdivided rooms for various tasks are still intact in the building today, conveying their original, specialized function in the baking process.

Like other baking factories, the Continental Baking Company Factory opened its doors to visitors on select days, providing tours that would show customers the baking process inside. A special Open House event in 1923 was immensely popular with the general public, featuring a jazz band, a tour of the factory, and a free loaf of bread for every visitor. The event attracted tens of thousands of people, with 10,000 visitors entering the plant in just the first two hours and thousands more waiting their turn to enter and inspect the plant. The line to enter extended for two blocks to the west and police reserves from the Genesee Street station were called in to handle the crowd.²⁷ After that time, tours were provided more regularly, typically on weekday afternoons.

In tours and advertisements overall, the Continental Baking Company Factory emphasized a clean environment that produced healthy, hygienic, and convenient food. The factory was promoted as “scrupulously clean, the big plant being white from cellar to roof. It is scrubbed down, every portion of it, once a week.”²⁸ The blond brick, offering no space for soot and dirt, conveyed the standard of cleanliness maintained inside. This cleanliness was linked to the machinery involved in the production, which required almost no human contact with the bread. One advertisement boasted, “so perfect is the breadmaking machinery that only once during the whole process will the white-gloved hands of the bakers touch a loaf until the bread is sealed in its waxed airtight wrappers and placed in the clean, white automobiles to be whizzed to the table.”²⁹

Employee welfare was also emphasized in advertisements and in the factory architecture itself.³⁰ The interior plan incorporated a large locker room on the second floor for male employees, with a smaller one for female employees as well. Shower baths were provided, to enable employees to “work in comfort and maintain a personal cleanliness.”³¹ Lit by large skylights, these locker rooms were well ventilated and illuminated, still visible in the building today. Company programming attempted to cultivate a “big-family feeling” among employees, providing free insurance for every employee after six months and hosting monthly employee dances in the shipping room as a makeshift ballroom.³² Many industrial corporations utilized employee welfare tactics during the early twentieth century, believing that “the employees worked faithfully as if in appreciation of the

²⁷ “Thousands Visit Ward Plant,” *The Buffalo Times*, November 9, 1923, 21.

²⁸ “Ward’s Bread is Here,” *The Buffalo Evening Times*, September 9, 1915, 12.

²⁹ “Wards Have Latest Baking Appliances,” *Buffalo Courier*, July 1, 1915, 9.

³⁰ For more on the relationship between employee welfare and architecture overall, see Andrea Tone, *The Business of Benevolence: Industrial Paternalism in Progressive America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997); Schentag, 213-290.

³¹ “Ward’s Bread is Here,” *The Buffalo Evening Times*, September 9, 1915, 12.

³² “Free Insurance, and Ideal Working Conditions Make Ward & Ward Workers Happy,” *Buffalo Times*, July 8, 1919, 11.

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many fine things done for them by the company and aided in no small way to continue the splendid growth of the company.”³³

CBC continued to innovate its line of products during the Great Depression, and the company’s affordable baked goods ensured their continued success even in an era typically characterized by economic hardship. In 1930, James Dewar, a CBC employee, invented the Twinkie, a packaged cake roll that was soon popular across the nation. That same year, Wonder Bread, produced by CBC at the Buffalo plant and in other locations, was the first brand of bread to be sold pre-sliced nationwide. Giving rise to the popular phrase, “the greatest thing since sliced bread,” CBC’s innovative pre-slicing technique, coupled with airtight packaging to ensure freshness, revolutionized the industry.

CBC continued to improve its product line and incorporate new manufacturing technology into the mid-twentieth century. In 1941, CBC introduced baking technology designed to eliminate holes in the bread. Due to shortages in steel as a result of World War II, the company was unable to slice bread for a few years during an industry-wide slicing suspension from 1943-1945, but sliced bread returned after that time. After the War ended, CBC continued to develop new products, introducing Sno Balls cakes in 1947, Ho Hos in the late 1950s, and Ding Dongs in 1967. Each of these was a small packaged snack and a variation on the popular Twinkie.

During the 1940s, CBC began adding vitamins and minerals to Wonder Bread as part of a government-sponsored program of enriching white bread, which was notoriously deficient in vitamin and mineral content, to combat certain diseases. Wonder Bread was also the first national bread brand to feature open dating as well as nutrition information on its packaging.³⁴

In the 1950s, Wonder Bread increasingly advertised its nutrient enrichments. Advertisements with Howdy Doody and Buffalo Bob Smith (popular television figures) claimed, "Wonder Bread builds strong bodies 8 ways. Look for the red, yellow, and blue balloons printed on the wrapper." By the 1960s, Wonder Bread was advertised with the slogan "Helps build strong bodies 12 ways," referring to the number of added nutrients. Promotions and advertisements were frequently aimed towards children, such as the inclusion of a free balloon in every loaf of Wonder Bread package during the 1960s. As advertisements continued to emphasize affordability, consistency, quality, cleanliness, and nutritional advantages, they upheld the values put in place by Ward & Ward in the early twentieth century.

In 1968, the Interstate Bakeries Corporation (ITT) acquired CBC, which then became a subsidiary at that time. No major changes occurred at the factory, and it continued to operate as CBC, a subsidiary factory until the 1980s. The Fougerson Street plant continued to produce wholesale baked goods, including CBC products like

³³ “Free Insurance, and Ideal Working Conditions Make Ward & Ward Workers Happy,” *Buffalo Times*, July 8, 1919, 11.

