United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1. Name of Property  Squibb, E.R. & Sons Building
    historic name  E.R. Squibb & Sons Building
    other names/site number  A.B. Dick Company Building

2. Location
    street & number  2500 West Pennway
    city or to  Kansas City
    state Missouri code MO county Jackson code 095
    zip code 64108

3. State/Federal Agency Certification
    As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [ ] 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 [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [ ] locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ].)

   Mark Miles /Deputy SHPO
   Oct 15, 2010
   Signature of certifying official/Title

   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

   State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

   I hereby certify that the property is:  
   [ ] 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 see continuation sheet [ ].

   Signature of the Keeper
   Date
**Squibb, E.R. & Sons Building**

**Name of Property**

**Jackson County, Missouri**

**County and State**

### 5. Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership of Property</th>
<th>Category of Property</th>
<th>Number of Resources within Property</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[x] private</td>
<td>[x] building(s)</td>
<td>1 = building 0 = nonbuilding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] public-local</td>
<td>[ ] district</td>
<td>0 = sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] public-state</td>
<td>[ ] site</td>
<td>0 = structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>[ ] structure</td>
<td>0 = objects</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ ] object</td>
<td>1 = total</td>
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</table>

**Name of related multiple property listing.**

"Railroad Related Historic Commercial and Industrial Resources in Kansas City, Missouri"

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

-0-

### 6. Function or Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic Function</th>
<th>Current Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse distribution</td>
<td>VACANT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**

MODERN MOVEMENT

**Materials**

- foundation: STONE/Limestone
- walls: BRICK
- roof: COMPOSITE
- other: Concrete

See continuation sheet [x].

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

See continuation sheet [x].
USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Squibb, E.R & Sons Building  
Name of Property  
Jackson County, Missouri  
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

[X] 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

[X] 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.

Areas of Significance

COMMERCIAL

ARCHITECTURE

Periods of Significance: 1953-54

Significant Dates: 1953-54

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Keyser, Charles E., Architect

Morris Hoffman Contracting Company, Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Primary location of additional data:

[x] State Historic Preservation Office

[ ] Other State Agency

[ ] Federal Agency

[ ] Local Government

[ ] University

[ ] Other:

Name of repository
USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

E.R. Squibb & Sons Building

Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Less than an acre

UTM References

A. Zone 15 Easting 362310 Northing 4327100
B. Zone Easting Northing

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 Sally Fullerton Schwenk, Historian

Organization Sally Schwenk Associates, Inc date December 20, 2009

street & number 112 West 9th Street, Suite 510 telephone 816-221-2672

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64105

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 FPO for any additional items)

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

name F&O RE LLC Contact: David Brinkerhoff

street & number 1257 W 57th Street telephone 816-918-4524

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64113

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.
SUMMARY DESCRIPTION STATEMENT

The E. R. Squibb \\& Sons Building, erected in 1953-54 at 2500 West Pennway is on the southwest edge of the historic Union Station Crossroad railroad freight area. (See Figure 1) The building site is at the southwest corner of West 25th Street and West Pennway and the building’s primary east facade faces West Pennway. A large paved parking and loading area covers the remainder of the lot. (See Figure 2) The One-Part Commercial Block building is a post-World War II commercial adaptation of the Modern Movement style which conveys an overall horizontal effect typical of the style subtype through the use of contrasting bands of the limestone foundation and the buff and red brick used to face the building walls on the elevations facing 25th Street and West Pennway. The uniform placement of horizontal double and triple windows featuring horizontal muntins creates a ribbon effect on these two elevations that also reflects the influences of Modern Movement designs which reference the International style, particularly in the early post-World War II period. Other than these wall treatments and the primary entrance, the building lacks any additional architectural ornament or adornment. A slightly projecting stacked brickwork entrance surround that encapsulates the aluminum frame entrance system is the only visual cue denoting the location of the primary façade. The one-story 146 x 137.6 foot concrete block and brick building has a welded steel frame and a flat built-up composition roof. The rear elevation of the building features loading doors and a long dock sheltered by a metal awning. The front entrance opens onto the original hallway which runs from front to back of building. To the south of the entrance is the original “front office” space. The remainder of the building is divided into modern office and administrative spaces and sections of the original open warehouse space.

