

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Magnus Metal Company Building

Other names/site number: KEL 105

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

## 2. Location

Street & number: 4 Highway Avenue

City or town: Ludlow State: Kentucky County: Kenton

Not For Publication:  Vicinity: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 X 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 X 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 X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D

|  |
|--|
| <p>_____</p> <p><b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b> Craig Potts, SHPO <b>Date</b></p> <p>_____ Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office _____</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>_____</p> <p><b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>                                   | <p>_____</p> <p><b>Date</b></p>  |
| <p>_____</p> <p><b>Title :</b></p>   | <p>_____</p> <p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p> |

Magnus Metal Company Building

Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky

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

Private:

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

Building(s)

District

Site

Structure

Object

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State

**Number of Resources within Property**

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Contributing<br/> <u>1</u><br/> _____<br/> _____<br/> _____<br/> <u>1</u></p> | <p>Noncontributing<br/> _____<br/> _____<br/> <u>2</u><br/> _____<br/> <u>2</u></p> | <p>buildings<br/> sites<br/> structures<br/> objects<br/> Total</p> |
|--|---|---|

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**  
**Historic Functions**

Industry/manufacturing facility/ brass foundry  
Industry/ manufacturing facility/metal bearing company  
Industry/ energy/ propane gas distribution  
Commercial/ professional/ construction offices and warehouse

**Current Functions**

Vacant/not in use  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

Industrial/no style  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:**

Principal exterior materials of the property:

foundation: basement/concrete/concrete block  
walls: brick/concrete block/metal panels  
roof: metal

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State

## **Narrative Description**

### **Summary Paragraph**

The Magnus Metal Company Building (KEL 105) is located at 4 Highway Avenue in Ludlow, Kenton County, Kentucky. The industrial building is located near the bank of the Ohio River, adjacent to the Cincinnati, New Orleans, and Texas Pacific Railway tracks and the Cincinnati Southern Bridge, northeast of the city's downtown commercial district. The main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, built between circa 1913 and 1933 and oriented to the southwest, is a two-story building with a rectangular footprint and a concrete block basement foundation (see Figure 2). The first story is constructed of concrete blocks with sections of brick and metal panels filling in previous window openings. The second story is clad in metal panels, and the building is sheltered by a monitor roof clad in metal panels. Between 1933 and 1949, a period during which the site transitioned from a metal bearing company to a natural gas processing facility, a one-story gas bottling and loading dock was constructed on the southeast elevation and a concrete platform was constructed on the northeast elevation. Between 1949 and 1954, the gas bottling and loading dock was expanded to the northeast. Originally constructed on a larger, multi-building industrial site, the present-day Magnus Metal Company Building parcel includes two buildings and various support resources on approximately 1.77 acres. Changes to the original parcel boundary and the buildings included within the parcel boundaries are further discussed in the Statement of Integrity. Within the boundary of the present-day parcel as determined by the Kenton County Property Valuation Administrator (see Figure 1), only the main building and two non-contributing retaining walls are located within the proposed .499-acre National Register boundary. For reasons further explored in the Statement of Integrity, a second building, a gas propane pipe, and a metal gate have been determined as lacking integrity or are viewed as non-essential structures within the parcel boundary, and were not included in the National Register boundary. This nomination is submitted to list the property in the National Register of Historic Places with one contributing building and two non-contributing structures. The area proposed for listing immediately surrounds the building and includes the additions and concrete platforms. The building is in fair condition and exhibits some alterations since its construction.

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 1A: Aerial Photograph of Site with Parcel Boundary (blue) and National Register Boundary (red)

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State

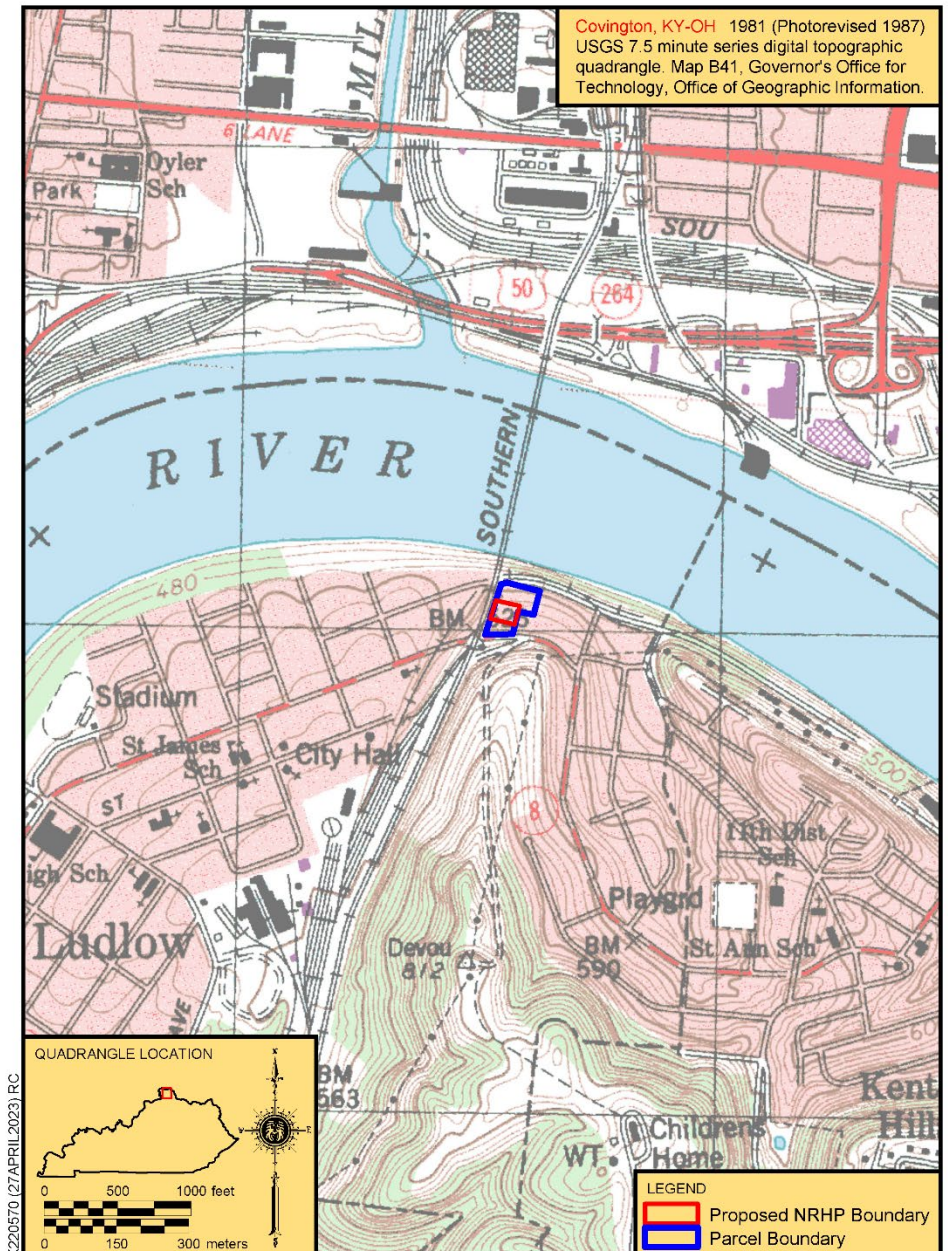


Figure 1B: Parcel Boundary (blue) and National Register Boundary (red) indicated on the Covington, KY-OH 1981 (Photo Inspected 1987) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 2: Façade (southwest) elevation of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking north-northeast.

### **Narrative Description**

East of the building are historic residential structures. Across Highway Avenue to the south of the Magnus Metal Company Building is an undeveloped hillside. West of the building, the railroad tracks separates the industrial building from the densely established Central Ludlow Historic District (listed under NR ID # 84000526 in 1984), which is comprised of both historic commercial buildings and residences. To the north, River Road extends between the building and an undeveloped bank of the Ohio River.

