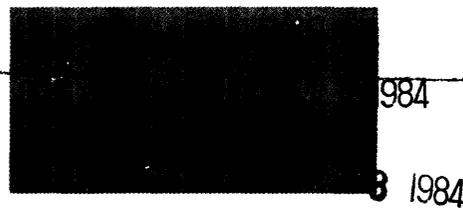


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections



1. Name

historic Berger Building

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 164 N. 8th Ave., North N/A not for publication

city, town Nashville N/A vicinity of congressional district

state Tennessee code 047 county Davidson code 037

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" 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	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input 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 John Connally, et. al.

street & number c/o 164 Eighth Avenue, North

city, town Nashville N/A vicinity of state Tennessee

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Davidson County Courthouse

street & number Public Square

city, town Nashville state Tennessee

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Metropolitan Davidson County Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Metropolitan Nashville Historical Commission

Nashville Tennessee 37203
city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Berger Building is a two-story masonry structure constructed in 1926. It faces Eighth Avenue, North in downtown Nashville and has been utilized for retail sales and offices since its construction. The upper facade is intact and exhibits its original design. The lower facade was slightly altered when the original three storefronts were consolidated into a single central entrance and the two flanking entries were replaced with plate glass display windows.

The Berger Building was designed by Nashville architect O. J. Billis and the original drawings have been preserved and illustrates that the majority of the original design remains intact. The storefront consists of three large bays with plate glass windows on wood frame kick plates. The original recessed central entrance with a coffered ceiling is still intact as is the side entrance which leads to the second floor. The original storefront appears to have been altered during construction or soon after due to the presence of black carrara glass over the sidewalk level kick plates. Above each storefront is a metal awning transom bar and attached canvas awnings. Surmounting the transom bar are five-pane transoms of original prism glass, a ridged translucent material.

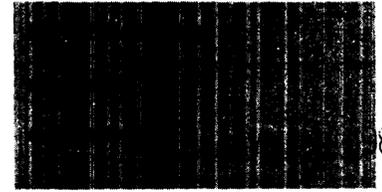
The upper facade is a detailed example of the 1920s Commercial style and its terra cotta decoration is unique among small downtown buildings. In the brick above the storefront are five rectangular panels with white glazed terra cotta corner blocks. These rectangular panels correspond to the five one-over-one sash windows set within each bay. Large white terra cotta corner blocks join the windows and link the brick soldier course lintels. The five windows are also connected by a continuous stone sill.

Above each window on the upper facade are rectangular brick panels with inset green, glazed terra cotta with diamond designs. Each bay on the upper facade is separated by a brick pilaster with decorative terra cotta capitals. These capitals feature white glazed rectangular blocks, terra cotta lion heads and floral designs. The cornice is composed of two horizontal bands of white, glazed terra cotta tiles separated by nine brick courses. The central bay has an elliptical cornice containing the inscription "Berger Building" which is produced by raised letters on terra cotta panels. Separating the two words is a floral cartouche with the date "1926" inscribed on the interior panel.

The Berger Building adjoins the party wall of the adjacent building on the south and has a blank masonry wall on the north facade. On the rear or east facade is an offset entrance and original one-over-one sash windows on the upper facade. This facade does not have any decorative detailing. Behind the building on the east facade is also a small parking area.

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

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Continuation sheet Berger Building

Item number 7

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The interior of the Berger Building has not been significantly altered. The first floor retains its original pressed tin ceilings and wooden floors. Separating the open floor space and offices are original frame and glass double doors. On the second floor the original plan of the building is intact with a central core of offices which open onto an encircling hallway. Offices are also located along the exterior walls. This plan is intact although some new partition walls have been added in recent remodeling. The offices retain their original opaque glass windows, chair rail and door and window surrounds. The bathrooms have also retained their original fixtures and octagonal floor tile.

The Berger Building stands as one of Nashville's most ornate and intact small buildings. Few changes have occurred to the exterior and interior and its terra cotta decoration is some of the finest remaining in the city.

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

Specific dates 1926 **Builder/Architect** O.J. Billis

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Located on Eighth Avenue, North in Nashville, Tennessee, the Berger Building is an architecturally significant property of the early 20th century. The building has been nominated under criteria C because of its distinguished architectural characteristics. The Berger Building is the last remaining small scale 1920s commercial building in the downtown area of Nashville which has retained its original features. Only minor alterations have occurred to the building since its construction and it continues to be used as commercial and office space.

