

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

1987 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 Pitcairn Building

and or common Pitcairn Building

2. Location

street & number 1027 Arch Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Philadelphia N/A vicinity of

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Philadelphia code 101

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<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:

4. Owner of Property

name 1027 Arch Street Associates

street & number 1511 Walnut Street, 4th Floor

city, town Philadelphia N/A vicinity of state Pennsylvania 19102-3001

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Department of Records, Room 153, Philadelphia City Hall

street & number

city, town Philadelphia state Pennsylvania 19107

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

city, town Harrisburg state PA

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Pitcairn Building is an eight-story steel frame commercial building with granite base, cream-colored Roman brick pilasters and terra cotta trim. The flat-roofed building, designed in the English Baroque style in 1901, measures approximately 74 feet by 172 feet. The south and west facades are organized vertically into a two-story base, a five-story shaft, and a single story cap. The red brick east facade is blank, except for three widely spaced bays on the northern half of the facade. The interior of the building consists largely of open space with exposed wood girders, and steel columns and beams. The building's integrity is good. The most significant alterations are at the street level and include the removal of original shop windows and the partial enshrouding of the ornamental entrance surround behind aluminum panels.

On the two lower stories the brick of the giant pilasters, which rise from granite bases, is laid to simulate rustication. Terra cotta pilaster caps consist of a beveled arched tablet flanked by foliated s-curves below egg-and-dart molding and an abacus. A plain terra cotta frieze with paired terra cotta triglyphes above the corner pilasters (single triglyphes over the other pilasters) runs across the south and west facades above the second story. The bracketed cornice above the frieze is composed of a terra cotta braided rope molding below alternate guttae and rosettes. The entire entablature is loosely based on the Roman Doric order.

All first story openings are one bay wide (approximately twenty feet) and are capped with pressed metal dentil cornices and are framed by pressed metal pilasters loosely based on Scamozzi's Ionic order. The three southern bays on the west facade are infilled with buff brick and plywood, the northern five bays with plywood, and the fourth bay from the southwest corner with glass block and a wooden sash door. The westernmost bay on the south facade contains red brick infill with a central glass door flanked by single pane windows capped by vertical wooden siding. The central bay is infilled with a buff brick base and a large slab of rippled glass.

A terra cotta entrance surround, loosely based on the work of James Gibbs, fills most of the easternmost bay. The outer layer of the surround is composed of rusticated pilasters with ornamented Scamozzi Ionic caps. The inner layer is shrouded by aluminum panels applied in the mid-twentieth century. The entire surround is surmounted by a bracketed Roman Doric entablature. A plaque on the entablature frieze,

NPS Counting Purpose: The nominated property contains one contributing building.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Pitcairn Building, Philadelphia County

DESCRIPTION (continued)

with the words "Printing Crafts," dates from the mid-twentieth century. Above the cornice is a highly ornamented parapet with C-scrolls separating small obelisks and balls on pedestals and a central datestone (MDCDI) flanked by cornucopia.

Within each second story bay on the west and south elevations, three 1/1 double-hung sash windows separated by molded terra cotta piers capped by consoles are present. Terra cotta spandrel plaques are located beneath each window. On the fourth through seventh stories terra cotta spandrel tablets are located below each window and a plain terra cotta frieze constructed of flat arch blocks and molding separates each story. Plain brick piers separate each bay. A fire tower, with a Philadelphia stair, occupies the easternmost bay of the south facade.

The top story serves as an ornamental cap. Rusticated terra cotta pilasters with Scamozzi Ionic caps enriched with swags separate the bays, and plain terra cotta piers capped with consoles separate the windows. The terra cotta entablature is ornamented with medallions (filled with vertical tablets) over each Ionic capital and rinceaux over each window. The bracketed cornice contains dentils, egg-and-dart molding, and guttae.

The rear (north) facade on Appletree Street contains three bays, with three 1/1 double-hung sash windows per bay. The central first story bay contains a loading dock with a large overhead door. The flanking bays have 1/1 sash of various sizes. An enriched terra cotta cornice above the eighth story continues around from the west facade. A simple terra cotta cornice is located above the seventh story. This facade is a simplified version of the west and south facades, and contains plain brick piers and window openings with terra cotta flat arch lintels.

The interior is dominated by large open spaces originally used for warehousing. These spaces are unadorned and are characterized by wood floors, steel columns and beams, and wood girders. Modern wood paneling and office partitioning is evident in some areas. The first floor of the building contains several commercial establishments. All original finishes are hidden behind applications of new materials. A similar condition exists in the lobby.