### **Site Description**

The Magnus Metal Company building, built between circa 1913 and 1933, is first depicted on a photograph of the Magnus Metal Company site,<sup>1</sup> though it is absent from a 1913 photograph of the site (Figure 13, page 19, below).<sup>2</sup> The 1909–1949 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Covington,

<sup>1</sup> Northern Kentucky Views, "Ludlow, Flood Scenes," Northern Kentucky Views webpage. [www.nkyviews.com/kenton/kenton\\_ludlow\\_floods.html](http://www.nkyviews.com/kenton/kenton_ludlow_floods.html) (accessed April 2, 2023).

<sup>2</sup> Northern Kentucky Views, "Southern Railway Scenes," Northern Kentucky Views webpage. <https://www.nkyviews.com/kenton4/kenton3067.html> (accessed April 3, 2023).

Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

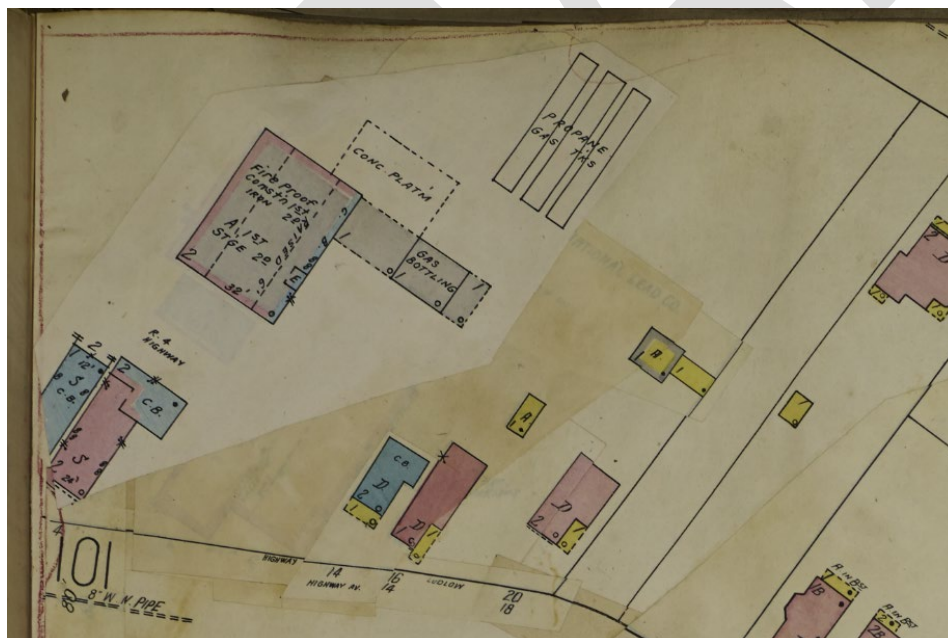
Name of Property

County and State

Kentucky is the first map to indicate the building.<sup>3</sup> The building is located on the north side of Highway Avenue, southeast of the Cincinnati, New Orleans, and Texas Pacific Railway tracks, and is in the vicinity of the Southern Railroad Bridge.

The building's façade is oriented to the southwest facing Highway Avenue. The building's facade is separated from Highway Avenue by a paved parking area and chain link fence. The building maintains its original footprint and additions constructed within the period of significance, and no major additions or changes to the massing and form of the structure have taken place since the period of significance.

A 1949 Sanborn map indicates the parcel on which the company operated consisted of seven buildings and three gas propane tanks (see Figure 3).<sup>4</sup> The parcel was bounded by the railroad and the Southern Railroad bridge to the northwest, River Road to the northeast, an undeveloped parcel to the southeast, and Highway Avenue to the southwest. The map shows an addition was constructed on the southeast elevation of the structure and a partial-width concrete deck was constructed on the northeast (rear) elevations of the original block of the building and the addition. Oriented in a southwest to northeast orientation, three gas propane tanks were located northeast of the main building in 1949. A commercial building (formerly utilized as a restaurant and/or bar) faced Highway Avenue in the current location of the commercial building in the southwest corner of the parcel. Three dwellings, located in the southeast corner of the lot, faced Ludlow Highway (aka present-day Highway Avenue). Two small support structures were indicated northeast of the dwellings.



**Figure 3: Image of Magnus Metal Company Building on Ludlow 1949 Sanborn (Map #102)**

<sup>3</sup> Sanborn Map Company, Insurance Maps of Covington, Kentucky, Volume Two . Sanborn Map Company: New York, 1909-1949.

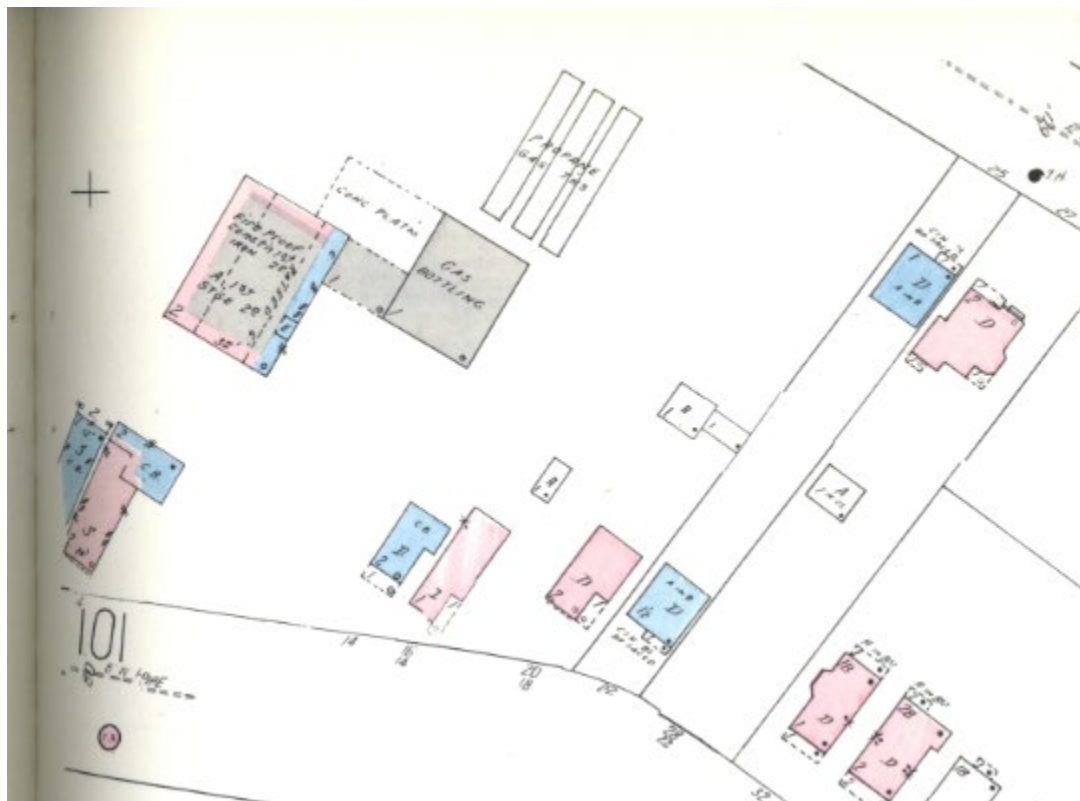
<sup>4</sup> Sanborn Map, 1949.



Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State

A 1954 Sanborn map indicates the addition on the southeast elevation of the building's main block was expanded to the northeast (see Figure 4).<sup>5</sup> A concrete platform was constructed on the southwest elevation of the addition prior to 1969.<sup>6</sup>



**Figure 4: Image of Magnus Metal Company Building on Ludlow 1954 Sanborn (Map #102)**

The present day parcel includes a propane pipe located on the property, northeast of the building. A metal gate extends along the northeast property boundary, adjacent to River Road. The pipe and gate are not included within the National Register boundary. A vacant commercial building is located on the same parcel southwest of the Magnus Metal Company Building. Sanborn maps and Williams Covington and Vicinity City Directories indicate the commercial building predominately housed saloons and restaurants under various owners from 1909 to 1978.<sup>7</sup> During the late twentieth century, the building was used by the *News Enterprise* newspaper between periods of vacancy. The commercial building did not contribute to industrial operations at the

<sup>5</sup> Sanborn Map Company, Insurance Maps of Covington, Kentucky, Volume Two . Sanborn Map Company: New York, 1954.

