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LEAVITT MANUFACTURING COMPANY BUILDING 208 WEST GRIGGS STREET, URBANA, ILLINOIS

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You've probably seen them all over Urbana-Champaign: cistern covers, coal chutes, sewer grates, etc. bearing the names of either "T. Wright and Son, Urbana, ILL." or "Leavitt Mfg. Co., Urbana, ILL.," but who were these people and where did they manufacture these durable metal objects still in use today?

The Abram Snedeker/Thomas Wright "Enterprise Foundry"/Leavitt Manufacturing Company Building, 208 West Griggs Street, is located immediately west of the Boneyard Creek beautification project at Race and Griggs streets, and represents a unique historic landmark of local and historic value to the Boneyard Creek improvement project.

Abram Snedeker established the foundry in 1872, a significant time in the socio-economic development of Urbana and Champaign County. In the early 20th century, the foundry was remodeled by Urbana architect Joseph William Royer for businessman H.W. Leavitt of Tuscola, Illinois. Leavitt turned the modest Urbana foundry into a worldwide operation. Today the old foundry complex originally established by Abram Snedeker in 1872 still exists. Situated north of the intersection of Wood and Griggs streets, the building is now an amalgamation of industrial structures consisting of approximately 18,000 square feet, with updated windows and doors reflecting the constant expansion of a thriving business.

The former foundry is located immediately west of the intersection of North Race and Griggs streets at 208 West Griggs Street. The current complex of structures rests



The former Snedeker-Wright "Enterprise Foundry"/ Leavitt Manufacturing Company Building today.

on a slab foundation and consists of three sections that occupy an area approximately 100 feet north-to-south by 200 feet east-to-west. It is bounded by Boneyard Creek to the east, railroad tracks to the north, Griggs Street to the south and an apartment complex to the west. The first section is a 2-story brick structure, the former machine/pattern shop located in the southwest portion of the foundry complex. Close examination of this section reveals details of brick window frames and modest triangular brick corbels along the roofline dating to the period of Joseph William Royer's remodel of 1903. The second section of the foundry consists of the western section of the complex. This section consists of a concrete block wall on the north, brick and concrete walls on the west, and a brick wall on the south. This section is 1-story high with a flat roof that slopes downward towards the north. The third section consists of the east portion of the

of the complex. It consists of a flat-roofed, 1.5-story area with concrete block walls on the north and east, and concrete block and brick walls on the south. The concrete block portion at the east end of this section dates to 1992.

To date, no image of the original foundry built by Abram Snedeker has been located. The earliest known image of the foundry is from the 1887 Sanborn Fire Insurance map, published approximately 15 years after Snedeker established the business, and five years after he sold it to Thomas Wright. Inspection of Sanborn Fire Insurance maps between 1887 and 1945 indicates how the Wright/Leavitt complex evolved over time. The 1887 map indicates the Wright foundry 1 consisted of three clusters of buildings. On the west, the shop consisted of three structures consisting of a pattern shop, shed, and iron storage. East of this was the main structure of the