NPS Counting Purposes: The nominated property contains one contributing building.

8. 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) social history

Specific dates 1901 **Builder/Architect** J.E. & A.L. Pennock, builders
G.W. & W.D. Hewitt, architects

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Constructed in 1901, the Pitcairn Building is historically and architecturally significant. The building originally served as one of seven regional distribution centers established by the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, the United States' largest producer of plate glass, in the first decade of the twentieth century. In 1923 H. Daroff & Sons, one of Philadelphia's largest manufacturers of ready-made men's clothing acquired the building as their factory and headquarters. Daroff & Sons' leading role in the struggle to unionize clothing workers during the mid-1920s lends the building social significance. Designed by G. W. and W. D. Hewitt, a leading Philadelphia architectural firm, the Pitcairn Building is an important example of the loft buildings that arose on Arch Street, and other streets immediately north of Market Street, in the first decades of the twentieth century, and is a significant example of the firm's loft building designs.

The Pitcairn Building is named for John Pitcairn (1844-1916), who in 1901 served as president and chairman of the board of directors of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company (PPG). Pitcairn, a mid-level Pennsylvania Railroad executive and oil refining and natural gas pipeline entrepreneur, and John B. Ford (1811-1903), an Ohio River steamboat captain, founded Pittsburgh Plate Glass, in 1883.

France dominated plate glass manufacturing throughout the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth century. Initial efforts to manufacture the product in the United States occurred in the early 1850s, but until the establishment of PPG in 1883 "not a piece of plate glass had been made in the United States without loss to the manufacturer; all money invested had vanished without result" (Glass 1923:31). Within forty years of Pittsburgh Plate Glass' founding, with PPG as the industry's largest and most powerful firm, the United States dominated world production of plate glass.

Pittsburgh Plate Glass dominated the American industry through diversification and technological and marketing leadership. In the early twentieth century Pitcairn bought out a number of other companies that produced building supplies, including the Patton Paint Company in Milwaukee, the Rennous, Kleinle & Company brush factory in Baltimore,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2Pitcairn Building, Philadelphia County
SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

the Red Wing Linseed Oil Company, the Corona Chemical Company, and a number of other firms. In 1902 PPG became one of the first American corporations to expand its operations overseas by acquiring a factory in Belgium. On the technological front the firm pioneered the use of new manufacturing processes that revolutionized the production line in the first decades of the twentieth century. PPG's research and development activities resulted in the introduction of a host of new products, including automobile safety glass, fiberglass, and latex paints. The firm's innovative distribution network, of which the Pitcairn Building was an integral part, permitted it to efficiently and economically serve a national market.

In 1896 John Pitcairn resolved to establish a system of regional distribution centers that would permit PPG to expand its market. Pitcairn established showrooms and warehouses in seven major cities between Boston and Minneapolis. The Pitcairn Building was one of these seven major distribution centers. Salesmen operating from each of these centers canvassed the local region for orders, often showing the firm's product to potential clients in the company's regional showroom. Orders from the distribution center were filled by the factory in Pittsburgh, shipped back to the region, and warehoused on the upper floors of the distribution center until called for by the customer. This distribution system, of which the Pitcairn Building was a major element, was "one of the first of its type in the nation" (Making Glass 1958:5), and by 1920 had become "the most complete of its kind in the world" (Paints Varnishes and Brushes 1923:179). For the first quarter of the twentieth century the Pitcairn Building was the source for all Pittsburgh Plate Glass' orders from the region encompassing eastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey, and Delaware.

In 1923 H. Daroff & Sons, a major Philadelphia clothing manufacturer, acquired the Pitcairn Building. For the next twenty-two years the building served as the firm's factory and offices. This did not constitute a radical change in the building's use, since Pittsburgh Plate Glass had leased some upper floors to other tenants, including small manufacturer's of men's clothing and neckties. The building's steel-frame construction provided relatively open spaces that could be easily adapted to a wide range of uses, including, at one point early in the century, a bowling alley and skating rink on the top two floors.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Pitcairn Building, Philadelphia County
SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

H. Daroff & Sons was the creation of Harry Daroff, an immigrant Russian Jew, who saw his South Philadelphia tailor shop grow into one of Philadelphia's most important manufacturers of readymade clothing. The clothing industry occupied an important position within Philadelphia's industrial economy, employing more workers than any other industry in the city during the first half of the twentieth century. Daroff & Sons dominated the readymade men's clothing sector of the industry in the first decades of the century, employing some eight hundred workers in 1924.

The city's ready-to-wear clothing industry had its roots among the eighteenth century sailors' slop shops along Front Street. In the years before the Civil War, the development of the sewing machine and Philadelphia's woolen textile industry stimulated the local ready-to-wear industry. In the 1880s, just as the first Russian Jews entered the business, improvements in cutting machines and the development of worsted woolens transformed the men's ready-to-wear industry into an extremely lucrative field. Philadelphia manufacturers concentrated on making clothes for middle income men, producing fifteen percent of the nation's wool and worsted clothing during the 1920s, including, over the course of the decade, approximately 3.6 million suits each year. This tremendous output occurred during a period when nationwide clothing production declined at a rate of approximately three percent annually.

In many respects H. Daroff & Sons was representative of successful American, and particularly Philadelphian, clothing manufacturers. Daroff entered the business after 1880 and utilized newly developed technologies to produce increasingly large volumes of quality, moderately priced men's worsted suits and coats. Daroff & Sons were a vertically integrated firm, distributing their clothing through a network of company owned outlets and department stores. Daroff & Sons originated the "Botany 500" label, and acquired exclusive use of this nationally known brand name in 1945, the year the company vacated the Pitcairn Building for new quarters at Twenty-third and Walnut Streets.

As a leading firm within the clothing industry, and "one of the largest houses in the market," (Zaretz 1934:130) H. Daroff & Sons played a significant role in local labor relations. Known as "the black pit of unionism" (LaMar 1940:25) by early-twentieth century union organizers,

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 4

**Pitcairn Building, Philadelphia County
SIGNIFICANCE (continued)**

Philadelphia had a long and violent history as a union-busting city. Judges predictably issued injunctions against strikers, and the police energetically enforced these injunctions while scabs and union-busters operated with a virtual free-rein. In 1929 this tradition changed dramatically in the apparel industry. Twenty-seven days after the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) struck Daroff & Sons in August 1929, the company signed a contract with the union. "The Daroff settlement was the signal for extending the campaign of unionization throughout the entire market" (Zaretz 1934:130-131). By the end of November 1929, only three months after the Daroff & Sons settlement, the ACWA's fifteen-year campaign to unionize the Philadelphia market was ninety percent complete. Once Daroff, the industry leader, accepted the inevitability of unionism other large manufacturers quickly followed suit.

The Pitcairn Building is architecturally significant as a fine example of early twentieth century loft building construction and as a significant example of the loft buildings designed by the prominent local firm of G. W. and W. D. Hewitt. Its construction in 1901-1902 was directly tied to that of the Reading Terminal (1891-1893) at the northeast corner of Twelfth and Market Streets. Completion of this major rail station ignited a flurry of building activity along Arch and Market Streets between Ninth and Thirteenth Streets. Most of the loft buildings on Market and Filbert Streets have been razed in the past decade for the Market Street East and Commuter Tunnel projects, or have fallen to fire. The half dozen loft buildings left on Arch Street (including the Pitcairn Building) stand as evidence of this turn-of-the-century commercial activity. The Pitcairn Building is perhaps the most ornate loft building extant along Arch Street and clearly reflects the power and prestige of its original owner, the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company.

John Pitcairn endeavored to assure that Pittsburgh Plate Glass' only Philadelphia area building projected a successful, progressive image appropriate to a major international corporation. He awarded the commission to design the building to G. W. and W. D. Hewitt, one of the city's most respected and experienced architectural firms. Perhaps best known for their domestic and ecclesiastical work, especially for Henry H. Houston in Chestnut Hill, the Hewitts built a number of commercial

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Pitcairn Building, Philadelphia County
SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

buildings ranging from rather utilitarian styled warehouses, such as the Merchants' Warehouse on Delaware Avenue (1901), to grand landmark buildings like the Philadelphia Bourse (1893), and the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel on Broad Street (1904). The Pitcairn Building occupies a middle ground in terms of these commercial commissions. It is more ornate and architecturally sophisticated than the average warehouse, but nowhere near as grand as the Bourse or the Bellvue-Stratford.

