COMMENT ON NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION

ADDRESS: 2201-21 Margaret Street, Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory

OVERVIEW: The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) has requested comments from the Philadelphia Historical Commission on the National Register nomination of 2201-21 Margaret Street located in the Bridesburg neighborhood and historically known as the Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory. PHMC is charged with implementing federal historic preservation regulations in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, including overseeing the National Register of Historic Places in the state. PHMC reviews all such nominations before forwarding them to the National Park Service for action. As part of the process, PHMC must solicit comments on every National Register nomination from the appropriate local government. The Philadelphia Historical Commission speaks on behalf of the City of Philadelphia in historic preservation matters including the review of National Register nominations. Under federal regulation, the local government not only must provide comments, but must also provide a forum for public comment on nominations. Such a forum is provided during the Philadelphia Historical Commission’s meetings.

The nomination for 2201-21 Margaret Street states that the property is significant under Criterion A in the area of industry as a manufacturer of numerous iconic, nationally available chocolate products during the early twentieth century. During the 1920s, Blumenthal developed candies like Goobers, Raisinets, and Sno-caps specifically for the growing movie theater business, making these products familiar to millions of movie-going Americans for decades to come. The Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory is also significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a major example of factory design by the Ballinger Company, one of Philadelphia’s best-known architectural firms of the day and one that specialized in industrial buildings. The period of significance begins in 1922, when the present factory was completed, and ends in 1969, when Blumenthal Brothers sold the business and ceased to control the company.

View of the Main Building at 2201-21 Margaret Street. The property also includes Boiler House and Garage buildings. All three are proposed as contributing to the historic property.
1. **Name of Property**
   Historic name: Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory
   Other names/site number: NA
   Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. **Location**
   Street & number: 2201-21 Margaret Street
   City or town: Philadelphia
   State: PA
   County: Philadelphia
   Not For Publication: NA
   Vicinity: NA

3. **State/Federal Agency Certification**
   As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
   I hereby certify that this nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
   In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
   __national  __statewide  __local
   Applicable National Register Criteria: __A __B __C __D

   Signature of certifying official
   Date

   Title; State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

   In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

   Signature of commenting official
   Date

   Title; State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. **National Park Service Certification**
   I hereby certify that this property is:
   ___ entered in the National Register
   ___ determined eligible for the National Register
   ___ determined not eligible for the National Register
   ___ removed from the National Register
   ___ other (explain:)

   Signature of the Keeper
   Date of Action
5. Classification

Ownership of Property

- Private: X
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

- Building(s): X
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION – Manufacturing Facility (Chocolate)

Current Functions: Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification: Art Deco influences

Principal exterior materials: Brick
Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph
The Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory consists primarily of a three-story industrial building at the northeast corner of Margaret and James Streets in the Bridesburg section of Northeast Philadelphia. The Bridesburg area is densely residential with pockets of small and large industry. This property is on the west side of the Interstate 95 corridor that runs through the area. Designed by the Ballinger Company and built in 1922, Blumenthal’s Art Deco-style, reinforced concrete building is primarily faced in red brick and features numerous white terra cotta accents, with a prominent tower rising from the center of the James Street elevation. The property also contains two other contributing buildings: a one-story brick boiler house (with smokestack) and a one-story brick garage. Although a portion of the former complex has been demolished, the remaining factory building is substantial, intentionally detailed, and more than adequately conveys the historic industrial use of the property and the success of the Blumenthal Brothers company.

Figure 1: Current aerial view (Pictometry). The National Register boundary is shown as a solid red line. As shown in Figure 3, the property across Margaret Street was once owned by Blumenthal Brothers. This property is shown here as a dashed white line. Blumenthal Brothers apparently never used this property and sold it in 1959, well within the period of significance. For these reasons this property has been excluded from the National Register boundary.

The Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory occupies an approximately 2.5 acre urban site, which is bounded by Margaret Street to the west, James Street to the south, a vacant property to the east, and a four track-wide rail line (historically the Pennsylvania Railroad, but now used by Amtrak and SEPTA) to the north. The main three-story building is situated at the southwest corner of the site, and there are concrete sidewalks along the south and west elevations. To the east, there is an open area paved in asphalt between the factory and the boiler house and garage, with a chain-link metal fence extending along the James Street sidewalk between the Main Building and the garage. The fence contains a wide gate just to the east of the Main Building where it is likely that trucks once entered the property. To the north, there is an additional open area that was once occupied by a two- and three-story building that was the original
factory at this location, built by Blumenthal Brothers in 1912. This building, which is partially visible in Figures 5 and 6, was largely demolished by the previous owner around 2004, leaving only the original foundation along the north side, below the rail line, and the lower portion of the exterior wall along the west side, facing Margaret Street. There was historically a rail siding along the north side of the property (see Figures 2 and 3), but no evidence of this feature remains.

Figure 2: Site plan with National Register boundary in red. Buildings that no longer exist are shaded in gray. Outbuildings are crosshatched. The 1922 Main Building, the Boiler House (which includes a prominent smokestack), and the Garage are all considered “contributing.” The sidewalks along Margaret Street and James Street are included in the boundary due to the frequent loading and unloading activity that took place on these sides of the factory during the period of significance.
Figure 3: The historic parcel, which corresponds to the current parcel, is shown here in a 1929 map (from Bromley’s *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, 23rd and 41st Wards*).

A 1929 atlas (Figure 3) shows that the Blumenthal Brothers also owned a wedged shape property to the west, across Margaret Street, which currently has the address of 2201-03 Orthodox Street (Orthodox Street, at far left in this image, is the western boundary). Blumenthal Brothers apparently never built anything on this property, and no evidence has been found to suggest the company used the property for any purpose. Blumenthal Brothers sold the property to Kopperman Industries in October, 1959, ten years before the end of the nominated property’s period of significance (see Philadelphia Deed Book C.A.B., vol. 1202, page 312). Prior to the sale, Blumenthal Brothers sought zoning approval for industrial use on the property “for a proposed purchaser” who intended to build a factory there to manufacture metal products, presumably Kopperman Industries as they were a known manufacturer of metal pipes and plates (Philadelphia Zoning Application 65850-F, 6/24/59). Because there is no known evidence that Blumenthal Brothers ever used the property, and because they sold it well within the nominated property’s period of significance, the property has been excluded from the National Register Boundary.
Main Building (1922)
The red brick and terra cotta main factory building, which stands on a painted concrete foundation, is five bays wide on the west elevation (the northernmost bay, containing a stairway on the interior, is narrower than and slightly recessed from the other four) and thirteen bays long on the south and north elevations (Photos 1-5). The bays are articulated by slightly projecting brick piers that rise slightly above the roofline, terminating with Art Deco-style, glazed off-white terra cotta caps. Between the caps, there is simple terra cotta coping. Most of the bays contain multi-light steel factory windows with operating awning units, although these are mostly covered with plywood on all elevations. On the second floor, many of the window openings have been infilled with red brick, which likely took place sometime in the last 30 years. On the first floor, the second bay from the south on the west elevation contains a roll-down metal garage door located in an opening that historically contained a window like those on either side (based on its material and appearance, the door appears to be 30-40 years old). On the north elevation, there is evidence of a two-story, c.1950s infill building that once connected the Main Building to an earlier manufacturing building dating to 1912 (Photo 5). On the east elevation, a modern, chain-link metal fence extends east from the building along the James Street sidewalk, terminating at the garage. As described in greater detail below, the 1912 building and the 1950s infill building were demolished around 2004.
Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory
Name of Property

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County and State

Photo 2: Main Building, west elevation, looking north. The northernmost bay (at far left) houses one of the original interior stairs and is slightly recessed from the other four bays.