³⁴ *The Wonder Bread Cookbook* (Berkeley, California: Ten Speed Press, 2007), 3-7.

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Wonder Bread and Ho Hos, through the period of significance. The building is significant for its affiliation with these companies, which were pioneering in their development of new methods and reliable products through much of the twentieth century.

After the Period of Significance, 1971-2021

The building continued to function as an industrial bakery after the period of significance, with no major changes or alterations after the period of significance ended. In 1984, ITT sold CBC to Ralston Purina, requiring it again in 1995. By 2000, ITT was the nation's largest wholesale baker, following in the footsteps of previous companies like CBC. That same year, the company suffered financial strain when its San Francisco-based headquarters paid \$120 million to 17 Black former employees for punitive damages in a racial discrimination lawsuit.³⁵ In 2004, ITT filed for bankruptcy protection. The Buffalo plant on Fougeron Street was closed that same year, laying off hundreds of employees. The plant has remained vacant since that time.

In 2009, ITT emerged from bankruptcy and was renamed as Hostess Brands. In 2012, Hostess Brands filed for bankruptcy, suspending Wonder Bread and Hostess Cakes production. In 2013, however, Wonder Bread and Hostess Cakes returned to U.S. shelves under new ownership.

The factory has been closed since 2004. Almost all of the machinery was sold as scrap metal and the building has been vacant for over a decade. It has suffered from deterioration, particularly on the exterior brickwork. The building has attracted many break-ins, resulting in graffiti on all floors. Despite this, the building retains a substantial amount of original materials and the original interior plan, with sufficient architectural integrity to convey a historic understanding of the original function and significance.

Summary

The Continental Baking Company Factory is significant for its industrial history and architecture, as an excellent example of a factory designed to produce wholesale baked goods during the twentieth century. The factory was designed to communicate values associated with the baking industry during the early twentieth century, visually emphasizing cleanliness, trustworthiness, and consistency. The factory produced many popular baked goods, including Wonder Bread and Ho Hos, during the period of significance from 1915-1971. During this period, several major companies occupied these two buildings as their primary offices and factories, including Ward & Ward Inc, the Continental Baking Company, and ITT. The building's interior plan is largely intact, with open floor plans, round concrete columns, and some internally divided spaces used to provide climate control and structural support for the machinery required. Serving as a good example of industrial

³⁵ "Wonder Bread Workers Win Bias Lawsuit," *Salamanca Press*, June 16, 1998, 4.

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architecture occupied by some of the nation's largest and most prominent baking companies during the growth of the industry in the twentieth century, the Continental Baking Company Factory represents an intact architectural contribution to the history of industrial development in this part of Buffalo, NY.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is indicated with a heavy line on the attached maps with scale.

Boundary Justification

The boundary has been drawn to correspond to the historic building and parcel at 356 Fougerson Street. This boundary is consistent with the historic boundaries of the building and parcel during its ownership and occupation by Ward & Ward Inc. and the Continental Baking Company.

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Continental Baking Company Factory