ELABORATION

PROPERTY TYPE

The E.R. Squibb \\& Sons Building is a “Commercial Distribution Offices and Warehouses” property subtype identified in Section F/Page 2 of the Multiple Property Documentation Form, “Railroad Related

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1 City of Kansas City, Missouri Building Permit # 17941, 28 July 1953. City of Kansas City Planning and development, Landmarks Commission. City Hall. Kansas City, Missouri.
Historic Commercial and Industrial Resources in Kansas City, Missouri.” Like other buildings of the subtype, its physical location is near railroad shipping facilities that are part of the Crossroads Area identified in the MPDF. The property subtype includes buildings, such as the E.R. Squibb & Sons Building, erected and designed to serve as district headquarters for a particular corporation and to store and distribute the company’s products. The plan of this property type incorporated offices and storage areas and, sometimes, showrooms. The E.R. Squibb & Sons Building is like many examples of this sub-type, particularly those built beginning in the period after W.W.I. and continuing after World War II, that were relatively small buildings that resembled office buildings, usually no more than two stories in height. As noted in the MPDF, buildings in this sub-type were often architect designed and almost always incorporated popular academic “high style” architectural treatments. Even those with more restrained designs featured more decorative styling than manufacturing and warehouse property sub-types. Whatever the style or treatment, because they often served as regional or corporate headquarters, the entrances of these buildings are accentuated and different fenestration patterns often delineate office space on the lower floors from storage and processing areas. The Modern Movement design of the E.R. Squibb & Sons Building with its restrained emphasis on horizontality that was a distinguishing characteristic of the style, and its modest but accentuated entrance and different fenestration as well as loading docks which distinguished between the office and storage and distribution functions of the building meet all of the criteria for the sub-type established in the MPDF.

The property subtype is related to the larger property type “Industrial Facilities and Commercial Distribution Buildings” documented in the MPDF. Like the sup-type, distinguishing characteristics of the general property type reflected in the E.R. Squibb & Sons Building is the simple form and restrained decorative and ornamental treatments. Nevertheless, the post-World War II E.R. Squibb & Sons Building’s Modern Movement design is typical of the property type, which utilized and adapted many of the popular commercial “high style” architectural treatments of the era in which they were built. All such facilities of the property type have loading docks for boxcars and/or trucks depending on their period of construction as does the E.R. Squibb & Sons Building. Other typical features of the building and its property type include a flat roof and fire-proof masonry construction reflecting the latest in fireproof construction for the period in which it was built, such as brick, steel framing, and reinforced concrete commonly used beginning in the 1920s.
LOCATION AND SETTING

The building is located to the east of Interstate 35, and about four blocks south of the Kansas City Terminal Railway Company (KCTR) main tracks and the 1913 Union Station freight and passenger depot to the southeast. [Figure 1] The building is on the southwest edge of the Crossroads Area, a freight district identified in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) "Railroad Related Historic Commercial and Industrial Resources in Kansas City, Missouri" which is roughly bounded by Broadway on the west, Grand Avenue on the east, 15th Street (Truman Road) on the north, and the railroad tracks serving the Union Station on the south including access to the alignment of the KCTR tracks south of 22nd Street.  