Photo 3: Main Building, south elevation, looking northeast. A tower that historically housed a water tank rises from the center of the James Street elevation, above the primary entrance.
Photo 4: Main Building, south and east elevations, looking northwest. A modern chain-link fence runs along the James Street sidewalk between the Main Building and the garage to the east. A Sanborn map from 1950 (Figure 7) shows a fence in the same location, but this may have been an earlier fence of undetermined material and design.

Photo 5: Main Building, north elevation, looking southwest. It appears that the building may have been connected to the now-demolished section in the first, fifth, and tenth bays (starting from the left).
Photo 6 (left): Main Building, south elevation, main entrance, looking north. This entrance, which has a terra cotta surround topped by a panel carved with “OFFICE”, is located in the center bay on the south elevation, facing James Street.

Photo 7 (right): Main Building, rooftop tower, west and north elevations, looking southeast. At the top of the tower, all four sides have a terra cotta panel carved with the company’s name: “Blumenthal Bros. Chocolate & Cocoa.”

On the south elevation, the center bay on the first floor features a wide terra cotta door surround with a cornice, the corners of which have broken off (Photo 6). Above the entrance, there is a terra cotta panel carved with “OFFICE.” The visual focus of the Main Building is the square water tower that rises from the center of the south elevation (Photo 7). The tower is treated similarly to the building below with red brick exterior walls and white terra cotta accents. At the top, the tower contains terra cotta panels spelling out “Blumenthal Bros. Chocolate & Cocoa” on all four sides and the panels are capped by terra cotta pediments. The tower, a common feature in industrial buildings designed by Ballinger & Perrot and the Ballinger Company, contains two levels of windows, although the interior is one large volume. The water tank does not survive. The windows are multi-light steel units similar to, but taller than, those on the first through third floors.
On the interior (Photos 8-12), the building is typical of large manufacturing buildings that were built in Philadelphia and other American cities during the early twentieth century. This building was the primary manufacturing facility for Blumenthal Brothers where finished products were created and packaged; following the completion of this building in 1922, the earlier, now-demolished section was primarily used for the storage and processing of raw materials. The floors are largely open in plan, each containing a grid of reinforced concrete mushroom columns, which are graduated in size (30” on the first floor, 24” on the second floor, and 18” on the third floor). Both the floors and the ceilings are concrete. There are few partitions, which include a c.1950s or 60s concrete block wall diving the third floor roughly in half from east to west. Although there was historically an administrative office on the first floor (as shown in Figure 6, the office entrance was on the south elevation), there is no remaining evidence of this feature.
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There are three stairs and one freight elevator. The two original stairs, which are concrete with metal pipe handrails, are located at the northwest and southwest corners of the building and provide access between all floors (Photo 13). The third stair, located at the center of the south elevation, is metal and was added in the 1950s. The freight elevator, which is original, is located along the southern half of the west elevation.

Photo 12 (left): Main Building, third floor, looking west.

Photo 13 (right): Main Building, typical stair, looking east on the third floor.

Photo 14 (left): Boiler House, west elevation, looking northeast.
Boiler House (1912, c. 1920)
The Boiler House is a one-story, L-shaped brick building located northeast of the Main Building (Photos 14, 15). There are few architectural embellishments, and the windows, which consist of 9-over-9, double-hung wood units appearing in pairs and groups of three, are covered on the exterior side by painted plywood. The south elevation of the short leg of the “L” contains a square opening, half of which currently contains brick infill and half of which contains one of the original multi-light glazed wood doors (historically, this opening had double doors). The opening is topped by a blind arch accentuated with three rows of soldier cours ed brick voussoirs, and the tympanum consists of a field of brick headers at the center of which is a Star of David inlaid in brick, a reference to the Jewish faith of the Blumenthal family. The historic south elevation is visible in Figure 6, which shows that the Boiler House once consisted only of the short leg of the L, with the long leg, extending south, having been added later, around 1920. The exterior walls of the short leg of the “L” (the northwestern portion of the building) are built up with painted concrete block. The building has a flat roof. To the east of the building, there is a cylindrical brick smokestack, which is about 80'-tall and is tapered, as well as a concrete platform or loading dock.
The interior of the building consists of two rectangular spaces with concrete floors, painted brick walls, and exposed heavy timber ceilings and wood roof decking (Photo 16). The roof is structurally unstable and it is not possible to access all parts of the building due to the instability of the structure. No major boiler equipment remains inside.

Garage (1920)
The Garage is a one-story, rectangular brick building with a flat roof located north of the Main Building and east of the Boiler House. Like the Boiler House, there are virtually no architectural embellishments. There are numerous window and garage door openings on all four elevations. It was not possible to access the interior at the time of the survey. As described above, a modern, chain-link metal fence extends west from the building along the James Street sidewalk.

![Photo 17: Garage, west and south elevations, looking northeast. The boiler house smokestack is visible in the background. A modern chain-link fence runs along the James Street sidewalk between the garage and the main factory building. A Sanborn map from 1950 shows a fence in this location, but this may have been an earlier fence of undetermined material and design.](image)

North of the Main Building, the site is open where a two- and three-story building, completed by Blumenthal Brothers in 1912, once stood (this earlier building is partially visible in Figures 7 and 8). It was largely demolished by the previous owner in 2004. The first story portion of the 1912 building’s west elevation, which is brick, partially survives, abutting the bridge carrying the rail line over Margaret Street at the north end of the property (Photo 18). The historic window openings have been infilled with brick, some portions of which contain metal exhaust louvers. A modern, chain-link metal gate restricting access to the site spans the distance between the remnant wall and the main factory building. The first story portion of the building’s north elevation, which largely consists of a rubble stone foundation wall, also partially survives below the train tracks; it abuts the embankment below the tracks and therefore has no window openings.
Integrity
The Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory complex retains overall integrity. The aspect of design is retained in the distinct, early twentieth century industrial form of the building. The building’s reinforced concrete structure, brick cladding, Art Deco-style terra cotta accents, prominent tower with carved sign
panels, and the consistent fenestration pattern reinforce the complex’s design quality. Although many of the windows are in poor condition and others have been replaced with brick infill, the original fenestration pattern is easily conveyed.