Name of Property

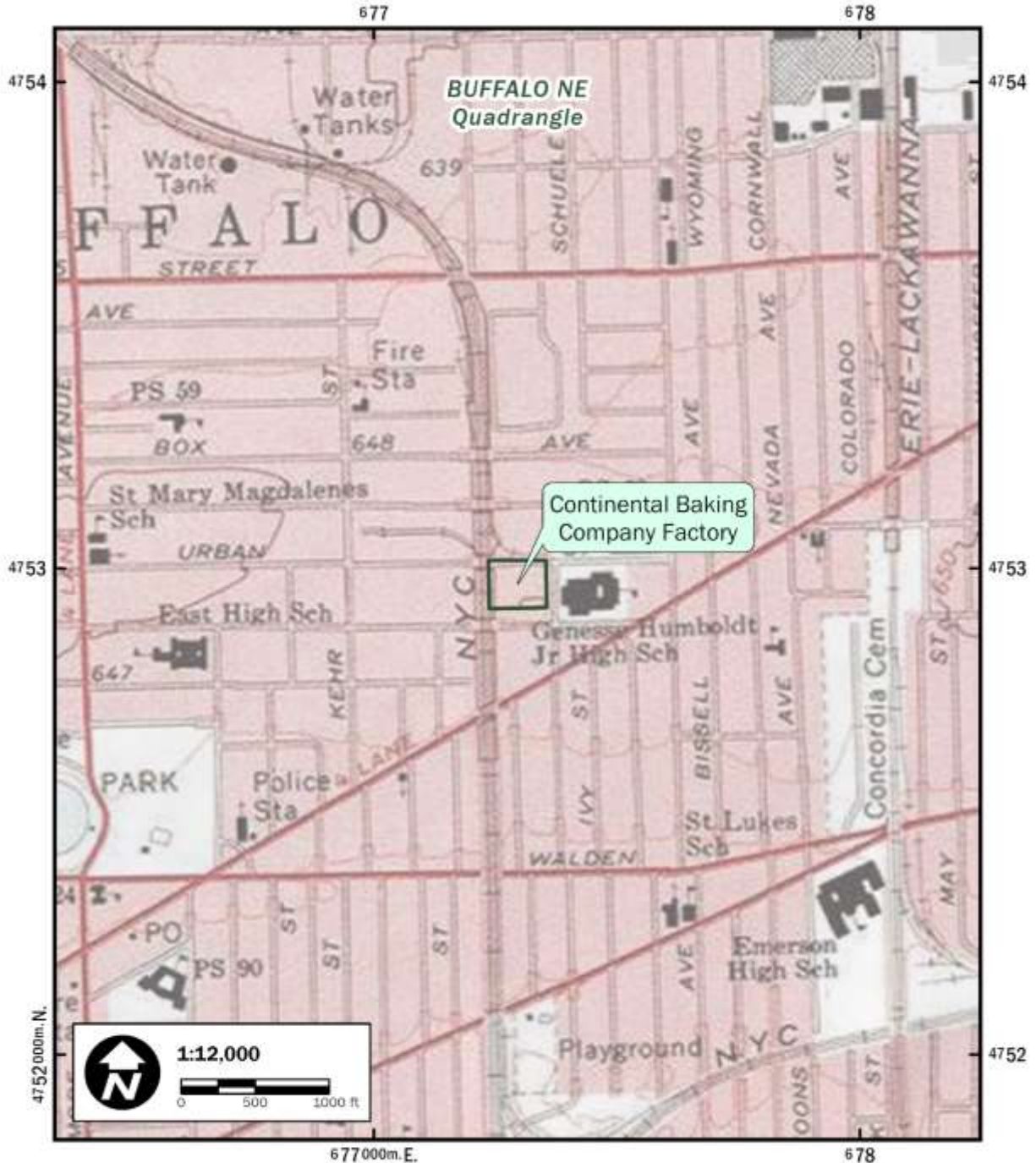
Erie County, New York

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Continental Baking Company Factory
City of Buffalo, Erie County, New York

356 Fougeron Street
Buffalo, NY 14211



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Coordinate Units: Meter

 Continental Baking Company Factory



Parks, Recreation
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Continental Baking Company Factory
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Continental Baking Company Factory
City of Buffalo, Erie County, New York

356 Fougerson Street
Buffalo, NY 14211



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Continental Baking Company Factory
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Continental Baking Company Factory
City of Buffalo, Erie County, New York

356 Fougeron Street
Buffalo, NY 14211



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Coordinate Units: Meter
Parcel Year: 2019
Orthoimagery Year: 2016

 Nomination Boundary



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Continental Baking Company Factory

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Additional Information

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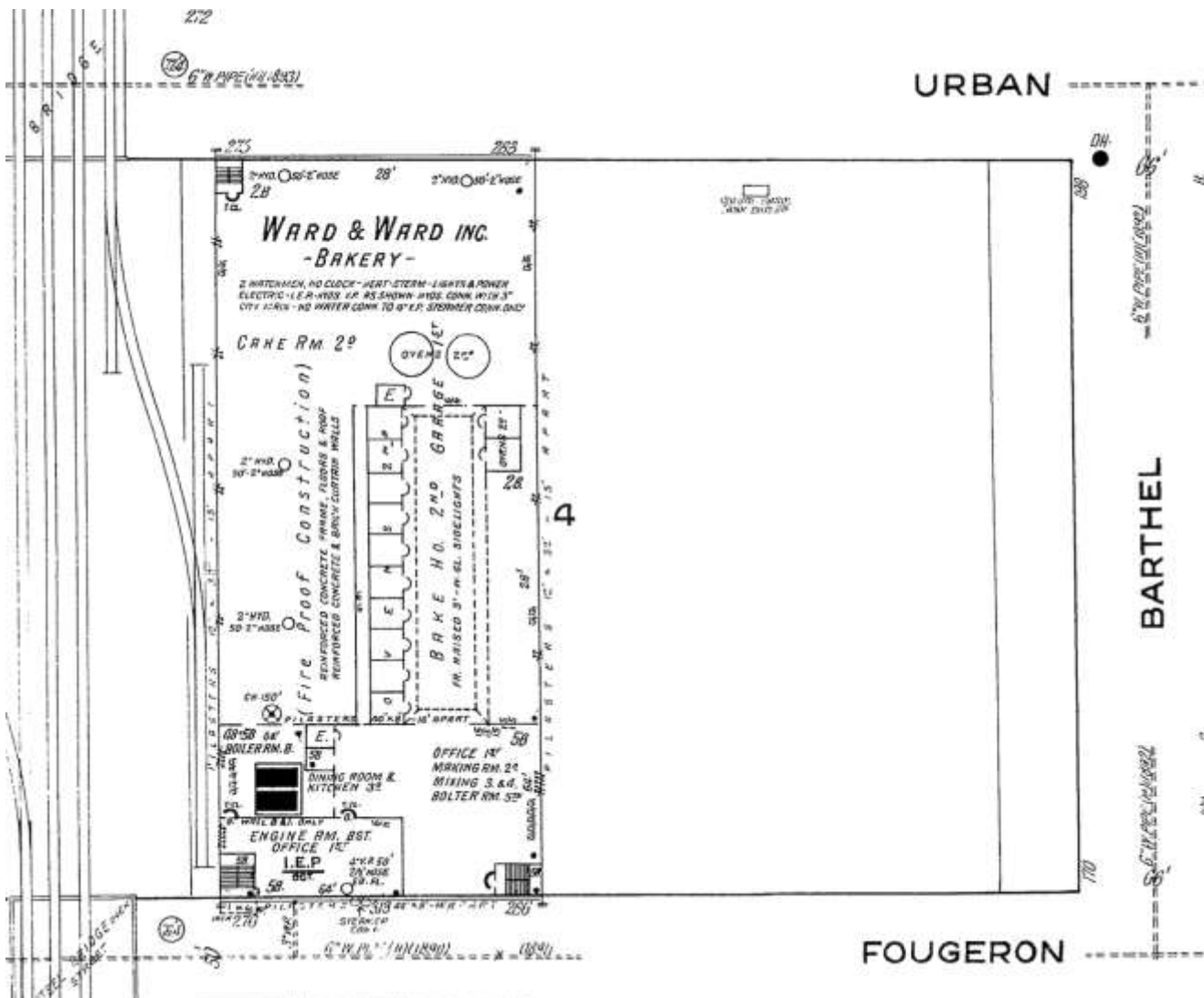
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Historic Maps

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1917

Note the building had been constructed by this time, with a 5-story portion to the south and a 2-story portion to the north. Two small additions to the east would be constructed later, in ca. 1930 and ca. 1965.



