



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

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Schlitz Brewing Company Washington Branch and National Geographic Society Warehouse

Another names/site number: Lemuel Penn Center

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

## 2. Location

Street & number: 326 R Street NE (prior: 329 Randolph Place NE and 300 R Street NE)

City or town: Washington State: DC County: \_\_\_\_\_

Not for Publication:  Vicinity:

## 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

<p>_____  <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
<p>_____  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	
<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____  <b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
<p>_____  <b>Title:</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

---

#### 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

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/Manufacturing facility

COMMERCE/TRADE/Warehouse

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT/Government Office (storage)

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque Revival

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Commercial Style

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, stone, steel, concrete

## Narrative Description

### Summary Paragraph

The Schlitz Brewing Company Washington Branch/National Geographic Society Warehouse complex in Square 3574 incorporates two principal structures, the Schlitz Brewing Company bottling works (facing Randolph Place NE) and the National Geographic Society Warehouse (facing Third and R Streets NE). The Schlitz section, constructed 1907-1908, is a two-story, brick-walled, steel-frame and concrete-slab building. The National Geographic section, constructed in 1924, is a four-story, reinforced-concrete building with a one-story wing. Its otherwise brick-faced façade has cut fieldstone on portions of its lower story. The complex is a composite of these original buildings and their additions. Additions include two single-story connectors between the buildings, the first constructed in 1913, and the second in 1937. An addition to the east façade of the Schlitz plant dates to 1920.

The Schlitz and National Geographic buildings retain a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The additions retain a moderate degree of integrity, having likely been altered. However, such modification is characteristic in the adaptation of light-industrial buildings to evolving usage.

The Schlitz Brewing Company Washington Branch/National Geographic Society Warehouse complex that includes the Schlitz plant, constructed in 1908-1909, the Geographic Society Warehouse, constructed in 1924, and their additions. An addition that includes loading facilities was made to the east façade of the Schlitz plant in 1920. The buildings' second stories are connected by an enclosed walkway that traverses the roof of a 1913 addition to the southeast corner of the bottling house. The buildings are also connected by a 1937 one-story garage addition whose north wing protrudes toward Randolph Place just west of the west end of the bottling house. The complex virtually fills Square 3574, save for parking lots in its northwest corner and to its south. Its square is bounded to the north by Randolph Place NE, to the west by 3rd Street NE, to the south by R Street NE, and to the east by the Metropolitan Branch Trail.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

The Schlitz plant, which faces north toward Randolph Place NE near the square's northeast corner, is a two-story building that contained a bottling facility, a packing room, cold storage rooms, and a stable wing for delivery wagons and horses. A 2016 architectural survey determined that it has a full basement with brick masonry perimeter walls, load-bearing red brick walls set in American bond, and a steel skeleton supports its concrete slab floors and flat roof. The plant's now-hidden south façade, whose one-story stable wing and two additions extended toward the middle of the square, was apparently utilitarian and unadorned. Its north façade, which faces Randolph Place, has castellar embellishments, the most prominent of which is a parapet wall above a corbelled cornice that suggests a battlement. Its base is a concrete-clad water table that is higher at its east end to compensate for the ground's downward slope from Third Street to the Metropolitan Branch. Brick piers divide this façade's main section into eleven bays. Counting east from the intersection of Third Street NE, its first, or westernmost, bay has a first story arched entranceway, which gives egress to a recessed set of double doors flanked by sidelights and topped by a rectangular transom. On its second story, arches top double-ganged window openings filled by six-over-six-light wood-sash double-hung windows. On its eleventh, or easternmost bay, the arch and window apertures are blind openings. The arch at one time had two window apertures which have been filled-in with brick.

The façade's second through tenth bays are incised within brick arches above the level of the second story windows. The tenth bay's lower story is an entranceway. It is filled by a wooden panel with a cutout door and has a concrete stoop with metal steps. Bays three through five and seven through nine are identical. Their rectangular first-floor windows are concealed by metal grates. On each bay's second story is a keystone arch over a pair of double-hung six-over-six-light windows. The second story of bay six has a full height double door beneath a keystone eyebrow course and a steel hoisting beam. Its first story has an entryway without a stoop, now concealed by a metal grate. All the window apertures have concrete sills, while those on the first story also have concrete lintels.

The 2016 architectural survey determined that the plant's east façade was originally a one-story extension that wrapped the eastern end of its north façade to form a twelfth bay with a row of single windows. In 1920, a second story was added with brickwork and a parapet that mimic those of the north façade's main section. The survey notes that, in 1920, a covered loading platform was constructed behind it. This platform, which faces east toward the Metropolitan Branch, is now partially concealed by steel fencing. An earlier single-story addition, constructed before 1913, adjoins the original southeast corner of the bottling plant and extends eastward to be virtually flush with the loading platform of the 1920 addition. This earlier addition has a filled-in loading doorway that presumably served a rail siding.

The Schlitz plant's west wall is blind except for several single windows that likely illuminate a stairway. It has a chamfered section with single windows that faces the four-story Geographic Warehouse across its single-story garage addition. Virtually all the windows in the plant appear to have their original wooden sashes.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

Constructed in 1924, the National Geographic Society Warehouse is a reinforced concrete structure which occupies the southern half of Square 3574. Viewed from Third Street, the building footprint roughly suggests a reversed letter "L" whose four-story section faces R Street as its "shaft" and a one-story extension faces Third Street as its "bar." This bar section and a one-story garage addition between the buildings partially conceal the west façade of the Schlitz plant.

The warehouse, which includes a first-story storage area for paper and upper floors devoted to clerical functions, has a remarkably complex façade for a functional industrial building. Its four-story east facade, which faces the Metropolitan Branch, is of unadorned brick, now covered by an outside mural. Its first story has a row of three now-sealed loading dock doors. Its upper stories have three tiered rows of three large rectangular steel sash multi-light windows.

The warehouse's eleven bay south facade faces R Street across a parking lot. Its first story is clad in multi-chromatic fieldstone, which surrounds entranceways near its east and west ends, a row of three loading dock doors in its central section that presumably served trucks, and a band of other large windows hidden by metal grates. These apertures are separated by stone-faced piers with wedge-shaped capitals that rise to the top of the first story. The warehouse's upper stories are of rough-finished, earth-toned, variegated brick with three tiered rows of eight broad steel-sash industrial windows centered above the loading docks and windows of the first story. Each tier of windows is set in an incised bay which rises to the bottom of the warehouse's fourth story and is topped by a patterned row of five small arches. In lieu of a cornice, a row of diamond-shaped geometric forms in brick runs below the flat roofline. A column of single multi-light windows illuminates the staircases above each entrance, and tiers of smaller square steel sash windows rise close to the façade's corners. All upper story windows have brick lintels and sills

The four-bay wide, four-story tall portion of the warehouse's west façade is treated in similar fashion, with a fieldstone-clad first story punctuated by windows behind metal grates and brick upper stories with tiers of steel sash windows. At the junction of the facade's four-story section and one-story wing that reaches north is a single-story stone-clad formal entry bay. Its doorway is flanked by concrete piers topped by owls perched on rounded stones. Between the owls and above the entrance "National Geographic Society" is carved into the stone. On the outside of each pier is a window, and beyond are larger ornamental stone-covered concrete piers. A two-bay single-story extension north of the entrance is built in brick clad with fieldstone. Its smaller metal grated windows are separated by field stone piers with wedge-shaped capitals and topped by eyebrow courses in brick.

The warehouse's north façade has both four and one-story sections, all of which are built in utilitarian red brick rather than the multi-hued masonry of the west and south facades. The four-story section, which is visible above the roof of the single-story wing, has tiers of steel sash windows as well as significant "blind" sections of unfenestrated wall. The one-story west section and a 1937 garage addition that protrudes toward Randolph Place from between the Schlitz and Geographic buildings have single rows of windows covered by metal grates.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

The Schlitz Brewing Company Washington Branch/National Geographic Society Warehouse retains a high level of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The minor additions retain a high degree of integrity, as they were likely altered. However, such modification is consistent with the history of this light-industrial building type.



Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A. Property 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

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

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

### Areas of Significance

Industry

Commerce

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

**Period of Significance**

1908-1937

**Significant Dates**

1908, 1913, 1924, 1937

**Significant Person**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Charles L. Lesser (Schlitz Brewing Company Washington Branch)

Arthur B. Heaton (National Geographic Warehouse)

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

The Schlitz Brewing Company Washington Branch and National Geographic Warehouse complex incorporates the 1908 Schlitz Company bottling works and associated buildings, the 1924 National Geographic Society Warehouse, and several additions built between 1913 and 1937.

The complex meets D.C. Criterion B (History) because it is associated with historical periods, social movements and patterns of growth and change that contributed significantly to the development of the District. It thus also meets similar National Register Criterion A.

The complex is also significant under D.C. Criterion D (Architecture and Urbanism) for embodying the distinguishing characteristics of architectural styles and building types. It thus also meets similar National Register Criterion C.

The complex retains integrity of form, feeling, and association. Its period of significance begins with the construction of the Schlitz Brewing Company Washington Branch in 1908 and ends with the construction of the final addition to the conjoined buildings in 1937.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

### **Narrative Statement of Significance**

The Schlitz Brewing Company Washington Branch and National Geographic Warehouse complex is significant under D.C. Criterion B because it reflects significant patterns of growth and change through its association with the development of:

- The Eckington warehouse corridor, which provided one of the city's key interfaces between national and regional railroad transportation and local distribution of goods by wagon and motor truck. The construction of the Schlitz depot in 1908 closely followed the establishment of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad's Eckington Freight Yard, a product of the McMillan Plan initiative to remove railroad operations from city streets and the monumental areas of the city. The building of the National Geographic Warehouse in 1924 represents the corridor's second stage of development with larger reinforced concrete industrial structures. The construction of the warehouse, with its relationship to the nearby Judd & Detwiler Printing Plant, reflects the expansion of Eckington's industrial and commercial base following the area's designation as "industrial" by the first citywide zoning code in 1920.
- Washington's brewing industry. Built for the Schlitz Brewing Company of Milwaukee, the bottling plant represents the growing influence of national brands in what had been a market dominated by local producers. It is Washington's sole-surviving building directly related to the distribution of beer, an industry important employer in the District.<sup>1</sup>
- Washington as a center for the diffusion of high-level cultural products and scientific knowledge. The warehouse's construction was necessitated by the success of the National Geographic Society, a Washington-based organization whose magazine, published in the city, was an enormous cultural force during the first six decades of the twentieth century.

The complex is also significant under D.C. Criterion D because:

- Both sections of the complex are notable examples of specialized building types that serve more complex functions than storage. The Schlitz branch fulfilled production and distribution functions, while the warehouse is a true multi-purpose building that provided specialized spaces for storing massive quantities of printing paper as well as mailing, subscription, and administrative functions. Both the Schlitz branch and the Geographic building reflect the evolution of the Washington warehouse in the era of rail and the automotive age.
- It provides excellent examples of significant building sub-types reflecting the evolution of industrial construction. The Schlitz branch is a low-rise, fireproofed structure with load-bearing brick walls and a steel skeleton that supports its concrete-slab floors and roof. According to the D.C. Historic Preservation Office's *Warehouse Survey Thematic Property Report* (1991), this construction sub-type replaced "mill-constructed" brick and timber-

<sup>1</sup> There is at least one extant, subterranean structure that had been used in beer production and storage, the lager cellar of the Washington Brewery.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

framed warehouses in the early twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> The warehouse, designed to support seven stories, was built as a four-story structure with reinforced concrete beams, columns, and floors, brick curtain walls, and large, multi-light steel slash windows characteristic of the “daylight factories” characteristic of post-World War I industrial construction.

- Its design reflects the work of master architects. Milwaukee architect Charles L. Lesser executed multiple commissions for the Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company as well as other significant midwestern buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Geographic Warehouse designer Arthur Heaton was among Washington’s most active and celebrated early twentieth-century designers, with buildings of numerous types listed on the National Register. Often recognized for the quality of his apartment building designs, Heaton was also an important early architect of transportation-related structures and is cited as a significant warehouse architect by the *D.C. Warehouse Survey Project Final Report*.<sup>3</sup>
- It presents highly realized aesthetic features. Each building’s architectural style symbolically conveys its builder’s identity as well as the structure’s function. The Schlitz plant, as a faux “brewer’s castle,” reflects the German heritage of Joseph Schlitz and many other leading late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American beer producers. This style allowed such buildings to be “read” as taverns, beer gardens, and other structures related to brewing.