The Berger Building is associated with Nashville's building boom of the 1920s and it is one of the last of the smaller commercial structures constructed in this decade. The use of extensive terra cotta decoration on the facade was typical of many buildings of this time period but the majority of these have given way to larger structures in the downtown area.

In 1925 Samuel Berger purchased several adjacent lots on Eighth Avenue, North to construct a two-story building. Berger was one of Nashville's leading merchants in the early 20th century. Berger settled in Nashville during the late 1890s and operated several clothing stores in the downtown area. By 1901 he was employed as an officer in the Loveman Clothing Company which was one of the first department stores in Nashville. By the early 1920s Berger had become president of the company which was renamed Loveman, Berger and Teitlebaum Incorporated.

Berger did not construct the Eighth Avenue building for his business but instead built it as an investment. The architect for the building was O.J. Billis of Nashville who was active in residential architecture. Billis designed many apartment houses and residences in Nashville during the 1920s but the Berger building is one of his few known commercial structures. The original drawings of the building have survived and show the original facade of the building to be relatively unchanged.

The design for the Berger Building incorporated many decorative elements. On the first floor black carrara glass was used on the bulkheads below the plate glass windows. The plate glass windows were

9. Major Bibliographical References

Davidson County Deed Records, 1925-1926.

Frank, Fedora. Beginnings on Market Street. Nashville, Tennessee: Private Printing, 1976.

Herndon, Joseph. "Architects in Tennessee until 1930, A Bibliographical Dictionary." New York: Columbia University, 1975.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .25 acre

Quadrangle name Nashville West, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	5	1	9	5	1	0	4	0	0	1	6	5	1	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 The nominated property is bounded on the west by Eighth Avenue, North, on the east by an alley and on the north and south by adjoining property lines. This includes the land on which the building sits and is all the property historically associated with the Berger Building.

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 Philip Thomason

organization Thomason and Associates

date August 1984

street & number 1700 Hayes Street, Suite 202

telephone 615/320-5732

city or town Nashville

state Tennessee

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.

Deputy

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert L. Hays

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

date 10/3/84

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 11-8-84

for Melvyn Byer
Keeper of the National Register

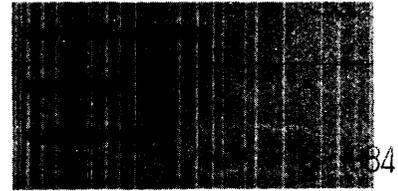
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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



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Continuation sheet Berger Building

