

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

EWART BUILDING

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

921, 923, 925 Liberty Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Pittsburgh

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

14

STATE

Pennsylvania

VICINITY OF

CODE  
42

COUNTY

Allegheny

CODE

003

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Matthew and Marian Jean Weisberg

STREET & NUMBER

16 Darlington Court

CITY, TOWN

Pittsburgh

VICINITY OF

STATE

Pennsylvania

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Allegheny County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

414 Grant Street

CITY, TOWN

Pittsburgh

STATE

Pennsylvania

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Downtown Pittsburgh Building Survey

DATE

1975

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation

CITY, TOWN

Pittsburgh

STATE

Pennsylvania

# DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Ewart Building is situated on the north side of Liberty Avenue in the downtown district of Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle. Several blocks west, Liberty Avenue terminates at Pittsburgh's celebrated Gateway Center, an area of high rise office buildings built in the 1960's. Along Liberty Avenue, recent development has been localized on the south side of the Street. Except for a few later buildings of the 1940's the north side of Liberty Avenue and the south side from the Ewart building eastward still retain a turn-of-the-century image. The marked homogeneity of the area derives from the uniform scale of the buildings and the predominance of the Romanesque Revival style.

Being one of the tallest buildings at 9 stories, and one of the widest at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lot sized (67'7"), the Ewart Building itself is the anchor for its block. The three bay facade consists of rough-hewn granite stones, now blackened with soot, set in a Richardsonian Romanesque style. Three store fronts occupy the ground floor. While probably not original, their style is not disharmonious. A stone moulding above the second story marks the top of a two story base from which three 5 story high arches spring. The windows are tripled in each bay for the top 8 stories. The cornice line is heavily articulated and supports a pediment in the center bay which frames the carved name "EWART".

The east side facade, facing an alley, is divided into 6 equal bays with a total width of 107'1  $\frac{3}{4}$ ". The front facade wraps around the side for one bay. The rest of the surface is of brick. Windows are paired in each bay for the entire 9 stories. The rear brick facade, facing an alley, is a modification of the front facade with 3 giant arches, but with paired windows. The west wall is embarrassingly exposed. A building which abutted it was torn down after a fire, and was replaced by a parking lot. Its material is rough remnant brick.

The rectangular plan of the building is divided into a grid of 3 by 6 bays which correspond to the exterior bay definitions. The structure consists of masonry exterior walls and iron interior supporting members. Each level is characterized by wood floors, unfinished brick exterior walls, and plastered ceilings. Some levels have been altered with partitions. Two elevators, perhaps original, service the 9 floors.

Overall, the Ewart Building is in a remarkably good state of preservation. The few alterations which have occurred have not detracted from the building's integrity.

# SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

1891

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ewart Building's character, through its sense of style, place, and time, provides an awareness of Pittsburgh as a bustling commercial metropolis. The essence of the period, the area, and the building, is commercialism.

The Ewart building sits on part of the original site of Fort Fayette. In 1792 the fort was considered "out of town". By 1816, the city had expanded and the need for a fort had dwindled. The U.S. Government began selling subdivisions of the fort's property. Three commercial buildings: two 3 story and one 5 story, were erected on 3 of the subdivisions. A wholesale grocer, Samuel Ewart, purchased the lots in 1891, and soon after erected the present 9 story building. After Ewart died in 1915, his two sons continued the business until 1925, but the building remained in the hands of the family until 1969.

The significance of the Ewart building lies in its architecture. Richardsonian Romanesque was the most important style in Pittsburgh for a quarter of a century after 1880. Buildings erected during that period of Pittsburgh's prosperity reflected the confident attitudes of the city residents. Although many Romanesque examples have since been destroyed, it is still the only style to be found in all parts of the central business district. A noteworthy example of the period is Richardson's masterpiece, the Allegheny County Courthouse.

Liberty Avenue is the focus of much concern on the part of the Mayor and the Department of City Planning of Pittsburgh. The Ewart Building, located in the heart of this blighted area, is one of a handful of remaining commercial warehouses in the Romanesque Revival style. With its grand facade it strengthens the importance of the surrounding buildings and endows the neighborhood with a sense of history. Its aesthetic and physical strength insures that its preservation would be pivotal to the revitalization of the entire neighborhood.

# MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Landmark Architecture of Allegheny County, Ziegler, Arthur P., and Van Trump, James D., Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, Pittsburgh.

## GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .6

QUADRANGLE NAME Pittsburgh East, Pa.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 585140 4477250

B         

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Continuation Sheet

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Ellis Schmidlapp

ORGANIZATION

Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

One Landmarks Square

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Pittsburgh

STATE

Pennsylvania

## STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE ED WEINTRAUB, Director  
Office of Historic Preservation

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST:    NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

Ewart Building  
921, 923, 925 Liberty Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA

Verbal boundary description

"Beginning at the Northwesterly corner of Liberty Avenue and Garrison Place; thence westwardly along the Northerly side of Liberty Avenue, 64 feet 7 inches, to line of land now or late of Matthew Weisberg, formerly of Alexander King Estate; thence by said land, Northwardly and parallel with Garrison Place 107 feet 1 3/4 inches to the Southerly side of Exchange Way; thence Eastwardly along the Southerly side of Exchange Way, 64 feet 7 inches to the Westerly side of Garrison Place; thence Southwardly along the Westerly side of Garrison Place, 107 feet 1 3/4 inches to Liberty Avenue at the place of beginning."

(From deed dated 5/5/76).

Acreage

Approximately 1/6 acre.

44 77 250  
NORTHING  
E WART  
BUILDING

Ewart Building  
Allegheny County  
Zone 17 E585140 N4477250

