

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

FINAL

For NPS use only

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

received

date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic Brownell Block/Senger Dry Goods Company Building

and/or common Senger Dry Goods Company Building

**2. Location**

street & number Northeast Corner of Broadway and Fifth Street N/A not for publication

city, town Peru N/A vicinity of

state Indiana code 018 county Miami code 103

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	Planned for
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Board of Commissioners of Miami County, Indiana

street & number Courthouse

city, town Peru N/A vicinity of state Indiana 46970

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Miami County Courthouse, Recorder's Office

street & number Northeast Corner of Broadway and Main Street

city, town Peru state Indiana

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title N/A has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town state

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Constructed in 1883-84, the Senger Dry Goods Company building is a three story commercial structure located on a corner in downtown Peru. It is a brick building with a molded stone veneer, and measures 66½ feet by 132 feet on the ground floor.

Large plate glass windows occupy the first floor walls along the south and west sides of the building. On the west side, the windows are separated by large cast iron piers, while on the south side the piers are faced with stone. Above the plate glass windows is a wide band of Luxfer glass with movable ventilating panels at the center of each bay. Entrances are positioned along the south and west sides, while a service entrance is situated in the east side, opening onto an alley.

The second and third floors of the building are faced with molded stone. On the west side there are nine bays. In the center is a two story, projecting bay of frame construction. Flanking this are four double-hung windows on each side. Openings on the second story are segmentally arched, with incised decoration above the rectangular sash, whereas the third story openings and sash are rectangular. The second to last bay from each end is slightly different on each story, with a console. The south side has nine bays, as well, but they are spaced farther apart, and there are three projecting bays.

Above the third story is a deep entablature, with dentils, and modillions supporting the cornice; above this is a dentiled parapet. The roof slopes gently toward the alley.

At the east end of the three story building is a two story addition, with similar window treatments, but featuring only two projecting bays on the second story.

The second floor extends into an adjoining building along the north side; however, this portion of the second floor is not included in this nomination.

The first floor consists of a large open room with ceiling supports positioned symmetrically throughout the room. An elevator occupies a portion of the north wall of the room and a wooden staircase along the interior east wall of the room leads to a small mezzanine and upwards to the second floor. Wooden steps in the northeast corner of the room lead to the basement.

The second floor is a large open room with openings leading to the building next door along the north wall of the building and into the addition occupying the east side of the building. The second floor is serviced by the elevator.

The third floor is a large, open room with no openings for windows along the north interior wall. Access to the roof and the elevator are available from this floor.

There is a large, finished basement. Hardwood floors are noted throughout the building.

The building assumed its present appearance following an extensive remodeling in 1907-08. It had previously been a brick Italianate building, with cast iron columns framing the three storefronts on the west facade, and with corbelled brick embellishing the cornice line. The only elements from the original building that are still visible are the four large cast iron piers on the west facade, and the incised decorations above the second story windows. The present window heads are similar in shape to the originals, but are more simple.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1883-84/1907-08      **Builder/Architect** Unknown/J. B. Goodall

### Statement of Significance ~~(to be completed)~~

The Senger Dry Goods Company building is the largest turn-of-the-century commercial building remaining in Peru. It was also the home for 70 years of the Senger store, one of the longest-established businesses in the city until its closing in 1978.

The building was built in 1883-84 by C. H. Brownell, a banker. Known as the Brownell Block, it housed numerous business establishments, most notably the Lenhart and Simpson furniture store and undertaking business. In 1907, the building was purchased by B. E. Wallace.

Peru has long been the winter home of a number of circuses, and one of the best known circus owners was Wallace. He had come to Miami County in 1863 as a teenager, and eventually organized the Great Wallace Shows. When local banks became unable to handle the large sums of money necessary for the operation of his circus, Wallace organized the Wabash Valley Trust Company.

Wallace had furnished the financial backing for Frederick Senger to establish his dry goods store in a nearby building in 1906. By 1907, the business needed room for expansion, which prompted Wallace to buy the Brownell Block. In October, a contract was let to J. B. Goodall for remodeling the building, and the building was renamed the Enterprise Block. It was at this time that the stone veneer was applied, and the windows were changed. The Senger Dry Goods Company moved into the building in 1908, and remained there until 1978.

Current plans are to restore the building, which dominates the Courthouse Square, to its 1908 appearance. It will house the collections of the Miami County Museum and the Puterbaugh Museum.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Bodurtha, Arthur L., History of Miami County, Indiana, Vol. II, The Lewis Publishing Company, Chicago and New York, 1914.

Cook, Vesper, The Brownell Block and Senger Dry Goods Co., unpublished manuscript available through the Miami County Museum, Courthouse, Peru, Indiana

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Peru

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 

1	6	5	7	8	5	5	0	4	5	1	1	7	5	0
Zone		Easting			Northing									

B 

Zone		Easting			Northing				

C 

Zone		Easting			Northing				

D 

Zone		Easting			Northing				

E 

Zone		Easting			Northing				

F 

Zone		Easting			Northing				

G 

Zone		Easting			Northing				

H 

Zone		Easting			Northing				

**Verbal boundary description and justification** South 66 1/2 feet of Lots 220 and 221, Original Plat. Starting at the northeast corner of the intersection of Broadway and Fifth Street, being a the southwest corner of Lot 220 in the original plat of the City of Peru, east 132' to the southeast corner of Lot 221, north 66 1/2', west 132' to the west side of Lot 220, south 66 1/2 feet to the point of beginning.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert A. Spahr, Attorney

organization Miami County Historical Society date March 1, 1983

street & number P.O. Box 145, 55 S. Broadway telephone 317/473-4690

city or town Peru state Indiana 46970

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature James M. Ridgway 7-21-83

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date

**For NPS use only**  
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration