

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Coca-Cola Bottling Company Building  
other names/site number Kelly Press Building

**2. Location**

street & number 10 Hitt Street [N/A] not for publication  
city or town Columbia [N/A] vicinity  
state Missouri code MO county Boone code 019 zip code 65201

**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 [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [ x ] locally.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ].)

*Mark A. Miles*

*04 JAN 06*

Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ].)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

[ ] entered in the National Register.  
See continuation sheet [ ].

[ ] determined eligible for the National Register.  
See continuation sheet [ ].

[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.

[ ] removed from the National Register.

[ ] other, (explain:)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Classification**

| Ownership of Property                       | Category of Property                            | Number of Resources Within Property |                  |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|------------------|
|   |   | Contributing                        | Non-contributing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | 1                                   | 0 buildings      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> private            | <input type="checkbox"/> district               | 0                                   | 0 sites          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local       | <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | 0                                   | 0 structures     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State       | <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | 0                                   | 0 objects        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal     | <input type="checkbox"/> object                 | 1                                   | 0 Total          |

**Name of related multiple property listing.**

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.**

Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

**Current Functions**

INDUSTRY: manufacturing facility

INDUSTRY: communications facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural classification**

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

**Materials**

foundation concrete  
 walls brick  
 roof asphalt  
 other \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet [ ]

**Narrative Description** See continuation sheet [x].

**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**

Property is:

**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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

See continuation sheet [x].

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**Bibliography** See continuation sheet [x].

**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
- # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commerce

\_\_\_\_\_  
Architecture

**Period of Significance**

\_\_\_\_\_  
1935-1955

**Significant Dates**

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

**Significant Person(s)**

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

**Cultural Affiliation**

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

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_  
unknown

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other:

Name of repository:  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property:** less than one acre

#### UTM References

|         |         |          |         |         |          |
|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|----------|
| A. Zone | Easting | Northing | B. Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 15      | 558490  | 4311320  |         |         |          |

|         |         |          |         |         |          |
|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|----------|
| C. Zone | Easting | Northing | D. Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|----------|

[ ] See continuation sheet

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Debbie Sheals  
organization Private Contractor  
date August 5, 2005  
street & number 29 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St. Suite 204 telephone 573-874-3779  
city or town Columbia state Missouri zip code 65201

#### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FOP for any additional items)

#### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Hittsville, LLC (c/o Paul Sturtz)  
street & number 109 Anderson Avenue  
telephone 573-443-0881  
city or town Columbia state MO zip code 65203

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

**Coca-Cola Bottling Company Building  
Boone County, Missouri**  
Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri

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**Summary:** The Coca-Cola Bottling Company Building is located at 10 Hitt Street, in Columbia, Boone County, MO. It was built in 1935 to house the Columbia Coca-Cola Bottling Company, and has seen very few changes since that time. The building sits facing west to Hitt Street, on a level lot located at the east edge of the central business district. It is a red brick building with simple Colonial Revival styling, and it is the only resource on the property. The front part of the building is one and one-half stories tall, with a side facing gable roof, and three gabled front dormers. A long one-story rear ell has the same type of red brick walls, and a flat roof. There are four bays on the façade; two have open plate glass display windows, one has a large garage door, and the fourth contains the doorway to the main office. The interior of the building continues to reflect its historic utilitarian function; the plan is largely open, and there is minimal architectural detailing. The Coca-Cola building is a representative example of Property Type A. Commercial Buildings, as discussed in the Multiple Property Submission cover document "Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri." It meets the registration requirements set forth in that document under Criteria A and C, in the areas of Commerce and Architecture. The building is in good condition and highly intact; it has seen no additions or changes of note in the last fifty years, and is immediately recognizable to its period of significance.

**Elaboration:**

The Coca-Cola property is on Hitt Street, less than one block south of Broadway, which is the main commercial thoroughfare through downtown Columbia. Hitt Street runs north and south, along the east edge of the central business district. There is a large church property on Hitt Street to the south of the Coca-Cola building, an open parking lot directly across the street, and the rest of the surrounding properties contain commercial buildings. The Coca-Cola lot is bounded on the north by a small private alley, on the south by the church property, on the west (front) by Hitt Street, and on the east by a small private parking lot which serves a warehouse for an adjoining property. (See Figure One, 1960s Sanborn Map.)

The building occupies most of its rectangular lot. A small gravel parking lot runs along the north wall, and there is a narrow landscaped area between the sidewalk and the front of the building. Another gravel parking area is located on the south side of the building, between it and the church next door. The very back of the Coca-Cola building is wider than the front section, and that part of the building extends southward to within a few inches of the adjacent church building.

The front part of the building has a decidedly residential form, with a side gabled roof, evenly spaced dormers, and Colonial Revival styling. That part of the building is one and one-half stories tall, and the rear ell is one story tall. The façade features a corbelled brick cornice at the roofline, along with prominent brick quoins at the front building corners and around the