<sup>6</sup> 1969 aerial image of the Magnus Metal Company Building, [www.historicaerials.com/viewer](http://www.historicaerials.com/viewer), accessed April 3, 2023.

<sup>7</sup> Sanborn Map Company, Insurance Maps of Covington, Kentucky, Volume Two . Sanborn Map Company: New York, 1909-1949, 1949, 1954. Williams Directory Company. Williams Covington and Vicinity City Directory. Cincinnati: Williams Directory Co. Publishing, 1931-1932, 1945, 1948, 1961, 1971, 1972, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1980, 1986, and 1994.

Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

site during the Period of Significance and the alterations to the building's façade likely occurred in the late twentieth century. The building is not included within the National Register boundary. The retaining walls located near the northwestern and southeastern parcel boundaries are included within the National Register boundary, but are recommended as non-contributing structures. Based on its form and materials, the concrete block retaining wall adjacent to the northwestern boundary may have been constructed after the period of significance. Based on its location, form, and materials, the quarried stone retaining wall extending southeast from the northeast elevation of the building likely predates the Period of Significance. Moreover, it was likely associated with a non-extant building formerly on the site.

Since 1954, the property boundary has been altered to include only the Magnus Metal Building, the building fronting Highway Avenue (southwest of the Magnus Metal Building), the propane pipe, two retaining walls, and a metal gate. The property boundary also includes sections of a chain-link fence and a paved parking area.

#### Exterior Description

The form of the original block of the two-story building is slightly rectangular, with a width of approximately 52 feet and a depth of approximately 58 feet. The building as a whole is largely a modest industrial building with little to characterize it within a specific style. The most notable architectural element of the building is the expansive monitor roof covered with metal panels. The three-bay, first-story façade of the main block of the building is characterized by brick cladding with a centrally located, double-leaf entry (see Figure 5, next page). The entry contains two sliding, six-light metal doors on a metal track. The sliding door on the left (southwest) side of the entry is pierced by a pedestrian-scale, hinged, unglazed metal door. Flanking the entry are two wide sections of metal panels filling original window piercings with wide concrete sills. The first-story fenestration is framed by a belt of concrete, located above the piercings, and connecting concrete pilasters extend from the belt to a parged concrete foundation on both sides of the southwest window piercing. A concrete pilaster extends from the belt to grade on the northeast end of the northeast bay. Above the concrete belt, a narrow band of brick extends below another section of metal panels. The metal panels cover the original full-width ribbon of windows spanning the elevation (see historic photo 1, page 12). The second story is sheathed in corrugated metal panels.

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 5: Façade (southwest) and northwest elevations of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking southeast.

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State

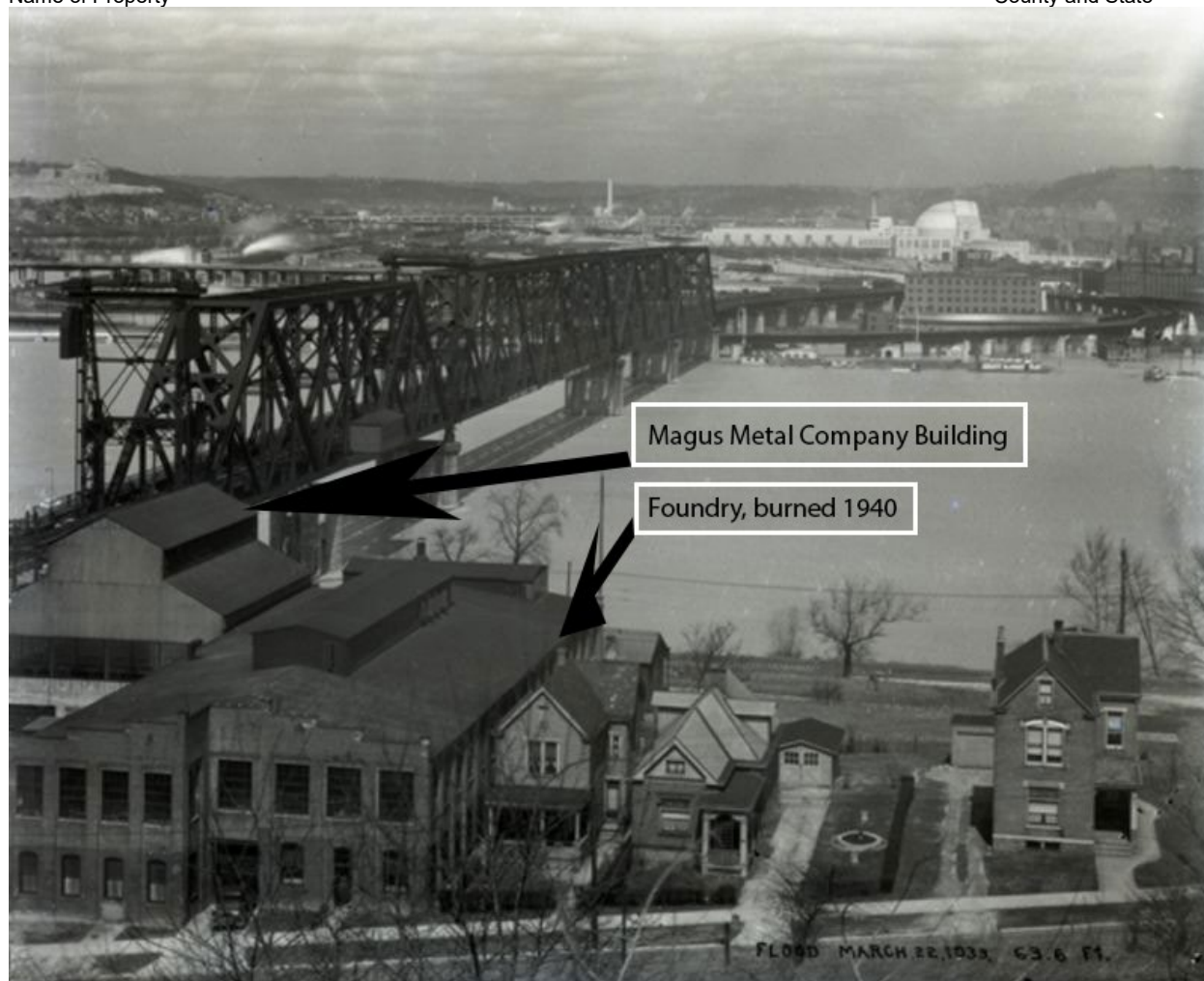


Figure 6: Historic photo of the site, circa 1933

The northwest elevation displays a parged concrete foundation pierced by two louvered metal vents (see Figure 5). The elevation features brick along the first story, which is pierced by three large window bays filled in with concrete blocks. The southeastern bay is flanked with two sections of brick and features a metal sill. The two northwestern bays display concrete sills and rest over sections of brick. A full-width concrete belt is located over the filled windows, and concrete pilasters extend between the window bays to the parged foundation, framing the first-story fenestration. Above the concrete belt, a narrow section of brick cladding sheathes the elevation. The second story features a full-width section of metal panels covering the location of the original windows. Above, the elevation is clad in corrugated metal panels. The section of elevation located between the lower and upper portions of the monitor roof display a continuous ribbon of metal windows similar to the configuration on the southeast elevation.

The southeast elevation is fully constructed of concrete blocks (see Figure 7). The first floor is pierced by a vehicular entry filled with a metal, unglazed overhead door. A belt of concrete

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State

perforated with rectangular concrete projections divides the first and second stories. Six windows featuring original, fixed, sixteen-light metal sashes punctuate the second story. Between the fourth and fifth window (when approached from the facade elevation), an entry filled with an unglazed metal door pierces the second story and is accessed by a metal stair and deck. The section of elevation located between the lower and upper portions of the monitor roof is pierced by a ribbon of ten windows with metal sashes. Beginning at the southwest elevation, three fifteen-light windows display six-light, centered awning sashes which operate within the fixed portion of the sash. Moving northeast, a window filled with a sixteen-light sash with an eight-light, centered awning sash is followed by a window featuring a six-light awning sash over three fixed lights. This fenestration pattern is mirrored on the northeastern end of the elevation. A metal ladder rests on the lower section of the monitor roof and extends to the upper section.