In addition, although the equipment, furnishings and people have long since departed, the aspect of feeling is retained in the intact finishes (exposed concrete floors, walls, and ceilings, as well as structural mushroom columns) and voluminous spaces. These features and characteristics effectively relay the sense of place and the notable industrial history of the nationally prominent and culturally influential manufacturer who occupied this building for more than 40 years.

Lastly, the aspect of setting is retained in the surrounding neighborhood’s largely intact residential and industrial fabric. The Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory stands on its original site among a neighborhood that has changed very little over the last century. The complex remains surrounded by many of the same rowhouses that have stood since the late-nineteenth century and its relationship to the adjacent rail line, which once served the property via a direct siding, is intact.

Despite the loss of Blumenthal Brothers’ first factory building on the property, which was completed in 1912 and largely demolished by a previous owner in 2004, the remaining factory more than adequately conveys the significance of this once nationally prominent manufacturer. The existing building is far more visually prominent than the 1912 building was due to its greater height, soaring tower, and striking Art Deco-influenced architectural embellishments. By comparison, the 1912 building was commonplace in its design as seen in Figures 4 and 5. After the existing building was completed in 1922, the 1912 building was sandwiched in between it and the adjacent elevated rail line. For this reason, the 1912 building became significantly less visible from the primary approaches to the site along Margaret and James Streets. Additionally, it was only after the existing factory was built that the company began to invent and manufacture the brands of chocolate – including such iconic products as Raisinets, Goobers, and Sno-Caps, among others – that made the Blumenthals nationally recognized producers of chocolate and cocoa. In fact, it appears that the 1922 Main Building became the focus of production activity as soon as it was completed. As related by Bud Blumenthal, son of founding brother Joe Blumenthal, during his summers working in the plant between 1925 and 1929 he was forced to spend much of his time in the roasting room, mill room, press room, and mixing room where cocoa beans were processed in preparation for manufacture into finished chocolate products. That is, until he was allowed to learn how the various products were made “over in the new building, as it was called” suggesting that the 1922 Main Building was the center of production after 1922 while the original 1912 building was relegated to the storage and processing of raw ingredients.¹

¹ Mike Blumenthal, All You Ever Wanted to Know About the Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company of Philadelphia (Cary, NC: Mike Blumenthal, 2003). Available at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and Hagley Library.
8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

[X] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[C] Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

[X] 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 commemoratory property

G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance: INDUSTRY; ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance: 1922-1981

Significant Dates: N/A

Significant Person: N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Ballinger Company (architects and engineers)
Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory is significant under Criterion A in the area of Industry as a manufacturer of numerous iconic, nationally available chocolate products during the early twentieth century. During the 1920s, Blumenthal developed products like Goobers, Raisinetts, and Sno-caps specifically for the burgeoning movie theater vending trade, making these products familiar to millions of movie-going Americans for decades to come. Although Blumenthal Brothers was sold to Ward Foods in 1969 and its successor, the Ward Candy Company, went bankrupt in 1984, these well-known chocolate products are still produced today by Nestlé and continue to be widely available in theaters and stores. The Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory is also significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a major example of factory design by the Ballinger Company, one of Philadelphia’s best-known architectural firms of the day and one that specialized in industrial buildings. The overall period of significance begins in 1922, when the present factory was completed, and ends in 1981, when Bernhard S. Blumenthal retired as president of the Ward Candy Company and the company started to move their manufacturing operations to Milwaukee.

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Early Years of Blumenthal Brothers

The Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Company originated as the Blumenthal Brothers Extract Company, which was founded in 1900 by brothers Joseph, Aaron, and Abraham Blumenthal. Located at 48 North Third Street in the Old City neighborhood of the city, the brothers specialized in the manufacture of flavoring extracts for bottlers, distillers, bakers, and confectioners, and only in 1905 began to transition to chocolate liquors and cocoa powder. That same year, the three brothers were joined by two of the other Blumenthal Brothers, Jacob and Moses, and the company moved into larger quarters nearby at 345 North Third Street. A sixth brother, Meyer, also eventually joined the company.

In 1910, as Blumenthal Brothers’ sales increased because of a greater focus on more lucrative chocolate and cocoa products, the company acquired the roughly 2 ½ acre vacant plot of ground at Margaret and James Streets in the Bridesburg section of Northeast Philadelphia, embarking on the construction of a large new plant. Bridesburg, similar to Port Richmond and Kensington to the south, was a mixed industrial and residential area with convenient rail access and a population of working-class residents who would have been attracted to the company’s employment opportunities. Working with architects Stearns & Castor, the company built a long, two- and three-story factory that was completed and began to produce chocolate in 1912 (Figures 4-6). The extract business remained in Old City.

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2 This nineteenth-century building was demolished decades ago and the site is now occupied by a recently constructed, five-story residential building.
4 *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*, June 19, 1912, p. 400.
Figure 4: Sanborn map, 1920. This map shows the original 1912 building. In 1922, the existing Main Building was built to the south of the original building. In 2004, the original 1912 building was demolished.

Figure 5: View of the original 1912 building, looking north from across James Street shortly after construction was completed (Athenaeum of Philadelphia).
Figure 6: Circa 1920 advertisement showing the original 1912 building, looking northwest from James Street, showing the boiler house and smokestack at far right (Archives Center, National Museum of American History). The arched entryway seen in the boiler house remains today.

Until the Blumenthals began operations at the new Bridesburg plant, the chocolate and cocoa side of the business primarily supplied the food industry with unsweetened chocolate liquors and cocoa powder and did not offer a consumer line. In the much larger quarters of the new factory, however, the company began to invest in new types of machinery and in research and development that allowed them to expand the company’s offerings to finished chocolate treats intended for retail sale. The basis of this transition was the company’s move for the first time to the manufacture of sweetened chocolate that could be used for such products. One of the first consumer products produced by the company was the Almond Snap, which was a pyramidal shaped chocolate with an almond in the center. By the early 1920s, the company had dramatically expanded its consumer line to include the following products:5

- Moo-Cow: A solid chocolate piece shaped as a rectangular medallion with a cow on it
- Eat-it: A 4”-long chocolate bar
- Two for One: Two chocolate plaques with the words “Two for One” stamped into them
- Chocolate Cigar: Milk chocolate cigar shaped bar in a paper holder
- Octagonal Bar: An octagonal shaped chocolate with coconut

Within a few years, Blumenthal chocolates became widely available in both independent candy shops as well as national chains like Woolworth’s and Kresge’s. To market the products to the company’s growing national audience, Blumenthal Brothers set up sales offices in both New York and Chicago. As a result of rapidly increasing sales of its consumer line, which itself continued to grow in scope, the company

5 Blumenthal.
expanded its footprint at Margaret and James Street in 1922 when it built the three-story plant that exists today (Figures 7 and 8). Designed by the Philadelphia-based Ballinger Company, the striking Gothic-inspired Art Deco building became an important symbol of the company that appeared in both its advertising campaigns and sometimes on product packaging for several decades to come (Figure 9).\textsuperscript{6}

\textbf{Figure 7}: Sanborn map, 1951. The former railroad siding that historically served the site is located north of the original 1912 building.