The National Geographic Warehouse’s handsome fieldstone cladding suggests a relationship to the natural world presented so vividly in its magazine. The stylized owls at its formal entrance serve a similar function, symbolically linking the building to both nature and knowledge. The stone cladding also performs the symbolic function of linking the formal office entrance on the Third Street façade to the loading dock and warehouse entrances facing R Street, both accentuating the building’s dual functions and acknowledging their mutual importance.

Arthur Heaton’s buildings, including industrial and transit-related structures, are often characterized by beautiful masonry work. Like the rough-textured multi-chromatic brick of his National Register-listed Washington Railway and Electric Company bus garage on Georgia Avenue NW, the rich textures and varied shadings of its brick and fieldstone walls add beauty and interest to a functional structure.

Indeed, aesthetic embellishment makes the bottling house and the magazine warehouse advertisements for their owners in conspicuous locations on a major streetcar line. It also represents the attempt to inject notes of beauty and order in a zone of industrial tumult which was the ironic consequence of efforts to aestheticize the cityscape. Lastly, it facilitates these buildings’ function as a screen between residential blocks and a massive railroad yard.

The Schlitz Brewing Company Washington Branch and National Geographic Warehouse has been recommended for designation by several professional studies. In 2016, the distinguished

<sup>2</sup> EHT Tracerics. *D.C. Warehouse Survey Project Final Report, Phase I*. (unpublished, 1991), 12.

<sup>3</sup> EHT Tracerics. *D.C. Warehouse Survey Project Final Report, Phase II* (unpublished, 1991), 27.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

architectural firms Hartman-Cox and EYP conducted a feasibility study for converting the complex into a facility for the D.C. Office of Public Records and the D.C. Archives. This report concluded:

Neither the 1910 buildings by Charles Lesser nor the 1925 buildings by Arthur Heaton are listed on the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites or on the National Register of Historic Places. Despite not yet being designated as such, the historical research conducted thus far suggests that each of the buildings would likely be eligible for designation, in whole or in part, if nominated.<sup>4</sup>

The D.C. Warehouse Survey Project's final report listed both the Schlitz plant and the Geographic warehouse as eligible as landmarks.<sup>5</sup> In particular, one or both sections of the complex met proposed criteria A2-A4, A6-A8, and C2-C14.

### **Early Washington Warehouses and the Eckington Warehouse Corridor <sup>6</sup>**

Washington has never been noted as a manufacturing city. However, before Congressional laws and the 1920 zoning code excluded virtually all heavy industry, some manufactories operated in the city. Most produced consumer goods like milled flour, ironwork, or print products, which were stored in warehouses. The city also functioned as a distribution hub for the local area, necessitating even more warehouses to receive "imported" goods in wholesale quantities.

Most eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century District warehouses and light industrial buildings were built in Georgetown along the canal/waterfront. With arrival of the city's first railroad in 1835, such business relocated to the more efficient rail lines, which numbered seven by the end of the century. Indeed, trains, with their capacity and reliability, made possible the modest but continuous development of distribution, processing and manufacturing seen in the city by 1890, which then held 2,300 industrial establishments, mostly small, employing 23,477 with production valued at \$39.2 million.<sup>7</sup>

The Schlitz plant and National Geographic warehouse is a component of the Eckington Warehouse Corridor, which developed rapidly after the opening of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O)'s Eckington Freight Yard in 1907. The Eckington Yard was among the products of a collision between Washington's robust economic growth and the "City Beautiful Movement." A

<sup>4</sup> Hartman-Cox and EYP Architects. *Feasibility Study and Programmatic Test Fit for Penn Center* (unpublished, 2016), 27

<sup>5</sup> EHT Tracerics. *Phase II*, 26-27.

<sup>6</sup> General information on the development of warehouses and industry in Washington is from EHT Tracerics, Inc., "D. C. Warehouse Study Final Report, Phases I and II"; for the warehouse district in Eckington see the same study and Kimberly Prothro Williams, *Eckington – A Neighborhood History* (Washington, D.C.: Eckington Civic Association, n.d.), and QED Associates, "Draft Eckington Historic District Nomination" (unpublished, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> *Census Industrial Review*, 1890, quoted in Tracerics, *D.C. Warehouse Survey Phase II*, 22.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

background factor was a nascent turn-of-the-20<sup>th</sup> century campaign to provide the District of Columbia with an industrial base. However, although boosters touted enterprises like paper mills on the Georgetown waterfront, this drive quickly stalled, due to the city's distance from deposits of natural resources and lack of port facilities – as well as competing interests who intended that Washington maintain its primary identity as the national capital and seat of government. By 1920, Congress had banned new heavy industries from the city, and the newly created DC Zoning Commission promulgated strict rules restricting light industry to Georgetown and Southwest.

Although national depressions in 1873 and 1893 slackened growth, the city had prospered since the Civil War, with its population more than doubling by 1900. Business activity had grown exponentially, as the city's commercial core expanded beyond Georgetown and Pennsylvania Avenue NW. This commerce was sustained by a web of rail lines that dominated many city streets and neighborhoods. In 1851, the B&O Railroad had erected a brick, stucco, and brownstone depot at New Jersey Avenue and C Street NW, which was soon joined by a car barn and freight yard. In 1872, the railroad's Washington Branch main line, which ran along the right-of-way for West Virginia Avenue NE, was augmented by its new Metropolitan Branch, which ran north and west into Maryland.

In 1872, the Baltimore, Potomac, and Washington (PB&W), a Pennsylvania Railroad subsidiary, also built its own station and a train shed that stretched halfway across the National Mall at Sixth and B Streets NW. Tracks that crossed the Mall linked the station to the railroad's main line, which ran through the Southeast and Southwest quadrants. After crossing the Anacostia River, the PB&W tracks emerged near Sixth Street SE. Radiating spur lines south to the Naval Gun Factory, the city's largest industrial employer, the railroad then ran west through city streets to its massive coal and freight yards on Virginia Avenue SE. No fewer than seven separate track-lines ran through the unit block of Virginia Avenue SE, which was labeled "Railroad Avenue" on early 20<sup>th</sup> century maps. After crossing South Capitol Street, the PB&W traversed the southwest quadrant on Virginia Avenue, with lines running across the Mall and crossing the Long Bridge to Virginia.

The railroad district to the Capitol Building's south exemplified the squalor, disorder, and unpleasantness of mingling railroad operations with city life. In 1924, *Washington Post* columnist George Rothwell Brown reminisced that "the railroads lay like monstrous iron giants across the southern stretches of the Capital."<sup>8</sup> His descriptions evoke industrial wastelands like the "Valley of the Ashes" in *The Great Gatsby*:

[It was] one vast network of tracks and switches, and long sidings where freight was handled under the most primitive conditions. Here was a region of mountainous coal dumps, warehouses, lumberyards, bleak stretches of commons and neighborhoods of frame shacks where colonies of the poorer people lived in an atmosphere of perpetual smoke and noise.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> George Rothwell Brown. "Capital Silhouettes," *Washington Post*; Feb 18, 1924; 4.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

Spur and subsidiary lines

[s]pread out over a great part of the southeast and southwest sections of the city, where for years [the railroads] enjoyed an enormous monopoly of important thoroughfares, and virtually divided the city in halves by immense areas of tracks and sidings and switches...<sup>10</sup>

When occupied, these street-level tracks and the intersecting streets were blocked off by gates, “vehicles would be in interminable traffic jams, while long lines of freight and passenger cars were shifted back and forth with exasperating delays.”<sup>11</sup>

By the 1890s, such urban disorder was countered by a new conceptualization of the cityscape. “Beaux-Arts” architecture sought order and beauty by applying classical and neoclassical precedents to contemporary buildings, and harmonizing building interiors and exteriors with classical orders and ornament.<sup>12</sup> Such highly embellished and expensive buildings were often grand mansions and civic edifices, including Washington’s Carnegie Library (1903) and the John A. Wilson Municipal Building (1908).

In the early twentieth century, Washington’s development was re-shaped by the City Beautiful movement, which sought a balanced, harmonious, and aesthetically satisfying cityscape that would impose a sense of moral, civic, and political order on unruly and often chaotic urban life. The movement’s key planning principle was the symmetrical arrangement of monumental neoclassical buildings around formally organized public spaces. In Washington, City Beautiful principles gained ascendancy with the adoption of the 1902 MacMillan Commission Plan, which reaffirmed the green corridor of the National Mall as the preeminent such space in Washington. However, establishing such formalized civic landscapes required banishing disruptive or noisome functions to secluded areas of the city.

Congress had begun to adapt the City Beautiful vision for Washington even before it codified the 1902 McMillan Plan, which re-envisioned the city core as a procession of monumental public buildings and grand boulevards arranged about the National Mall. Backed by longstanding public outcry at the devastation the railroads wrought on the cityscape, legislators resolved to remove industrial facilities and railroad operations from the Mall and city streets. In 1900 and 1901, Congress passed legislation that required the B&O and PB&W to eliminate grade crossings and construct modern passenger terminals. This project was facilitated by Congress granting the railroads the power of eminent domain and paying them subsidies.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> David Brain. “Discipline & Style,” *Theory and Society* (Vol. 18, No. 6) (Nov. 1989), 810.

<sup>13</sup> William Tindall *Standard History of the City of Washington from a Study of the Original Sources*. (Knoxville, Tenn.: H. W. Crew & Co., 1914), 416-417.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

Legislation passed in February 1903 further required the railroads to erect a station of monumental design for all passenger railroads serving the District of Columbia. This “union station,” to be built at the intersection of Massachusetts and Delaware Avenues, would be owned by the Washington Terminal Company, a corporation controlled by the B&O and the PB&W.<sup>14</sup> The PB&W tracks were to be removed from the Mall and train traffic routed to the new station through a tunnel under First Street NE. The B&O’s Washington Branch right-of-way would move from West Virginia Avenue to run in parallel with a PB&W line north of New York Avenue.<sup>15</sup> Other major lines that crossed city streets would be elevated above grade on viaducts.<sup>16</sup> Designed by Daniel Burnham, a co-creator of the Chicago Columbian Exposition and the McMillan Plan, the magnificent Beaux-Arts Union Station opened in late 1907. Shortly afterwards, the older depots were razed.

In its 1900-1901 legislation, Congress also had approved the B&O’s plans to construct a massive, centralized freight yard in Eckington.<sup>17</sup> By 1907-1909, this yard covered the land south of R Street NE, north of New York Avenue, east of Eckington Place, and west of the Metropolitan Branch. The 300 block of R Street, once part of the longest stretch of asphalt road in the city, now dead-ended into rail tracks. T Street NE, which crossed the Metropolitan Branch track lines on a viaduct, became the east-west connector with Brentwood Road.<sup>18</sup>

Platted in 1887, George Truesdell’s Eckington subdivision was Washington’s first streetcar suburb, as well as its most important early rail-industrial corridor.<sup>19</sup> Truesdell’s subdivision covered a large, irregularly shaped tract roughly bounded by U Street NE to the north, Second Street NE to the west, Boundary Street (today’s Florida Avenue) to the south, and Brentwood Road to the east. Its spine was the Eckington & Soldiers’ Home Railway, the city’s first electric street railroad, which began operating in 1888, just months after the nation’s first such system opened in Richmond, Virginia. Truesdell’s innovative plan provided Eckington, which lay just outside the L’Enfant city’s boundary, with amenities not found in many downtown neighborhoods, including pure running water, sewer service, streetlights, and residential electricity. Eckington had paved roads fully fifteen years before such major surrounding streets as Rhode Island Avenue, with R

<sup>14</sup> Tindall, 417-418.

<sup>15</sup> Rebecca Summer “This Is Ivy City: An Iconic Building’s Role in Gentrification and Neighborhood Identity in Washington, D.C.” *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Spring 2018), 26.

<sup>16</sup> Tindall, 417.

<sup>17</sup> *Congressional Record*, 57<sup>th</sup> Congress, Second Session, Volume 36, (December 1-20, 1902), 317. This volume describes much deliberation about the planning of Union Station and related projects.