Figure 7: Southeast elevation of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, and partial view of the southwest elevation of the addition, looking west-northwest.

A long, rectangular addition constructed between 1933 and 1949 extends from the southeast elevation (see Figure 2). The addition rests on a concrete deck supported by concrete piers. It is clad in corrugated metal panels and sheltered by a side-gable roof covered with metal panels. The southwest (façade) elevation of the addition displays a single-leaf entry filled with a hinged, unglazed, metal panel door and two single-leaf entries displaying sliding metal doors on a horizontal metal tracks. The doors each display two solid metal panels which may cover original

Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

glazing. Between the doors, the façade features two solid metal panels which cover original glazing. A partial-width integral porch spans the southeast portion of the façade elevation. The southeast portion of the integral porch is supported by a metal post, and the apex of the gable is supported by a metal truss. The northeast (rear) elevation displays a single-leaf entry filled with a hinged, metal door and a section of brick cladding which may infill an original window or door opening (see Figure 8). A quarried stone and mortar retaining wall intersects with the basement foundation of the southeast elevation and stands approximately ten feet in height (see Figure 9).

A flat-roof addition was constructed on the northeast elevation of the primary addition between 1949 and 1954 (see Figure 8). Three window openings covered with solid metal panels pierce the southeast elevation of the addition. A single-leaf entry filled with an unglazed, metal door and five window openings covered with metal panels punctuate the northeast (rear) elevation. Only one window opening is uncovered and features original glazing, displaying a four-light metal sash with a missing pane of glass. The northwest elevation displays a single-leaf entry filled with a sliding, unglazed, metal panel door on a horizontal metal track. The entry is flanked by two window openings covered with solid metal panels.



Figure 8: Southeast and northeast (rear) elevations of the addition of the Magnus Metal Company Building, and northeast (rear) elevation of the main block, looking southwest.

Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 9: View of the quarried stone and mortar retaining wall, looking south-southwest.

The northeast (rear) elevation of the main block displays a parged concrete basement foundation, a first story clad in brick, and a second story clad in metal panels (see Figure 10). A single-leaf entry filled with a metal door with a metal screen pierces the basement foundation. A poured concrete belt divides the concrete foundation and brick on the first story. Above the belt, three window bays pierce the first story and display concrete sills. The bay piercing the southeastern end of the elevation is filled with a fixed, multi-light metal sash partially covered by metal panels. The two remaining window bays are covered with metal panels. Above the window bays, a concrete belt runs across the elevation. Concrete pilasters cover the sections of the first-story elevation between the bays and on the ends of the outermost bays, extending to the concrete belt between the first story and basement foundation and framing the first story fenestration. Exterior brick is located between the first story and the original second-story, full-width window fenestration, which is currently covered with metal panels. The second story is clad in corrugated metal panels.

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 10: Northeast (rear) elevation of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking south-southwest.



Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State



Figure 11: Interior view of the first story of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking southwest.

A two-story concrete deck spans the northeast elevations of the primary addition and the main block of the building. The second-story deck is supported by concrete piers extending to a concrete retaining wall and the first-story deck.

#### Interior Description

The interior of the building has undergone significant change as the operational needs of each industry on the site have necessitated various uses of the space. Currently, the first floor features a poured concrete floor and uninsulated walls that reflect the exterior materials. Original first-story window sashes on the façade elevation are located behind exterior metal panel coverings and are exposed to the interior (see Figure 11). Exposed, poured concrete ceiling beams extend in a southwest-northeast direction and are supported by poured concrete columns. Plans made by Beckman Construction, an entity that purchased the building in 1978, shows a 7' 7" x 7' 7" three-story elevator shaft (basement, first story, second story) on the interior southeast wall, and the current 15' 10" x 17' "tool crib" constructed in the north corner of the first floor (see Figure 8). The elevator shaft contains a metal freight elevator. The interior office walls are constructed of concrete block and are pierced by a single-leaf entry filled with a metal door, and an interior window bay filled with a fixed, single light sash (see Figure 11). The plans do not indicate the replacement stair that currently ascends to the second story on the southeast wall.

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 12: Interior view of the first story of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, including the elevator shaft, looking southeast.

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 13: Historic photo of the site circa 1913

The second story displays fewer alterations than the first as the building retains its open floorplan. Continuous poured concrete floors extend to each wall (see Figure 15). A concrete block wall pierced by windows forms the southeast wall and the ribbon of brick is fully visible on the remaining elevations (see Figure 16). A Fink Truss system supports the second story walls and the monitor roof (see Figure 17).

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 14: Interior view of the first story of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, including the office, looking northwest.

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 15: Interior view of the second story of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking southwest.

The interior of the primary addition is an open space with a continuous poured concrete floor. The side-gable roof is supported by Pratt metal trusses (see Figure 13). The interior of the second addition also consists of an open space with a continuous poured concrete floor (see Figure 14). There is no interior wall dividing the additions. The roof is supported by metal beams extending to metal ceiling joists. Both additions lack insulation and interior walls, therefore the exterior metal panels are exposed. Many of the window sashes covered with metal panels on the exterior are visible from the interior.

A continuous poured concrete floor, concrete pillars with a large circumference, and exposed foundational concrete walls define the basement level (see Figure 15). The ceiling is concrete and is divided by a network of pipes. The uninterrupted space houses the elevator shaft and a sink (see Figure 16).

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 16: Interior view of the second story of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, including the elevator shaft, looking southeast.

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 17: Detail of the Fox Fink steel truss system supporting the roof of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building.

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 18: Interior view of the first story of the first and second additions of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking northeast.



Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 19: Interior view of the first story of the first and second additions of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking southwest.

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 20: Interior view of the basement of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking northeast.



Figure 21: Interior view of the basement of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, including the elevator shaft and the sink, looking southeast.

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State

Changes to the building since the period of significance.

The Magnus Metal Company Building has undergone various changes since the period of significance, though many of the original materials remain. Perhaps the most significant alteration is the removal of the second story windows and the removal of some of the first story windows. Interior alterations are limited to the partitioning of the first story to incorporate storage and office space and the addition of an interior stair. Major industrial equipment has been removed from the site, but traces of equipment during the period of significance, such as a work table and the elevator, remain (see Figure 22).

DRAFT

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State



Figure 22: Detail of the elevator shaft on the second story of the original block of the Magnus Metal Company Building.

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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

- 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

#### Period of Significance

1932-1978

#### Significant Dates

1932

1945

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State

**Significant Person**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DRAFT

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State

## Statement of Significance

### Summary Paragraph

The Magnus Metal Company Building (KE 105), built circa 1913–1933, meets National Register of Historic Places Criterion A. It is locally significant in the area of Industry. Its significance is evaluated with the historic context “Industry, Development, and Growth in Ludlow, Kentucky, 1818-1978.” Within that context, the building housed important industrial operations between 1932 and 1978. During that time, the building came under the proprietorship of five entities: the Magnus Metal Bearing Company, the National Lead Company, the Rural Natural Gas Company, Doxol, and Williams Energy Company. The Magnus Metal Company Building provides a strong example of the roles of local industries in providing employment to residents during the height of Ludlow’s population growth and development. The Period of Significance begins with the purchase of the building by the Magnus Metal Company in 1932 and ends with the last year of the building’s association with the propane gas industry in 1978. This period includes the building’s most significant contribution to the local economy through the industries it housed and the number of residents (primarily men, per newspaper records) employed by the entities operating within the building. Prior to 1913, other industrial owners operated on the site; other users of the site after 1978 operated on a much smaller scale and were not engaged undertakings known to be significant to local industrial affairs.

### Historic Context: INDUSTRY, DEVELOPMENT, AND GROWTH IN LUDLOW, KENTUCKY, 1818-1978

#### The History of Ludlow’s Establishment and Early Growth, 1818 to 1870

The city of Ludlow, Kentucky is located in a bend of the Ohio River, southwest of Cincinnati. The riverfront area south of Cincinnati, within the state of Kentucky, is established by a string of river communities comprising the Northern Kentucky region. From west to east, these cities are: Bromley, Ludlow, Covington, Newport, Bellevue, and Dayton.

