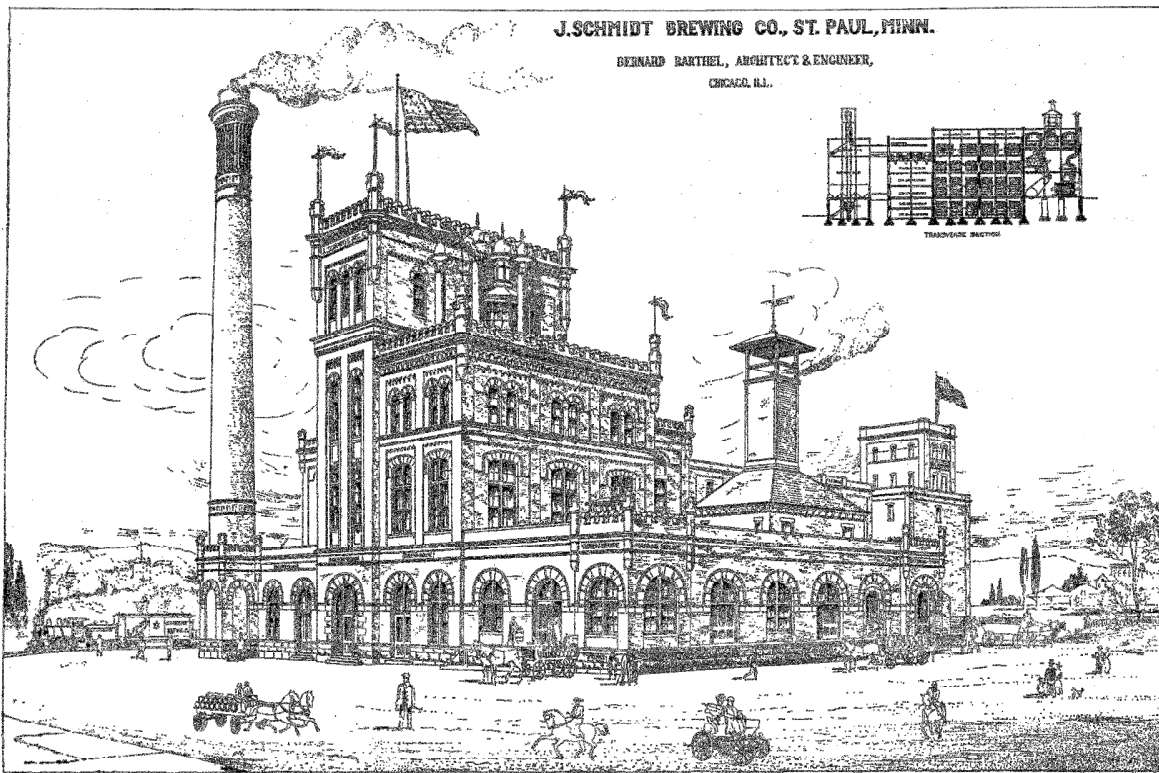


## PART 2

### DISTRICT SIGNIFICANCE



*Bernard Barthel office rendering, 1902*



## THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHMIDT'S BREWERY AND THE BREWING INDUSTRY TO ST. PAUL

The birth of the brewing industry in St. Paul, as elsewhere in the Midwest, coincided with a massive influx of German immigrants in the 1840s and 50s. They brought with them a relatively new method of brewing, in which fermentation occurred at the bottom rather than the top of the vat and the beer was laid up under refrigeration in barrels for several months before drinking. This lagering method had been known since the late 18th century in Germany but did not establish a foothold in the United States until 1840. From its introduction in Philadelphia it spread to cities in the middle states that were hosts to large numbers of German immigration, notably San Antonio, Chicago, St. Louis, Milwaukee, and St. Paul. By the opening of the Civil War, German immigrants had engulfed the American brewing industry, and lager was fast overtaking ale and other English brews as the dominant type of beer in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

Germans and the lager method dominated the brewing industry in Minnesota from the beginning. Anton Yoerg was the first to establish a brewery in what would become the Twin Cities. His plant of 1849 on the West Side of St. Paul was followed the next year by John Orth's brewery in St. Anthony. By the arrival of statehood in 1858, St. Paul boasted six breweries: Bruggemann's, Banholzer's, and the North Mississippi Company founded in 1853, and the City Brewery, North Star Brewery, and Stahlmann's founded in 1855. This number, closely matched by Minneapolis and St. Anthony, was substantial for communities still numbering less than 5,000 inhabitants; but they were well behind the forty breweries St. Louis could boast of prior to the Civil War, as the city's population approached 160,000.<sup>2</sup>