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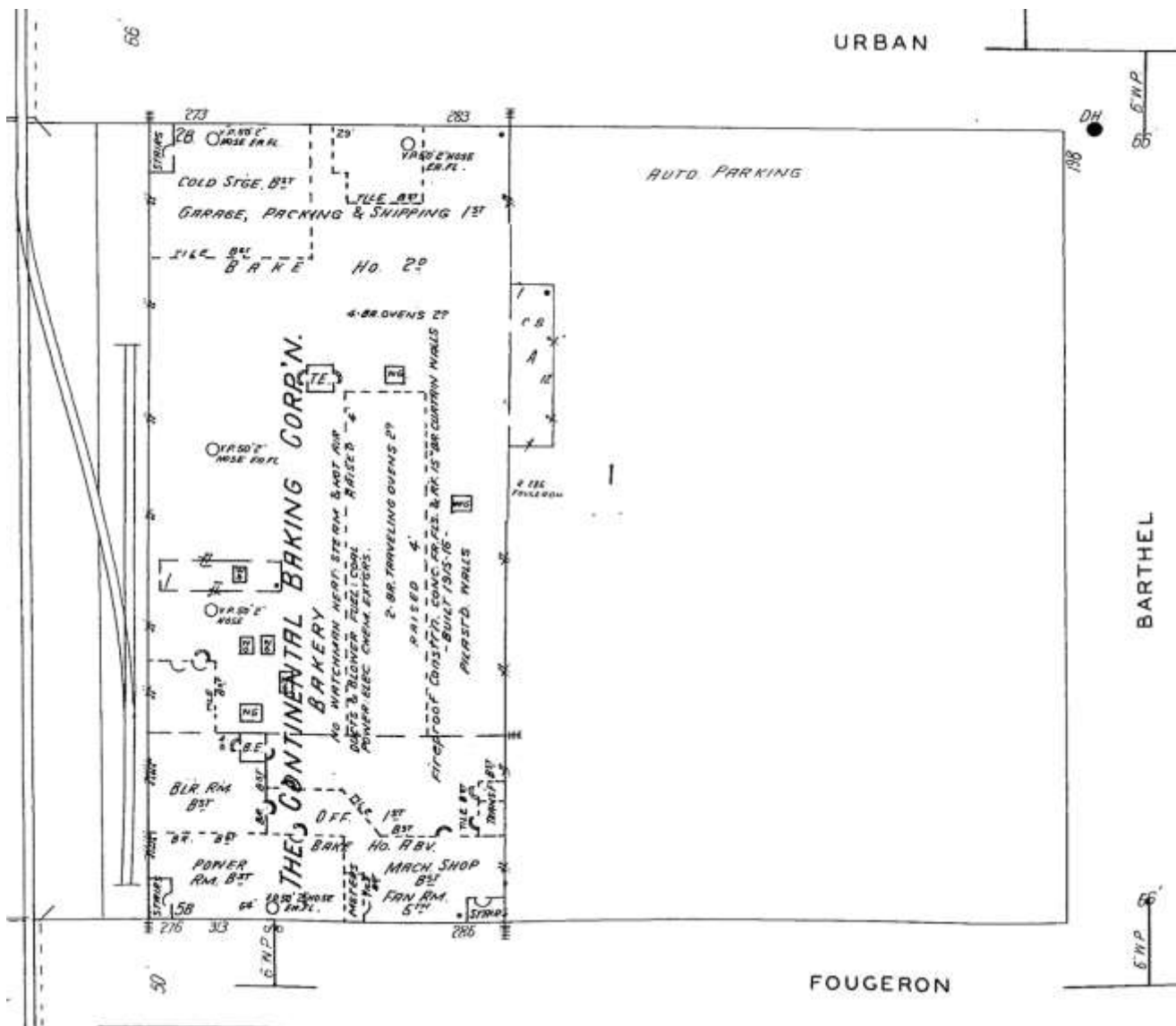
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Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1950

Note the building appears much the same in function and design by this time. The northeast addition appears, as it was constructed ca. 1930 as additional loading dock space. The addition to the southeast would be constructed ca. 1965 and therefore does not appear on available digital maps.



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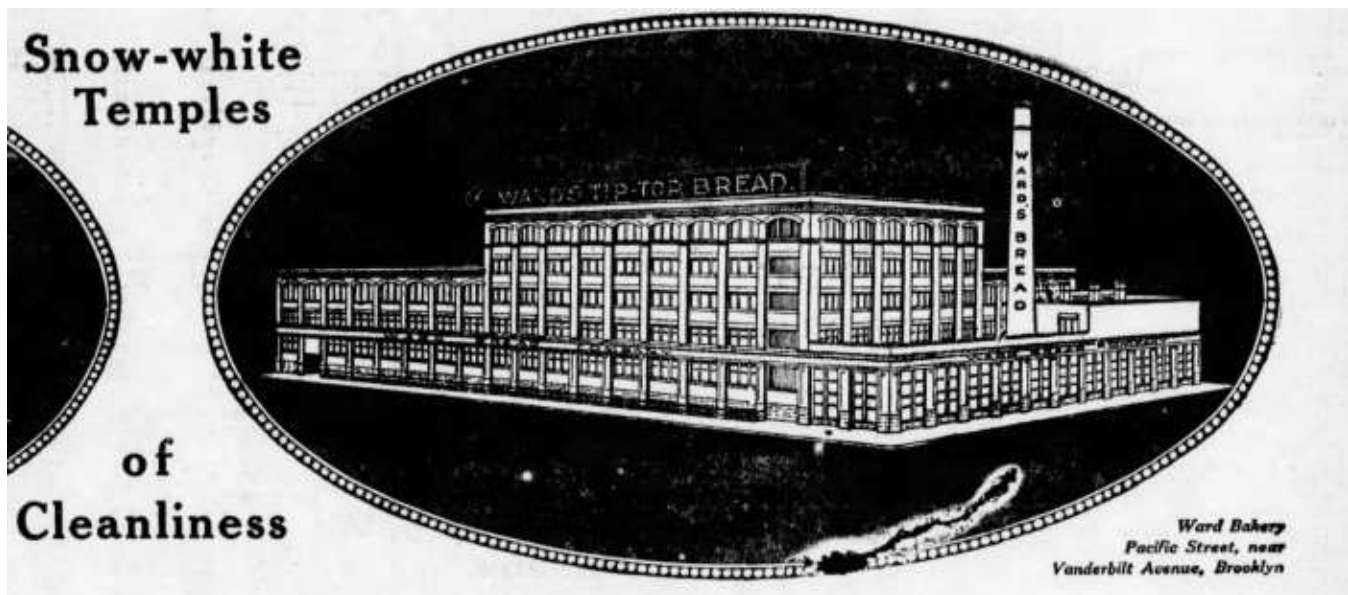
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Continental Baking Company Factory
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Historic Images

An illustration of the Ward factory in Brooklyn, designed by architect Corry B. Comstock and used as the model for the 1915 factory in Buffalo. Note the factory is referred to as a 'snow white temple of cleanliness.' The building was demolished in the early 2000s.



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Continental Baking Company Factory

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An illustration of the factory shortly after it was completed in 1915. Note the factory retains many of these architectural details today.

From *The Buffalo Times* (September 7, 1915).



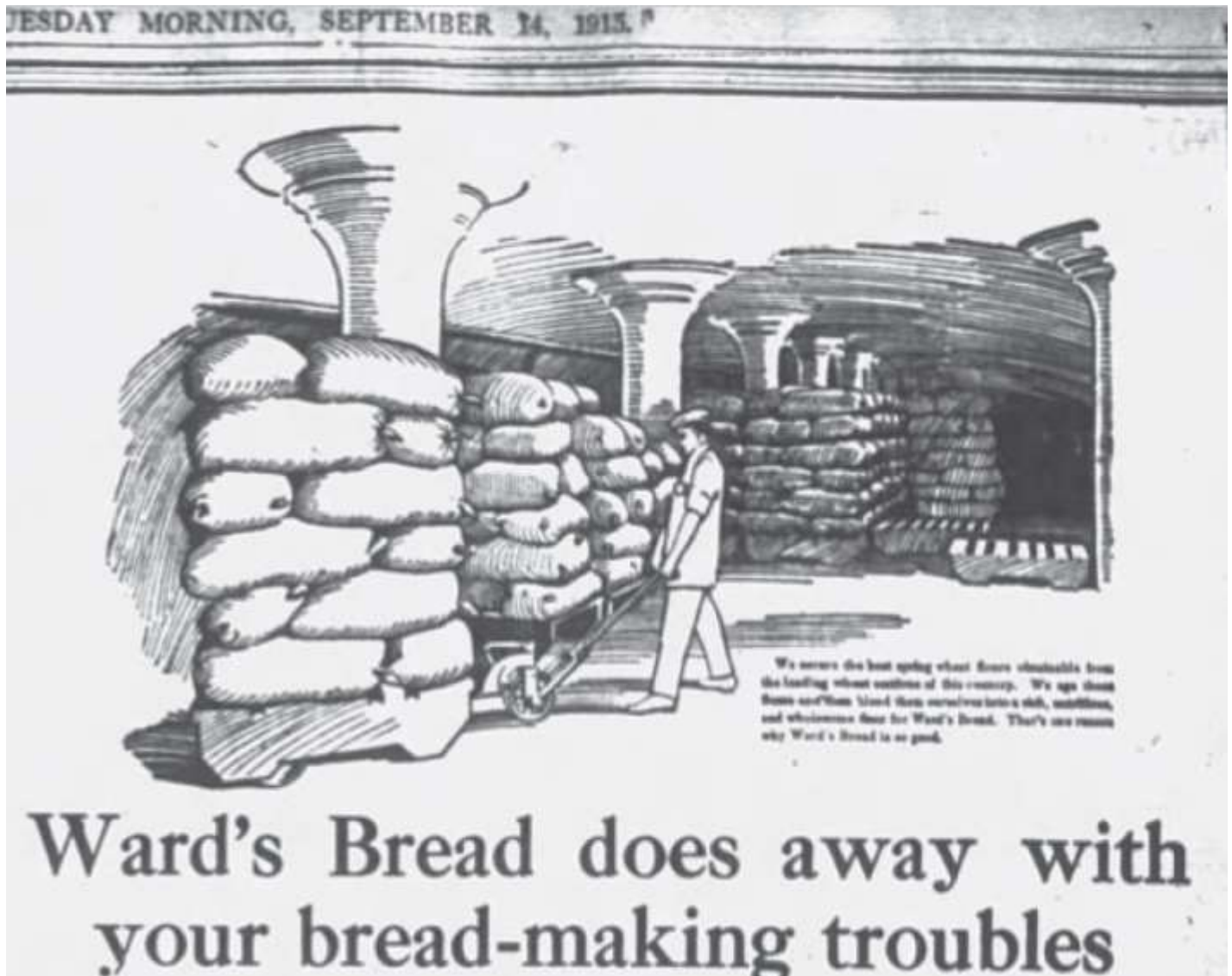
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Continental Baking Company Factory
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An illustration of the interior mushroom capital columns from 1915. This image depicts flour storage in the basement, but the columns are consistent throughout the five-story portion.
From *The Buffalo Times* (September 14, 1915).