\textsuperscript{6} Blumenthal.
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Figure 8: Circa 1922 photo of the new building, looking northeast from Margaret and James Streets (from the Athenaeum of Philadelphia).

Figure 9: Circa 1922 trade card signed by Meyer Blumenthal (from the collection of the Blumenthal Family).
The new plant not only allowed Blumenthal Brothers to increase its output of consumer products, but provided space for modern equipment that provided the opportunity for the company to produce varieties of chocolates not possible before. In 1925, the Blumenthals were approached by Jacob Beresin of the Berlo Vending Company who sought new types of chocolates to be sold in movie theaters. Beresin, a Philadelphian, is widely credited with being the first to sell popcorn and candy in theaters, pioneering the practice at the Metropolitan Opera House in Philadelphia in 1911. Working with Beresin, the Blumenthals developed Goobers (milk chocolate covered peanuts) in 1925 and Raisinetts (milk chocolate covered raisins) in 1926 (Figure 10). These two products were only made possible through the implementation of chocolate panning machines, which Blumenthal Brothers installed in the new plant after 1922. As explained by Joseph Blumenthal, Jr. (son of co-founder Joseph Blumenthal, Sr.), “Panning is the chocolate coating of centers in a revolving drum. As the drum revolves with center in it, chocolate is added slowly and solidifies by cooling as added, making a smooth coating.” Goobers and Raisinetts were among the first chocolate products developed specifically for sale in movie theaters, and they quickly became a staple concession among movie goers. Thanks to Berlo Vending, as well as the Sanitary Automatic Company and the Confection Cabinet Company, which followed Berlo into the burgeoning vending trade, Goobers and Raisinetts became available in thousands of movie theaters across the United States by the end of the decade. Both products remain available today in theaters and retail outlets, although they are now made by Nestlé, a major international chocolate manufacturer.8

During the 1920s, Blumenthal Brothers also continued to produce molded and dropped chocolate products, including Sno-Caps (small chocolate chips covered in white nonpareils), which were also developed for sale in movie theaters. The company maintained their line of chocolate and cocoa products for industry and began to develop new types of chocolate coatings.9 Working with the Union Ice Cream Company, for example, Blumenthal Brothers created the chocolate coating for the Eskimo Pie, a popular vanilla ice cream bar (Figure 11).10 Like Goobers and Raisinetts, both Sno-Caps and Eskimo Pies are still available today, although these products have long been produced by other companies.

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8 Blumenthal.
9 Blumenthal.
Blumenthal Brothers faced stiff competition throughout their long history as chocolate manufacturers. Pennsylvania was a center of chocolate manufacture during the early twentieth century, with several major producers located in Philadelphia itself. Among the Blumenthals’ major Philadelphia competitors were Whitman & Son and Wilbur & Sons, both of which had large factories near the Blumenthal’s original Old City location (Wilbur also had a plant in Lititz, Pennsylvania). With 518 and 1091 employees in 1925, respectively, Whitman and Wilbur were larger than Blumenthal by number of employees, Blumenthal having employed 214 men and women that year, increasing to about 500 by the early 1930s.11 Employment statistics do not tell the whole story, however, for these companies all produced different types of chocolate products that may have required varying levels of skilled workers. Although precise statistics are not available, it is possible that Blumenthal Brothers was just as (or more) productive and profitable as these “larger” companies. Whitman, for example, specialized in fancy boxed chocolates, while Wilbur was known for chocolate buds (similar to Hershey Kisses) and chocolate bars. Neither company developed products specifically for the movie theater market, which Blumenthal appears to have dominated throughout much of the first half of the twentieth century. The Hershey Chocolate Company, which had over 2500 employees in 1925, was the only other Pennsylvania-based chocolate manufacturer who appears to have successfully marketed their products to movie theaters. Like

11 The 1925 figures are taken from the *Fifth Industrial Directory of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, PA, 1925). The 1933 figure for Blumenthal is taken from *Census of Manufactures, 1933* (Washington, DC: Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1933).
Blumenthal’s line, Hershey’s Milk Duds, the famous milk-chocolate covered caramel bites, were developed in the late 1920s and were sold in theaters across the country.\(^{12}\)

While Blumenthal Brothers continued to produce Goobers, Raisinets, and Sno-caps en masse during the 1930s and beyond, the company continued to develop new products. One of the most popular was Malties, which were milk chocolate covered malted milk balls (Figure 12). Appearing around the same time as the Overland Candy Company’s “Giants,” the predecessor to today’s Whoppers, the candy became widely available in movie theaters. Blumenthal Brothers also bolstered its line of penny candy. Available in Kresge’s, Woolworth’s and other chain stores, which continued to be a significant source of revenue for the company, the most popular penny candy products during this period were the Bud (similar to a Hershey Kiss) as well as foil wrapped bars known as Richmilk and the Buddy Bar. Blumenthal Brothers also began to sell Goobers, Raisinets and Sno-caps in a penny candy size, broadening the reach of these products beyond just movie theaters. Aiding in the dramatically increased production was the Blumenthal’s installation of a modern air conditioning system in the building in 1934.\(^{13}\) As explained by Joseph Blumenthal, Jr., “Up to this time air had been cooled and used to solidify chocolate in the course of manufacture. Now the air was cooled and dehumidified, and used in an entire room,” rather than a specific phase in the manufacturing process. Blumenthal continued, “This has a beneficial effect on the quality of the chocolate and on the efficiency of packing and manufacturing.”\(^{14}\)

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\(^{12}\) Blumenthal.

\(^{13}\) “Air Conditioning a Large Chocolate Factory,” *Ice and Refrigeration* (September 1935), 107-109.

\(^{14}\) Blumenthal.
During the post-war period, as the second generation of Blumenthals (sons of the founding brothers) returned from the war, Blumenthal Brothers significantly expanded their physical presence across the country. Reaching a sales volume of over $10,000,000 by 1950, a substantial increase over the roughly $2,200,000 reported in 1933, the company was in good financial condition and in a position to grow. By the end of the decade, Blumenthal Brothers not only maintained sales offices in several cities beyond the original two in New York and Chicago, but operated numerous warehouses as far away as the west coast, where distribution facilities could be found in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle. These warehouses served over 4000 accounts that were managed by 30 salesmen.