The primary façade faces east. (Photograph # 1 AND 2) A fenced parking lot and a large one- and two-story commercial distribution complex originally built for the Coca Cola Company is to the south. Across West Pennway is the massive new six-story Internal Revenue Service complex. To the north directly across West 25th Street is a two level parking structure and open ground providing storage for pallets and construction materials. Directly to the west of the back lot line is the elevated viaduct for the Southwest Trafficway. The viaduct curves to the east at 22nd Street and railroad spurs and streets run under the viaduct. [Figure 2]

In front of the West Pennway facade, a wide concrete sidewalk and a narrow grass verge separate the sidewalk from the curb. (Photograph # 3) A narrow concrete sidewalk runs along West 25th Street abutting the north elevation. (Photograph # 8) An uncoursed, roughly square ashlar limestone wall, with a skim coat of concrete on the top, runs from the rear of the building west to the rear lot line. (Photograph # 13) A grassy slope rises from the stone wall to a level fenced paved area used for parking and access to the loading docks. The paved area is surrounded by a chain link fence. (Photograph # 13)


4 Broadway merges with West Pennway near 22nd Street.

5 U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Railroad Related Historic Commercial and Industrial Resources in Kansas City, Missouri. Section E, Page 7. See also Figure 3 of the MPDF.
EAST (PRIMARY) FAÇADE

This elevation has two distinct components that reference the change in grade of the street. On the northern (and lower) half of the façade, a band of red brick extends downward from the parapet which is capped by a flat concrete band to the top of the windows and the entrance. Below the red brick, a horizontal band of buff/yellow-brown brick faces the wall. (Photograph # 1, 2, 3) Yellow soldier brick window sills that project from the wall plane accentuate the simple fenestration of multi-paned horizontal, rectangular metal windows with horizontal muntins. (Photograph # 4, 5) The arrangement of double and triple windows on the same plane and equidistant from each other creates another horizontal band. (Photograph # 3) The stacked horizontal red brick masonry treatment that projects from the wall flanks the aluminum frame entrance that incorporates a door, side light and transom. (Photograph # 7) A flat concrete band course caps the red brick flanking the entrance and protrudes out over the door system to form an abbreviated roof. The windows and the entrance create six bays of this section of the façade.

The south portion of the façade’s roof line steps up and the brick coloration is reversed. Buff brick wall cladding rises from the window sills of a pair of narrow, horizontal asymmetrically placed windows and extends to the parapet cap; a band of red brick extends downward from the window’s red brick sills to the ground. (Photograph # 2, 6)

NORTH (SIDE) ELEVATION

The north elevation faces West 25th Street and has seven bays created by double and single metal windows with horizontal muntins (Photograph # 1, 8-13) Because of the ground slope, the uncoursed roughly squared ashlar limestone foundation is exposed and, with the buff and red brick bands, creates a tripartite effect that accentuates the horizontal effect of the wall design. (Photograph # 12)

WEST (REAR) ELEVATION

The rear (west) elevation incorporates the building’s original loading dock area. The elevation has seven bays (Photographs # 14, 16) created by a single metal door accessed by steps to a stoop porch (Photograph #15); four loading dock openings accessing an open loading area under a metal canopy with a standing seam metal soffit (Photographs # 17, 18); and, in the middle of the elevation, two horizontal rectangular single-pane windows located high in the wall between the downspouts. (Photograph # 16)
The limestone foundation runs below the entrance and the bottom of the concrete loading docks. Wood panel overhead garage doors have two rows of glazing in the upper two rows of the doors.

**SOUTH (SIDE) ELEVATION**

The south side of the building has two bays created by the brick facing. One consists of a ground-to-parapet wrap-around wall plane of buff brick. The other consists of an unbroken wall plane of red brick stretching west from the yellow brick panel. This secondary elevation features no fenestration or ornamentation. (Photograph # 2)

**INTERIOR SPACES AND FEATURES**

The interior space retains its original steel framing, CMU walls, concrete floors (Photograph # 20-22, 24), but a large back-of-office area used for warehouse and distribution functions has been subdivided into small work areas with gypsum board partitions. (Photograph # 23) The original entrance hall (Photograph # 25, 26) and front-of-house office space (Photograph # 27) remain, in particular, the offices along the north side of the building including the original bathroom (Photographs #28). The loading dock retains its original integrity of features and materials. (Photograph # 29-31).