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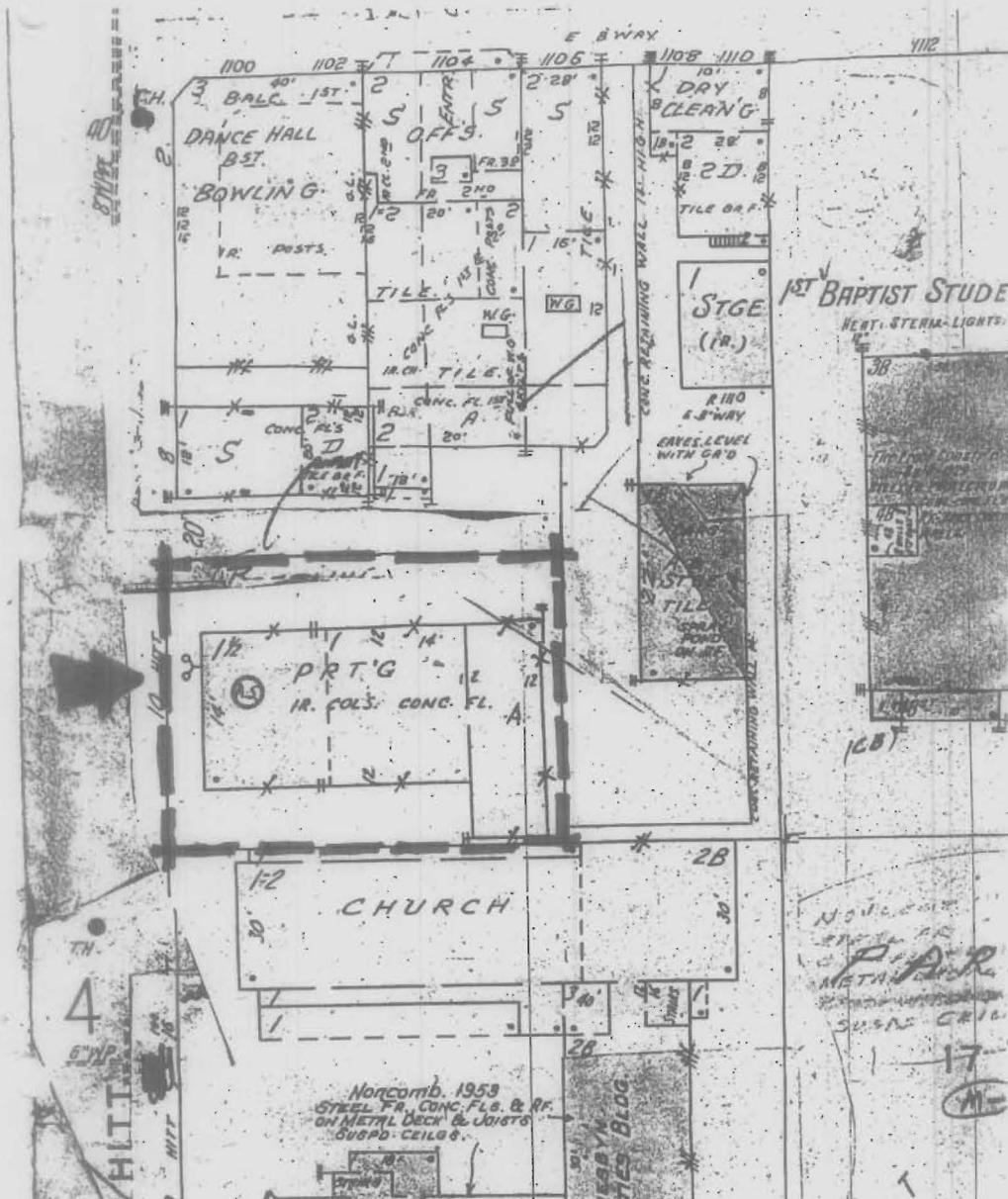
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Boone County, Missouri  
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doorway to the office.

Figure One. Sanborn Map of the Property and the Surrounding Properties. (A 1931 base map, with 1968 updates, from microfilm on file at Ellis Library, UMC, Columbia.)



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Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri

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The façade has four bays, which are separated by flat brick piers. The office doorway is in the southernmost bay, and there is a large truck entrance in the bay next to it. Both of those openings are original and unchanged; the doors themselves are newer. The other two bays on the front of the building have large, open display windows, with plate glass panels and very low brick bulkheads. An identical display window is located on the front bay of the north side wall as well. All of the display windows appear to be original. The front bay of the south side wall contains evenly spaced rectangular window openings that are intact, and filled with newer glazing units.

The gabled roof on the front section has asphalt shingles, and there are three gabled dormers on each side of the roof. The dormers all had double-hung windows when new. Those on the front have since received window air-conditioner units and smaller new windows; the original window openings and trim are intact, however, and the other portions of the dormers are unchanged. One rear dormer retains an early wood multi-light window. The dormers were sheathed with asphalt tab shingles when new, and they have similar shingles today. There are also windows in the side gable ends; those openings are intact, and filled with a mix of old and new materials, as well as two more air-conditioning units. Both side walls of the building also have tall square brick chimneys, set at irregular intervals. There are three on the north wall, and two on the south wall; those on the south are closer to the front of the building.

The low visibility of the rear ell belies the fact that it actually has a larger footprint than does the gabled front section. The rear ell has the same type of red bricks walls, and a flat roof sheltered by low parapet walls. It is "L" shaped; the very back portion extends all the way across the lot. (See Figure Two, First Floor Plan.) That wider rear section appears to be original, but it could be a very early addition. There are no obvious breaks in the brick work of the north side wall between the two sections, and all construction materials are very close to those used elsewhere on the building. The side walls of the ell feature large window openings, with early or original steel-framed factory windows.

The back wall of the building has brick only on the upper section; the lower part of the wall is of rough poured concrete. A row of small, widely placed windows are set high into the back wall. Three of the six retain early or original metal-framed awning windows. The poured concrete part of the back wall extends north, past the building edge, to shelter a small covered loading dock that is located at the very northeast corner of the building.



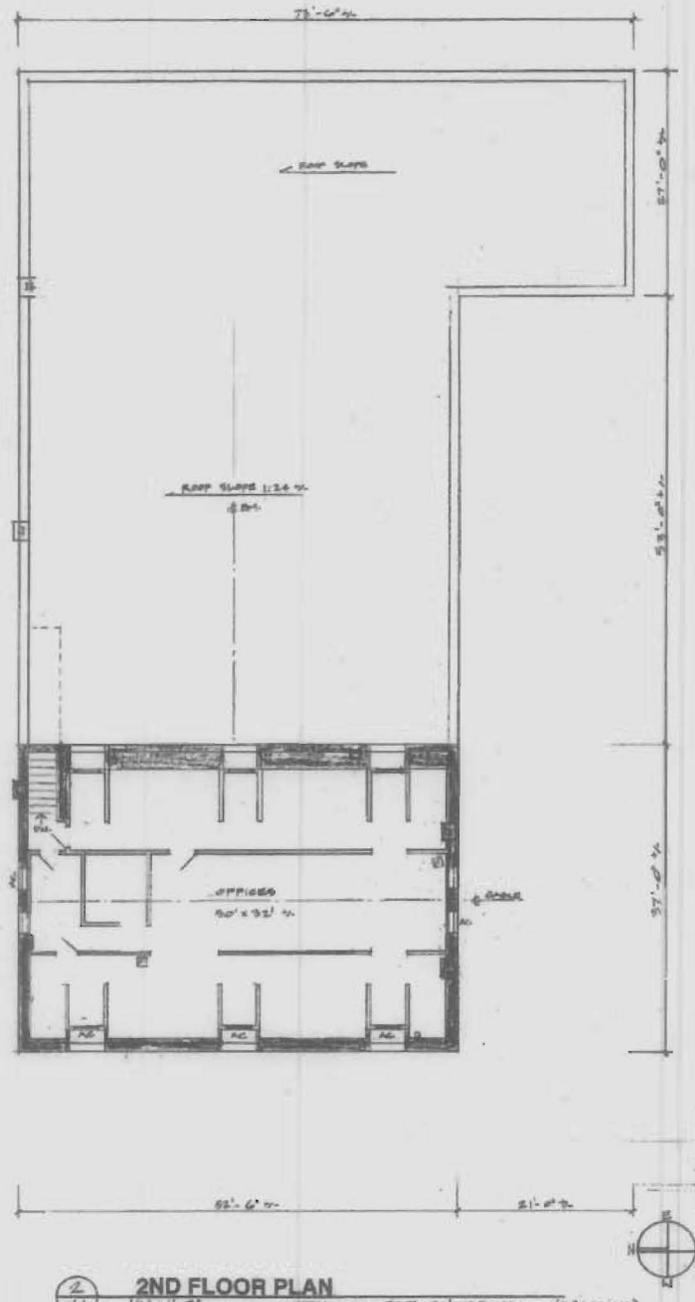
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**Coca-Cola Bottling Company Building  
Boone County, Missouri**  
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Figure Three. Second Floor Plan. Drawn by Brian J. Pape, Architect.  
North is left.



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The interior of the building is largely open, with minimal interior partitions or architectural detailing. The front door opens to two small offices, and there is a small garage/delivery area behind the front truck door. The rest of the ground floor, which has housed a printing company since the 1960s, is open. The floors are poured concrete and the walls are painted brick. An early or original set of wooden stairs located on the north wall leads up to the small second floor. The stairs have a simple wood balustrade and handrail with square newel posts. The second floor, which is tucked beneath the sloped front gable roof, contains small offices. Several of the office walls have plastered walls and beadboard wainscoting that appear to be early or original.

The building today is in good condition, and looks very much as it did during the period of significance. There have been no additions or other changes of note to the historic form and patterns of fenestration, and an impressive amount of original fabric remains in place. The interior has housed light industrial functions since the day the bottling plant opened, and it, too, is highly intact.

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**Coca-Cola Bottling Company Building  
Boone County, Missouri  
Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri**

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**Summary:** The Coca-Cola Bottling Company Building, at 10 Hitt Street, in Columbia, Missouri, is significant under Criteria A and C, in the areas of Commerce and Architecture, with a local level of significance. The building was constructed in 1935 to house the Columbia Coca-Cola Bottling Company, and it continued in that function until 1966. The period of significance for the property thus runs from 1935 to 1955, the standard fifty year cut-off point. The Columbia Coca-Cola Bottling Company had its roots in one of the oldest bottling companies in the community, and the building on Hitt Street was used as a bottling plant longer than any other building in the downtown area. It is also the only surviving building in the commercial center to have been associated with the local Coca-Cola franchise. The building serves as an intact representative example of Property Type A. Commercial Buildings. It meets the registration requirements for that property type set forth in the Multiple Property Submission Cover Document "Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri," and falls under the historic contexts *In Every Way Far More Metropolitan than Her Sister Cities: Downtown Columbia, 1900-1955*, and *Log Stores to 'Capitoline Hill': Architectural Development in Downtown Columbia, 1821-1955*. The Coca-Cola Bottling Company Building provides a significant, intact link with Columbia's early commercial history.

**Elaboration:** Downtown Columbia has been the commercial center of the community since the town was created in 1821. From the 1820s into the 1950s, almost all commercial activities in Columbia were based in the central city. That long commercial history was documented in 2003 in the Multiple Property Submission Cover Document "Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri."<sup>1</sup> That history is still evident, as noted in the cover document: "Commercial buildings constitute the vast majority of the historic resources in the downtown area today; approximately 94% of all historic buildings in the area are commercial buildings. Commercial buildings in downtown Columbia were built and used for commercial functions during the period of significance. Uses include such things as retail, office, light manufacturing, travel related facilities, restaurants, and other business-related functions."<sup>2</sup>

Those early commercial ventures included the bottling and sales of carbonated beverages from a very early date. Downtown Columbia was home to soft drink bottling facilities as early as 1877, and early records show that a number of bottling works were

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<sup>1</sup> Debbie Sheals, "Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri," Multiple Property Submission Cover Document, on file with the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office, 2003. See that document for a discussion of the commercial history of Downtown Columbia.

<sup>2</sup> "Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri," a description of the Commercial Building Property Type, p. F-1.

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Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri**

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located downtown throughout the late 1800s and early 1900s. One of the earliest known soda bottling operations was located near the center of the commercial district, at the intersection of Ninth and Cherry Streets. A description of the building now at 29 S. Ninth Street noted the existence of a natural spring on the property and mentioned that "Frenchman Rene Butel opened a plant here where he bottled soda water, ginger ale, birch beer, champagne cider, and other soft drinks."<sup>3</sup>

Butel's first building was a modest frame structure which was replaced about 1892 by a two story brick building which was constructed for a local furniture company.<sup>4</sup> Sanborn maps show that a bottling works continued to operate out of the basement of the new building for at least another decade, however, after which a bottling works operated in a new location nearby. The bottling works was still located in the basement of the furniture store in 1902, but was gone by the time the next map was made in 1908. There was, however, an all-new building on a back lot of the same block that was labeled "ELMO BOTTLING WKS."<sup>5</sup> It is not clear how long Butel remained associated with the bottling works; neither he nor ELMO are listed in early Gazetteers or city directories.

The bottling works in the building on the back lot was still titled ELMO in the 1914 Sanborn, but by the time the 1917 city directory was published it was listed as the Columbia Bottling Works; they were the only bottling works listed in that directory. Business must have been good for that company, as they moved to a new location not long afterward. The 1925 directory shows that the Columbia Bottling Works had moved into a building a few blocks away, at 207-209 South Eighth Street. That directory also shows that the Columbia Bottling Works had significant new competition; there was an Orange Crush Bottling Works and a Coca-Cola Bottling Company, both of which were also located in the downtown area.

The Columbia Bottling Works appears to have purchased or been sold to the local Coca-Cola Bottling Company soon after that. Columbia Bottling Works, at 207-209 S. 8<sup>th</sup> is the only bottling works listed in the 1927 City directory, and the 1931 Directory also listed just one bottling works, at the same location. By 1931, however, it was being called the Coca-Cola Bottling Company, with C. R. McCallister listed as owner or manager.

The establishment of a Coca-Cola franchise in Columbia came at a time of great expansion for the Coca-Cola Company. The beverage Coca-Cola was invented in 1886, by Dr.

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<sup>3</sup> Mary Matthews, "Downtown Columbia: An Architectural Survey." (Inventory Form on File with the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office. Jefferson City, MO, 1979.)

<sup>4</sup> That building, the Ballenger Building, 29 S. Ninth Street, was listed in the Register 1/21/2004.

<sup>5</sup> Sanborn maps of Block 14, Original Town of Columbia, 1882-1968. The lot was at the back of 13 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street.

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Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri**

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John Stith Pemberton, a pharmacist in Atlanta, Georgia.<sup>6</sup> Pemberton's invention came in the form of a flavored syrup, which soda fountains mixed with soda water to create the now-famous beverage. Pemberton's partner and bookkeeper, Frank Robinson, is credited with the name "Coca-Cola," and with the design of the distinctive script logo that remains in use today. That logo was patented in 1893. (See Figure Four.)

Figure Four. Coca-Cola Logo, from  
[www2.coca-cola.com](http://www2.coca-cola.com).



Pemberton and Robinson gradually sold off shares in the company, and shortly before his death in 1888, Pemberton sold his remaining shares to Atlanta businessman Asa G. Chandler. Chandler soon acquired all other shares of the company, and under his leadership, Coca-Cola developed national prominence. By 1895, he was able to report to shareholders that "Coca-Cola is now drunk in every state and territory in the United States."<sup>7</sup>

The growing popularity of Coca-Cola as a soda fountain offering led to the practice of bottling the beverage. In 1894, Joseph A. Biedenharm of Vicksburg, Mississippi installed bottling machinery in the back of his soda fountain and bottled the beverage for local distribution; he was the first bottler of Coca-Cola. Within a few years, the Coca-Cola Company had awarded bottling rights to Benjamin Thomas and Joseph Whitehead, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, and they opened the first exclusive Coca-Cola bottling plant in the United States in 1899.<sup>8</sup>

Bottled Coca-Cola proved to be quite popular, and by the late 1910s there were more than 1,000 Coca-Cola bottling plants in the United States, 95% of which were locally owned and operated. It was also during that time period that leadership of the Coca-Cola Company passed to the hands of Robert W. Woodruff, and he soon began working with bottlers to establish quality standards for the bottling process. Packaging innovations of the period included the adoption of the now-patented contour bottle, and the use of the six-bottle carton, a Coca-Cola company innovation that was an immediate hit. By the end of the 1920s, bottle sales of Coca-Cola exceeded fountain sales, and locally owned bottling plants could be found

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<sup>6</sup> Coca-Cola Company history is all from "The Chronicle of Coca-Cola," Coca-Cola Company Website, <http://www2.coca-cola.com/heritage.html>, August 2, 2005.

<sup>7</sup> "The Chronicle of Coca-Cola; The Chandler Era", p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

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Boone County, Missouri  
Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri**

all over the United States, as well as overseas.<sup>9</sup>

In 1932, the Columbia Coca-Cola Bottling Company was purchased by Ed Roberson, who had just moved to the community from Newport, Arkansas. Roberson was no stranger to the business; his father had owned Coca Cola franchises in Missouri and Arkansas.<sup>10</sup> Roberson's Columbia investment apparently flourished. He built the Hitt Street building for it just three years later, and remained at that location for the next three decades. A special business feature of the Columbia Missourian that was published in 1936 included Roberson and his new plant in a collection of drawings of local business persons and their products.

**Figure Five.** Drawing from the Columbia Missourian, July 21, 1936. (Clipping courtesy of Nancy Schoenbrun and Laura Lee Ellifrit, Roberson's daughters.)



<sup>9</sup> "The Chronicle of Coca Cola; A Man Named Woodruff," p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> Laura Lee Ellifrit, Telephone Interview with building owner Paul Sturtz, June 4, 2005. Ellifrit is the daughter of Ed Roberson. She also remembered that T. L. Bellingrath was an early partner in the business as well; his name is not in any directory listings or other written sources of the time.

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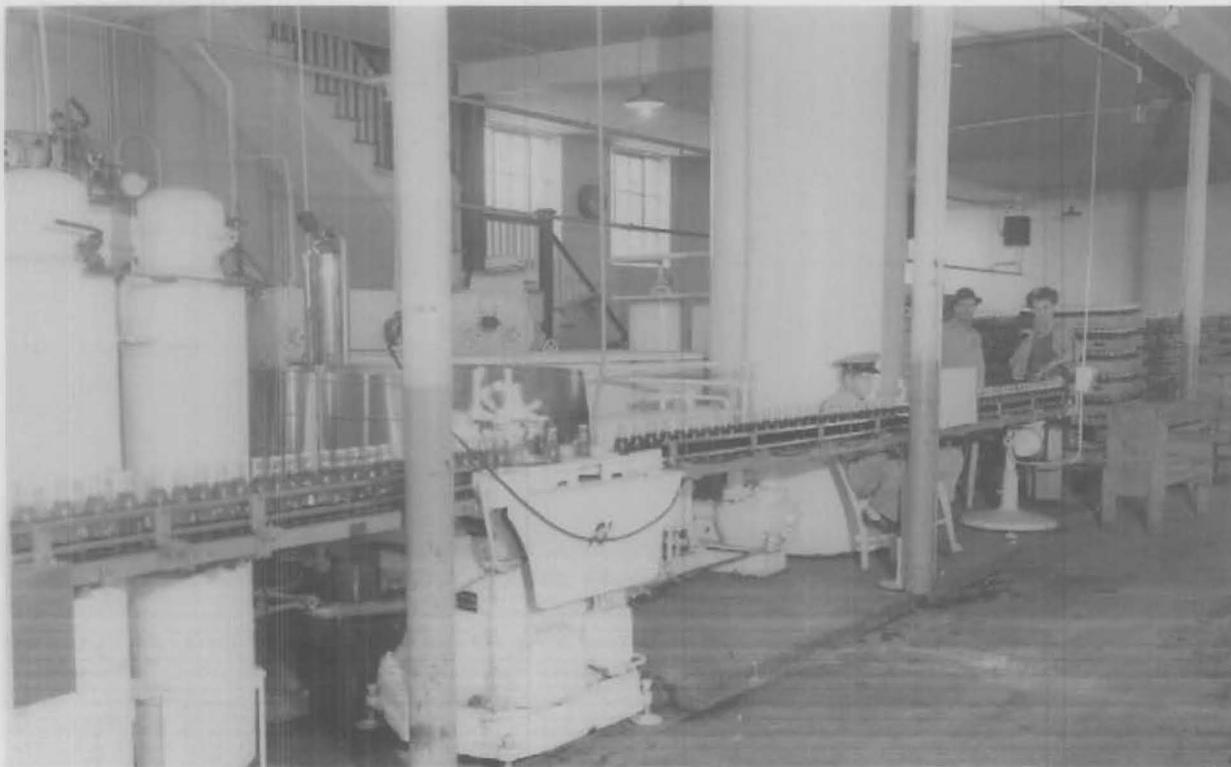
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**Coca-Cola Bottling Company Building  
Boone County, Missouri  
Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri**

The location of the new bottling works, at the edge of the business district, kept the business close to other commercial ventures, but no doubt provided easier truck access than the old location in the center of the district. Roberson's daughters both remember that the trucks used the front truck door to drive right into the bottling facility to be loaded and unloaded. In addition to the truck drive, the ground floor housed the "Filler Room" where the bottles were filled with the finished product. The second floor contained large stainless steel tanks for syrup, which was piped down to the Filler Room as needed.<sup>11</sup>

Figure Six. Interior view of the plant, from the collection of Laura Lee Ellifrit.



<sup>11</sup> Laura Lee Ellifrit, Interview with Paul Sturtz.

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The location may have also influenced the form of the building. When the new bottling plant was built, many of the properties on Hitt Street were still residential, and the residential form and Colonial Revival styling of the bottling works would have been sympathetic to its surroundings. (See Figure Seven.) Daughter Laura Lee Ellifrit noted that her parents chose to use dormers on the front of the building so that the building would not look “too commercial.”<sup>12</sup>

The use of residential design characteristics, although unusual for commercial buildings in the downtown area, was not unheard-of. As noted in the Multiple Property Submission Cover Document, a few of the commercial buildings built in the 1920s and 1930s “utilized ornamental motifs which had more residential associations.”<sup>13</sup> The gabled roof and dormers of the Hitt Street plant, combined with simple Colonial Revival stylistic elements, such as quoins and a corbelled cornice, give the building a decidedly residential appearance. From the street, in fact, it looks much like a Cape Cod cottage, a house type, which was at the height of its popularity when the Hitt Street plant was built.

The Colonial Revival style is one of the most enduring residential styles seen in the United States. Colonial Revival styling first came into use for houses in the late 1880s, and it has continued to be popular in one form or another into the present time.<sup>14</sup> The use of that style for a one or one and one-half story house, however, was relatively new when the Coca-Cola building was constructed. It is noted in the Field Guide to American Houses, that one-story Colonial Revival houses “are generally Cape Cod cottages” which “were built throughout the Colonial Revival era, but were most common in the 1920s and ‘40s.”<sup>15</sup> Another history of residential design noted the popularity of the style for middle-class housing in the 1920s and 30s: “it was the most important of the many revival styles that formed America’s huge new suburbs. Colonial Revival houses and small Cape Cods filled the catalogues of mass producers of house plans...”<sup>16</sup>

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12 Ellifrit, Laura Lee, Telephone Interview with Paul Sturtz, June 4, 2005.

13 “Historic Resources of Downtown , Columbia, MO,” p. E-46.

14 Lee and Virginia McAlester, Field Guide to American Houses, (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1986) pp. 321-324.

15 Ibid.

16 James C Massey and Shirley Maxwell, House Styles in America, (New York: Penguin Studio, 1996) pp. 185-186.

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**Figure Seven.** 1947 photo, showing the residential setting. From the collection of Laura Lee Ellifrit.



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**Coca-Cola Bottling Company Building  
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The Coca-Cola Bottling Company thrived under Roberson's ownership, and it operated at the Hitt Street location for three decades. It was in operation there longer than any other contemporary bottling works in the downtown area. A check of City directories shows that in 1936, the Coca-Cola Company was one of three bottling works in the community. The other two were the Smith Beverage Company, at 9<sup>th</sup> and Ash Streets, and the Whistle Vess Company, at 505 Rogers. By the time of the 1940 directory, however, the Smith Beverage Company was no longer listed, and Vess had changed locations. (Smith later reappears as the Pepsi Bottler, located on Highway 40.) It appears, therefore, that this building housed the oldest continually operated bottling company in downtown Columbia during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Roberson did not limit himself to running the bottling company, however. He was active in an impressive number of civic organizations in the community as well, and in 1953 was given the Distinguished Service Award and declared "Columbia's First Citizen, 1953" by the Columbia Cosmopolitan Club.<sup>17</sup> The award recognized years of active participation in numerous public service organizations, including the Columbia Charter Commission, the Boone County Fair Association, the Columbia School Board, the Columbia Chamber of Commerce, and the Kiwanis Club, to name just a few of many. Roberson was also credited with helping to found the Boy Scout movement in Columbia, and later, in the early 1970s, led a successful effort to bring the piano of noted ragtime musician John William "Blind" Boone back to Columbia.<sup>18</sup>

Ed Roberson and his family operated the Columbia Coca-Cola Bottling Company at the Hitt Street location for just over 30 years. Roberson headed the company, and his wife, Florence, served as the company secretary treasurer, and worked at the bottling plant. Later, his daughter Laura Lee also worked there. By the mid-1960s, the bottling plant had outgrown the 1930s building, and Roberson moved the bottling operations to a building near the edge of town in 1966. The Hitt Street building became home to E. S. Brown Printing Company, which later became Kelly Press, which has been in business at the site ever since. (The printing company is planning to move soon.)

The bottling company building today looks very much as it did when it opened for business in 1935. It is highly intact and in good condition, and it provides a significant example of Property Type A. Commercial Buildings," as discussed in "Historic Resources of Downtown Columbia, Missouri."

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<sup>17</sup> Columbia Cosmopolitan Association, "Columbia's First Citizen 1953," (Distinguished Service Award Program, February, 1953. From the collection of Laura Lee Ellifrit, Columbia, MO.)

<sup>18</sup> "Blind Boone's Piano: A Bit of History Returns." Columbia Daily Tribune. October 10, 1971, and "Cosmopolitan Club Names Ed Roberson for Annual Distinguished Service Award." (Undated clipping in the collection of Laura Lee Ellifrit.)

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### Chronology

1877, ca. Frenchman Renee Butel opens a bottling works at the corner of Ninth and Cherry Streets in Columbia. Sanborn maps show that a bottling works was in operation on that block, in two different locations, from at least 1895-1914.

1886 Coca-Cola invented by Dr. John Stith Pemberton.

1899 Coca-Cola awards bottling rights to investors for the first time.

1909 Directory, no business listings for bottling works.

1914 Sanborn shows ELMO Bottling works behind 13 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street.

1917 City Directory lists Columbia Bottling Works at the rear of 13 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.

1924, ca. Coca-Cola Distributorship established in Columbia.

1925 Directory, all bottling works in town:

Coca-Cola Bottling Company at 19 S. 8<sup>th</sup> Street

Columbia Bottling Works, 207-209 S. 8<sup>th</sup>

Orange Crush Bottling Works, 108 N. 8<sup>th</sup> St.

1927-28 Directory

No listing for Coca-Cola

Columbia Bottling Works, 207-209 S. 8<sup>th</sup> is the only bottling works listed.

1930-31 Directory- still just one bottling works listed.

“Coca-Cola Bottling Company, 207-209 S. 8<sup>th</sup> (C. R. McCallister)”

1932 Ed Roberson buys the Coca-Cola Bottling Company on S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.

1932-33 Directory

“Coca-Cola Bottling Company, 207-209 S. 8<sup>th</sup> (Ed Roberson, pres.)”

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1935 Ed Roberson builds the current building, to house the Columbia Coca-Cola Bottling Company. Telephone directories show that in the winter of 1935 both the Hitt and 8<sup>th</sup> Street addresses were listed, and by June of 1936, only the Hitt Street plant was in use.

1936 Directory

The Coca-Cola bottling Company is one of three bottling works in operation in town.

**Columbia Coca-Cola Bottling Company, 10 Hitt St.**

Smith Beverage Company, 9<sup>th</sup> and Ash Streets

Whistle Vess Company, 505 Rogers

1940 Directory includes management/ownership information about the business.

Ed Roberson, president

Mrs. John R. Cobb, vice-president

Mrs. Florence Roberson, secy-treas. (She was Ed Roberson's wife.)

1947 A total of four bottling works were listed in Columbia, two were downtown and two were on Highway 40.

1953 Ed Roberson was given the Distinguished Service Award and declared "Columbia's First Citizen, 1953" by the Columbia Cosmopolitan Club. The award recognized years of active participation in numerous public service organizations.

1966 Roberson moves the Coca-Cola bottling company to 1601 Highway 63 South. The E. S. Brown Printing Equipment Company moves into the Hitt Street building. That business later became Kelly Press, which still occupies the property today.

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National Park Service**

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Columbia Cosmopolitan Association. “Columbia’s First Citizen 1953,” Distinguished Service Award Program, February, 1953. (From the collection of Laura Lee Ellifrit, Columbia, MO.)

Columbia Missourian, July 21, 1936. (Untitled clipping from the collection of Nancy Schoenbrun, Columbia, MO.)

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“Blind Boone’s Piano: A Bit of History Returns.” Columbia Daily Tribune. October 10, 1971,

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

A part of Eleven (11) Acre Lot Number Twenty-five (25) and a part of the Southwest Quarter (SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ) of Section Seven (7), in Township Forty-eight (48) North of Range Twelve (12) West of the Fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) Principal Meridian, in the City of Columbia, Boone County, Missouri, more particularly described as follows, to-wit: Beginning at the Northwest corner of Lot Number One (1) in Samuel's First Addition to the Town (now City) of Columbia; thence North along the East line of Hitt Street, ninety-six and six-tenths (96.6) feet to an iron post on the East line of said Street; thence East one hundred thirty-two (132) feet; thence South ninety-six and six-tenths (96.6) feet; thence West one hundred thirty-two (132) feet to the point of beginning.

**Boundary Justification**

The current boundaries encompass all of the land currently and historically associated with the building.

**Photographs**

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Coca-Cola Bottling Company Building  
10 Hitt Street, Columbia  
Boone County, MO  
Debbie Sheals  
August 2, 2005  
Negatives on file with Debbie Sheals 29 S. Ninth St., Columbia, MO 65201

**List of Photographs**

See photo key for description of camera angle.

1. Façade, west elevation.
2. Streetscape, looking north on Hitt Street.
3. Front section, southwest corner.
4. Front, with rear ell.
5. Northwest corner.
6. North elevation.
7. Back, east elevation
8. Entrance detail
9. Upper floor, front section, looking south.
10. Ground floor, looking west.
11. Ground floor, looking southeast, from the stairs.
12. Windows, north wall, by the stairs.

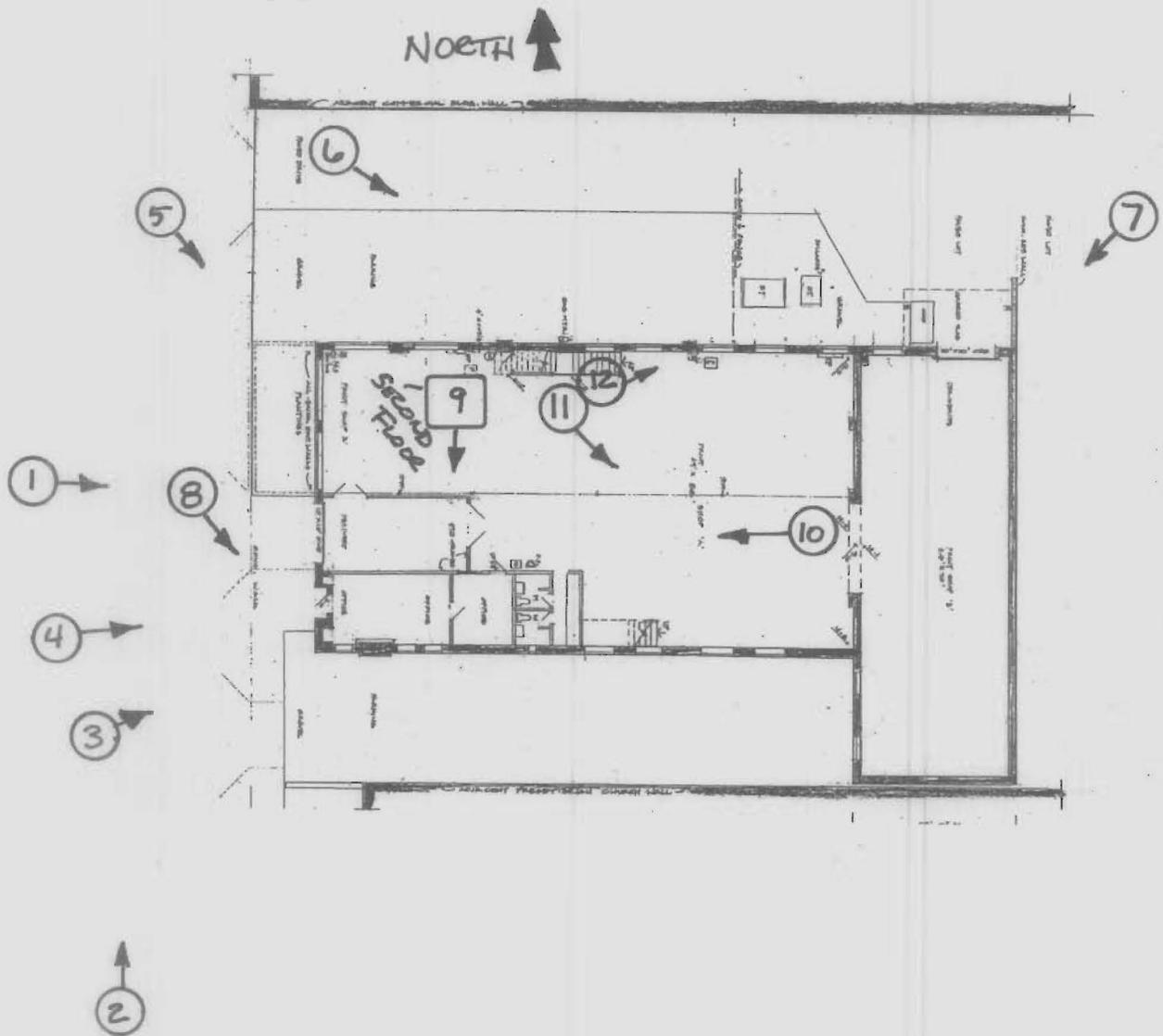
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Coca-Cola Bottling Company Building  
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Photo Key