<sup>18</sup> Congressional Serial Set, Issue 4430 (1901), U.S. Government Printing Office 157-184, contains a thorough presentation of the streetscape changes.

<https://books.google.com/books?id=vB85AQAAMAAJ&pg=RA14-PA161&lpg=RA14-PA161&dq=%22eckington+yard%22&source=bl&ots=2cE6bfL03I&sig=ACfU3U37DeCwsLDIStHCnWmBjaw3yx7UpA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwix4cvjzfb3AhUlk4kEHdxXDSUQ6AF6BAggEAM#v=onepage&q=%22eckington%20yard%22&f=false>

<sup>19</sup> See the *Draft Eckington Historic District Nomination* and Williams, *Eckington – A Neighborhood History*. See also the “History” section of the Eckington Civic Association website at [eckingtoncivicassociation.com/eckington/history-3](http://eckingtoncivicassociation.com/eckington/history-3).



Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

Street NE, Eckington's major east-west thoroughfare, becoming a link in one of the city's longest stretches of asphalt. In 1891, Truesdell platted the adjoining subdivision of West Eckington, which stretched west toward North Capitol Street.<sup>20</sup>

Truesdell envisioned Eckington as a residential district linked to downtown commerce by its streetcar; the subdivision originally barred commercial and industrial development. However, his plan was derailed by external forces, some congressional and others corporate. Operation of the Eckington & Soldiers Home Railway were greatly disrupted by conflicts with Congress over the railroad's use of overhead electric wires. As development slackened with the Panic of 1893 and the transportation controversy festered, Truesdell removed himself from the railway's operations and became increasingly less involved with Eckington.

In the meantime, railroad operations spurred industrial development around Eckington. The subdivision was bisected into east and west sections by the B & O Railroad's Metropolitan Branch Line, which ran diagonally northeast from the vicinity of Third Street and New York Avenue NE to cross the Rhode Island Avenue right-of-way between Sixth and Seventh Streets NE. The railroad owned parcels along the tracks and on the borders of the subdivision that were not subject to Truesdell's restrictions. One large cone-shaped parcel stretched from Florida Avenue to the vicinity of Second and T Streets NE. By 1903 a large freight depot covered its base on Florida Avenue, while additional railroad sidings had begun to proliferate to the north.

Eckington's industrial development was greatly accelerated by Congress' 1902 endorsement of the McMillan Plan and the removal of railroad tracks and grade crossings from city streets. Such projects as the construction of Union Station and concentration of freight operations in central rail yards were facilitated by railroad-backed legislation granting the power of eminent domain. In 1903 the *Washington Times* reported described plans to construct the massive freight yard in Eckington, noting that:

In South Eckington numerous houses are to be torn down. The deep gullies lately filled with growing trees are being leveled. The hill beyond is to be cut out and a long line of freight sheds built. They will extend from Florida Avenue to the Brentwood Road on the north side for the Baltimore and Ohio Company ... The car yards will extend forty or fifty tracks wide. The railroad companies have options on land several hundred feet each side of the constructions now going on and while the ultimate purpose of the ownership of these lands has not been made known it is conjectured that the railroad people have in contemplation many other structures not on the general plans of the terminal. The ideas of the railroad companies seem to be that Washington is to be an

<sup>20</sup> The current Eckington neighborhood includes a portion of Truesdell's Eckington and West Eckington, as well as several neighboring subdivisions which were not subject to Truesdell's rules. These included portions of Bloomingdale, Barbour & Moore's Addition, High View, McLaughlin's Subdivision, Center Eckington and Northwest Eckington, as well as land owned by the B & O Railroad and other parcels. Present-day Eckington's boundaries are the Metropolitan Branch Trail, Florida Avenue, North Capitol Street and Rhode Island Avenue NE.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

important railroad center which in future years will call for an immense extension of traffic facilities along the northern approaches to the station.<sup>21</sup>

This development doomed Eckington's eastern squares, where nearby railroad activities and an uncertain future had long limited development. By 1903 the B&O owned much of the land east of the Metropolitan Branch, and by 1909 almost all these squares had been redeveloped for railroad use.<sup>22</sup> The few blocks with houses could be reached only through the neighborhoods along Brentwood Road NE to Eckington's east.

After the Eckington Railyard project was announced, industrial and warehouse buildings proliferated on private and railroad land on the peripheries of the subdivision. The Hogue & McDowell Company complex, opposite the B & O freight depot on Eckington Place, was "the industrial pioneer of twentieth-century Eckington." It included a grain elevator, a hay house, and several warehouses erected along the railroad line in 1904-1908.<sup>23</sup> The Studebaker Wagon Company of South Bend, Indiana built a brick carriage-storage warehouse at 118 Q Street NE. Barber & Ross, a national fabrication firm established a multi-building plant on both sides of the 500 block of V Street NE that included carpentry shops, a millwork and glass warehouse, and an iron fabrication shop (now demolished).<sup>24</sup>

By 1907-1909, the Eckington rail yard covered the land south of R Street and east of Eckington Place. The 300 block of R Street, once part of the longest stretch of asphalt road in the city, now dead-ended into the rail yard. T Street, which crossed the Metropolitan Branch on a viaduct, became the neighborhood's internal connection to Brentwood Road. Nearby industrial and warehouse construction accelerated further. In November 1907, a major *Washington Times* feature describing the "Great Industrial Growth Around Capital of Nation" was particularly devoted to the Eckington area. In addition to the new shops and "ideal roundhouses" of the B & O Railroad, the article described planned warehouses for the National Biscuit Company and the Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company, as well as a factory at 140 Q Street NE for the James S. Topham Trunk factory. In describing the vision of company official Washington Topham, the *Times* captured a quality that would become a hallmark of Eckington's major warehouse development:

Mr. Topham is one of the most enthusiastic advocates for an industrial city but he does not believe in sacrificing residential beauty for this purpose He thinks that there is no need to fear any destruction of the city's present attractiveness as a place of residence by the introduction of a much greater volume of manufacturing. In order to demonstrate this the architect for the new factory has been Instructed to make a

<sup>21</sup> "Plans Showing the New Washington Railway Terminal," *Washington Times*, October 4, 1903, 4-5.

<sup>22</sup> "Additional Purchases of Land by the B&O," *Washington Post*, October 18, 1903, H3.

<sup>23</sup> Williams, 21. Until their recent demolition, the Hogue & McDowell buildings in the 100 block of Q Street NE were the oldest surviving warehouses in today's Eckington neighborhood.

<sup>24</sup> "Extensive Warehouse Plant," *Washington Post*, July 10, 1903, 2.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

pleasing building and one that will add attractiveness to the surrounding property rather than detract from it.<sup>25</sup>

As large as it was, the B&O's Eckington Yard was just one section of a gigantic rail ecosystem that soon occupied a significant portion of Near Northeast Washington. By the end of World War I, this railroad zone stretched south from the Metropolitan Branch's crossing of the Rhode Island Avenue right-of-way on a recently constructed bridge. East of the Metropolitan Branch's multiple "through lines," a network of sidings ballooned outward toward Brentwood Road. A short distance south of the T Street viaduct, a large lobe of the railroad zone stretched east along the north side of New York Avenue through the Ivy City neighborhood. It included the B&O and PB&W rights-of-way, as well as railyards and maintenance facilities. Tracks now cut off Brentwood Road and Seventh Street NE north of New York Avenue. Curving connectors linked these east-west lines to the north-south Metropolitan Branch right-of-way. South of New York Avenue, the Metropolitan Branch narrowed before expanding to funnel into the massive car yards behind Union Station.<sup>26</sup>

There were similarities and differences between the development of the Eckington warehouse corridor and other neighborhoods that bordered this massive railroad zone. Building Union Station and its car yards caused the demolition of over 300 buildings and displaced much of Swampoodle, a community composed largely of Irish immigrants.<sup>27</sup> While Union Station was built for passenger traffic, a line of warehouses served by sidings arose along First Street NE south of Florida Avenue and north of the station car yard. While every neighborhood near a railroad facility complained of smoke and noise, residents of the primarily African American Ivy City community were perhaps the most heavily impacted by the railroad zone. Congress had authorized B&O and PB&W to jointly build a large freight yard, repair and coaling facilities, and twin roundhouses opposite Ivy City, north of New York Avenue.<sup>28</sup> By late 1907, the B&O was dismantling its rail yard at New Jersey Avenue NW and D Street NW, and moving these operations to Ivy City.<sup>29</sup> The new facilities included a coal fired steam plant whose tunnels provided heat to railroad zone facilities, which became a long-standing source of complaints about smoke and cinders.<sup>30</sup> Ivy City became an important light industrial and warehouse district, but its development peaked later. During the 1930s, large warehouses were built along the New York Avenue corridor, including the iconic Hecht Company Warehouse at Fenwick Street NE, and the neighborhood was crisscrossed by spur lines that connected to the railyard.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>25</sup> "Great Industrial Growth Around Capital," *Washington Times*, November 10, 1907, 7.

<sup>26</sup> In addition to the Baist Real Estate Atlas maps included, , *Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Washington Union Station Expansion Appendix B – Washington Union Station Terminal Infrastructure EIS Report* has many useful diagrams of current trackage.

<sup>27</sup> National Register Nomination for Capitol Hill Historic District (Swampoodle Boundary Increase 2010), 24.

<sup>28</sup> Summer, 26.

<sup>29</sup> "Farewell to Old Terminal". *Evening Star*. November 17, 1907. 3.

<sup>30</sup> "\$5-Million Project At Terminal Begun," *Washington Post*, May 16, 1949, B2: "Hearing Told Of Railroads' Smoke, Noise," *Washington Post*. October 25, 1947, 4.: "Firm Fined For Violating Smoke Laws," *Washington Post*, February 4, 1948. 16.

<sup>31</sup> Summer, 30, 32.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

### Brewing in Washington, D.C.<sup>32</sup>

In colonial and early Republic times the general population's beverages of choice were cider and rum, transitioning to whisky in the 1820s. Ale was imported from Britain, and Americans produced local substitutes from persimmons, spruce tips and pumpkins. Barley-based beer was first made in this region in plantation brewhouses and kitchens, growing to what we might today call brewpubs and microbreweries serving a very localized customer base. In the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth, American beers had real competition from ale imports from Britain, a nation with great experience in brewing and in shipping to present and former colonies. Still, local American breweries proliferated, because shipping bulk products was expensive, and beer is perishable. A former plantation brewer by the name of Andrew Wales opened the area's first commercial brewery at Alexandria in 1770, followed there by the Potomac Brewery (1793-1807), the Union Brewery (1794-1797) and Entwisle/Irwin brewery (1807-1854).<sup>33</sup> Cornelius Coningham was the first Washington commercial brewer, setting up his plant in 1796, followed by Daniel Bussard of Georgetown in 1809, and William Hayman—Bussard's former brewer—in 1830. Many more followed. The failure of the liberal revolutions of 1848 sent legions of German emigrants to America, including brewers, who, with the help of the Civil War's concentration of thirsty men, soon spread the popularity of lager beer across the country. Lager would soon overtake the traditional ale in popularity. The number of District breweries followed the national trend, growing from seven in 1860 to thirteen in 1870, leveling off at fourteen by 1880, before dropping to only six by 1900, as each remaining plant grew in size. Their production increased from 3,580 barrels in 1863, to 21,573 in 1875, and 228,647 in 1902.<sup>34</sup>

As the industry consolidated, local brewers like Christian Heurich (Christian Heurich Brewing Company), Albert Carry (National Capital Brewery), and Robert Portner (Robert Portner Brewing Company, Alexandria) rose to become citywide business leaders. Although local production continued to increase exponentially, the 1880s saw national brands such as Anheuser-Busch, Schlitz, Philadelphia Best, and Pabst begin shipping their pasteurized product to the city in refrigerated rail cars for local bottling. By the mid 1890s, labor unions had entered the industry. Cash-rich English syndicates bought up and consolidated a number of American breweries and tried to eliminate their rivals by price-cutting. The number of American breweries peaked at 4,144 in 1873, before dropping to 1,816 at the turn of the century. Manufacturers were negotiating and sometimes colluding among themselves to stabilize pricing. Feuds culminated in a local "Beer War" of 1903-1907. In this competitive environment, breweries sought to lock in their market by

---

<sup>32</sup> See Garrett Peck, *Capital Beer: A Heady History of Brewing in Washington, D.C.* (Charleston: American Palate, 2014) for development of the local brewing industry and, for the history of the Schlitz Company, Uwe Spiekermann, "Marketing Milwaukee: Schlitz and the Making of a National Beer Brand, 1881-1940," in *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute*, No. 53 (Fall 2013).