Elmwood Hall, the first house established within the area that is now Ludlow, was constructed in 1818 by Thomas D. Carneal, a member of the Kentucky legislator.<sup>8</sup> Carneal obtained the 1200 acres of land on which he constructed Elmwood Hall from General Thomas Sandford, who received the acreage a few decades earlier as part of a military grant. Carneal sold Elmwood Hall and surrounding acreage to William Bullock in 1827. Bullock was a wealthy Englishman and proprietor of an Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly Square. He planned to settle the area as an urban-yet-bucolic respite for close friends, but his plans never manifested. In 1831, Bullock sold 710 acres to Israel Ludlow, who successfully platted the city and began selling parcels. By 1846, approximately 300 people inhabited the community. Much of the population was comprised of Irish and German immigrants from Cincinnati, who moved to Ludlow and quickly developed Ash Street into a corridor of thriving businesses. Ludlow was officially incorporated by the Commonwealth of Kentucky in 1864.<sup>9</sup>

#### Early Commercial and Residential Development and the Cincinnati Southern Railroad, 1870-1900

<sup>8</sup> Schroeder, David. "Ludlow," in *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky*, edited by Paul A. Tenkotte and James C. Claypool. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2009. 567.

<sup>9</sup> Schroeder 576.

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State

In the decades following the Civil War, Ludlow grew from an area of unpaved roads to a city with established schools, police and fire departments, and a town hall. The Cincinnati Railroad, the greatest antecedent to commercial viability, residential growth, and the establishment of local industry, extended into Ludlow in the 1870s. The Southern Railroad Bridge, which provided direct access to Cincinnati, was completed in 1877, with a footpath added in 1885.<sup>10</sup> The railroad with its railyard and shops emerged as Ludlow's largest employer during the turn of the century and propelled the community into its late-nineteenth century status as a working class suburb.

By 1883, the commercial center on Ash Street was outpaced by the burgeoning business district on Elm Street.<sup>11</sup> The city's population of approximately 2,500 residents supported bakeries, barbershops, groceries, dry goods, drugstores, clothing and shoe stores, and several saloons on Elm Street. City services on Elm Street included doctors, lawyers, dentists, a blacksmith, an undertaker, insurance agents, a livery stable, an optician, tailors, and music teachers. In 1893, Highway Avenue was completed. The highway, combined with streetcar service between Covington and Ludlow, provided easy accessibility between the river cities. The Ludlow Lagoon Amusement Park opened in 1894 and the community built new schools. Perhaps most notably, the Pullman Company, a passenger car repair plant, began operating near the railroad's right-of-way.<sup>12</sup> The plant was one of Ludlow's first industries attributed to the location of the Cincinnati Southern Railroad.

#### Twentieth Century Development and the Expansion and Peak of Local Industry, 1900–1978

The population of the city expanded from 3,000 to 6,500 residents between 1900 and 1930. Ludlow's largest building boom since the years following the Civil War followed World War I. Additions were constructed on the east and west portions of the city, with new residential, commercial, and civic developments, including a new firehouse, park, and city hall.<sup>13</sup> By 1909, the R. B. Carron Foundry Company, a brass foundry which provided parts to the railroad, was established on Highway Avenue just southeast of the Southern Railway bridge, and the site began its evolution as host to two of the largest industrial employers in the city during the twentieth century, the Magnus Metal Company (1932) and the Rural Natural Gas Company (1945).<sup>14</sup>

In 1939, the twelve largest local industries in Ludlow were employing over 1,000 men.<sup>15</sup> Given the demographics of the community, the numbers implied these industries provided jobs for nearly half of the employed sector of the population, and this did not include jobs created by smaller local companies and businesses. Ludlow's largest commercial establishment during the 1930s was the Southern Railroad, which employed nearly 650 people in 1939 and provided the city with nearly \$23,000 annually in taxes. The Trumbull Electric Company provided jobs for 150 men, and provided products to twenty-eight states, from the "Atlantic Ocean to the Rockies, and from Canada to the Gulf."<sup>16</sup> The Magnus Metal Company was the city's third largest employer, with a payroll of approximately 60 men. The Kentucky Post referred to the Magnus Metal Company as "one of Ludlow's oldest and most interesting industries." The

<sup>10</sup> Schroeder 576.

<sup>11</sup> Feldman, Lori. Ludlow Multiple Resource Area nomination. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1984.

<sup>12</sup> Schroeder 567-568.

<sup>13</sup> Feldman.

<sup>14</sup> Sanborn Map Company, 1909. Sanborn Map Company, 1901-1949. Sanborn Map Company, 1954.

<sup>15</sup> "Ludlow's Many Industries Keep its City Busy," *The Kentucky Post*. March 22, 1939. [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.



Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

remaining positions were held by nine smaller local industries, which included Big Four Mills, Dixie Metal Tag Co., Wilson Coal Co., Thomas Candy Co., Ideal Supply Co., Hanekamp Monument Co., Taylor Lowenstein Resin Co., the Pullman Co., and the Safety Car Lighting Co.

The Magnus Metal Company ceased to operate on Highway Avenue by 1940, but by 1945 the location housed the Rural Natural Gas Company associated with the propane gas industry. The Rural Natural Gas Company relocated from Mt. Washington, Ohio, and promised the city of Ludlow a \$100,000 industry which would employ approximately 75 workers. Between 1945 and 1978, three entities, the Rural Natural Gas Company, Doxol, and Williams Energy processed, distributed, and/or marketed propane gas on the site.<sup>17</sup>

After World War II, more residential streets were developed, but the downtown business and residential districts experienced little change. Ludlow's population peaked at 6,374 residents in 1950, and began to decline during the late 1960s. The population stabilized around 4,500 residents in the early 1980s, and has maintained a similar level since.<sup>18</sup> Mirroring larger national trends, many of the manufacturing and processing industries thriving during the pinnacle of the city's development and population growth ceased to operate during the late twentieth century.<sup>19</sup>

#### History of the Magnus Metal Company Building

The site on which the Magnus Metal Company Building would eventually be constructed was first established for industrial operations by Brothers Earl W. Carran and A.B. Carran. The brothers, both prominent members in the Ludlow community, established the R. B. Carran Foundry Co. in 1908 with their father, Richard B. Carran.<sup>20</sup> Richard B. Carran was President of the Ludlow Savings Bank.<sup>21</sup> The foundry was located east of the railroad tracks extending south of the Cincinnati Southern Bridge, on the banks of the Ohio River. The R. B. Carran Foundry Co. manufactured brass and other metal castings. Archibald B. Carran, a life-long resident of Kenton County, served as the secretary-treasurer of the foundry and was widely known in business and railroad circles.<sup>22</sup> Earl Carran was an industrial engineer who later served as a director of the Covington Trust and Banking Co. in addition to serving as the president of the Covington Chamber of Commerce.

In 1909, the parcel on which the foundry operated consisted of six structures.<sup>23</sup> The foundry was comprised of a one story, brick commercial structure housing an office and an industrial floor with four large brass furnaces. A dwelling with two supporting domestic structures faced northeast to river road. A smaller dwelling, located in the southeast corner of the lot, faced Ludlow Highway (present-day Highway Avenue). Northwest of the foundry, a small commercial building (labeled as a saloon on the Sanborn map, and subsequently utilized as a restaurant and/or bar) also faced Ludlow Highway.

<sup>17</sup> Kenton County, Kentucky, Deed Book 326, page 28. Kenton County, Kentucky, Deed Book 487, page 249. Kenton County, Kentucky, Deed Book 724, page 140.

<sup>18</sup> Schroeder 567-568.

<sup>19</sup> 1954 Sanborn Map.

<sup>20</sup> "A.B. Carran Stricken While at Summit Hills Club," *The Kentucky Post*, October 15, 1930. [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>21</sup> "Carran is Head of Ludlow Savings," *The Kentucky Post*, January 11, 1917. [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>22</sup> "A.B. Carran Stricken While at Summit Hills Club," *The Kentucky Post*, October 15, 1930. [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>23</sup> 1909 Sanborn Map.

Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

By 1912, Richard B. Carran remarried and retired from the brass foundry, leaving his sons in charge of overseeing its operations.<sup>24</sup> In the same year, the company expanded its premises and filed a building permit to erect a brick addition.<sup>25</sup> A 1913 photograph shows the business significantly expanded, with a large brick addition on the southwest elevation in addition to a brick addition on the rear elevation (see Figure 13). The rear addition, which included a large chimney, an elevated shed roof, and two monitor roofs, architecturally communicated the industrial nature of the site.<sup>26</sup> The photo also indicates a residential structure, not currently extant, constructed southeast of the foundry and in close proximity to its southeast addition. The photograph shows the dwelling facing River Road, the saloon in the southwest corner of the parcel, and the dwelling in the southeast corner of the lot.

In 1930, at the age of forty-seven, A.B Carran fell ill while playing golf at the Summit Hills Country Club, where he was a member, and died later that evening.<sup>27</sup> One year later, Carran Foundry and Smelting Works Co. was granted a charter by the secretary of state. Three Carran descendents, in addition to two new members, served as incorporators for the charter. The R. B Carran and Sons Co. was simultaneously chartered, but saw a decrease in stock.<sup>28</sup>

In March 1932, the Carran Bearing Metal Company filed articles of incorporation in Ludlow. The *Kentucky Post* states that its shares are now owned by five men from Chicago, with the majority of the shares owned by James S. McClellan. The company planned to engage in all types of metal working, including manufacturing, mining, smelting, and selling their projects.<sup>29</sup> The following month, both the Carran Foundry and Smelting Works Co. and the R. B. Carran and Sons Co. were dissolved by unanimous consent of all stockholders.<sup>30</sup> Earl Carran was later appointed to the War Production Board and served as staff until 1944.<sup>31</sup> His son, Richard Carran, served as an attorney for the city of Ludlow.

At this point, the corporation acted as a subsidiary of the Magnus Metal Co., Inc., and was one of 18 similar plants throughout the country. By 1933, the Carran Bearing Metal Co. reported increasing its employment from 28 part-time workers to 68 part-time workers after a successful re-employment campaign. It also reported boosting its weekly payroll to \$1,000 and paying a rate of 40 cents per hour. It manufactured steel steam and electric railroad journal bearings and engine castings.<sup>32</sup> The plant contributed its success to the improvement of car loadings and the general condition of the railroads.

The Magnus Metal Company Building appears in a 1933 photograph, indicating it was constructed between circa 1913 and 1933, and was an addition to the industrial site under the ownership of the

<sup>24</sup> "Ludlow," *The Kentucky Post*, March 9, 1912. www.newspapers.com (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>25</sup> "Ludlow," *The Kentucky Post*, April 25, 1912. www.newspapers.com (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>26</sup> Northern Kentucky Views, "Southern Railway Scenes." <https://www.nkyviews.com/kenton4/kenton3067.html> (accessed April 3, 2023)

<sup>27</sup> "A.B. Carran Stricken While at Summit Hills Club," *The Kentucky Post*, October 15, 1930. www.newspapers.com (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>28</sup> "Charter Local Firm: Carran Foundry & Smelting Works C. Incorporated at \$100,000," *The Kentucky Post*, May 20, 1931. www.newspapers.com (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>29</sup> "Foundry Firm Seeks to Incorporate in Ludlow," *The Kentucky Post*, March 18, 1932. www.newspapers.com (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>30</sup> "Notice of Dissolution," *The Kentucky Post*, April 27, 1932. www.newspapers.com (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>31</sup> "Earl Carran Dies Of Heart Attack," *The Kentucky Post*. February 8, 1946. www.newspapers.com (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>32</sup> "Plant Doubles Workers Under New NRA Code," *The Kentucky Post*, September 11, 1933. www.newspapers.com (accessed February 8, 2023).

Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

Carran family or Magnus Co., Inc. (the company as it appears on deeds).<sup>33</sup> The main section of the structure as it currently exists is shown in the 1933 photograph. Although the building is partially obscured from view by the original foundry, the photo indicates the building displayed a full-width ribbon of windows on the second story of its façade elevation. The façade's second story currently has metal panels filling the original window openings. The photo also depicts a large, multi-light window on the first story which is currently covered with metal panels.

Magnus Co., Inc., was incorporated as a division of the National Lead Company, and deed records indicate the foundry was transferred to the National Lead Company in 1936.<sup>34</sup> A notice of its dissolution was given in *The Kentucky Post*, confirming that on August 6, 1937 the company closed its business and was winding up its affairs.<sup>35</sup> The site continued to manufacture railroad parts under the National Lead Company, however, though locally it operated under its previous name, the Magnus Metal Company, and was referred to as the "Magnus Plant" in *The Kentucky Post*. In 1939 the newspaper announced local industries employed 1,000 workers in various plants, and mentioned the Magnus Metal Company as the third most significant employer in Ludlow, providing work for approximately 60 men and producing railroad bearings for railroad cars throughout the nation.<sup>36</sup> It was under the ownership of the National Lead Company that the original brick building housing the foundry on the site burned in August, 1940.<sup>37</sup> The fire completely destroyed the interior of the building and all of its contents, and two firemen and two children were injured by the collapse of an exterior wall. Representatives from the National Lead Company and the Southern Railway met to discuss the future of the site. In December, the Magnus Plant announced it needed more land and was potentially relocating its operations.

Presumably the plant relocated, because the National Lead Company sold the site to the Rural Natural Gas Company in May 1945 for approximately \$50,000.<sup>38</sup> The Rural Natural Gas Company was relocating from Mt. Washington, Ohio, and promised the city of Ludlow a \$100,000 industry which would employ approximately 75 workers. The company owned a sales office in Campbell County, but planned to construct a rail-water terminal in Ludlow for the transportation of bottled gas, which *The Kentucky Post* introduced as "propane." The propane was distributed to areas where natural or artificial gas was not available via a fleet of seventeen trucks, within a 50-mile radius of Cincinnati and within the states of Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio. In June, 1945 the Rural Natural Gas Company stated it planned to erect a 30,000-gallon tank, a barge and other equipment necessary to the industry at the site of the old Magnus Plant, with more tanks to potentially follow. A month later, 40 men were employed on the site, placing footings for the storage tanks and driving piles for a rail-water terminal.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Northern Kentucky Views, "Ludlow, Flood Scenes," Northern Kentucky Views webpage. [www.nkyviews.com/kenton/kenton\\_ludlow\\_floods.html](http://www.nkyviews.com/kenton/kenton_ludlow_floods.html) (accessed April 2, 2023).

<sup>34</sup> "Magnus Plant Fate Weighed Following Fire," *The Kentucky Post*, August 12, 1940. [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) (accessed February 8, 2023). Kenton County, Kentucky, Deed Book 257, page 283.

<sup>35</sup> "Notice of Dissolution," *The Kentucky Post*, August 14, 1937. [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>36</sup> "Ludlow's Many Industries Keep its City Busy," *The Kentucky Post*, March 22, 1939. [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>37</sup> "Ludlow May Lose Two Industries," *The Kentucky Post*, December 13, 1940. [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>38</sup> "Mt. Washington Plant Will Move To Kentucky Site," *The Kentucky Post* June 20, 1945. [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>39</sup> "Work Started on Gas Plant at Railroad Site," *The Kentucky Post*, July 12, 1945. [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) (accessed February 8, 2023).

Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

Newspaper ads in *The Kentucky Post* indicate the company had a sales room on-site by 1949.<sup>40</sup>

Advertisements boasted propane-fueled stoves with top-of-the-line features, and promised liberal trade-ins on old ranges.

A 1949 Sanborn map indicates the parcel on which the company operated consisted of seven buildings and three propane gas tanks.<sup>41</sup> The parcel was bounded by the Southern Railroad bridge to the northwest, River Road to the northeast, an undeveloped parcel to the southeast, and Highway Avenue to the southwest. The map shows an addition was constructed on the southeast elevation of the structure and a partial-width concrete deck was constructed on the northeast (rear) elevations of the original block of the building and the addition. Oriented in a southwest to northeast elevation, three gas propane tanks are located northeast of the main building. A commercial building in the southwest corner of the parcel faced Highway Avenue. Sanborn maps and Williams Covington and Vicinity City Directories indicate the building predominately housed saloons and restaurants under various owners from 1909 to 1978.<sup>42</sup> Three dwellings, located in the southeast corner of the lot, faced Ludlow Highway. Two small supported structures are indicated northeast of the dwellings. A 1954 Sanborn map shows the addition on the southeast elevation of the main block was expanded to the northeast.<sup>43</sup>

By 1956, newspaper ads included a new propane brand, "Doxol," claiming "It's new! It's modern!" and indicating its multi-purpose uses for farms, homes, and trucks.<sup>44</sup> In 1961, The Natural Rural Gas Company sold the property to Rural Doxol Gas of Ludlow.<sup>45</sup> This transfer appears to have had no effect on company operations.