**INTEGRITY**

**Setting**

The E.R. Squibb & Sons’ regional office and distribution warehouse building features an exterior which retains all of its original materials and design elements with no significant loss or alterations. The building and site retain their historic/architectural integrity of location and landscape features. The setting retains the historic Coca Cola complex to the south. The sidewalks, verges and curbs remain intact. The new IRS processing center across West Pennway to the east is clearly distinguished as a new feature in the setting and is set back from West Pennway and its large footprint and height restrictions does not disturb historic street configurations and minimally impacts the setting as a result of design guidelines established in the Section 106 process. Because of the railroad tracks under the 1950s Southwest Trafficway
viaduct, the setting retains important elements of the physical connection with adjacent railroad track spurs and historic street configuration which connect to the main truck line and freight facilities of the Union Station. These extant physical features provide important information about the shift from railroad to truck transport which occurred in the 1920s and continued through World War II and became reestablished for private commercial transport after the war.

**Structural and Exterior Features**

The building retains all of its original exterior materials and design features, including the original exterior brick, limestone, and concrete materials and features such as windows and doors and the loading docks and metal loading dock canopy; concrete floors, steel skeleton and CMU walls as well as some of the key front office and related public spaces and back-of-office warehouse spaces. It is not clear if the wood loading dock doors and the east entrance aluminum door system are the originals, but their materials and design are typical of products available in the early 1950s. The aluminum and the steel windows, as well as mortar joints and some concrete finishes show deterioration. Due to its retention of these character-defining design elements, the building continues to communicate a feeling of its time of construction and associations with post-World War II commerce and commercial architecture found in railroad freight areas. No alterations or additions have occurred to the building’s structure or exterior walls, roof or foundation. The recent enclosure of interior spaces to form offices occurs in the open secondary spaces once used for storage.
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The E. R. Squibb & Sons Building at 2500 West Pennway in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places Under Criteria A in the area of COMMERCE for its associations with the pattern of development of the wholesale “Commercial Distribution Offices and Warehouses” functional property sub-type found in Kansas City’s railroad freight areas. It is also eligible under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE for its illustration, through its distinctive architectural characteristics, of the pattern of features common to post-World War II Modern Movement commercial buildings; the evolution of the style; and the individuality and variations of features that occurred in the execution of the style for its particular functional property type. These areas of significance are documented in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) Railroad Related Historic Commercial and Industrial Resources in Kansas City, Missouri. The property, located at the southwest edge of the Crossroads Freight Area, has direct associations with the MPDF’s historic contexts “The Evolution of Kansas City Railroad Freight Industry, 1859 – 1970” and “Commercial and Industrial Businesses Located Near Rail Freight Facilities, 1865-1970.” Its functional property type, as a regional corporate distribution offices and storage building meets the MPDF registration requirements and integrity thresholds established in Section F of the MPDF. The regional headquarters and wholesale distribution building’s location and design has significant associations with the pattern of events related to the emergence of the motor truck as a dominant mode of freight transportation and with the provision of rail-to-road access within railroad freight areas. As such, the resource contributes to an understanding of how commercial and industrial railroad freight areas functioned historically and the technological evolution in transportation that occurred in these areas relating to railroads and trucking. The building also has significant associations with the historic context, “Commercial and Industrial Architecture in Kansas City’s Railroad Freight Districts 1869-1970” and meets the MPDF registration requirements and the architectural property types’ integrity thresholds established in Section F of the MPDF. Like other buildings of its architectural and functional sub-type erected in the post-World War II era, it was architect-designed. The design’s restrained emphasis on horizontality and lack of ornamentation is a distinguishing characteristic of the era’s Modern Movement design. Particularly those designs that referenced the evolution of the International style after World War II.