<sup>33</sup> Timothy Dennee, Robert Portner and His Brewing Company (Alexandria, Virginia: Saul Centers, Inc., 2010), 7-8, [media.alexandriava.gov/docs-archives/historic/info/archaeology/sitereportdenneepartnerbreweryhistoryax196.pdf](http://media.alexandriava.gov/docs-archives/historic/info/archaeology/sitereportdenneepartnerbreweryhistoryax196.pdf).

<sup>34</sup> Peck, 36.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

allying with “tied-house saloons” which only carried one label, with the proprietor indebted to the brewery for the equipment to set up his bar. Christian Heurich would not sell to any outlet offering competitors’ beer. There is no immediate evidence, such as chattel mortgages, to indicate that Washington’s Schlitz branch managed to set up any tied houses locally.

Many brewers initially had no bottling works, first selling the bulk of their products in wooden kegs. Washington had many independent bottlers before 1890, as federal and local law required brewing and bottling to be performed at different facilities. The principal purpose was taxation of the product before bottling, but this inconvenience was supported by bottling industry lobbyists. The Heurich Brewery used three different bottlers in 1881. Federal legislation gave brewers a competitive assist by allowing them to build their own bottling facilities but, by federal law, these still had to be separated from the brewhouse at least by a road; a pipeline connection was first permitted in 1890.

### **The Joseph Schlitz Company in Washington**

The Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company was founded in a Milwaukee restaurant basement by German immigrant August Krug in 1849. Fellow German Joseph Schlitz joined the business the following year and took over and renamed the company on Krug’s death in 1856. On Schlitz’s death in 1875, control of the firm passed to the three Uihlein brothers who piloted the company into the early twentieth century. Schlitz saw constant growth through the rest of the century, producing one million barrels in 1902, when the company surpassed Pabst as the largest American brewery. Such production was only possible with a vastly expanded market area, enabled by improvements in production, transportation, refrigeration and communication. By this time, Schlitz had agents and branches over much of the country, including its own East Coast depots in New York, Baltimore, Wilmington, North Carolina, and Washington.

When first entering a market, outside breweries generally started small, using an established local bottler or beverage dealer as agent. With some success, they soon cut out the middleman and established their own depot. The independent distributor would be a creation of post-Prohibition government regulations. Among the first such depots in Washington was established by Alexandria’s Robert Portner brewery in 1876. It was soon joined by Philadelphia’s Bergner and Engel, Buffalo’s Gerhard Lang, Toledo’s Grassner and Brand, Rochester’s Bartholomay, and Anheuser-Busch and Schlitz, of course, plus several others, including some Baltimore brewers. Other producers would never graduate beyond selling through independent agents. Washington’s own breweries battled for market share—the last, the big Christian Heurich Brewing Company enduring until 1956—but most succumbed quickly to local and outside competition. The first locus of Washington beer depots was along the Baltimore and Potomac line near the intersection of Virginia and Maryland avenues SW.

Joseph Schlitz’s Milwaukee Lager Beer arrived in the District of Columbia in 1876, distributed by Georgetown bottler and beverage dealer Samuel C. Palmer, who may have connected with the

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

brewer at Philadelphia's Centennial Exhibition that year. Palmer's advertisements noted that "This celebrated... beer" is shipped from Milwaukee iced in insulated freight cars, "and after arrival is kept in ice boxes, thereby insuring its good condition." Palmer fitted his plant with state-of-the-art bottling equipment: "steam power, lightning bottle washers, patent filters, bottle filling and corking machines." By 1886 he had expanded to a second facility, "a large two-story brick building" at 615-623 D Street SW, originally a lager brewery dating from at least 1866. He left the Georgetown location in 1894. By this time Schlitz had added a pilsener to its offering, sold through several companies, though Palmer remained the local bottler.<sup>35</sup>

In 1898 Schlitz began to sell directly, buying Palmer's old D Street facility and renaming it its "Washington Branch."<sup>36</sup> The company was more actively promoting its brand name—every "cork or crown is branded Schlitz"—taking on local brewers head-to-head. A key claim was that Schlitz used superior methods to create a superior product. Marketing historian Uwe Spiekermann noted that:

Since a grassroots movement for "pure food" was forming, Schlitz talked constantly of clean production, pure ingredients, and the efforts of the firm to maintain the high quality of its products. "Clean-cut and reasonable" text advertisements portrayed the difference between the technologically advanced production in the Schlitz Milwaukee plant and the average brewing process elsewhere, which had a risk of spoilage and damage. Schlitz beer was promoted as a product of highly skilled experts who took care of every detail of production. Beer advertisements focused not only on the individual steps of production but also on the quality of all the ingredients. Schlitz therefore fought to maintain its image of technological leadership and propagated this image again and again.<sup>37</sup>

British-backed syndicates of the 1890s and the largest brewers of the post-World War II era would experiment with multiple production plants, but the branches of this era were not brewing facilities. At their most basic, depots consisted of offices, cold storage, and a stable and wagon shed for deliveries. Major brewers added bottling plants in sizeable cities, stimulating home use and consumption beyond the saloons where the beverage could still be served from kegs. The greater use of glass packaging encouraged brewers' interest in the lightness and clarity of the product within, but Schlitz would soon tout its new brown bottles, which retarded spoilage by reducing the contents' exposure to light. Proximity to a rail line was a must, for receipt of the beer and the bottles. It was cheaper to ship beer in bulk, as it occupied less space and constituted less weight than that already poured into the breakable bottles. Bottles had to be shipped, too, but they typically

<sup>35</sup> *Evening Star*, November 28, 1866, 3; *Evening Star*; November 29, 1876, 2; *Evening Star*, September 3, 1877, 4; *Evening Star*, November 2, 1886, 7; *Evening Star*, July 14, 1892, 2; *Evening Star*, July 4, 1894, 4. For a good profile of Palmer, see *Critic and Record*, May 17, 1886, 4.

<sup>36</sup> *Evening Star*, March 18, 1898, 10.

<sup>37</sup> Spiekermann, 59-60.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

originated from other points; brewers managed to vertically integrate to a degree, but never controlled glassmaking.<sup>38</sup>



*Images courtesy of  
the Potomac Bottle  
Collectors Facebook  
page and group,  
and Mike Cianciosi  
in particular.*



A brewery branch's personnel typically consisted of a branch manager or agent, a clerk, a bookkeeper, a bottling foreman, an engineer and an assistant to operate the refrigeration plant and maintain the steam engine and machinery, firemen to stoke the boiler, "hands" to do the hauling and the bottling, and stablemen to care for the horses, wagons and harness. The highest-paid workers outside the office were the delivery-wagon drivers and collectors, who were frequently one and the same. They carried the beer to customers and took in the payments—and on a couple of occasions, embezzled some of it. We have the names of more than a dozen Schlitz Washington Branch employees, but only the occupations of a few. It appears that the branch agent for much of this initial period was Carl L. Mueller, a German immigrant but longtime Washingtonian.

Schlitz's Southwest plant was experiencing growing pains by 1906, seeking additional stable space in Southwest and additional labor for the bottling house. The following year, part of the building was wrecked by the explosion of a tank of volatile anhydrous ammonia, used as a refrigerant.<sup>39</sup> As such demands for an improved facility arose, so did an opportunity for a new site. In its urban planning for the District of Columbia, the City Beautiful-era Senate Park Commission (McMillan Commission) had encouraged the rationalization of the District's railroad lines. Although the Baltimore and Potomac, a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania Railroad, was not required to remove its train station from the National Mall, the writing was on the wall, and the Pennsylvania and the

<sup>38</sup> Extant Schlitz Washington Branch bottles often have mold numbers embossed on their bases, but not the mark of a bottle manufacturer.

<sup>39</sup> "Ammonia Tank Explodes at Schlitz Brewery," *Washington Times*, 13 July 1907, 7; *Washington Herald*, November 13, 1910, 29.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

Baltimore and Ohio lines agreed to consolidate their facilities north of the Capitol at a new “Union” Station, opened in 1907. Northeast of the station stretched a classification yard and freight sidings at the intersection of the B & O’s Metropolitan Line and Washington Line. The rail infrastructure attracted a number of industrial facilities to the young Eckington neighborhood. In November 1907, the *Washington Post* reported that Schlitz was planning to build a modern plant at Eckington.<sup>40</sup> Building permits of December 9, 1907 authorized a two-story brick and concrete bottling plant with a separate stable at 309 Randolph Street NE (Square 3574, Lots 6-7 and 20-22 for the plant, and Lot 31 for the stable). The *Manufacturers’ Record* and *Engineering News* both reported a total projected cost of \$100,000, while the permits stated half that amount. Perhaps the former figure was industry puffery—or the latter was a means to avoid a high property tax assessment. Either way, the Schlitz company was mindful of the stock placed on architecture at the time and invested a great deal in a facility that would represent one of the greatest brewers of the nation. Beer depots were trackside industrial facilities visited mostly by their own staffs and occasionally bar owners and hotel agents. From the photographic evidence of the period, they were largely utilitarian, but, like proper Victorian and Edwardian adults wore hats in public, they were decorated at least by cornices. Schlitz exceeded the functional minimum in engaging a Milwaukee architect with which it had worked, to design a 75-by-305-foot building to have concrete foundations and floors to support its machinery. Contractor James M. Dunn would execute the drawings of Charles Lesser.

Charles L. Lesser (1864-1941) was born in Saxony, Germany and came to the United States as a youth.<sup>41</sup> He began his architectural career in the spring of 1881 as an apprentice of Milwaukee society architect Howland Russel, and then worked for firms in Omaha and St. Louis. Lesser was a draftsman for architect Thomas N. Philpot at the latter’s South Side Milwaukee office through 1887 and then formed a one-year partnership with Gustave H. Leipold (1888) when the two apparently took over Philpot’s practice. Lesser joined Henry J. Van Ryn in 1889 and in 1891 became a partner in the firm under the name Van Ryn, Andree & Lesser. By 1901 Lesser had his own practice which he continued until he rejoined his old partner Frank W. Andree in 1917. In 1919, Albert J. Schutte joined Lesser as a partner and Joseph Lindl was added in 1923 when the firm became Lindl, Lesser & Schutte. The firm designed the Kenosha County Courthouse in 1925, after which Lesser again became a solo practitioner. In 1928, he resigned from the American Institute of Architects, writing that he was retiring from active practice and planned to work thenceforth in other building-related fields.<sup>42</sup>

Lesser executed projects ranging from schools and churches to municipal buildings, manufacturing plants and foundries, offices, stores, grain elevators, theaters and residences. Most of his commissions were in the Milwaukee area, including such major works as the Merrill Building, the

<sup>40</sup> “A Month Review of The Building Trades,” *Washington Post*, November 24, 1907, R3.

<sup>41</sup> City of Milwaukee, Department of City Development, *Milwaukee Historic Ethnic Architecture Resources Study* (unpublished, 1994). Supplementary information on Lesser and Uihlein kindly supplied by the City of Milwaukee, Department of City Development.

<sup>42</sup> Charles L. Lesser, AIA Membership File; City of Milwaukee, *Permanent Historic Designation Study Report: Schlitz Tavern / Coventry Inn, 2501 West Greenfield Avenue* (2009), 5-6.



Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

Riviera Theater, a natatorium and public library, at least one church, a Masonic lodge, apartments, and several schools. He would go on to design eight area movie theaters. He also planned numerous commercial buildings and received numerous commissions from the Schlitz Brewing Company for neighborhood taverns. Several of his buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places or are registered Milwaukee Historic Sites. Two are included in the City of Milwaukee's Ethnic Architecture walking tour. The Schlitz branch is the only known Lesser-designed structure in Washington.