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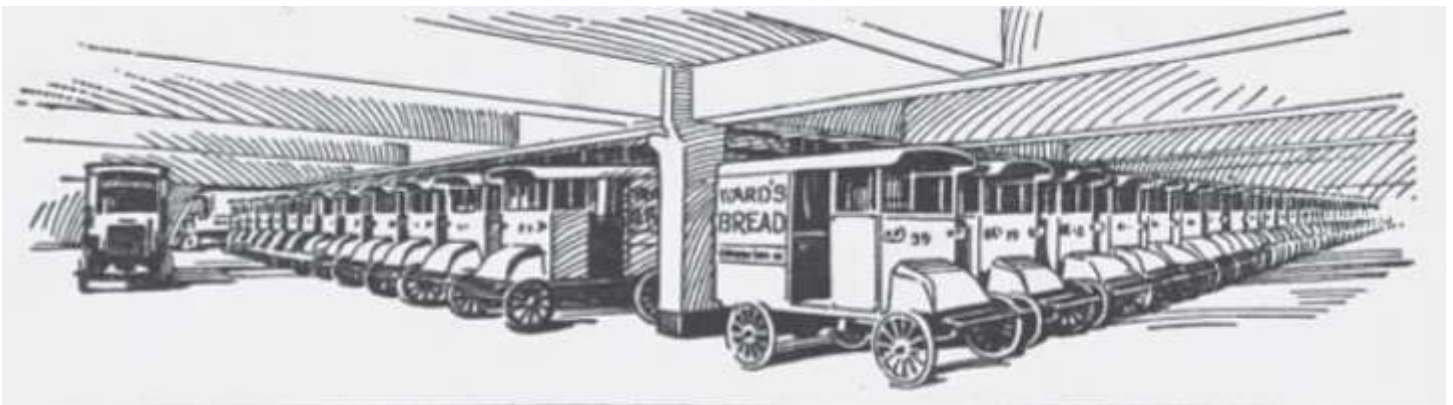
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Continental Baking Company Factory

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An illustration of the garage shipping area on the first floor, located towards the north end of the building in the two-story portion. The company took pride in using vehicles rather than “dirty horses,” to emphasize the cleanliness of the entire manufacturing process and product.

From *The Buffalo Times* (September 14, 1915).



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Continental Baking Company Factory
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Image of large bread oven on the second floor. Portions of this oven remain intact today.

BUFFALO EVENING NEWS, MONDAY, JULY 18, 1916

BUFFALO'S LEADERSHIP IN BAKING

"NOTHING TOO GOOD FOR BUFFALO"



"NOTHING TOO GOOD FOR BUFFALO"—That's the **WARD SLOGAN** and it is forcefully demonstrated in the most advanced **WARD** methods of baking. A Traveling Oven is the "last word" in baking perfection. This innovation in scientific baking, necessitating an expenditure of many thousands of dollars, has recently been installed in the Ward Bakery. **IT'S THE ONLY OVEN OF ITS KIND IN THIS PART OF THE COUNTRY.** The illustration here gives an idea of the oven. It's really a separate building—a building within a build-

ing—for it occupies a large space on one of the upper floors of the great Ward Bakery. The capacity of this huge traveling oven is 6000 LOAVES of bread an hour. At the receiving end bakers in immaculate white uniforms place the loaves as they come, each in a separate tin from the rising oven, on the moving platform of the endless chain that carries the loaves through the oven. The tins are placed so close together that they touch as they journey in great platoons—first white, then gradually browning, from one end to the other of the great oven while being baked. The mechanism of the oven is so **PERFECTLY ADJUSTED**, the degree of heat so exactly controlled and the entire process of baking so

minutely perfected that each of the thousands of loaves in passing thro' is subjected to the **EXACT DEGREE** of heat for the exact length of time to produce an absolutely perfect loaf. Soon after entering the oven each loaf comes in contact with 400 degrees of heat. A little further along in the process of baking the heat is gradually increased to 600 degrees and the varying of the intensity of the heat is **SCIENTIFICALLY CONTROLLED**. Indicators show the exact degree of heat in each portion of the oven. All the old method hard labor is done away with. The hot toil of former years is no longer necessary. The human hand hardly touches the loaves. It takes the raised dough just fifty minutes to traverse the length of the oven and to come out at the other end radiating the wholesome goodness of the **PERFECTLY BAKED**, delicious loaf ready to be tightly sealed in the clean wax paper that bears the name that stands for quality in baking—**WARD**.