The 1971 Williams City Directory indicates at least a portion of the site was purchased by Williams Energy Company, because the 1976 city directory indicates both the Williams Energy Company and Rural Doxol Gas of Ludlow are operating on the site.<sup>46</sup> The Williams Energy Company was a major liquid propane gas marketing company.<sup>47</sup> It was the final owner of the property connected to the propane industry. Subsequent owners used the property for commercial purposes, but no records indicate the number of employees on the site surpassed the metal bearing and propane gas industries.

The Beckman Broering General Construction company purchased the site from Williams Energy Company in 1978.<sup>48</sup> Under the ownership of the construction company, the first floor of the building was altered to incorporate an office, a staircase, and a storage room.<sup>49</sup> The construction company owned the

<sup>40</sup> "Enterprise Gas Range" newspaper ad, *The Kentucky Post*, March 22, 1949. [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>41</sup> 1949 Sanborn Map.

<sup>42</sup> Sanborn Map Company, Insurance Maps of Covington, Kentucky, Volume Two . Sanborn Map Company: New York, 1909-1949, 1949, 1954. Williams Directory Company. Williams Covington and Vicinity City Directory. Cincinnati: Williams Directory Co. Publishing, 1931-1932, 1945, 1948, 1961, 1971, 1972, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1980, 1986, and 1994.

<sup>43</sup> 1954 Sanborn Map.

<sup>44</sup> "Rural Doxol" newspaper ad, *The Kentucky Post*, November 26, 1956. [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>45</sup> Kenton County, Kentucky, Deed Book 326, page 38.

<sup>46</sup> Williams Directory Company. Williams Covington and Vicinity City Directory. Cincinnati: Williams Directory Co. Publishing, 1976.

<sup>47</sup> "Accounting and Credit Manager" advertisement, *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, June 19, 1973. [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) (accessed February 8, 2023).

<sup>48</sup> Kenton County, Kentucky, Deed Book 724, page 140.

<sup>49</sup> Beckman Broering General Construction blueprints, Beckman Broering General Construction Co.

Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

site until Lamp Properties purchased it in 2008.<sup>50</sup> Blue Pirate LLC owned the property from 2012 to 2019.<sup>51</sup> The site is currently owned by TADA Opportunity Fund LLC.

### **Evaluation of the Significance of the Magnus Metal Company Building within the context of Local Industry and Development in Ludlow, Kentucky (1932–1978)**

The Magnus Metal Company Building is significant for its role in local industry from 1932 to 1978 in Ludlow, Kentucky. The site on which the building stands was originally associated with one of the most propelling events to Ludlow's growth and development, the arrival of the railroad. The R. B. Carran Foundry Company constructed components for the railroad in the brass foundry, with ownership deeply involved in community affairs. After the Magnus Metal Company purchased the site, the building played an integral role in providing employment to many local residents in the community. The company established its role as the third largest industrial employer in Ludlow. After the building was purchased by the Rural Natural Gas company, the number of Ludlow residents employed at the site surpassed the numbers associated with the metal industries.

### **Evaluation of the Integrity between the significance of the Magnus Metal Company Building and the condition of the physical plant today**

The Magnus Metal Company Building is associated with a period in which local manufacturing, processing, railroad and energy industries positively impacted the local economy and community life by providing employment to local residents. These industries are non-functioning and largely non-extant today. To evaluate how well the Magnus Metal Company Building conveys the significance of local industrial processes in Ludlow, Kentucky, during the early half of the twentieth century, the other sites where important local industry took place were visited and considered as candidates for telling this story.

The original Pullman Shops burned in 1919.<sup>52</sup> The subsequent Engine and Car repair shop, present in 1949 Sanborn, on the corner of Davies and Cedar Alley, was demolished circa 1960. Big Four Mills Limited, located at the corner of Post Place and Louise Court, and Taylor Lowenstein and Company, located near Elm Street, adjacent to the railroad tracks, were both indicated in a 1949 Sanborn Map and are no longer extant. The only other industrial building constructed within the twentieth century and still extant is the building previously owned by the Continental Electric Equipment Company, located at the corner of Hooper and Kenner. From this analysis, the Magnus Metal Company Building is an integral remnant of an important local chapter of history.

The 2020 census showed that only 11.5 percent of those living in the city of Ludlow worked in manufacturing industries. And, the majority of those residents traveled to work by car, with an average commute of approximately 22 minutes, suggesting many residents who engaged in manufacturing industries traveled outside of Ludlow for that kind of work.<sup>53</sup> This change in manufacturing today is an important part of the story that Magnus Metal Company is telling: during the first half of the twentieth century, the economies of modest-sized towns in the United States could depend upon local industrial operations. In the latter half of the twentieth century, as many industrial products could be obtained for

<sup>50</sup> Kenton County, Kentucky, Deed Book C-3880, page 100-106.

<sup>51</sup> Kenton County, Kentucky, Deed Book C-4936, page 96-103.

<sup>52</sup> Feldman, Lori. Ludlow Multiple Resource Area nomination. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1984.

<sup>53</sup> 2021 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Ludlow, KY [censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US2148378-ludlow-ky](https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US2148378-ludlow-ky), accessed April 3, 2023.

Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

much cheaper rates outside of local communities, and indeed, outside of the United States, local manufacturing ceased because it lost its competitive advantage. We can see in the Magnus Metal Company Building a physical plant which served a succession of users, industrial entities who occupied the building and who could survive economically within the local market. But as industrial markets ceased to be localized, and reached to regional, national, and even international in scope, the small factory which grew to provide products for a localized area became economically less viable. A community's collection of buildings which once could shelter and support a mix of industrial concerns on the local level, eventually found no users. One by one, such buildings became derelict and local liabilities, ultimately facing removal for the sake of safety and for the redevelopment of the site for non-industrial purposes. Ludlow's buildings named above were demolished because those buildings had ceased to have an economic value. The Magnus Metal Company Building remains as an example of this sector of the local economy of Ludlow, which once had other comparable structures.

Although the 1940 fire destroyed the main building associated with the brass foundry and metal bearing operations, the industrial building was constructed as an ancillary building when the industry was thriving, and remains on the site as the only structure used by the natural gas industry in Ludlow for over three decades. The building stands by the Southern Railroad as a reminder of the railroad's support of industrial production.

The building retains integrity of **location**. The original footprint of the building remains and is clearly delineated from later additions constructed during the Period of Significance. This location is a key factor in the building's place in the history of Ludlow: the location in close proximity to the railroad yard/repair shops allowed the industries which operated in the building during the Period of Significance to profit from convenient access to this transportation center.

Likewise, the building retains integrity of **setting**. Specifically, it retains integrity of a broader setting which includes surrounding neighborhoods and sites. Highway Avenue retains its historic residential development patterns to the east of the building and the railroad line to the immediate west of the parcel. North of the building, the view to the Ohio River remains unobstructed along with the undeveloped hillside to the south of Highway Avenue. The character of the setting provides the historic mix of uses that comprised communities in the twentieth century: residential, commercial, industrial, transportation corridors, often with a mixture of various purposes in close proximity to one another. This is in contrast to later planning and zoning decisions which made communities more homogenized by creating zones of specific uses.

The building's immediate setting has significantly changed since its construction. The original building associated with the brass and metal bearing industries burned in 1940, and some buildings located on the parcel in the early twentieth century are no longer extant.

In 1909, the parcel on which the foundry operated consisted of six structures on a lot slightly larger than the current parcel, which currently consists of 1.77 acres.<sup>54</sup> The foundry was comprised of a one story, brick commercial structure housing an office and an industrial floor with four large brass furnaces. A dwelling with two supporting domestic structures faced northeast to river road. A smaller dwelling, located in the southeast corner of the lot, faced Ludlow Highway (present-day Highway Avenue). Northwest of the foundry, a small saloon also faced Ludlow Highway (see Figure 13).