Coca-Cola  
Bottling Company  
Building

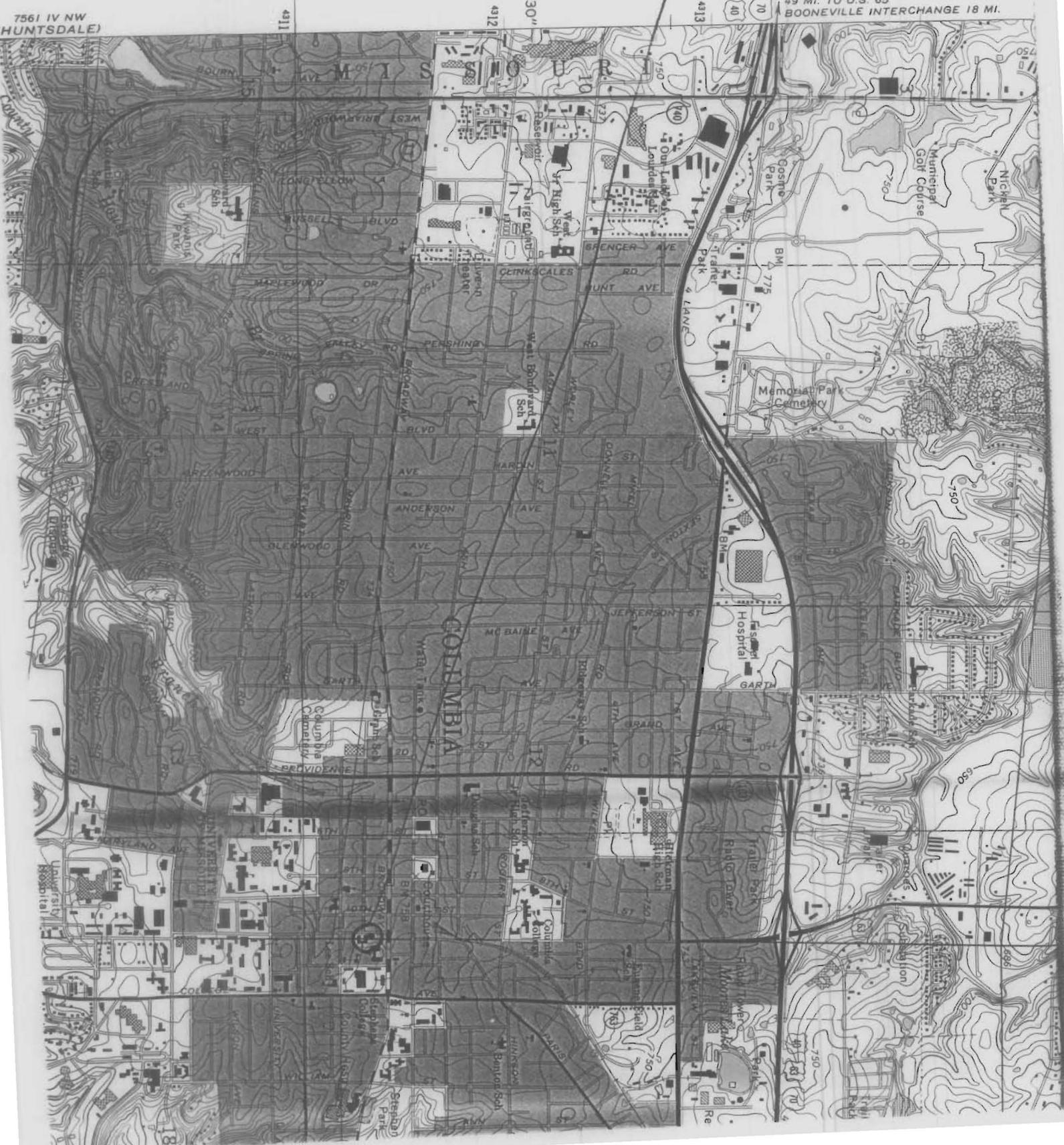
10 H.H. St

Columbia  
Boone County,  
MO

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4311320

49 MI. TO U.S. 65  
BOONEVILLE INTERCHANGE 18 MI.

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