The expression of Lesser's Washington Schlitz plant was not that of the classical revival that swept the upper Midwest a decade earlier and which was already embedded in the DNA of Washington's core and the planning documents that guided its development. With its red-brick corbelling, battlements and arches, the new building was rétardataire by 1907 standards, but it carried on a German tradition of Romanesque and Renaissance revival that evoked images of Rhine castles and Rhine maidens that became associated with German-American breweries. It was a signifier and a product of aspirations of typically middle-class immigrant brewers who had truly arrived.



**Bottling Works, Schlitz Brewing Co.  
Washington, D. C.**

Chas. L. Lesser, Milwaukee, Wis., Architect. J. M. Dunn, Washington, D. C., Contractor.

**Universal Portland Cement Used**

*From Universal Portland Cement Monthly Bulletin, No. 66 (1909)*

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

The facility incorporated a bottling and packing house, cold storage, a loading dock, an office, a stable and wagon shed, and a probable bottle- and crate-storage shed. It was built of brick with a steel frame that supported its concrete slab floors and roof, a feature that led to its depiction in promotional materials circulated by the cement manufacturer.<sup>43</sup> Although drawn a decade after Prohibition reached the District of Columbia, the detail of the 1928 Sanborn insurance atlas shown on the next page best depicts the arrangement of the Schlitz depot during its operation. Beer, bottles and crates would be delivered to the covered, trackside loading dock (A) at the extreme northeast of the facility. They would be brought inside through a passage (B) leading to the lower floor of the two-story bottling and packing house (C) whose many windows admitted natural light to these working spaces. Reached by stairs and a lift, the upper story housed the bottling room. The 1903 tome *One Hundred Years of Brewing* described modern bottling at some length:

The washing of the old bottles... is preceded by a soaking... For the washing and succeeding rinsing various kinds of apparatus are used... The racking apparatus... now receives the beer from the cask placed under pressure by filtered air or carbonic acid, and... special apparatuses are used by which a number of bottles are filled under iso-barometric pressure of carbonic acid at the same time.... The apparatuses for corking the bottles are fitted for corks, or for the various numerous patent stoppers of different kinds which are in use now, as loop seal, crown cork [i.e., bottle cap], etc.... One of the most remarkable of modern machines is a combination of a corking, capping and wiring machine performing the entire work mentioned automatically... After wiring, the bottles for distant shipment or long keeping are subjected to Pasteurization [i.e., a dunk in a hot bath to kill microbes that would promote spoilage]... The next operation, labeling, is still, to a great extent, performed by hand, but the larger plants are equipped with proper machinery for this work also... After the bottles are labeled and neck and mouth covered with tinfoil, they are placed in boxes specially constructed for the local market....<sup>44</sup>

This packing of bottles into cases would occur on the ground floor of the Schlitz bottling house, with the full crates removed through the arched entrances on Randolph Place. By means of belts, driveshafts and flywheels, the upstairs bottling machinery was driven by a coal-fired steam-engine located in a space (D) just inside from the loading dock and whose truncated chimney can still be seen. The same engine powered ammonia compressors for an adjacent ice machine (E) and refrigerating pipes within the one-story almost windowless cold-storage room (F) against the tracks at the southeast corner of the facility.

We must refer to an earlier map, a detail of the 1913 *Baist's Real Estate Atlas of Surveys of Washington, District of Columbia*, to fill in the rest. The Baist maps were more interested in depicting lots carefully and showing the improvements thereon generally; they were less interested in use and in the internal spaces, and less reliable as to building dimensions. What it shows, in a

<sup>43</sup> *Universal Portland Cement Monthly Bulletin*, No. 66 (1909), 11.

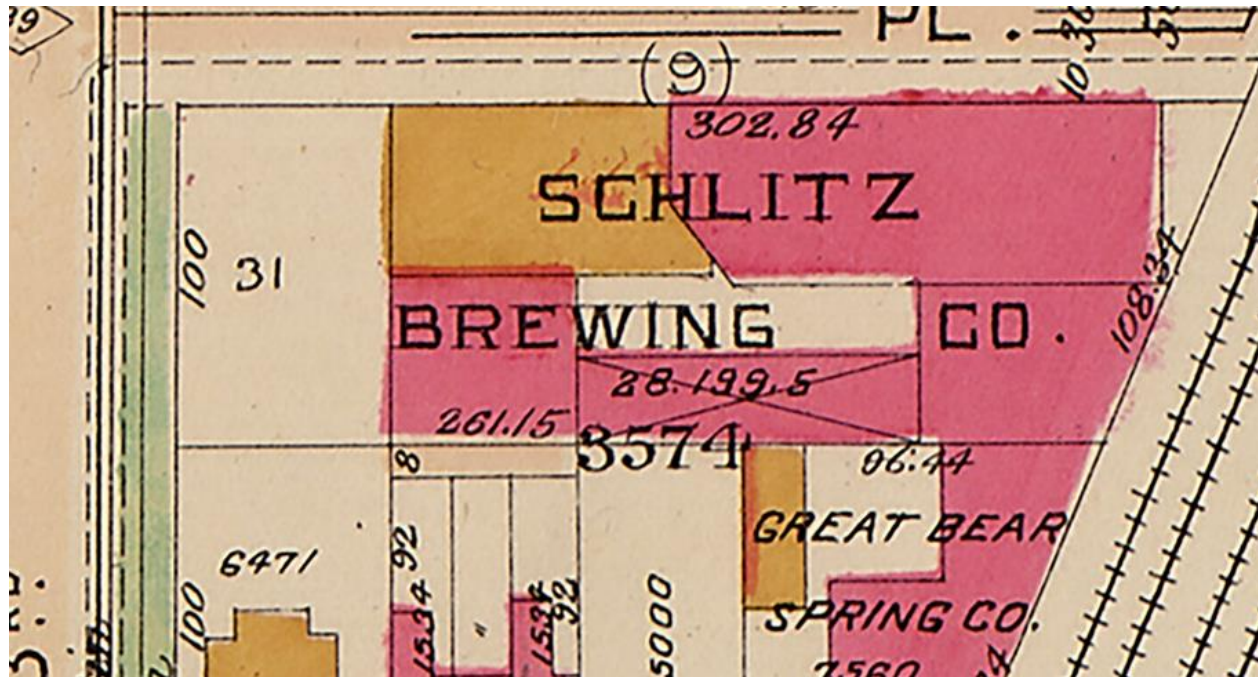
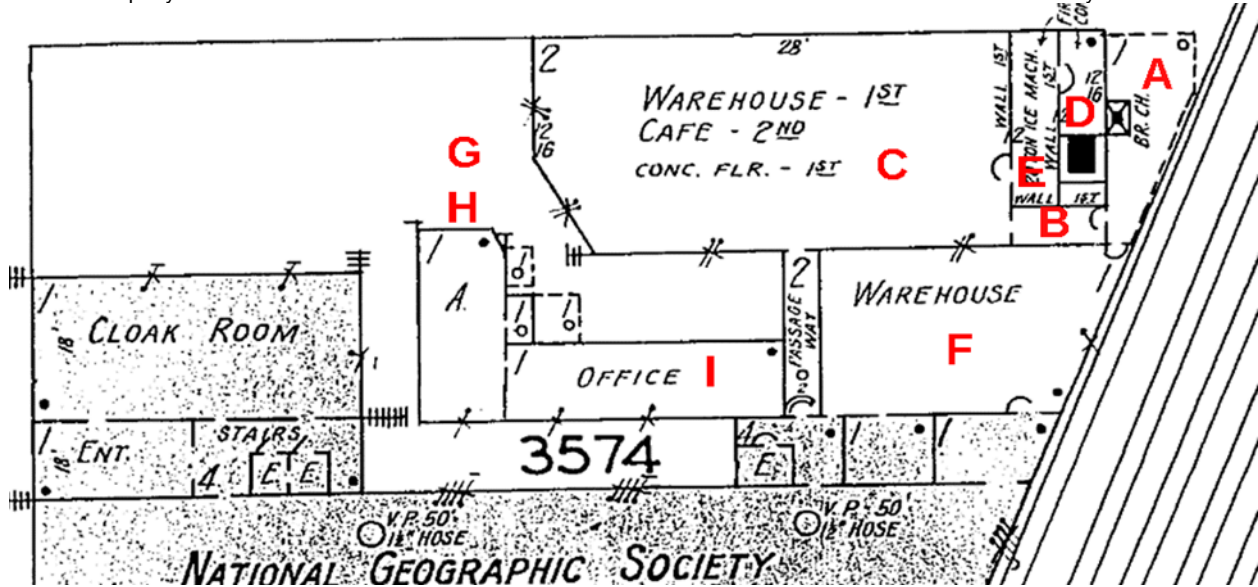
<sup>44</sup> The Western Brewer, *One Hundred Years of Brewing*, (Chicago: H.S. Rich & Co., 1903), 112.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State



yellow denoting a frame building demolished before 1924, is the Schlitz wagon shed and/or stable (G), whose permit had indicated was located on Lot 31. Adjoining it to the south may have been the original office or stable (H), constructed of brick, to the east of which was an apparent shed (I), likely for the storage of bottles and crates, both of which were bought new and then reused.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

Alternatively, the office could have been located in the west end of the bottling house, behind the arched opening. And the “shed” could have been the stable, but its location would have made it more difficult to get the horses through the other portions of the building.

In addition to the in-house operations, a crucial component of the business was beer delivery and collection of the money from saloons, restaurants, hotels and households. The new depot was connected by telephone from the beginning, and deliveries occurred citywide. The beer-wagon drivers were typically also the collectors. There was no special relationship between this business and residential Eckington, other than their proximity. Eckington had relatively few saloons or restaurants, and a 1913 D.C. law forbade bars within a one-mile radius of the Soldiers’ Home. Although employees tended to live closer their places of work than today, there seems to be a pretty weak correlation here. The former bookkeeper, Royal Beck, had resided near the original location in Southwest, but not so for manager Carl Mueller or bottling hand Edward Henning. Julius Albrecht, the manager or agent from 1912 to 1915, lived only two blocks away from the Randolph Place facility, but his immediate predecessor, Edward A. Neill, had an East Capitol Street address. Driver John F. Kenney resided in Northeast in 1911, but a mile away by foot and across the tracks. That is not to say that the workers were not part of a community; they contributed as a body to charitable causes, and they fielded both baseball and duckpin bowling teams. The unionized workers sometimes got along with the community better than their employers, striking briefly in 1904, 1906 and 1910.

By the early 1910s Washington brewers were on a collision course with the temperance movement. In 1913 the local Anti-Saloon League complained that the Schlitz plant encroached within the one-mile radius of the Soldiers’ Home. The depot was close enough to the boundary that a survey was ordered.<sup>45</sup> Years later, the *Evening Star* reported that, in the dead of night, the company’s lawyer had dispatched a crew to demolish a fifty-foot section of the building that impinged on the protected zone.<sup>46</sup> However, a 1919 real estate atlas shows the plant’s footprint unchanged from early 1913. This was only one manifestation of a movement that was sweeping the country, as several states adopted bans on the sale of most alcoholic beverages in the 1880s, and many others followed in the 1900s and 1910s. Another successful strategy was granting localities to exercise the option to go “dry.”

In March 1917, a month before America entered World War I, the Sheppard-Bone Dry Act bought prohibition to the District, causing sports journalist and humorist Bugs Baer to lament that “All the Schlitz signs which make our suburban autumns so beautiful will he to be hauled down or flown at half-mast.” The proud purveyors of the “beer that made Milwaukee famous” then had only Schlitz “Famo”, a near-beer, and a malt extract to distribute from its Eckington address.<sup>47</sup> In August 1917, Congress approved the language of the Eighteenth Amendment, which authorized the passage of a national prohibition law after the amendment was ratified by the states. Shortly

<sup>45</sup> “Uncle Sam Owns Three Bar Rooms,” *Evening Star*, October 21, 1913, 1.

<sup>46</sup> “Property at Third and Randolph Streets Sold,” *Evening Star*, May 15, 1920, Section II, 1.

<sup>47</sup> *Evening Star*, June 25, 1918, 4.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

after the Volstead Act became effective on January 17, 1920, Schlitz sold its branch and many other properties across the country. Schlitz continued to advertise Famo as available at the Third Street NE address until August 1920, but, when it received District approval to market “medical beer” in 1921, its warehouse had moved to 1320 First Street NE.<sup>48</sup> The National Geographic Society, which purchased the property in May 1920, had apparently begun occupying at least a portion of the building in 1918.

### The Eckington Warehouse Corridor From The World War I Era

In 1920, when zoning laws formally designated the area “industrial,” the corridor along the west side of the Metropolitan was already devoted to warehouse and small factory use.<sup>49</sup> By 1913, the first section of the Judd & Detwiler printing plant occupied the corner of Eckington Place and Florida Avenue NE and a quartermaster corps warehouse filled the lots between the printing plant and the McDowell and Hogue warehouse complex. The continuing growth of motor truck transportation increasingly made Eckington’s location at the axis of arterial streets and the railroad, an ideal area for warehouses and commercial garages. Such development had progressed north of Truesdell’s original subdivision into Center and Northwest Eckington, two separate subdivisions platted by other owners in the 1890s. In 1915-1916 The Railway Terminal Company erected several brick warehouses in Square 3623, which abutted the B & O tracks between Fifth Street and Rhode Island Avenue.<sup>50</sup> An important technical advance was provided by the United States Post Office Mail Equipment Shop, was constructed near the intersection of Fifth and V streets in 1918. This large, daylight-factory-style building was among the first poured-in-place federal facilities in Washington. It served as a multipurpose manufacturing and maintenance facility where hundreds of employees designed postal equipment and manufactured or repaired millions of mail sacks and hundreds of thousands of postal locks annually.<sup>51</sup>

Like the three structures constructed between S and V Streets by the Fries, Beall & Sharp building supplies company, many warehouses built in Eckington during the 1920s were one or two-story brick buildings. However, the corridor’s largest and most dominant buildings were of reinforced concrete construction like the Mail Equipment Shops. The Sanitary Grocery Company, which operated the Piggly-Wiggly Stores, one of the earliest supermarket chains erected a four-story warehouse at 1845 Fourth Street NE in 1923. Its architect, the Ballinger Company of Philadelphia, designed numerous Sanitary Grocery markets in other cities. Both 1845 Fourth and a second, larger warehouse erected at 1631 Eckington Place in 1929 are four-story buildings of fireproof reinforced

<sup>48</sup> *Evening Star*, September 1, 1919, p. 17; *Evening Star*, May 15, 1920, p. 14; *Evening Star*, November 4, 1921, 2; *Washington Herald*, October 22, 1919, 9.

<sup>49</sup> David Maloney, District of Columbia state historic preservation officer, to Daniel Delahaye, National Park Service historic preservation officer, December 5, 2014.

<sup>50</sup> “Names Tax Reviewers,” *Washington Post*, May 28, 1915, 14.

<sup>51</sup> Because of its importance to the development of postal operations, the keeper of the National Register determined the building eligible for listing in 2015. See Patrick W. Andrus, keeper of the National Register, to Daniel Delahaye, National Park Service historic preservation officer, January 23, 2015.

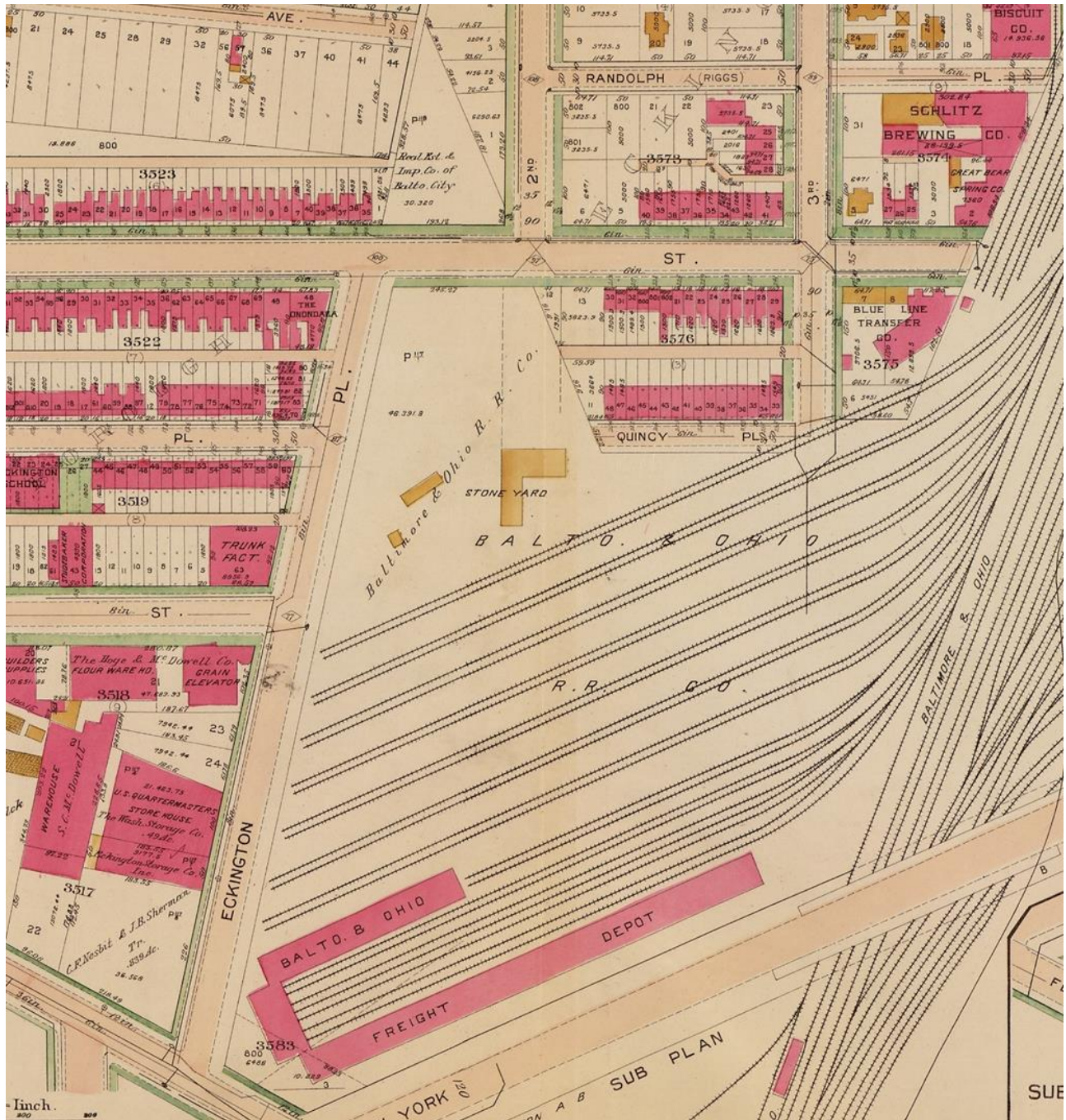
Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

concrete construction with such "daylight factory" characteristics as repeating bays of large steel sash windows and a flat roof surrounded by a parapet wall. Between the construction of the first and second Sanitary Grocery Warehouse, a stylized reinforced concrete building was constructed for the National Geographic Society at Third and R Streets NE.



Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

## The National Geographic Society in Eckington

The National Geographic Society has been the United States' preeminent organization for exploration and scientific education, seeking to "increase and diffuse geographic knowledge while promoting the conservation of the world's cultural, historical, and natural resources" since the late nineteenth century.<sup>52</sup> The Society was founded in January 1888 by academics, explorers, scientists, and wealthy members of the elite interested in travel and geography. Its first president was prominent lawyer and investor Gardiner Greene Hubbard, whose daughter Mabel was married to Washington inventor Alexander Graham Bell. The first issue of the Society's journal, *National Geographic Magazine*, was published in October of 1888.

After Hubbard died in 1898, Bell became the Society's president and Gilbert H. Grosvenor, Bell's son-in-law, became the magazine's first full-time editor. Under Bell and Grosvenor, the Society's membership and the magazine's subscription rose, as it increasingly adopted photographic illustrations and a lighter, less academic tone. In 1903 Grosvenor became president and the Society moved into Hubbard Memorial Hall, its stately Renaissance Revival style headquarters 16<sup>th</sup> and M Streets.

The National Geographic Society steadily established itself as a fixture in American popular culture during the early 1900s. Aided by its coverage of such feats as Robert E. Peary's expedition to the North Pole and archeologist Hiram Bingham's discovery of the Incan city of Machu Picchu, the magazine's circulation grew from fewer than 1,000 in the 1890s to 10,000 in 1905 to 107,000 by 1912. The Society constructed a southern addition to Hubbard Hall in 1913.

By 1912, production operations had outgrown printer Judd & Detweiler's plant on 11<sup>th</sup> Street NW. The firm commissioned a new plant at Florida Avenue and Eckington Place NE that "represents in its arrangement and equipment the last word on printing offices." Designed by prominent architect Arthur B. Heaton, it was dedicated solely to producing the magazine. By 1916, the magazine had a circulation of 635,000 and the largest direct subscription list of any publication in the world.<sup>53</sup>

With production moved to Eckington, it made sense for distribution operations to follow. In 1918 the Society moved 200 employees in its office, distribution, and storage departments to the Schlitz Warehouse.<sup>54</sup> A Geographic Society account noted that:

---

<sup>52</sup> Gilbert M. Grosvenor, "A Hundred Years of the National Geographic Society" in *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 154, No. 1 (1988), 87-92; Susan Schluten. "The Making of the National Geographic: Science, Culture, and Expansionism" in *American Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (2000), 5-29. See also [newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/National\\_Geographic\\_Society](http://newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/National_Geographic_Society).

<sup>53</sup> *Evening Star*, November 1, 1913, 13; *Evening Star*, January 19, 1914, 9; *Washington Herald*, December 27, 1916, 4. Judd & Detweiler continued as the Society's printer until 1957. *Evening Star*, October 20, 1968, 38.

<sup>54</sup> The *Evening Star* for May 5, 1920 reported the property's purchase by the Washington Loan and Trust Company ("one of the largest realty transactions reported for the week") on behalf of an unidentified company. However,

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

The largely female work force addresses letters, pamphlets, and other materials, such as the geographic news bulletins sent to more than 500 newspapers across the country. One vast room contains the membership index files, arranged in thirty-nine geographical sections. There is a file for every member – nearly 700,000 now – and each contains a metal address plate used in addressing the wrappers surrounding the National Geographic magazine.”<sup>55</sup> .

The magazine’s readership exceeded 750,000 by 1920. In that year, the Society engaged architect Arthur B. Heaton to expand the building with additional restrooms, as well as a second story and covered loading dock at the east end of the original plant.<sup>56</sup>

In 1924, the Society executed a plan to greatly enlarge its Eckington footprint. It gradually had acquired the remainder of Square 3574, which held a free-standing frame house, three brick rowhouses, and the 1908 bottling plant of the Great Bear Spring Company, which sold natural spring water in five-gallon bottles, all fronting on R Street.<sup>57</sup> By April, the Society was preparing the site for a new building, to be designed by Arthur Heaton and constructed by Skinker and Garrett at an estimated cost of \$300,000.<sup>58</sup>

### Architect Arthur Heaton

Arthur Heaton (1875-1951),<sup>59</sup> a graduate of the District’s Central High School and student at the Sorbonne, was long one of Washington’s most prominent architects. By the end of his fifty-year career, he had designed over a thousand houses and 28 apartment houses.

Heaton apprenticed with Frederick Pyle, the blue-ribbon firm of Marsh & Peter, and Paul Peltz, designer of the Library of Congress. He began solo practice while in his mid-twenties, and quickly gained recognition for notable apartment designs. He took a sabbatical in 1903-1904 to attend the Sorbonne and tour Europe, and then returned to Washington, where he designed a steady stream

---

permit 634 of August 21, 1918 (install a motor) lists the National Geographic Society as owner. Permit 6045 of April 29, 1920 lists owner Washington Loan and Trust, but permit 1257 of August 25, 1920 reverts to National Geographic. The Society itself states that it first occupied the building in 1918.

<sup>55</sup> Information supplied by the National Geographic Society, apparently quoting an undated contemporary source.

<sup>56</sup> Permit 6045, April 29, 1920. See also Hartman-Cox, 24-25. Eleven of Heaton’s drawings for this project are in the Library of Congress’s Heaton Archives (Prints and Photographs Division, Unit 875).