Blumenthal Brothers also expanded their footprint at home in Philadelphia. In 1949, the company acquired a portion of the former Yale & Towne Manufacturing Company complex at 4530 Tacony Street, about two blocks to the west of their current plant (Yale and Towne moved into a large new facility in Northeast Philadelphia that year). The site contained two four-story manufacturing buildings and a one-story office building, and also had a rail siding from the adjacent Pennsylvania Railroad line. In terms of square footage, the two four-story buildings were similar in size to the existing plant, but according to a 1951 Sanborn fire insurance map were used only for warehouse and shipping purposes, perhaps serving as a local version of the distribution facilities that the company operated in other cities (Figure 13).

**Figure 13:** Sanborn map, 1951. This map shows the former Yale & Towne complex that Blumenthal Brothers acquired in 1949. As illustrated here, the two four-story buildings were used for storage and shipping, and the one-story building was used as an office.

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18 As explained elsewhere, all traces of the Yale & Towne complex, including the buildings owned by Blumenthal Brothers, were demolished in 2014 and replaced by a modern charter school.
As Blumenthal Brothers continued to grow nationally, they began to invest heavily in advertising. While the company had long been an advertiser in industry publications like *The Manufacturing Confectioner* and *Food Technology*, Blumenthal Brothers sought a more direct connection with consumers beginning in the 1950s. In 1957, the company worked with an advertising agency to film television commercials, which were aired in major metropolitan markets. As part of the same advertising push, the agency bought so-called “color cards,” or advertisements on the sides of buses and trolleys, which were placed on over 5,000 vehicles in 30 cities in the eastern United States. This campaign primarily focused on Raisinets and Goobers. In 1959, the company filmed additional commercials, which had six-to-eight-week placements in various Eastern and Mid-Western cities. Although these too were focused on Raisinets and Goobers, the “Video effectiveness is so high,” *Television Age* noted, “that the entire line of candy was selling in some markets.” Blumenthal Brothers continued to air television commercials periodically through the 1960s, bringing their long-admired brands directly into millions of American homes.

Although Blumenthal Brothers remained in a stable financial condition during the 1960s as both industrial and commercial sales thrived, the second generation of the family was beginning to lose interest in the business. By 1968, the Blumenthal cousins agreed to seek a buyer, finding one in a long-time customer, Ward Foods, a New York-based conglomerate primarily known for making “Tip Top Bread.” By the end of January, 1969, the sale, which included both of the company’s sites in Bridesburg, was completed and the company was renamed the Ward Candy Company the following May. Although Bernhard Blumenthal remained president of the company until 1981, the rest of the Blumenthals neither had involvement nor a financial interest in the running of the business. In 1981, the year Bernhard Blumenthal departed, the company was acquired by the Chicago-based Terson Company, which started to relocate the manufacturing operation to a plant in Milwaukee. Although it remained in operation, the former Blumenthal Brothers factory played an increasingly minor role in production and in 1984 the company went bankrupt. The former Ward operations were subsequently acquired by Nestlé who moved production of all the remaining Blumenthal/Ward brands to manufacturing sites located in other cities. Since that time, the Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory buildings have had no permanent use, although they did host flea markets through the early 2000s. As explained above, the original 1912 building (located north of the existing three-story Main Building) was largely demolished by a previous owner around 2004. The warehouse and shipping facility on Tacony Street was completely demolished around 2014 and the site is now occupied by a recently constructed charter school. Nestlé continues to produce the Blumenthal Brothers’ three most iconic products to this day.

The Architecture of the Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory

The Main Building of the Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory was designed by the Ballinger Company of Philadelphia. The history of the Ballinger Company, which became one of the most prolific architectural and engineering firms in early twentieth-century Philadelphia, begins with the partnership formed by architects Walter F. Ballinger and Emile G. Perrot in 1901. Prior to joining up with Perrot, Ballinger was widely recognized as a successful businessman, architect and engineer, though his formal training was only in business. At the age of 22, Ballinger began his training as a bookkeeper, stenographer, clerk and later architect at the Philadelphia firm of Geissinger & Hales in 1889. Ballinger went on to form a partnership with Hales in 1895 and the resulting firm of Hales & Ballinger served as a

23 Blumenthal.
foundation for Ballinger’s later practice. Hales & Ballinger’s commissions concentrated on commercial and industrial buildings and maintained an emphasis on architectural engineering with a technical approach to design, a tradition continued by the successor firms of Ballinger & Perrot and The Ballinger Company.24 In their six years of partnership, Hales & Ballinger amassed an impressive number of commissions, primarily factories and their associated powerhouses, principally in Philadelphia and the surrounding area.25

In 1901, Emile G. Perrot, the chief draftsman of Hales & Ballinger, joined Ballinger to form a new partnership that lasted until 1920. Unlike Ballinger, Perrot received a more formal education in architecture at the Spring Garden Institute, the Franklin Institute, and the University of Pennsylvania.26 Ballinger & Perrot were immediately successful in the early twentieth century, amassing commissions throughout the Mid-Atlantic for the design of hundreds of factories, entire mills, and warehouses during the first half of the twentieth century.27 In 1920, Ballinger bought out Perrot’s interest in the firm and established The Ballinger Company, which survives to the present day (it is now known simply as Ballinger). The Ballinger Company also was one of the few firms in Philadelphia to offer both architecture and engineering services to clients.28

The Ballinger Company and its predecessors began experimenting with reinforced concrete technology in 1902, about the same time as William Steele & Sons, another local architectural and engineering firm. Both firms became well-known as full-service, one-stop shops offering architectural design, engineering, and construction of reinforced concrete buildings for industrial and commercial use. William Steele & Sons and Ballinger & Perrot established similar scientific and highly rational formulas for the layout and production flows of modern manufacturing spaces. Both firms specialized in factory buildings that would be fireproof, safe, and efficient, prioritizing proper ventilation, planned fire towers in strategic locations, modern sprinkler systems with pressurized water tanks on the roof, bathrooms that were centrally located on each floor, modern freight elevators, and automatic fire suppression systems.29

In terms of exterior appearance, however, the factory commissions of Steele and Ballinger significantly diverged. As demonstrated by dozens of industrial complexes located across the urban landscape of Philadelphia, the factories designed and built by William Steele & Sons between 1910 and 1930 were nearly always strictly geometric in their design. Presaging European modernism, the stylistic form of these factories prioritized function and a frank use of modern materials over all else; they featured sharply rectilinear facades with an exposed grid of reinforced concrete, red brick spandrels below the large multi-light windows, and a complete absence of ornamentation (Figure 14). As explained by architectural historian Betsey Hunter Bradley, this standardization of factory design “depended on the building blocks