The early St. Paul breweries clustered in three areas: the steep bluff above the Mississippi River on the West Side, the eastern edge of the embankment above the Trout Creek gulley, and a long strip of land between Fort Road and the Mississippi River. All three areas had caves carved into the soft St. Peter sandstone that lies beneath the limestone bedrock undergirding the city. Expansion of the existing caves into the deep, level rooms required for lagering could be achieved quickly and with simple tools.

Six breweries arose on the bluffs along Fort Road, interspaced with numerous foundries, factories, and a major yard of the Chicago, Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Omaha Railroad. Among its five local competitors, Stahlmann's Cave Brewery quickly rose to leadership. By the time of its transition to the Jacob Schmidt Brewing Company, it was the only West End brewery remaining and one of the three largest breweries in the Twin Cities, a position it maintained throughout the remainder of its history. In the meantime, much of the industrial base of the West Seventh Street neighborhood disappeared, along with the railroad yard, leaving the Schmidt Brewing Company as the dominant industrial and commercial enterprise on West Seventh Street.

St. Paul's development as an urban center depended on a thriving industrial and commercial sector, and the brewing industry was both major player and bellwether in the rising economic tide of the city. Outlying breweries in particular spurred the growth of neighborhoods remote from the city core, in the process stimulating the infill of the commercial corridor between brewery and city. Like German-language churches and schools, the breweries were also a

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1 Much of the information in this paragraph is drawn from J. E. Siebel, *One Hundred Years of Brewing*, supplement to *The Western Brewer* (Chicago: H. S. Rich & Co., 1903), 340-346.

2 For a history of St. Paul's breweries, see Gary J. Brueggeman, "Beer Capital of the State: St. Paul's Historic Family Breweries," *Ramsey County History* 16:2 (1981), 3-15.

magnet for the immigration and employment of a large German population. Most importantly for the city's commercial and financial independence, the local brewing industry helped turn St. Paul into a major producer of goods consumed by the expanding tier of northern states to the west rather than simply an entrepot for goods from Chicago, New York, and New England.

As a mark of the brewery industry's economic importance to St. Paul, it led the way in the city's emergence from each of the major economic depressions between 1857 and the 1930s. The record of the brewing company established by Chris Stahlmann is particularly clear. His building campaigns of 1858 and 1880 were among the first entrepreneurial initiatives after the panics of 1857 and 1875, respectively. An even more severe depression swept the country with the Panic of 1893. Building activity and commercial enterprise entered a trough from which they were not to emerge until 1901. In that year, \$600,000 was expended in manufacturing plants, with all but \$100,000 of this sum expended by Schmidt's rebuilding of the Stahlmann plant and Hamm's brewery expansion on the East Side. Finally, in the Great Depression of the 1930s, Schmidt Brewing Company's return to production at the end of Prohibition again placed the brewery at the forefront of renewed growth and investment in St. Paul's commercial and industrial sector.

Schmidt's Brewery, as it was commonly known, had its roots in two St. Paul brewing operations. The parent establishment on the West Seventh Street site was Bavarian immigrant Christopher Stahlmann's Cave Brewery. But Schmidt himself—and the beer that he would brew at the Stahlmann site—had roots in the North Star Brewery in Dayton's Bluff. These two historical paths, joined in the formation of Schmidt's brewery, will be explored in turn.