<sup>57</sup> Demolition of one frame and four brick structures at 300, 308, 310, 312 and 320 R St NE in permit 8372, April 10, 1924; construction of a four-story brick and concrete office building per permit 263, July 12, 1924.

<sup>58</sup> Great Bear Spring seemed to own at least lot 2 in 1908 when it received a permit to construct a shed there (permit 3790, June 12, 1908). Two years later, Lots 1-4 and 24 were sold by Charles C. Byrne, a retired Assistant Surgeon-General dabbling in real estate, to an unnamed buyer (*Evening Star*, February 12, 1910, 13). See also the discussion in Hartman-Cox, 240.

<sup>59</sup> Heaton’s biography is based on EHT Tracerics, *D.C. Architects Directory* (unpublished database prepared for D.C. Historic Preservation Office) and the D.C. building permits database.



Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

of houses, apartment buildings, commercial, educational, and civic buildings over the next four decades. For its first fourteen years Heaton was the Supervising Architect for the Washington National Cathedral. The certificate accompanying his AIA fellowship in 1942 cited “his notable contribution to the advancement of the profession of architecture by his Achievement in Design and Public Service”.

Heaton’s long career had multiple points of intersection with Eckington and the National Geographic Society. His first project in the subdivision was Truesdell’s last: a row of houses at 51 to 57 T Street constructed in 1909. (In 1915 he designed the Altamount Apartments in Washington Heights for Truesdell.) Heaton designed the original 1913 Judd & Detweiler building, as well as additions in 1916, 1922, 1923, 1925, and 1937 as well as modifications to the Lincoln Road Methodist Episcopal Church in 1923. His series of substations for the Potomac Electric Power Company likely influenced the design of the Eckington Substation at 1946 Fifth Street NE (1931). He also designed the residences of both printer Frederick Judd and Geographic Society President Gilbert Grosvenor, as well as a four-story addition to the Society’s Sixteenth Street headquarters.<sup>60</sup>

The area of Heaton’s practice perhaps most germane to the building of the National Geographic Warehouse were his designs for warehouses and other transportation-related structures. The National Geographic Warehouse was among the earliest of these. Other significant examples include the Capitol Parking Garage (1926 - demolished), the Connecticut Avenue Park ‘n Shop (1930), , the WRECO Bus Garage at 2112 Georgia Avenue (1930), the F.P. May Hardware Company Warehouse at 1818 New York Avenue NE (1934), the Western Bus Garage at 5201 44<sup>th</sup> Street NW (1934), the Southeast Bus Garage at 17 M Street SE (demolished - 1936), the Charles Tompkins-built warehouse at 23-33 M Street SE, and numerous gas stations and smaller garages.<sup>61</sup>

Heaton considered seven possibilities for the new Geographic Society building, all involving the entire block, with some demolishing and some incorporating the Schlitz building. In his final design, the original bottling house and its 1913 southeast corner addition were retained. Although it is unclear whether the frame structure, stables, and southwest addition had been removed during Heaton’s 1920 modifications to the plant, as they are shown in Heaton’s early sketch of the site.<sup>62</sup> The footprint of the demolished stables became part of an expanded courtyard between the old and new structures, now open on its west side. To its east, the 1913 addition adjoined the old and new buildings, while an enclosed walkway that traversed the addition’s roof connected their second stories. Heaton’s design provided for expansion to fill future needs. Although only four stories were built, the warehouse foundation and lower story were designed to support seven. Staff processing of correspondence took place in the upper floors. The warehouse’s ground floor was set up to receive a monthly shipment of 350 tons of magazine printing paper through a rear loading platform and to receive the society’s extensive correspondence on a separate dock. The attractive

<sup>60</sup> Paul Kelsey Williams, “History Mystery Solved: The Heaton House in Spring Valley,” June 4, 2012, [househistoryman.blogspot.com/2012/06/history-mystery-solved-heaton-house-in.html](http://househistoryman.blogspot.com/2012/06/history-mystery-solved-heaton-house-in.html), accessed Feb. 10, 2016.

<sup>61</sup> EHT Traceries, “Arthur B. Heaton,” in *D.C. Architects Directory*.

<sup>62</sup> The 1919 Baist real estate atlas shows the same footprint as the 1913 edition.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

stone-and-brick façade and Geographic owls greeting visitors at the main door on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street just between the two buildings was enhanced by terracing and plantings along the new structure.<sup>63</sup>

Construction of the new building was accompanied by renovation of the older one. According to management, “Every provision for the welfare of the Society’s clerical staff has been made. The present building, along Randolph Street [sic], will have its first floor turned over entirely to rest rooms, a first-aid room and cloakroom for the workers, while the second floor of the old building will have a perfectly equipped cafeteria.” Employees had morning and afternoon breaks of 7 ½ minutes to enjoy it.<sup>64</sup>



Figure 2.3 Upper level of the Chas. Lesser's Randolph Place Building showing Arthur Heaton's renovations and NGS staff at work. Photo Credit: Edwin I. Wisner / National Geographic Creative

<sup>63</sup> *Evening Star*, April 15, 1924, 17; *Hartman-Cox*, 25.

<sup>64</sup> *Evening Star*, April 15, 1924; information provided by the National Geographic Society.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

The Society's complex was the latest addition to a neighborhood that was developing residentially as well as industrially. When the Schlitz depot was constructed, adjoining squares contained scattered wooden houses from Eckington's first wave of development in the 1890s and strings of row houses extended down R and Q Streets. During the next fifteen years, more row houses filled in the lots between them. Although some early houses survived east of Third Street, the warehouses to its east were a jagged bulwark between the railroad operations to their east and the residential neighborhood. Their visibility to rail traffic going in and out of Union Station, streetcar passengers, and neighbors presumably lent emphasis to their aesthetic qualities, not least because they were public representations of their owners. Like the Mail Equipment Shops, the Sanitary Grocery Warehouses' reinforced concrete columns and beams expressed their structures. However, these buildings were also aestheticized with minimalistic ornamentation. Mail Equipment Shops have a cornice ornamented with terracotta tiles and cast medallions inscribed with the legend "U.S." Both Sanitary Grocery Warehouses' Art Moderne decoration includes yellow diamond-patterned tiles incised in the tops of the concrete piers. While the National Geographic Warehouse shares their reinforced concrete structure and steel sash fenestration, its much more highly stylized façade offers contrasting textures of richly colored brick and fieldstone. Its Romanesque arched bays above the loading docks and window tiers express the sense of history and heritage conveyed by the Geographic Society's magazine, while the fieldstone cladding of its lower story represent its celebration of the natural world.

*National Geographic Magazine* added a new dimension with its first color photographs in 1926. Despite the Great Depression, the Society continued to grow and expanded its 16<sup>th</sup> Street headquarters again in 1931 with the addition of an administration building designed by Arthur B. Heaton. By 1935, the magazine's monthly readership soared to over five million by 1935. In that year, the *Washington Post* profiled its operations, terming its 16<sup>th</sup> Street Headquarters "the brain building" and noted that:

The 'work building' in Eckington is a handsome, well-designed, brick structure, with large windows. Here correspondence with the 1,100,000 members is attended to, the intricacies of a mass circulation problem handled with dispatch. Hundreds of girls work there all day long in an atmosphere that reminds one of the best-conducted governmental department. There is no wasted motion anywhere. Everything that can be done is done by machinery, some of which was invented by society workers for the specific tasks of the magazine." Storage of all paper, ordinary and coated, mailing accessories and such printed material as books, pamphlets and advertisements were stored there also.<sup>65</sup>

In 1937, Heaton received a last commission at the site, filling in the courtyard with a one-story addition that included a garage and linked both buildings.

<sup>65</sup> *Washington Post*, December 22, 1935, B3.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

The National Geographic Society continued to grow and diversify its programs in the post-World War II era, including a move into television production. It expanded its headquarters in 1948 when an editorial wing was added behind the 1931 addition. In 1961, construction began on a 17<sup>th</sup> Street building designed by Edward Durrell Stone. The final expansion of the Society's headquarters complex occurred in 1981 with a structure designed by Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill; the organization paid for this building in cash. Subscriptions to the magazine reached 10.7 million in 1980.

However, the Eckington buildings had reached their full size. The Society bought five lots across Randolph Place (square 3571) for parking in 1962. The year its membership reached three million and it installed a Sperry Rand UNIVAC III computer to manage its address system.<sup>66</sup> However, by 1965, ever-increasing volume – 160,000 items mailed daily – , new technology, and the changing cityscape led the Society to join the flow of businesses to the suburbs. In announcing plans for a new Membership Center Building in Gaithersburg, Maryland, “Society president Dr. [Melville Bell] Grosvenor said” the Eckington quarters are now antiquated and overcrowded” and threatened by the proposed inner loop highway. The move to the suburbs, involving 1,100 employees, took place in 1968 and Society sold all square 3574 and its parking lot in square 3571 to the District government in 1971 for \$1.3 million.<sup>67</sup>

### The District Government Years

By 1973, the District Government had renovated both buildings to serve as a centralized maintenance support facility for the public schools. The Lemuel Penn Center, a vocational training program named for a District school superintendent murdered by Georgia Klansmen in 1964, was also housed in the buildings.<sup>68</sup> By 2016 school system operations had moved out, replaced by departments of the public library system during renovation of the central Martin Luther King Library. The complex awaits an anticipated renovation and reuse.

### Archaeological Potential

Prior to the establishment of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, this area was wooded, with a tributary of Tiber Creek to the east, close to the future rail right-of-way, paralleled by a road that originated at the future Dave Thomas Circle and ended at the “J. Gales heirs” parcel shown on Albert Boschke’s 1861 map. This road paralleled the old Bladensburg Road, would become Brentwood Road (see 1881 *Carpenter’s Atlas*, plate 19). The subject parcel was still undeveloped

<sup>66</sup> *Evening Star*, August 12, 1962, 48; *Hartman-Cox*, 27; D.C. Recorder of Deeds database. According to the 1971 deed, Lots 9, 12 and 19 in Square 3571 had been renumbered as 9, 800, 801, 805, 806, which numbers still apply today.

<sup>67</sup> *Evening Star*, November 17, 1965, 1; *Washington Post*, April 1, 1967, C8; *Hartman-Cox*, 27; information from National Geographic Society; D.C. Recorder of Deeds database.

<sup>68</sup> *Hartman-Cox*, 27.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

when it was first subdivided about 1887 and the surrounding streets paved in asphalt and coal tar shortly after. The triangular parcel to the west of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street was the shooting range and recreation ground of the Scheutezenverein Germania from at least 1878.



*A detail of Sheet 80, G.M. Hopkins, Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington... (Philadelphia: 1878), Library of Congress.*

The earliest documented development in the square was a frame dwelling and three brick rowhouses in the southwest corner, which stood by 1903. These structures persisted until at least 1921, despite the construction of warehouses and other structures over much of the rest of the parcel. They were apparently demolished in preparation for the National Geographic warehouse, which has a basement. The Schlitz plant, too, has a basement, but its additions appear to have slab-on-grade foundations.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

The location has natural archaeological potential for prehistoric Native American resources given the proximity to Tiber Creek tributary, only 350 to 500 feet to the east. We do not have reliable topographic elevation data for the area that predates the construction of the Metropolitan Branch line. Comparison of the 1880s and current topographic data indicates that a mixture of grading and filling have occurred across the parcel. More grading has occurred in the eastern half of the square—it is about seven feet higher in the northeast corner—and a few feet of cutting is likely in the western half, with as much as five feet in the northwest corner (the estimates have an accuracy within three to five feet and have not been ground-truthed). Therefore, it is possible that intact early surfaces from the Native American and historic period are present across the parcel but are buried beneath fill that could vary in thickness across portions of the parcel.

The brief review of historic development of the property shows only minor use throughout the nineteenth century. The industrial structures on the northern half of the square appear to be constructed with slab-on-grade foundations that could cap archaeological deposits related to the early development of the square including industrial and domestic occupation of the square and the early Schlitz operation, but construction of both major buildings almost certainly disturbed much of the development that had occurred previously.

It is possible that intact archaeological resources are present on the north half of the square sealed over by building slabs or beneath pavement. This archaeological potential includes both prehistoric and historical time periods and escaped disturbance from subsequent construction and demolition episodes. Such deposits, if present, would have the potential to provide information on the lives of the people who occupied the dwellings on the adjacent lots to the south, on the establishment and operation of the beer depot, and on any prehistoric occupation or use. To the extent they might be extant and eventually exposed, features might reveal, say, the location and something of the character of the Schlitz accessory buildings.