Item number 8

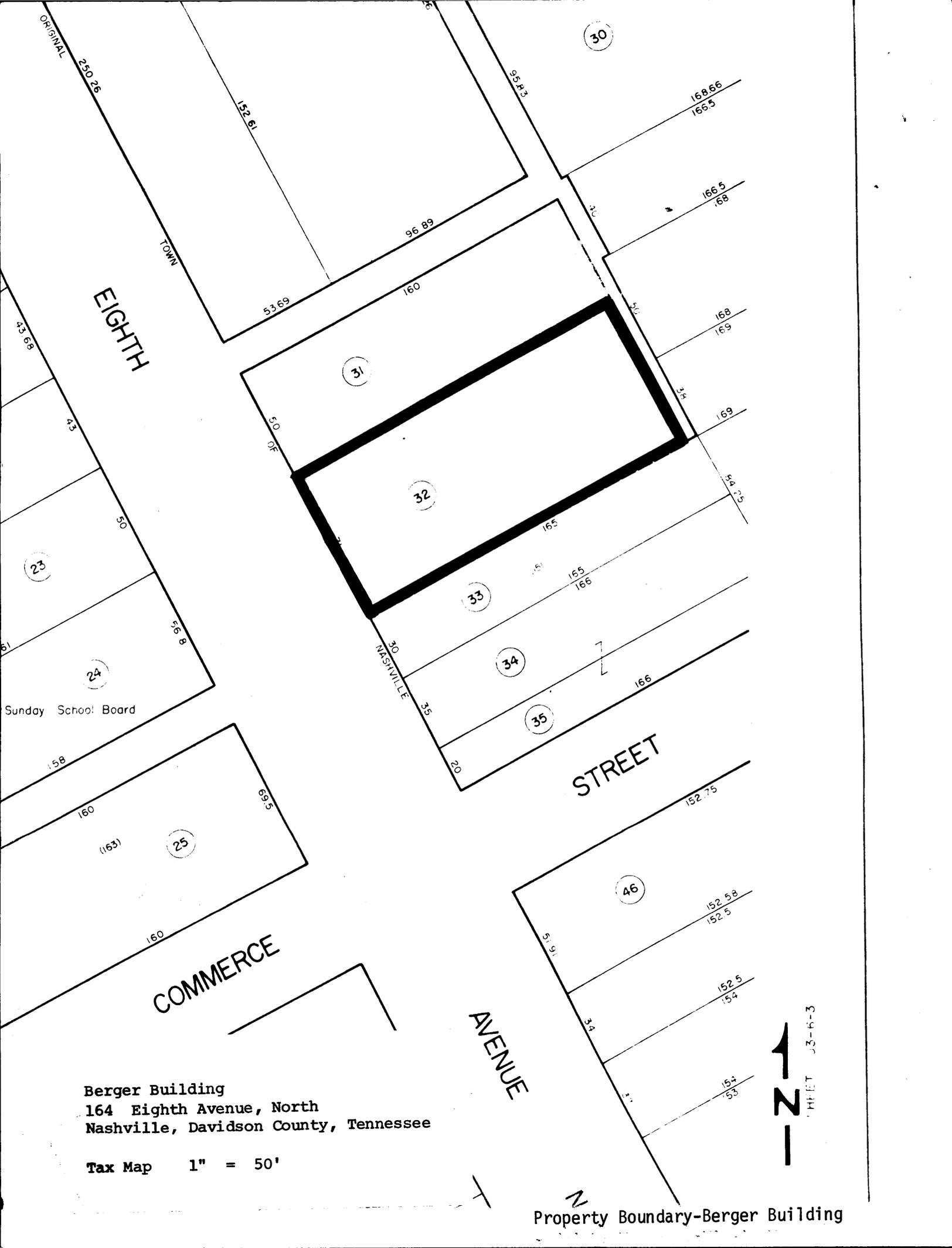
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divided by vertical copper bars and in the transom sheet prism glass was installed. On the upper facade extensive terra cotta decoration was used. Both green and white colored terra cotta was installed in rectangular and classical designs. At the top of each pilaster is a white terra cotta lion's head and there are thirty rectangular brick and terra cotta panels on the facade. At the top of the building is an elliptical pediment with a terra cotta name plate and a decorative cartouche with an inscribed date of "1926".

The interior of the building was designed to provide commercial space on the first floor and office space on the second floor. The drawings for the building show the storefront with an entrance on each of the three bays but this seems to have been replaced with a single central entrance during construction. The first floor contains open floor space with small rooms at the rear of the building. On the first floor is a decorative pressed tin ceiling, hardwood floors and double french doors leading to the rear offices. A side door at the north corner of the building leads to a stairway and the second floor. On the second story are separate office spaces displaying frame and opaque glass doors, a chair rail and hardwood floors.

Upon its completion the Berger Building was one of the more ornate small buildings in the downtown area and it quickly filled with tenants. The earliest tenants in the building included the Smith Premier Typewriter Company on the first floor and various loan offices and church organizations on the second floor. Many other businesses have since utilized space in the building with piano companys occupying the first floor for over thirty years.

Upon Samuel Berger's death in 1934 the building was willed to Vanderbilt University which retained the property until 1954 when it was sold to the family of the present owners. Since the building's construction very few changes have occurred to the building and it has retained its original character especially on the main facade. The significance of the building was recognized in 1982 when it was to be impacted by the proposed Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project. After review the Berger Building was deemed eligible for the National Register by the Metropolitan Nashville and Tennessee Historical Commissions. Because of its elaborate terra cotta decoration and integrity of design, the Berger Building is a significant structure in the downtown area.



ORIGINAL 250.26

TOWN

EIGHTH

COMMERCE

AVENUE

STREET

NASHVILLE

Berger Building
 164 Eighth Avenue, North
 Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee

Tax Map 1" = 50'

Property Boundary-Berger Building



PLAT J3-6-3

30

31

32

33

34

35

46

23

24

25

Sunday School Board

168.66
166.5

166.5
168

168
169

169

34.25

165
166

166

152.75

152.58
152.5

152.5
154

154
153

95.43

152.61

96.89

53.69

160

50 OF

43.68

43

50

56.8

158

160

(163)

69.5

160

51.91

34

11