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<sup>54</sup> Sanborn Map, 1909.

Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

By 1949, the parcel on which the company operated appears unchanged in size, but displayed seven buildings and three gas propane tanks.<sup>55</sup> The main foundry associated with the site burned in 1940, but the property boundary showed little change. The parcel was bounded by the railroad and the Southern Railroad bridge to the northwest, River Road to the northeast, an undeveloped parcel to the southeast, and Highway Avenue to the southwest. Oriented in a southwest to northeast orientation, three gas propane tanks were located northeast of the main building in 1949. A saloon faced Highway Avenue in the current location of the commercial building in the southwest corner of the parcel. Three dwellings, located in the southeast corner of the lot, faced Ludlow Highway (present-day Highway Avenue). Two small support structures were indicated northeast of the dwellings.

The present-day parcel, approximately 1.77 acres, does not include the two extant dwellings facing Highway Avenue and indicated in the 1949 Sanborn Maps. It also does not include the area where the non-extant support structures were indicated. The propane gas tanks indicated in the 1949 and 1954 Sanborns map have been removed from the site, and the commercial building (formerly utilized as a saloon, restaurant, and/or bar) facing Highway Avenue, though still located within the parcel boundary, has been significantly altered and no longer resembles the structure shown in historic photographs and Sanborn maps.

While equipment relating to the manufacturing and propane use of the building has been removed, the building retains an integrity of **materials** sufficient to identify the building as an industrial structure from the early twentieth century. The building retains its original brick, concrete, and metal frame construction along with its steel Fink trusses, monitor roof, and corrugated metal siding. These materials, while common to industrial buildings of the era, relate the structure's construction in the early-to-mid-twentieth century to its industrial purposes. The loss of original window sashes, especially those on the second story, diminishes the building's material integrity. However, original fenestration patterns can still be ascertained from the exterior and/or interior of the building via contrasting or disparate metal panels in the original openings.

The building retains integrity of **design**. The original footprint of the building, as well as the footprints of both additions and concrete decks constructed during the Period of Significance, remain unchanged, excluding the removal of window sashes and minor alterations to exterior materials.

The building retains integrity of **workmanship**, although workmanship is not a necessary component of eligibility under Criterion A. The façade design is straightforward and industrial in nature, but it retains its original construction materials such as the exterior brick, concrete block, and metal panels. While some window sashes are missing the majority of the interior finishes would have been minimal and remain intact, such as the exposed concrete block, brick, concrete pillars, and truss system supporting the roof.

The building retains integrity of **feeling**, though feeling generally supports eligibility under Criterion C, which is not the selected criterion for this nomination. Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time, which results from the presence of physical features that convey the property's historic character. The industrial form of the structure now is unique among the Ludlow's historic commercial structures that make up the majority of the non-residential historic building stock in downtown. The building continues to present itself as a twentieth century industrial building.

Because the building retains integrity of location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, and feeling, it can be said to have integrity of **association**. Integrity of association is the primary integrity factor for

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<sup>55</sup> Sanborn Map, 1949.

Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

eligibility under Criterion A, because that Criterion emphasizes a property's association "with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history." The building's intactness links it with the history of Ludlow and local industries in the twentieth century. Those associations are supported by the building's physical aspects, even though its immediate surroundings within the property's larger site have changed over time. The building is important for showing us the patterns of local industrial operations and growth within Ludlow during the twentieth century. The building physically embodies its past industrial uses. Despite the absence of associated manufacturing structures or propane tanks, the building clearly expresses its associations with industrial development in Ludlow's history.

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Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State

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**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: \_\_\_\_\_

Magnus Metal Company Building  
Name of Property

Kenton, Kentucky  
County and State

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** KEL 105

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** .499 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

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

1. Latitude: 39.095560° Longitude: -84.542467°

**Or**

### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: \_\_\_\_\_ Easting: \_\_\_\_\_ Northing: \_\_\_\_\_

### Verbal Boundary Description

The proposed National Register boundary for the property forms a .499-acre square which contains the original footprint of the building, the two additions, concrete platforms on the southwest (façade) and northeast (rear) elevations of the property, two non-contributing retaining walls, and a small buffer area from each elevation. To the southwest, this buffer extends slightly over the paved parking area. To the northwest and southeast, it extends to the parcel boundaries. To the northeast, it includes a small section of lawn. Starting from the southwesternmost corner of the boundary (Point A, latitude 39.095456°, longitude -84.542668°), north-northeast approximately 130 ft (to Point B, latitude 39.095651, longitude -84.542531°), east-southeast approximately 170 ft (to Point C, latitude 39.095675°, longitude -84.541960°), south-southwest approximately 135 ft (to Point D, latitude 39.095334°, longitude -84.542096°), to Point A, west-northwest approximately 170 ft.

### Boundary Justification

The site on which the Magnus Metal Company Building was constructed has been altered in both size (acreage), use, and number of extant buildings over the course of the twentieth and early twenty-first

Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

centuries. The proposed .499-acre National Register boundary only includes the main building and its immediate surroundings. The remaining sections of the parcel lack integrity due to the removal of the gas tanks and the loss of the original foundary building. The extant resources on the parcel outside the proposed National Register of Historic Places boundary includes a metal gate, a gas pipe connection, and a commercial building (formerly utilized as a restaurant and/or bar) facing Highway Avenue. The commercial building has been significantly altered and does not maintain integrity relating to the period of significance as a contributing resource. Moreover, city directories indicate the commercial building's use during the period of significance was limited to food and beverage service industries such as saloons, restuarants, and bars. The building was likely never used in connection with the industrial operations of the metal foundries or natural gas distributors. The gas pipe is no longer serviceable and is not essential to communicating the industrial nature of the site. The metal gate cannot be dated using aerial images and may have been erected after the period of significance. Although it is associated with the building, it is not essential or connected to the industrial operations housed by the structure. The retaining walls located within the National Register boundary are non-contributing structures. Based on its form and materials, the concrete block retaining wall adjacent to the northwestern boundary was likely constructed after the period of significance. Based on its location, form, and materials, the quarried stone retaining wall extending southeast from the northeast elevation of the building likely predates the Period of Significance. Moreover, it was likely associated with a non-extant building on the site.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Brittany Sams, Architectural Historian

organization: Cultural Resource Analysts, Inc.

street & number: 151 Walton Avenue

city or town: Lexington state: Kentucky zip code: 40508

e-mail: blsams@crai-ky.com

telephone: 859-252-4737

date: 2023

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### Photographs--Photo Log

Name of Property: Magnus Metal Company Building

City or Vicinity: Ludlow

County: Kenton

State: Kentucky

Photographer: Brittany Sams

Date Photographed: January 18, 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 1. Façade (southwest) elevation of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking north-northeast.

Magnus Metal Company Building

Kenton, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

Photo 2. Façade (southwest) and northwest elevations of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking northeast.

Photo 3. Southeast elevation of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, and partial view of the southwest elevation of the addition, looking west-northwest.

Photo 4. Southeast and northeast (rear) elevations of the addition of the Magnus Metal Company Building, and northeast (rear) elevation of the main block, looking southwest.

Photo 5. View of the quarried stone and mortar retaining wall, looking south-southwest.

Photo 6. Northeast (rear) elevation of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking south-southwest.

Photo 7. Interior view of the first story of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking southwest.

Photo 8. Interior view of the first story of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, including the elevator shaft, looking southeast.

Photo 9. Interior view of the first story of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, including the office, looking northwest.

Photo 10. Interior view of the second story of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking southwest.

Photo 11. Interior view of the second story of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, including the elevator shaft, looking southeast.

Photo 12. Detail of the Fox Fink steel truss system supporting the roof of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building.

Photo 13. Interior view of the first story of the first and second additions of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking northeast.

Photo 14. Interior view of the first story of the first and second additions of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking southwest.

Photo 15. Interior view of the basement of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, looking northeast.

Photo 16. Interior view of the basement of the main block of the Magnus Metal Company Building, including the elevator shaft and the sink, looking southeast.

Photo 17. Detail of the elevator shaft on the second story of the original block of the Magnus Metal Company Building.