25 Building upon the success of Hales and Ballinger, the successor firms were awarded impressive commissions that included the headquarters for the Victor Talking Machine Corporations (subsequently RCA), the first facility for the Joseph M. Campbell Company (now Campbell Soup Co.), and the design of one of the first “computer rooms” for the ENIAC at the University of Pennsylvania. Tatman and Moss, 327-330.
26 National Register Nomination for the Wesley Building, Philadelphia County, PA, Section 8, 3 (National Register of Historic Places #84003581).
28 Ballinger Co., “Firm History.”
29 National Register Nomination for Snellenburg’s Clothing Factory, Section 8, 3 (National Register of Historic Places #03000725).
of industrial buildings – the bay area between interior columns. Repetition of bays of uniform size resulted in the regular, rectangular forms of industrial buildings, as well as a similarity in the interior space from building to building.”30

Figure 14: A typical factory design by William Steele & Sons: The Reyburn Manufacturing Company at 31st and Allegheny Avenue in Philadelphia, built 1921-29 and pictured around 1930 (from the Pep Boys Company).31 The rectilinear grid of concrete is a character-defining feature of the many dozens of Steele-designed factories built in Philadelphia and elsewhere between about 1910 and 1930.

Structurally, and in terms of interior spaces, Steele and Ballinger factory buildings were, in fact, virtually identical. Both utilized a grid of reinforced concrete mushroom columns that are expressed on the exterior by repetitive window bays. Unlike William Steele & Sons, however, Ballinger & Perrot and later the Ballinger Company sought to imbue the company’s factory designs with a more expressive architectural form, one influenced by an emerging industrial aesthetic that was influenced by components of traditional Gothic architecture and anticipated later developments in the Art Deco style.

Ballinger’s factory designs were influenced in part by the work of Detroit architect Albert Kahn, whose firm became the largest architectural practice in the United States specializing in factory buildings during the early twentieth century. Until the automobile industry created a demand for more factories after 1900, “architects had considered factory design beneath them, and the task had been relegated to junior draughtsmen,” in the words of architectural historian W. Hawkins Ferry.32 But, as further explained by Ferry, “the automobile industry had created a new spirit, and manufacturers were demanding efficient, well lighted and attractive plants.”33 Kahn, understanding that the application of historical ornament would be an inappropriate means of improving the appearance of factories, created a way of articulating (rather than ornamenting) facades that rather grew out of the architecture, finding, as Ferry points out,

31 The building was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2022 (National Register of Historic Places #100007771).
33 Ferry, 12.
“values in the forms engendered by new techniques and functional considerations.”34 In many of Kahn’s industrial works completed before 1925, this often meant the use of stylized or abstracted geometrical ornament in strategic locations that aided in expressing the underlying reinforced concrete structure.

![Figure 15: A view of the Packard Motor Corp. Building in Philadelphia, designed by architect Albert Kahn of Detroit whose later factory work influenced Ballinger (from the March 1913 edition of *The Brickbuilder*).](image)

Although primarily known for his work on automobile plants for Packard, Ford, and others in Michigan, Kahn frequently took on large commissions in cities across the Untied States. In Philadelphia, Kahn’s best known works are the Packard Motor Corporation Building at 317-21 North Broad Street, completed in 1910; and the Ford Motor Company Service Building at 2700 North Broad Street, completed in 1914 (Figures 15 and 16).35 Although the Packard building is more traditional in its exterior treatment, containing a richly textured façade of white terra cotta and a Classical cornice, the later Ford building is more representative of Kahn’s later thinking on about the relationship between structure and ornamentation. With its attenuated brick piers, which terminate at stylized terra cotta caps (not a traditional cornice), as well as the restrained, geometric motifs found elsewhere, the Ford building speaks to the modernity that the automobile industry represented during this period. A similar approach to factory design would soon be applied to industrial buildings of all types.

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34 Ferry, 11.
35 The Packard Motor Corporation Building was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 (National Register of Historic Places #80003616). To date, the Ford Motor Company Service Building has not been evaluated for National Register eligibility.
Kahn’s close attention to the aesthetic quality of the factory influenced a host of architects nationally, particularly a group of Chicago designers of whom George C. Nimmons was one of the best known. In 1918 and 1919, Nimmons published a seven-part series in *The Architectural Record* in which the architect expounded on all aspects of the design and construction of factory buildings, including their appropriate stylistic expression. In his “Modern Industrial Plants, Part IV” in the February 1919 edition of *The Architectural Record*, Nimmons wrote that “the design must grow out of what is essential to the objects of the plant.” For this reason, Nimmons looked to the Gothic style for inspiration, a stylistic treatment that he himself employed in a large number of his factory designs and one in which ornamentation was more organically derived than a standard Renaissance or Beaux Arts-style building. Common among these Gothic inspired works, Nimmons wrote, “are piers marked on the exterior of the building…similar to buttresses, and also walls continued up without projecting cornices and terminated with ornamental copings,” similar to crenellation.36 Nimmons’ factories also typically featured rooftop water tanks enclosed in towers treated similarly to (or, often, even more ornately than) the primary façade below, a design element which Betsey Hunter Bradley likens to the towers in Gothic cathedrals.37

Like Kahn, Nimmons’ work and writings had a significant impact on industrial architecture across the United States, including in Philadelphia. In 1919, Nimmons himself designed the enormous Eastern Store of Sears, Roebuck & Company, a regional administrative, mail order, and distribution center for the company, which was located on Roosevelt Boulevard in Northeast Philadelphia (Figure 17). Completed in 1920, the complex was perhaps one of the largest and best examples of his industrial work, featuring all of the elements described in his 1919 *Architectural Record* essay in addition to a soaring, 14-story

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37 Bradley, 219.
The Sears complex was demolished in 1994. In 1929, just a few years after the Blumenthal Brothers plant was completed, local architect Clarence E. Wunder designed a large factory for I. Fischman & Sons, a soda water manufacturer, at the corner of Erie Avenue and G Street in North Philadelphia (Figure 18). Although the vast majority of the building is only two stories in height, an immense central tower with ornate Gothic stonework rises to more than double the height of the main block, closely following the Nimmons example. In 1932, the Fischman plant was acquired by Cuneo Press, Inc., a printing company based in Chicago for use as a branch printing facility. Unlike the Sears complex, the Fischman/Cuneo building remains largely intact today.

Figure 17: A view of the Eastern Store of Sears Roebuck & Company in Northeast Philadelphia, designed by Chicago architect George C. Nimmons and built 1919-21 (from the August 1921 edition of The Architectural Record). Nimmons’ industrial work, which incorporated certain elements of Gothic architecture, heavily influenced Ballinger’s factory designs, of which Blumenthal Brothers is highly representative. The complex was demolished in 1994.