### **THE STAHLMANN ERA (1858-1899)**

Christopher Stahlmann's brewing operation, at first known as the Cave Brewery, was the initial development on the Jacob Schmidt Brewing Company site. Henry Christopher Gottlieb Stahlmann (1829-1883) was born to an affluent family in Nuremberg, Bavaria on June 19, 1829. The bankruptcy of his father spurred him and his brothers to seek work abroad. Christopher (the given name he used) immigrated to the United States in 1846 or 1849. After working as a brewer's helper in New York City and Cincinnati, he moved to Muscatine and then in 1854 to Iowa City, Iowa, where he married Katharina Paulus (1834-1874) and set up his own brewery business. A year later he arrived in St. Paul and by July 5 opened a new brewery operation. He was the fourth or fifth to build a brewery in or near the city, but the first to have the optimism and the foresight to plant his establishment on an expansive site well removed from the city center. The city was undergoing its first population explosion, with 553 steamboats arriving in 1855 alone. The population of 4400 would more than double in the next five years.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Early sources disagree about his immigration date. One source (Newson) also has him first settling in Indiana rather than New York City. This précis of Stahlmann's life and character is compiled from a *St. Paul Pioneer Press* obituary for Christopher Stahlmann, Dec. 4, 1883; Edward D. Neill, *History of Ramsey County and the City of St. Paul* (St. Paul: North Star Publishing Co., 1881), 614; T. M. Newson, *Pen Pictures of St. Paul, Minnesota* (St. Paul: privately published, 1886), 531; Gary Brueggeman, "Beer Capital of the State: St. Paul's Historic Family Breweries," *Ramsey County History* v. 16 no. 2 (1981), 10; Adam Smith, "The History of the Stahlmann Family" (unpublished booklet, 2003), MHS Collections; U. S. Census, 1870 and 1880; Minnesota State Census, 1875 and 1885.

In 1858 Stahlmann moved his brewery operation from the north side to the south side of Fort Road, beginning with a three-story brew house built of the native limestone he would use for all of his future buildings. A fermentation house and bottling plant followed in the mid-1870s, in addition to extensive fermentation cellars being built under the brewery (property number 8). By the onset of the Civil War, Stahlmann's Cave Brewery was the leading beer producer in the state, exporting its product to a wide swath of territory from Canada to the border states. He had clients in Manitoba, Virginia, Nebraska, St. Louis, Missouri, and Memphis, Tennessee.<sup>4</sup>

For twenty-three years the Cave Brewery operated out of the limestone building complex and its sandstone cellars that grew up on and under the southwest corner of Fort Road and Oneida Street. The bursts of construction in 1858 and the mid to late 1870s led to spikes in production. In 1870, Stahlmann's real estate holdings were assessed at \$30,000 (six times the 1860 assessment) and his personal estate at \$15,000, making him at that early date one of the most prosperous businessmen in the city. A few years later he built a large house for his family, by then consisting of a wife, Katharina, four sons and a daughter, his mother, and two servants. Constructed on the site of the first brewery buildings, it was connected to the cellar complex by a basement stairway.<sup>5</sup>

Near the end of the decade, Stahlmann built a frame house next door for his eldest son (and leading employee), Henry, and his wife, Angela. In 1879, with the nation still in the throes of an economic depression, the Cave Brewery became the first Minnesota beer operation to reach the 10,000-barrel benchmark. It was also among the first, if not the first, to produce bottled beer, for the first time making the beverage easily available for home consumption.

The peak of the brewery's operation in Stahlmann hands came shortly thereafter. After a flurry of icehouse building brought most of the fermentation cellars above grade, the Cave Brewery was reorganized and incorporated on December 31, 1881, as the Christopher Stahlmann Brewing Company. Always a local leader in introducing brewery innovations, Stahlmann was among the first St. Paul brewers to make extensive use of icehouses. The American patent on the Lind ice machine that made the ice houses feasible had just been taken out in 1881, so he was at the forefront nationally as well.

Reorganization led to a rapid expansion of the brewery's capacity and footprint. Between 1880 and 1881, Stahlmann erected a stone stable northwest of his house; a boarding house, with a ground floor operating as brewery headquarters, west of his bottling plant; and a \$65,000 four-story (including the basement) new brewery complex in the block south of the old. Chicago architect Martin Wangen designed the new brewery buildings, a row of connected malt houses (part of property number 1) and barley-roasting kiln, the former with modillioned cornices to provide a modicum of style.

In the midst of this sudden growth of the brewery complex, a local publication announced that Stahlmann's Brewery was the largest lager producer west of Milwaukee. That was true only if it does not take in Missouri. With a claimed peak capacity of 60,000 barrels (40,000 may have been closer to the mark), Stahlmann's Brewery was still 250,000 shy of Anheuser-Busch's production in St. Louis. Eight years later, the brewery itself hedged its claim a little more closely,

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4 A Great Brewery," *St. Paul Dispatch*, Apr. 30, 1877.