While there is no direct evidence of an archaeological site that could be registered or designated, we recommend that prior to starting any ground-disturbing activities on the parcel, the property owner consult with the District of Columbia Archaeologist to determine if the proposed project will affect potential archeological resources. If so, archaeological identification survey and subsequent phases of investigations may be warranted prior to starting construction.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

City of Milwaukee, Department of City Development, "Coventry Inn: Milwaukee Historic Ethnic Architecture Resources Study". Unpublished study. 1994.

EHT Tracerics, Inc., "D. C. Warehouse Survey Project Final Report" (Phases One and Two). Unpublished study. 1991. (At D.C. Preservation League)

Grosvenor, Gilbert M. "A Hundred Years of the National Geographic Society." *The Geographical Journal* 154, no. 1 (1988): 87-92. Accessed February 15, 2020. doi:10.2307/633478.

Hartman-Cox Architects, and EYP, *Feasibility Study and Programmatic Test Fit for Penn Center – Preliminary, for District of Columbia Department of General Services*. Unpublished study. 2016. (At HPO)

Lightman, Marjorie, D.P. Sefton, and Zeiset, William., *Nomination for a Proposed Eckington Historic District*. (Prepared for Eckington Civic Association) (Unpublished) (2017). (At D.C. Preservation League)

Peck, Garrett, *Capitol Beer: A Heady History of Brewing in Washington, D.C.* (American Palate, Charleston, SC. c. 2014.)

Schulten, Susan. "The Making of the National Geographic: Science, Culture, and Expansionism." *American Studies* 41, no. 1 (2000): 5-29. Accessed February 15, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/40643115](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40643115).

Spiekermann, Uwe, "Marketing Milwaukee: Schlitz and the Making of a National Beer Brand, 1881-1940". *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute*, No. 53 (Fall 2013).

### Websites

Encyclopedia.com, "National Geographic Society."

### Archives and Databases

D.C. building permits  
D.C. building permits database

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

D.C. Recorder of Deeds database

EHT Tracerics, Inc., D.C. Historic Preservation Architects, Builders, and Owners database

American Institute of Architects archives

National Geographic Society

City of Milwaukee Historic Preservation Office

Newspapers

*Critic and Record*  
*Evening Star*  
*Washington Herald*  
*Washington Times*

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- 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):** \_\_\_\_\_



Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 1.2

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 38.913303 | Longitude: -77.001984 |
| 2. Latitude: 38.912642 | Longitude: -77.001971 |
| 3. Latitude: 38.912633 | Longitude: -77.001163 |
| 4. Latitude: 38.913312 | Longitude: -77.000809 |

**Or**

#### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |          |           |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |

#### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The following boundary includes the entirety of square 3574: R Street NE to the south, Randolph Place NE to the north, Third Street NE to the west, and the Metropolitan Branch trail and railroad tracks to the east.

#### Boundary Justification

The Schlitz/National Geographic complex occupies all of Square 3574, which is bounded by these streets.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

---

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Hayden M. Wetzel, Jacqueline Drayer, D.P. Sefton, Victoria Eve Kelly, Jessica Unger

organization: D.C. Preservation League

street & number: 1221 Connecticut Ave NW #5A

city or town: Washington state: D.C. zip code: 20036

e-mail info@dcpreservation.org

telephone: (202) 783-5144

date: April 7, 2021

---

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Photo Log**

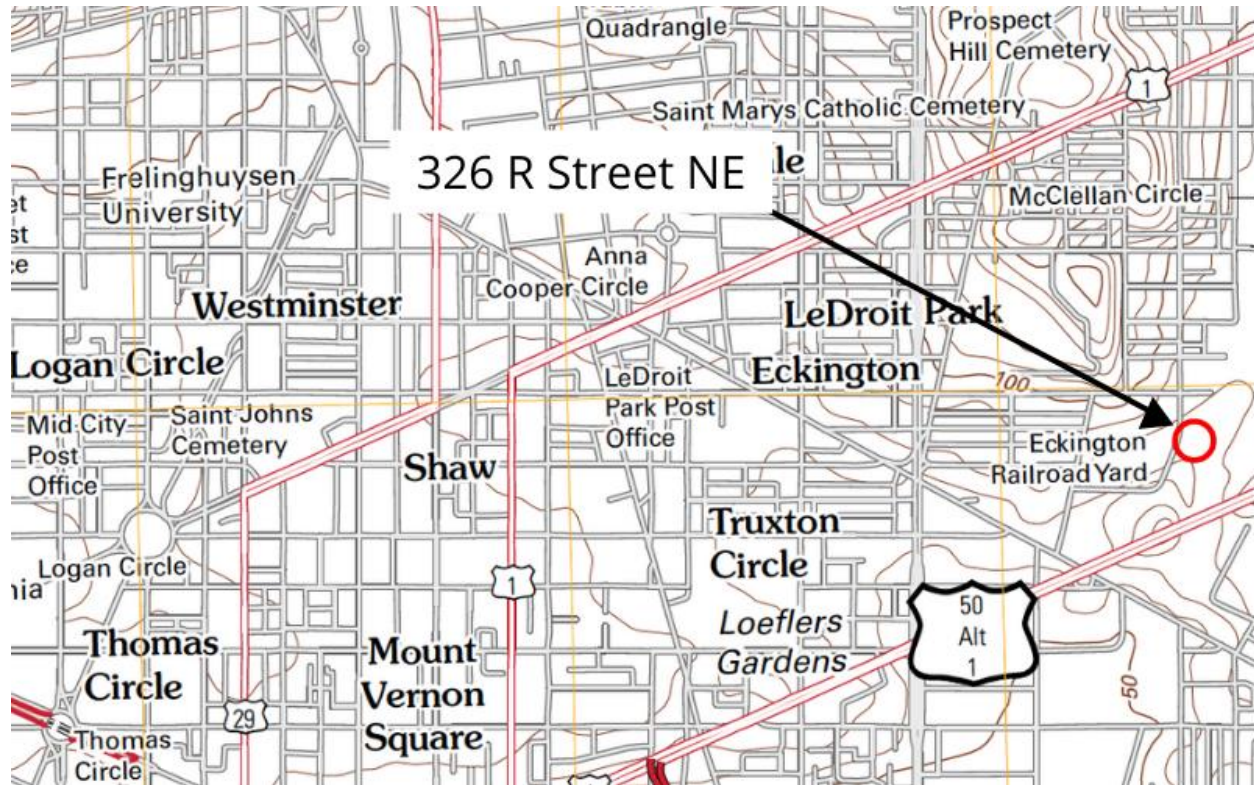
Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

### Illustrations



Detail from a 2011 USGS Washington West quadrangle, showing the location of 326 R Street NE

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State



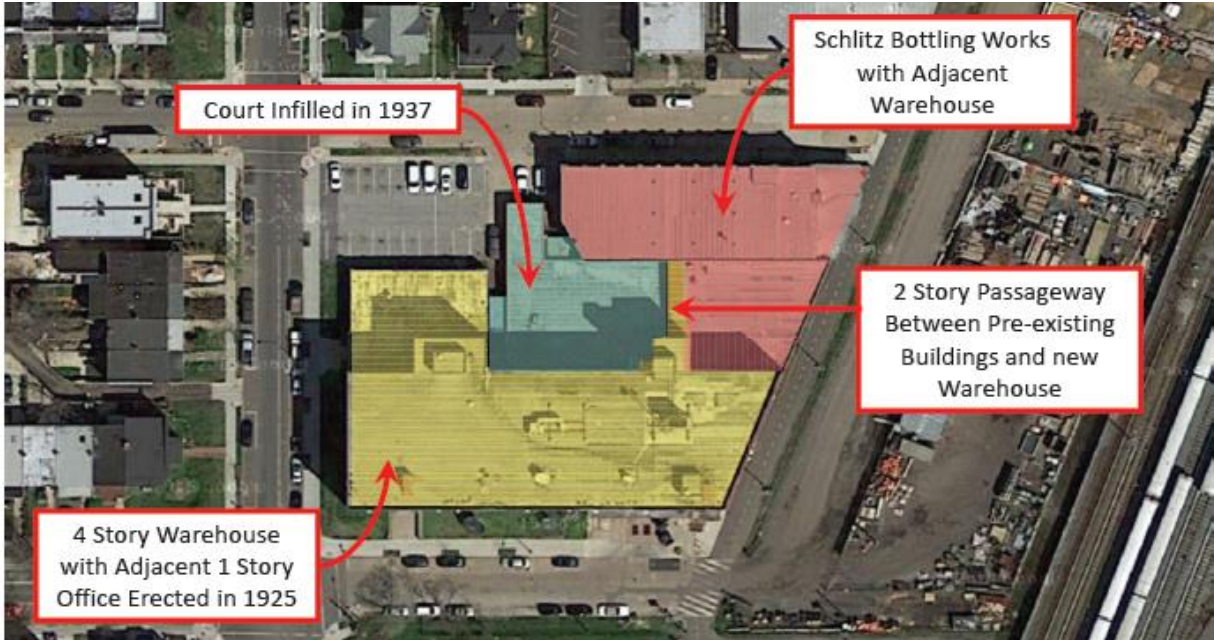
Map showing location of 326 R Street NE, yellow highlight. 326 R Street NE, courtesy of propertyquest.dc.gov, 2020.

Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Washington, D.C.

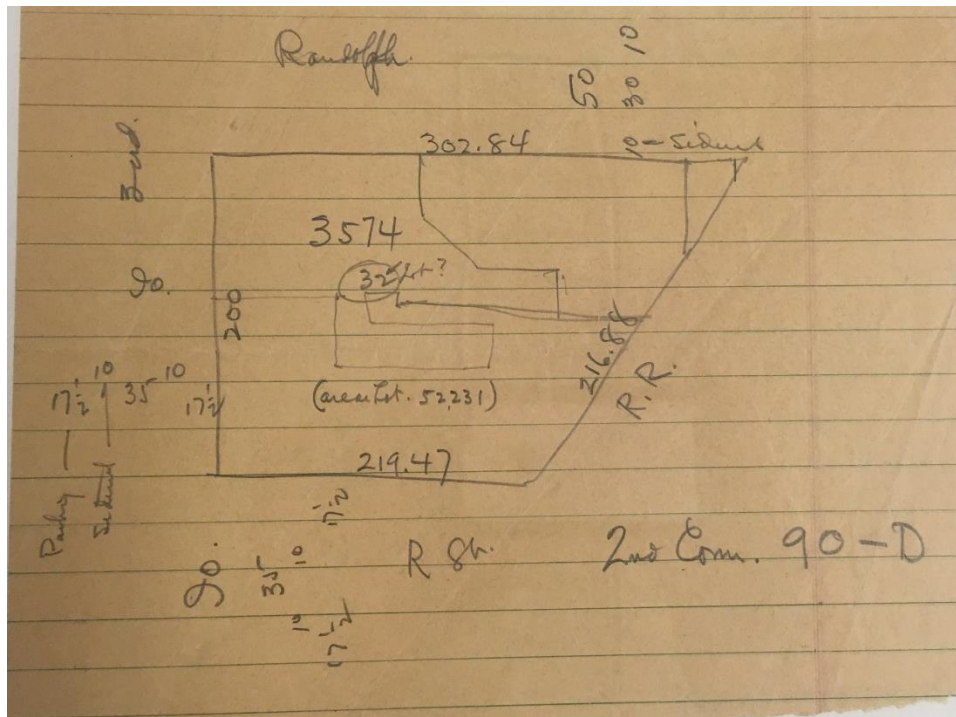
Name of Property

County and State



Above: Aerial showing current site plan.

Below: Sketch of Site Plan, circa 1924 (Heaton Archive, LOC)



Schlitz Brewing Company Washington  
Branch and National Geographic Society  
Warehouse

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State



Figure 3.15 Existing Substructure Conditions, National Geographic Society Warehouse

Photos from Hartman-Cox *Feasibility Study and Programmatic Test Fit for Penn Center – Preliminary, for District of Columbia Department of General Services*



Figure 3.29 Steel Column at Basement of Schlitz Building