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The Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory exemplifies the Ballinger Company’s approach to factory design during the period between about 1910 and 1925, demonstrating the influence of Kahn and particularly of Nimmons, whose work was known to Ballinger either first-hand or from the architectural periodicals in which it was often featured. In fact, the industrial work of Ballinger was often featured alongside that of Kahn and Nimmons in national architectural periodical so the day, including Architecture and Architectural Record. With the vertical emphasis of the buttress-like piers, which terminate above the parapet with stylized geometric caps in terra cotta to create a crenellation effect, and the soaring water tower at the center of the James Street side, the building evidently pays homage to the Gothic inspired factories of Nimmons. The Sears Roebuck store, having been built just two years prior to Blumenthal Brothers, would have been a particularly attractive model for Ballinger, although Ballinger had featured similar towers in earlier projects as discussed below. The Blumenthal Brothers building and other factory designs by Ballinger, discussed below, were not slavish imitations of Nimmons’ work, however. Where Ballinger’s factory projects differed was in their removal of most additive detail – such as the ornate Gothic door surrounds and tower ornamentation present in many Nimmons-designed factories – to create a more tectonic interpretation of Gothic form that packed a visual punch without the expense of superfluous stonework or terra cotta. This approach, which in some ways was a streamlined interpretation of Nimmons’ so-called “Industrial Gothic”, had much in common with what would soon become known as the Art Deco style.

The Blumenthal Brothers plant also clearly conveys the “modern industrial spirit,” in the words of engineer Willard Case, that many of William Steele & Sons’ factories of the same period simply cannot
match. In the early 1920s, Case wrote that a greater architectural emphasis in industrial building design – as opposed to the purely scientific, engineering approach of William Steele & Sons – would lead to a “modern industrial spirit” that conveyed a “joy in work, equality of labor – brain and manual – in the rights to the most comfortable of working conditions and surrounding and pride in the business of which we were a part.” The Blumenthal Brothers tower, in particular, while it did serve a useful purpose in housing the water tank, could also have had a secondary purpose of inspiring pride in the company’s workers. In this way, and because the building became a symbol of the company, which often used images of it in advertising and sometimes on product packaging, Ballinger’s design became more than simply a shelter for manufacturing activity.

![Image](image-url)

**Figure 19**: The Strawbridge & Clothier Warehouse in Philadelphia, designed by Ballinger & Perrot and built in 1918 (from The Ballinger Company, *Buildings for Commerce and Industry*, 1924). The building was listed in the National Register for its significance in the area of Commerce in 2018 (National Register of Historic Places #100003137).

The Ballinger Company designed numerous large factories in Philadelphia and other northeastern cities during the 1910s and 20s, many of which follow the Nimmons model, including the application of only the simplest of ornamentation as well as prominent central towers. Apart from the Blumenthal Brothers factory, one of the best Philadelphia examples is the Strawbridge & Clothier Warehouse at 9th and Poplar Streets, built in 1918 and individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2018 for its

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significance in the area of commerce (Figure 19).\textsuperscript{40} Outside Philadelphia, the Victor Talking Machine Company, built just across the Delaware River in Camden, New Jersey in 1909, and the Astor Cap Closure Corporation in Long Island City, New York, built in c. 1915, are two other prominent examples (Figures 20 and 21). The Victor Talking Machine Company was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2002 for its significance in the area of Architecture.\textsuperscript{41} All three buildings, which have stylized pier caps and parapets, repeat the central tower design that is so effective in drawing the eye toward the Blumenthal Chocolate Company Building.

\textbf{Figure 20}: The Victor Talking Machine Company (Nipper Building) in Camden, NJ, designed by Ballinger & Perrot and built in 1909 (from The Ballinger Company, \textit{Buildings for Commerce and Industry}, 1924). The building was individually listed in the National Register for its significance in the areas of Commerce and Architecture in 2002 (National Register of Historic Places #02001253).

\textsuperscript{40} National Register Nomination, Strawbridge & Clothier Department Store Warehouse, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, National Register #10003137.
\textsuperscript{41} National Register Nomination, Building 17, RCA Victor Company, Camden Plant, Camden, New Jersey, National Register #02001253.
Numerous other examples of Ballinger’s industrial work can still be found in Philadelphia and elsewhere in Pennsylvania, although some have been demolished or significantly altered in recent decades. Apart from the Strawbridge and Victor Talking Machine examples, the only two local Ballinger-designed industrial buildings that appear to be individually listed in the National Register are the eight-story Goodman Brothers & Hinlein Company Building at 1238 Callowhill Street, built in 1909, and the ten-story Smaltz Building at 315 North 12th Street, built in 1911 (Figures 22 and 23).42 Both buildings are located in the Callowhill neighborhood just north of Center City Philadelphia. The Goodman Brothers building features some of the same façade elements as Ballinger’s later, much larger projects – including tall brick piers and simple ornamentation in contrasting limestone – but is a fairly prosaic work with very little façade articulation compared to the Blumenthal Brothers plant or the other three Ballinger factories discussed above. The Smaltz Building, though impressive due to its tall profile, is somewhat of an outlier among Ballinger’s work. It features a comparatively severe treatment of rusticated concrete piers that lack the verticality of the firm’s more successful factory designs. Both buildings remain standing, although the Smaltz Building was dramatically altered around 2012 with the addition of a new façade of metal panels, which completely obscure the historic concrete walls.

The only other known National Register-listed industrial buildings by Ballinger & Perrot or The Ballinger Company are not individually listed, but rather are contributing resources in large, multiple-building complexes. These include a seven-story building (Building #11) for the Reading Hardware Company in Reading, Pennsylvania, built in 1924-25, and numerous buildings for the Edward G. Budd Manufacturing Company in North Philadelphia, built between about 1915 and 1926 (Figures 24 and 25).
Figure 24: A view of Building 11 at the Reading Hardware Company as it appeared in the late 1920s (from the Athenaeum of Philadelphia). The building was designed by The Ballinger Company and built in 1924-25. The building was listed in the National Register as part of the larger Reading Hardware complex in 1997. The building remains largely intact today but is vacant.

Figure 25: A view of one of the Ballinger-designed buildings at the Budd Manufacturing complex in North Philadelphia, designed by The Ballinger Company and built between 1915 and 1926 (from The Ballinger Company, Buildings for Commerce and Industry, published in 1924). The building was listed in the National Register as part of the larger Budd Manufacturing complex in 2007. The building remains largely intact today but is vacant.
Although both the Reading and Budd examples feature some of the characteristics found at the Blumenthal Brothers plant, particularly in their attenuated piers and articulation of the parapet, their exteriors are dominated by the grids of the expressed reinforced concrete structure. In this way, the two buildings are much closer in appearance to the highly standardized and more planar designs of William Steele & Sons’ factories and do not reflect the firm’s earlier thinking on the appropriate architectural expression of industrial buildings. For example, both lack the dramatic central towers that give the Blumenthal Brothers plant and the other examples discussed above such visual prominence. Both have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places as contributing resources in their larger, respective complexes in 1997 and 2007, respectively.43

43 National Register Nomination, American Viscose Plant Historic District, Roanoke, Virginia, National Register #100004260; National Register Nomination, Philadelphia Quartermaster Depot, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, National Register #09001212.

Figure 26: Aerial view of the American Viscose plant in Roanoke, Virginia, designed by Ballinger between about 1915 and 1950. As seen here, vast portions of the property were covered with single-story buildings with “Super-Span” sawtooth roofs.
Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory
Philadelphia County, PA

**Figure 27** (right): Birds-eye view of the American Viscose plant in Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania, designed by Ballinger between about 1915 and 1950. As seen here, vast portions of the property were covered with single-story buildings with “Super-Span” sawtooth roofs.

Among the many large, sprawling industrial complexes that Ballinger & Perrot and the Ballinger Company were solely or largely responsible for designing – as opposed to single-building or small complexes – only two appear to be listed in the National Register, including the American Viscose Company Plant in Roanoke, Virginia, listed in 2019, and the Quartermaster Depot in Philadelphia, listed in 2010.44 American Viscose had long been a major client of Ballinger who between about 1915 and 1950 designed dozens of buildings for the company at their two largest plants (along with worker housing) in Roanoke and in Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania (Figures 26 and 27). Although several buildings at the Marcus Hook plant survived as of early 2022, they were recently slated for demolition. In Roanoke, the Viscose plant survives largely intact. With some exceptions, both sites consist largely of low-slung buildings with Ballinger’s patented “Super-Span” sawtooth roofs, a type of construction with roof trusses that permitted column-free interior floor space. Invented by Ballinger around 1920, Super-Span roof buildings typically had little of the exterior articulation of the firm’s taller factory buildings, instead being defined by their characteristic sawtooth profile.45 In Philadelphia, the Ballinger-designed Quartermaster Depot reflects a shift in the firm’s design philosophy as the twentieth century progressed. Built largely between 1939 and 1942, Ballinger’s work at the Depot consisted primarily of sharp, rectilinear brick buildings with only the sparsest of Art Deco and Moderne-style ornamentation, a significant departure from the firm’s work during the 1910s and 20s (Figure 28).

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44 National Register Nomination, Reading Hardware Company, Reading, Pennsylvania (National Register of Historic Places #97000516).
45 For more on the “Super-Span” roof system, see Bradley, 193.
Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory

Philadelphia County, PA

Figure 28: One of numerous buildings designed by Ballinger at the Philadelphia Quartermaster Depot between 1939 and 1942 (Powers & Company, 2009).
9. Major Bibliographical References


Nimmons, George C. “Modern Industrial Plants, Part IV.” *The Architectural Record* (February 1919): 163-166

Periodicals (Newspapers and Trade Journals)*:
- *The Billboard*
- *Ice and Refrigeration*
- *Nashville Banner*
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*
- *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*
- *Television Age*

*see footnotes for specific citations

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
- X preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
  - previously listed in the National Register
  - previously determined eligible by the National Register
  - designated a National Historic Landmark
  - recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
  - recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #
  - recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

Primary location of additional data:
- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
  - Name of repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA
10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property  ~2.2 acres

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
  Latitude:  40.008810  Longitude: -75.075750

Verbal Boundary Description
The boundary of the property is shown on the accompanying map entitled “Figure 2: Site Plan with National Register Boundary.”

Boundary Justification
The proposed National Register Boundary corresponds to the historic and current parcel, which are the same, with the addition of the sidewalks along Margaret Street and James Street (the sidewalks are included due to the frequent loading and unloading activity that took place on these sides of the factory during the period of significance). As discussed above in Section 7, Blumenthal Brothers owned a second property to the west, across Margaret Street, which currently has the address of 2201-03 Orthodox Street (Orthodox Street is the western boundary). Blumenthal Brothers never built anything on this property, and no evidence has been found to suggest the company used the property for any purpose. In fact, Blumenthal Brothers sold the property to Kopperman Industries in October 1959, ten years before the end of the nominated property’s period of significance (see Philadelphia Deed Book C.A.B., vol. 1202, page 312). Prior to the sale, Blumenthal Brothers sought zoning approval for industrial use on the property “for a proposed purchaser” who intended to build a factory there to manufacture metal products, presumably Kopperman Industries as they were a known manufacturer of metal pipes and plates (Philadelphia Zoning Application 65850-F, 6/24/59). Because there is no known evidence that Blumenthal Brothers ever used the property, and because they sold it well within the nominated property’s period of significance, the property has been excluded from the National Register Boundary.

As explained in Section 8, Blumenthal Brothers’ first home was at 48 North 3rd Street in the Old City section of Center City Philadelphia. This nineteenth-century building was demolished decades ago and the site is now occupied by a recently constructed, five-story residential building. The company also owned a warehouse and shipping facility at 4530 Tacony Street in Philadelphia, just a few blocks west of the manufacturing plant. This facility, which Blumenthal Brothers acquired in 1949, was part of the former Yale & Towne Manufacturing Company complex, all remnants of which were demolished around 2014. A charter school was subsequently built on the site.

Form Prepared By
name/title: Kevin McMahon, Senior Associate
organization: Powers & Company, Inc.
street & number: 1315 Walnut Street, Suite 1717
city or town: Philadelphia  state: PA  zip code: 19107
e-mail: kevin@powersco.net  telephone: (215) 636-0192  date: August 30, 2022

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:
Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory
Philadelphia County, PA

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

**Photo Log**
Name of Property: Blumenthal Brothers Chocolate Factory  
City or Vicinity: Philadelphia  
County: Philadelphia  
State: PA  
Photographer: Kevin McMahon  
Date Photographed: March 2, 2022

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<td>12.</td>
<td>Blumenthal Brothers advertisement in the <em>Philadelphia Inquirer</em>, June 3, 1951</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Sanborn map, 1951 showing the former Yale &amp; Towne complex that Blumenthal Brothers acquired in 1949.</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>A view of the I. Fischman &amp; Sons factory in North Philadelphia.</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>The Victor Talking Machine Company (Nipper Building) in Camden, NJ.</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>The Astor Cap Closure Corporation Building in Long Island City, NY.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>A view of Building 11 at the Reading Hardware Company.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>A view of one of the Ballinger-designed buildings at the Budd Manufacturing complex in North Philadelphia</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>One of numerous designed by Ballinger at the Philadelphia Quartermaster Depot.</td>
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<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>USGS Map</td>
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<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Site plan with photo key.</td>
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<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>First floor plan with photo key.</td>
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<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Second floor plan with photo key.</td>
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<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>Third floor plan with photo key.</td>
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</table>
Figure 29 – USGS Map excerpt
Figure 30: Site plan with photo key.

Figure 31: First floor plan with photo key.
Figure 32: Second floor plan with photo key.

Figure 33: Third floor plan with photo key.

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.