5 The figures regarding Stahlmann's financial worth are based on census research by Smith.

advertising the operation as "the most extensive brewing establishment in the state or the Northwest."<sup>6</sup>

Stahlmann's death of tuberculosis at the peak of his fortunes in 1883 precipitated a cascade of misfortunes for his family and the family business. His three sons also died of tuberculosis over the next ten years, placing the firm in a poor position to withstand the twin challenges of the 1890s: a severe and long-lasting economic depression and the rising dominance of major corporations. After several attempts to reorganize the brewery spearheaded by carriage maker George Mitsch, the brewery passed into receivership in 1897.

Under its new name, St. Paul Brewing Company barely survived the century. Its manager, Frank Nicolin, formerly a merchant miller, lived on Seventh Street just west of the brewery. His ascendance in the brewery, perhaps aided by his marriage to the eldest Stahlmann son's widow, allowed him to construct his own home next to the old Christopher Stahlmann place on West Seventh Street in 1900, to be followed a year later by a rental duplex. Both houses are contributing properties in the historic district. Nicolin's move into the immediate vicinity of the brewery, to be followed shortly by his retirement, was coincident with the arrival of Jacob Schmidt, the second major figure associated with the history of the brewery.

#### **THE SCHMIDT-BREMER ERA AND ITS ARCHITECTS (1900-1955)**

Jacob Schmidt (1845-1910) was one of the most widely known and respected brewers in the Upper Midwest. Born in Bavaria on October 9, 1845, he immigrated to the United States at the age of 20, with some brewery experience already in hand. His first employer was the Miller Brewery in Rochester, New York. After a year there, he moved to Milwaukee, working at different times for the Philip Best, Blatz, and Schlitz breweries. In 1870, at the urging of his friend Theodore Hamm, he became brewmaster at Hamm's plant on the East Side of St. Paul. But then he continued to wander, first to New Ulm, where he worked for August Schell and married Katherine Haas in 1871, then on to Berlin, Wisconsin, back to St. Paul to work for Bahnholzer, and off to Milwaukee. In the latter city, his career must have sunk to a low point, for he listed his occupation in the 1880 census as "retired brewer," though he was still only 35 years old. After a short stint with the Keeley Brewery in Chicago, Schmidt finally returned to St. Paul to stay in 1884.<sup>7</sup>

In the year of his return, Schmidt first bought into and then gained control of the North Star Brewery south of Hamm's on the East Side. Located at Commercial Street and Hudson Road. According to some accounts, he had already worked at the North Star in the 1870s, when it underwent an ambitious building program resulting in a plant occupying an area 300 by 200 feet and described as "picturesque as a castle on the River Rhine." By the late 1870s, like Stahlmann's Cave Brewery, it claimed to be the largest brewery west of Milwaukee. Also like

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6 The hyperbole is from *Leading Industries of St. Paul, Minn.* (New York: Reed & Co., 1881), 134.

7 This sketch of Schmidt's early years is pieced together from W. B. Hennesey, *Past and Present of St. Paul, Minnesota* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1906), 765-66; "Forgotten Facts about St. Paul," *St. Paul Shipping News*, Jan. 11, 1950; Brueggeman, 11; and Ron Feldhaus, *The Bottles, Breweriana, and Advertising Jugs of Minnesota, 1850-1920* (Minneapolis: privately published, 1986).

the Cave Brewery, it had enormous cellars and a large bottling department; however it achieved its highest production numbers with only 12 employees.<sup>8</sup>

Schmidt's right-hand-man was Adolph Bremer (1869-1939), another German immigrant with whom Schmidt struck up a friendship on hunting trips. First appointed as bookkeeper, Bremer rose to become plant manager of the North Star Brewery in his early 20s and married Schmidt's only child, Marie, in 1896. From the beginning, Bremer pushed the delivery end of the business, often using a wheelbarrow to deliver the product locally and forging friendly relations with the city's barkeepers.<sup>9</sup>

In 1899, Schmidt formed a corporation, splitting ownership of the business in four equal parts. He retained one share and granted equal shares to the other corporation officers: Adolph Bremer, his older brother, Otto Bremer (1867-1951), and Peter Memmer (1854-1918). Then in 1900 the North Star Brewery burned to the ground, Schmidt and the Bremer brothers bought the mortgage on all of Stahlmann's Seventh Street properties, and the Jacob Schmidt Brewing Company was born. Schmidt, Adolph Bremer, and their families shared the old Stahlmann house, an arrangement that endured until Schmidt's death in 1910.

After operating the old plant for a short time under the North Star label, in August 1901 Schmidt initiated construction on a new complex (property number 1) that dwarfed the malt houses it absorbed. Estimated to cost \$200,000, the buildings erected in 1901-02 gave the rebuilt brewery a visual presence and a cache it had never had before and set the tone for brewery additions and alterations for decades to come.

While Schmidt's new plant was still in the planning stages, Hamm's boasted of being "the only brewery in St. Paul with a modern refrigerating plant" rather than "dark, ill-ventilated caves." Modern technology had also introduced forced-air drying, reducing the need for the multiple, open-racked malt houses that characterized 19th-century brewing operations. Schmidt's new brewery incorporated both of these new technologies. On completion of its first phase of construction, the 1903 *Book of Minnesota* heralded the new plant as "the most complete and modern in the Northwest," claiming that it was "constructed upon the most modern scientific plans known to the art of making beer."<sup>10</sup>

The architect and engineer of Schmidt's rebuilding of the Stahlmann plant was Bernard Barthel. Born in Leipzig in 1866, Barthel came to Chicago in 1892. He began in the office of Frederick W. Wolff, the acknowledged pioneer in American brewery engineering at a time when American breweries were still following in the footsteps of German engineering advances.<sup>11</sup>

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8 Your Visit to the Jacob Schmidt Brewing Co.," 1-2; "Forgotten Facts about St. Paul: The North Star Brewery—Jacob Schmidt," *St. Paul Shopping News*, Jan. 11, 1950; Brueggeman, 11.

9 Hennessey, 531; Minnesota State Census, 1895; U. S. Census, 1900. Feldhaus, 38. Hennessey claims that both the Bremer brothers received university educations, but their youth at the time of their emigration would have cut their education short at the Gymnasium level, equivalent to a year beyond high school in this country.

10 *Ad in St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Aug. 4, 1901, 2:7.

11 The chronology in this paragraph derives from Susan Appel, "General Chronology for the Jacob Schmidt Brewery, St. Paul, MN," in Andrew Hine, "Application for Determination of Eligibility for Historic Designation of the Jacob Schmidt Brewery," 2003, State Historic Preservation Office, MHS.

The design of Wolff's brewery exteriors, developed by a corps of talented draftsmen such as Louis Lehle, leaned toward a rampant eclecticism. The Schoenhofen Brewery in Chicago (1867, demolished), Schlitz Brewery in Milwaukee (1890, NRHP) and Grainbelt Brewery in Minneapolis (1893, NRHP) all string together a succession of variously styled building blocks, from German Gothic to French Renaissance to mid-19th century European neoclassicism.

Barthel's faux-Rhineland castles sprang up in dozens of small-town breweries scattered throughout the Upper Midwest and Canada. Moehn Brewing Company in Burlington, Iowa, and the Warsaw Brewery in Warsaw, Illinois are two surviving examples. The Schmidt Brewery was the grandfather of these designs and remained the most elaborate and costly expression of Barthel's architectural vision.<sup>12</sup>

Beyond its envelope, Barthel's breweries were also renowned for incorporating the latest technologies. He remained in close contact with Frederick Wolff until Wolff died in 1912, and installed his ventilation and refrigeration methods and equipment and much of his brewing apparatus in the Schmidt plant. The possibility of ammonia vapor-compression refrigeration had been well attested for over forty years, but only in the last decade of the 19th century had it become both safe and practical for large-scale operation. Forced-air drying was an equally important innovation, allowing the malt houses to shrink to a fraction of their former size. Banks of large windows could be replaced with vents, allowing the malt houses to maintain even temperatures. Together, the two innovations helped to bring the fermentation chambers above ground. Still called "cellars," they occupied spaces formerly required for extensive germination and drying racks, key components of the old malting process. Even after Wolff died, Barthel kept abreast of the latest technologies, adding to and rebuilding the fermentation cellars of the Schmidt Brewery in 1913-17 to incorporate new tanks and equipment.

The design and technological sophistication of Schmidt's brewery catapulted Barthel to the front lines of his profession. On completion of the main phase of Schmidt's brewery expansion, the *Book of Minnesota* heralded the plant as "the most complete and modern in the Northwest," claiming that it was "constructed upon the most modern scientific plans known to the art of making beer."<sup>13</sup>

The brewery quickly recaptured the place once held by Stahlmann's near the front of St. Paul's brewing industry. Its annual output of 200,000 barrels was second only to the 250,000 barrels produced by Hamm's. The latter brewery continued to dominate the local market, but Schmidt established a stronger regional foothold. Employing 230 people, it was also the largest industry on the West End of the city. The company soon boasted of being the second largest "in the west outside of Chicago," and once again the claim is accurate only if St. Louis is excluded. Anheuser-Busch in St. Louis had already exceeded the 1,000,000-barrel mark, following in the

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12 Appel has found over 150 references to his work, though many are to the same project. See also Jeffrey A. Hess and Paul Clifford Larson, *St. Paul's Architecture: A History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 88.

13 J. G. Nielson, "The Brewing Industry," *The Book of Minnesota* (St. Paul: Pioneer Press Co., 1903).



footsteps of the two Milwaukee giants, Schlitz and Pabst; and the Minneapolis Brewing Company had reached 500,000 barrels.<sup>14</sup>

As vice president and plant manager of the Jacob Schmidt Brewing Company, Adolph Bremer was the natural successor to Schmidt on the latter's death in 1910. While Schmidt's expertise and primary focus had been the brewery, in particular its adoption of the most advanced technologies, Bremer continued to refine and expand his early interest in getting the product into the market. Between 1903 and 1913, the company built two saloons and five store-and-flats buildings with a saloon on the ground floor. Several more store-and-flats buildings went up in the ensuing five years. Added to those already in place from the Stahlmann or North Star operations, the Schmidt saloons gave the brewery a ubiquitous presence in the city's neighborhoods. Bremer was also instrumental in melding the widespread clientele into a distribution network spread through the two Dakotas, Montana, western Wisconsin, and Iowa.<sup>15</sup>

The regional success of the Schmidt Brewing Company is the more remarkable for the aggressive marketing efforts of the brewing giants in Milwaukee and St. Louis. At the turn of the century, Schlitz expanded its Lowertown warehouse and began selling itself as the "beer of civilization," a snipe at breweries in an upstart prairie town. Responding to Schmidt's increasing share in regional markets, both Schlitz and Anheuser-Busch invaded Uppertown after the turn of the century, the former building a large warehouse on W. Seventh and Ramsey Street and the latter putting up a mammoth \$35,000 facility and stable at the foot of Chestnut street (all of these buildings demolished). Yet Schmidt and Bremer marched on, annexing a large racking house wing to the west of the brew house in 1908, continuing to extend the production capacity of the stock house over the next five years, upgrading the fermentation equipment in 1913-14, and expanding the brewery property to the east side of Oneida to build a new bottle works in 1916 (property number 2).<sup>16</sup>

In spite of the incremental breakup of Stahlmann's holdings and Schade's beer garden on the other side of West Seventh Street, the three blocks immediately north of the brewery remained very much a brewery neighborhood. On the Stahlmann block, both the Stahlmann houses remained intact, and two additional houses were built by a retired Stahlmann brewer at the turn of the 20th century. The beer garden converted to residential use and remained in the hands of the brewery. The second of the two houses that went up on it was built for master brewer John Aubele. Even Stahlmann's stable managed to survive the conversion to truck transport, as it was rolled into the Delivery Vehicle Complex.

Bremer's aggressive marketing and a savvy master brewer helped to keep the brewery alive during Prohibition. Hundreds of breweries nationwide were unable to retain enough sales of soft drinks or "near beer" to remain afloat. But Schmidt's brewers came up with a formula that retained much of the flavor of the old. Named "Schmidt's Select," it was so successful that the

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14 Paul Clifford Larson, "Schmidt Brewery Designation Study" (unpublished, 2005), 4; Stanley Baron, *Brewed in America: A History of Beer and Ale in the United States* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1962); Paul Clifford Larson, Draft NRHP nomination for Grain Belt Brewery, Minneapolis. (Unpublished, 1986).

15 The saloons prior to 1913 were found by an owner-index search of building permits; as the owner indexes stop at that date, later saloons have to be found by a physical search, e.g., by looking for old Schmidt signs.

16 P. Larson, *Designation Study*, 4.

public returned to the Schmidt's brand, and the plant was able to resume full production on shifts working through the night.<sup>17</sup>

At the end of Prohibition in 1933, the brewery endeavored to regain its strong regional position, rebuilding the power plant to accommodate the transition to electricity and introducing an expanded kegging operation that would vie with bottle production. For the brew house complex, management chose to defy the current antipathy toward "Victorian" building, and meld the modifications into the original design fabric, with a new malt house of seven stories and a new stack twice as tall as the 1902-03 original. The Moderne style was adopted for a new office building (property number 3), the expansion of the racking house, and a detached keg house (property number 4). By the end of this construction phase, the Jacob Schmidt Brewing Company had risen to seventh place among American beer producers, in part because of the absorption of its peers in size into the giants in Milwaukee and St. Louis.

The 1930s also brought a great expansion of the Delivery Vehicle Complex (property number 11) on the north side of West Seventh Street. When trucks were introduced in the 1910s, they were housed in a garage on Webster, across the street from the brew house. The construction of the Keg House required this garage to be demolished, leading to the erection of a mammoth new garage on Toronto Street. Occupying nearly half a city block, it wrapped around the old boarding stable (by then a machine shop) at the corner of Toronto Street and Jefferson Avenue, joining it to the brick stable facing Webster Street and forming a continuous brick wall on Jefferson. All the old buildings were converted to maintenance and storage. Around the same time, the brewery began to use Schade's old saloon-and-flats south of the stable as a company store and carpentry shops. The last remnant of Frederick Schade's little world on West Seventh, it was erroneously identified as "Stahlmann's saloon" (the long-gone frame building across the street) at the time of its demolition in 1960.

Walter W. Magee was the architect for all (and contractor for most) of the post-Prohibition brewery rebuilds and expansions except the office building, whose design fell to a local resident, former City Architect Charles Hausler. Magee's additions to the most visible components of the main complex in 1934-36 flowed seamlessly from Barthel's work. In addition, his design of outlying parts of the brewery, in particular the racking house, keg house, and truck garage are unusually complete statements of a Moderne sensibility for industrial buildings in St. Paul. They manage to be sensitive to, and sometimes faintly echo, the design of the main complex, while expressing both a more modern aesthetic and the increasing concern with diminished or filtered light into racking and storage spaces rather than the flood of light permitted by the earlier fenestration schemes.

Another period of nationwide industry consolidation after World War II, spurred by the aggressive marketing of national brands, again posed a threat to regional brewers. But Schmidt Brewing Company continued to expand, with a new stock house at the rear of Stahlmann's old malt houses, a new concrete malt elevator at the rear of the stock house, and three new bottling machines with a capacity of 250 bottles per minute, or the equivalent of 40 barrels per hour. This contrasted with the 6½ barrels of bottled beer per day produced by the Schmidt Brewing

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<sup>17</sup> Description of plant operations and production in this and the following two paragraphs is taken from "Your Visit to the Jacob Schmidt Brewing Co.," 4-5.

Company at its inception in 1901. By 1951, brewery production reached 750,000 barrels and the company employed 500 people.

#### **AFTER THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE (1956-2004)**

After Otto Bremer, the last of the Bremer brothers, died in 1951, the company struggled on for a few years, finally yielding to consolidation on January 1, 1955. Operating as the Jacob Schmidt division of Pfeiffer Brewing Company of Detroit, the brewery undertook only minor remodelings and upgrades before it was sold once again in 1972, this time to the G. Heileman Brewing Company of La Crosse, Wisconsin. Heileman expanded the facility with a number of major alterations and additions between 1978 and 1984. In 1991, Heileman sold the plant to Minnesota Brewing Co., and the operation shrunk to a microbrewery, making beer under contract for Dakota Brewing Company, Black Mountain Brewing Company, and Pride Brewing Company. In the face of substantial annual losses, in 1998 the MBC began planning to utilize some of the plant for ethanol production, with Gopher State Ethanol running the non-brewery side. Ethanol production began in 2002, and the split operation lasted until 2002, when the MBC filed for bankruptcy and ceased production, ending 144 years of brewing at the site. The ethanol plant closed in 2004.