The Hewitts gave the Pitcairn Building an ornate English Baroque skin in order to achieve Pitcairn's desired image of success and power. Apparently working within rather tight budget constraints, the Hewitts attained the desired effect through the sophisticated and judicious assembly of standard catalog pieces of terra cotta, not by the use of expensive hand carved or custom made ornament. The building is thus an excellent example of the Hewitts' flexibility and willingness to adjust their methods to the client's desires and budgets.

The Pitcairn Building is an important example of the early twentieth century loft buildings constructed along Arch Street. Its architectural sophistication reflects its design by the prominent local firm of G. W. and W. D. Hewitt and the progressive image desired by their client, the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company. The building is an important example of the Hewitt's loft designs and exists as a counterpart to their grandest commercial projects, the Philadelphia Bourse and the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel. The historical significance of the Pitcairn Building stems from its important role in the innovative regional distribution system developed and implemented by Pittsburgh Plate Glass in the first decades of the twentieth century and by its subsequent use by H. Daroff & Sons, one of Philadelphia's leading producers of readymade men's clothing and a major player in the local labor struggles of the 1920s.

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheets

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.3
Quadrangle name Philadelphia

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	8	4	8	6	5	2	0	4	4	2	2	4	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

see continuation sheets

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard J. Webster

organization John Milner Associates date June 1987

street & number 309 N. Matlack Street telephone (215) 435-9000

city or town West Chester state Pennsylvania 19380

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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 Brent D. Glass, State Historic Preservation Officer date _____

For NPS use only

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

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

Pitcairn Building, Philadelphia County
REFERENCES (continued)

Corbin, Harry A., The Men's Clothing Industry: Colonial Through Modern Times (New York: Fairchild Publications, 1970), pp. 20-32, 42-51, 60-64, 142-143.

Davis, Pearce, The Development of the American Glass Industry (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949), pp. 86, 166, 250.

Dictionary of American Biography, s. v. "Ford, John B.," by Asher Isaacs; "Pitcairn, John," by Louis Pearson Blodget.

Glass: History, Manufacture and Its Universal Application (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co., 1923), pp. 10-13, 31-38.

It Began With Making Glass in 1883 (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co., 1958), pp. 4-5, 15-16.

Jordan, John W., Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania Biography, 22 vols. (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1914), 3:805-809.

LaMar, Elden, The Clothing Workers of Philadelphia: History of Their Struggles for Union and Security (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Joint Board, Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, 1940), pp. 25-28, 85-87, 96.

Men's Wear (10 February 1950):150.

New York Times, 21 September 1957, p. 19.

Paints, Varnishes and Brushes: Their History, Manufacture and Use (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co., 1923), pp. 134, 179-181.

Philadelphia Inquirer, 14 February 1967, pp. 1, 35.

Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide, 16 (12 June 1901):371; (26 June 1901):403; (3 July 1901):419; (17 July 1901):465; (11 September 1901):589; (18 September 1901): 609.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 3

Pitcairn Building, Philadelphia County
REFERENCES (continued)

Phillips, C. J., Glass, the Miracle Worker: Its History Technology, Manufacture, and Applications, 2nd ed. (New York: Pitman Publishing Corp., 1948), pp. 14, 143, 210-211, 315.

Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company Annual Reports, passim.

Richards, F. S., "The Earliest Days, 1790-1890," "The Formative Years, 1890-1914," "The In-Between Years, 1919-1939," "The Leading Markets for Men's Wear," Men's Wear (10 February 1950):195-206, 222-223, 286-288, 333-336.

Tatman, Sandra L. and Moss, Roger W., eds., Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects, 1700-1930 (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1985), pp. 367-369.

Zaretz, Charles Elbert, The Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America: A Study in Progressive Trades-Unionism (New York: Ancon Publishing Co., 1934), pp. 130-133.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 2

Pitcairn Building, Philadelphia County
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (continued)

The nominated property occupies city plot plan 1N19, plot number 256. Beginning at a point at the northeast corner of Eleventh and Arch Streets, the lot extends eastward along the north side of Arch Street 74 feet to a point, thence northward 175 feet to the south side of Appletree Street, thence westward 74 feet to the east side of Eleventh Street, thence southward along the east side of Eleventh Street 175 feet to the point of beginning. The nominated property contains the Pitcairn Building.



4174

Cooper Point
4423
57'30"

5.130
TY 52 MI.

Pitcairn Building
Philadelphia County
Zone 18
E486520 N4422400
Philadelphia Record

4421

(CAMDEN)
5963 NE

CAMDEN