COME IN AND SEE THE TRAVELING OVEN

YOU'RE invited to **COME TO THE BAKERY** and **SEE** this oven. It's a sight well worth coming miles to see. From neighborhood groups, you'll find much of interest to repay you. There are guides to show you about and you'll be served a dainty luncheon of **WARDS CAKE** that you'll enjoy.

THE REASON FOR THIS OVEN

THERE'S but **ONE REASON** for this oven. There's but **ONE REASON** for the expenditure of many thousand dollars; and the reason is—**TO PRODUCE A BETTER LOAF OF BREAD**; the very best loaf of **WARDS BREAD** that modern science can produce and to guarantee the assurance that every loaf will be **UNIFORMLY PERFECT**.

WARD & WARD, Inc.

— BAKERS —


Illustration and advertisement for the factory, ca. 1916

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Continental Baking Company Factory
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Ward's Bread has come to Buffalo

Ward's, the wonderful bread, the achievement of four bread-baking generations of the Ward family.

Yes, Ward's Bread is now baked right here in Buffalo, and delivered Fresh from Our Ovens to Your Table in clean, white electric automobiles.

Highest Standard of Bread

A family of bakers—Wards are specialists. They have made good bread in this country and Europe since 1865. Each generation has carried the standard of Ward's Breads. Today Ward's Bread is "the best bread" all over the country.

New York, Brooklyn, Newark, Boston, Cleveland, Chicago, Providence, Pittsburgh and Rochester all have Ward's Bread.

New Buffalo has Ward's Bread, and the most modern bakery of all.

Who we are—Ward & Ward—William B and Howard B, the younger generation, have come in Buffalo to establish an independent business of our own, based on what we learned in our father's business. We have made bread ourselves. We know every step and the importance of exact knowledge in each step—materials, blending, mixing, rising, proper temperature, etc. In short, we know how to make really fine bread.

Come see our bakery—We want you to come and see this wonderful, bright, shining home of Ward's Bread. We want you to see how we make Ward's Bread.

Spick and span—Everything is bright and shining—and kept that way. Daylight and sunshine abound. Even the air is washed. No other bakery is so spick and span as Ward's. Make the comparison and find out for yourself.

Purest ingredients—We also want you to see just how good we make Ward's Bread. We use nothing except the purest and best flour, sugar, salt, shortening, milk, yeast and water. Come see for yourself.

Wonderful machines—Miraculous, bright, shining machinery does everything. Sifting, measuring, mixing, kneading and even shaping—all are done by machines.

Employees healthy and clean—All employees are physically fit—healthy and neat. And their welfare is provided for with shower baths, locker rooms, recreation rooms—pool and billiards, freshly laundered white uniforms—everything they need for comfort, cleanliness, efficiency and enjoyment.

Fresh from Our Ovens to Your Table

You get Ward's Bread just as it comes from our ovens—fresh, rich, delicious loaves, wrapped airtight to keep all of the goodness in and everything else out. And, oh, how you will like Ward's Bread when you try it!

It takes over 100 electric automobiles to supply you promptly. We use clean white electric automobiles instead of horses and wagons—no odor, no dirty harness, no stable. Quicker and cleaner—aren't those good reasons?

How to get Ward's


We are covering Buffalo as fast as possible—constantly adding new routes. If you are on one of our routes, we can serve you immediately with Ward's Bread and Ward's Fine Cake. Write or telephone us anytime.

Telephone
Oxford 2600
(both)

Your money back if you want it

Everybody likes Ward's Bread and Ward's Fine Cake. But to make you feel sure, we give you your money back if you don't think Ward's Bread or Cake worth more than the money. There isn't any risk—we know what we bake.

Telephone
51-060
(Federal)



Ward & Ward Inc

Buffalo

Belt Line near
Genevieve Street

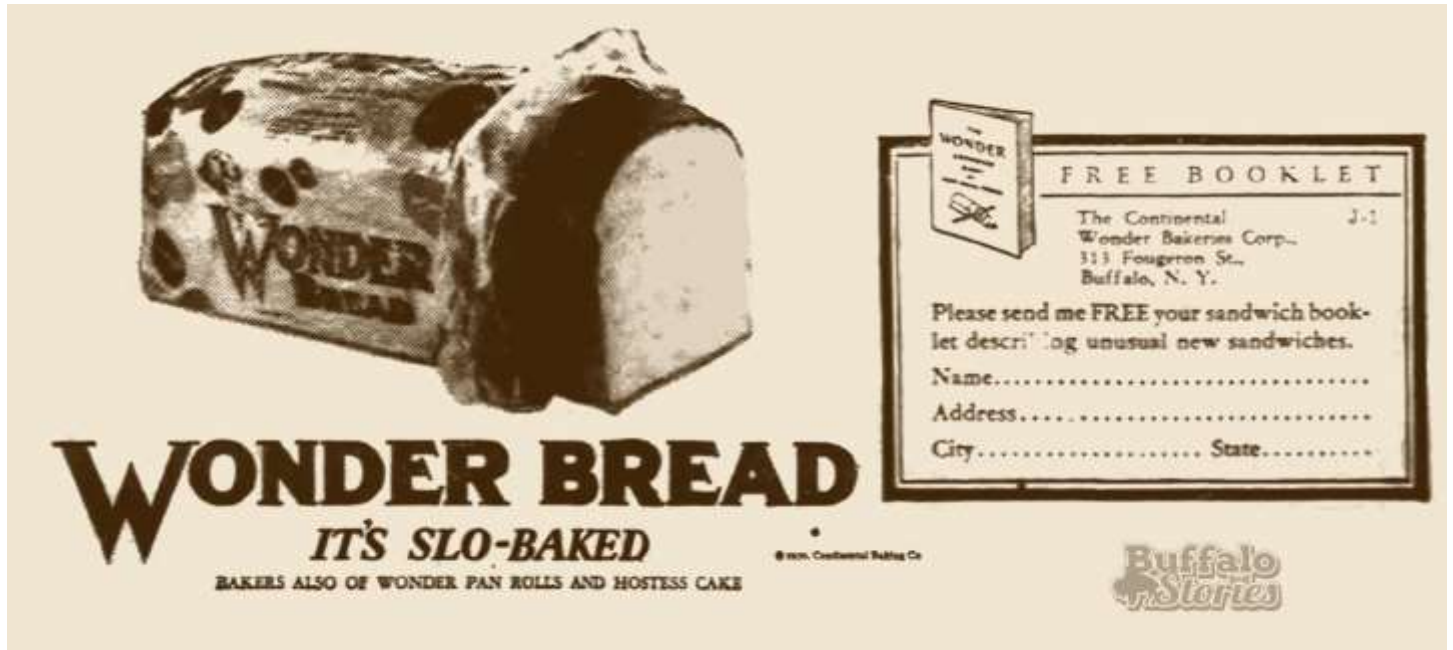
Advertisement for Wonder Bread, ca. 1930. Note the factory address. Bread would be sold pre-sliced starting in 1931.

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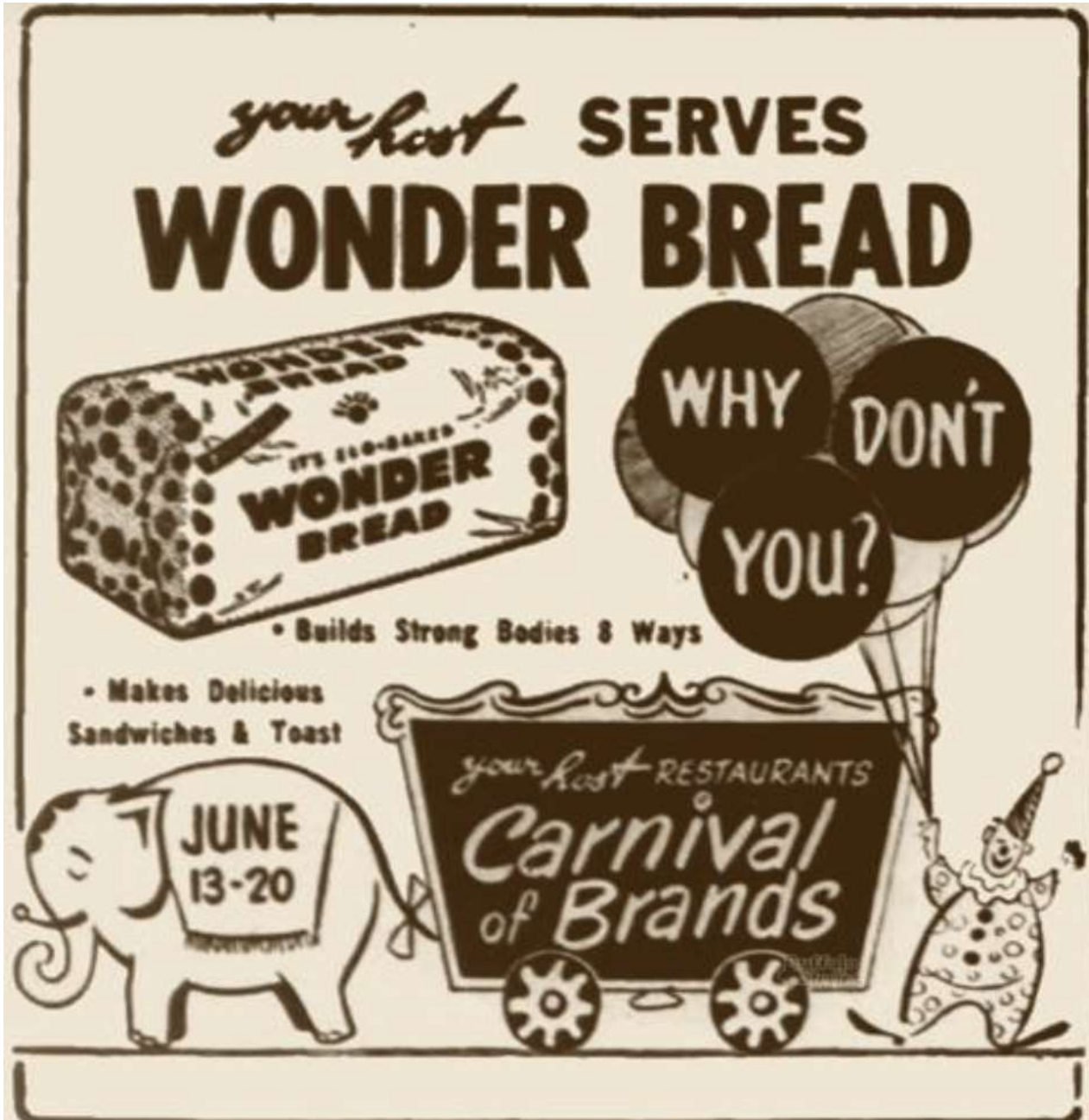
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Advertisement for Wonder Bread, ca. 1950. Product was made at numerous factories, including 356 Fougeron Street, and sold nationally by this time.



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