1 Ibid., Section F, Page 2.
2 The area, roughly bounded by Broadway on the west, Grand Avenue on the East, 15th Street (Truman Road) on the north and the railroad tracks serving the Union Station on the south, included access to an alignment of railroad tracks south of 22nd Street.
3 After review of the discussion of the revision of or waiving of registration requirements relating to dates of construction in the Elaboration Arguments for Significance) as required in Chapter IV “Documenting Properties within the Multiple Property Submissions” in National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form and at the request of the National Register program staff, the dates of contexts identified in the MPDF has been amended concurrent with this submission from 1869-1950 to 1869-1970.
4 Ibid.
Moreover, its modest but accentuated entrance and differentiated fenestration as well as loading docks, which subtly distinguish between the office and storage and distribution functions of the building, meet all of the criteria for the sub-type established in the MPDF. Although modest in size and design, the building is a pristine expression of the post-World War II, Modern Movement style, One-Part Commercial building form, which became established in railroad freight areas and industrial districts immediately after the end of World War II. The period of significance is 1953-1954, the dates of construction of the building and the initial occupation of the building by E.R. Squibb and Sons.

**ELABORATION**

**BUILDING HISTORY**

B. H. Zarr erected the 20,000 square foot, one-story building in 1953-54 for lease to E.R. Squibb & Sons. The building was designed to serve as one of Squibb’s regional office and warehouse/distribution centers. In a July 19, 1953 Kansas City (MO) Star article, Zarr announced the purchase of the 38,000 square foot site on West Pennway and the proposed building to be erected at that location which would house Squibb’s Kansas City distribution branch office, replacing the branch office at 2020 Grand Avenue. The Grand Avenue location of the first branch office was near the Grand Avenue freight depot on the east side of the Crossroads freight area where E.R. Squibb & Sons maintained offices as a supplier of medical and pharmaceutical products in Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Arkansas for over thirty-five years. The newspaper article noted that officials of the Squibb organization said the firm hoped to occupy the new building by January 1st.

**E.R. SQUIBB COMPANY**

Edward Robinson Squibb established the E.R. Squibb M.D. pharmaceutical laboratory in Brookline, New York, prior to the Civil War. During the war, the company became the source of medicines for the Union Army. At this time Squibb began a life-long pursuit to regulate the import, manufacture, and sale of drugs in the United States to ensure their purity and strength. By 1883, the company produced and distributed over 300 drugs to an international market. In 1892, Squibb established his two sons as partners in the company and changed the company name to E. R. Squibb & Sons. Six years later he retired. In 1905,

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5 Longstreth, 63-65
6 According to Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps, the new building to be erected at 2500 West Pennway replaced a shoe polish factory.
8 Ibid.
Squibb's sons sold the company to Lowell M. Palmer and Theodore Weicker, and the company became incorporated as E.R. Squibb & Sons. That same year, the corporation purchased land in New Brunswick, New Jersey, for establishment of an ether production plant. In 1938, the company established the Squibb Institute for Medical Research in New Brunswick, and contributed to the advancement of pharmaceuticals, particularly in the field of antibiotics. In particular, Squibb developed a process for the production of penicillin, and, by 1943, Squibb's factory in New Jersey was the largest penicillin production plant in the world. From 1945 through the 1960s, Squibb and the Bristol Meyers Company were significant participants in antibiotic development, enlarging their facilities and producing streptomycin, tetracycline and other discoveries. Squibb International incorporated in 1945 and expanded into South America and Europe, building manufacturing plants in Mexico, Italy, and Argentina. In 1946, Squibb received the Lasker Award, for its work in the development of an antibiotic used to treat tuberculosis.10

CHARLES E. KEYSER, ARCHITECT

It is unknown whether the developer or the Squibb officials chose local architect, Charles E. Keyser, to design the building at 2500 West Pennway. Keyser was a prominent architect practicing out of his offices in Kansas City, Kansas, from the mid-1920s through the late 1950s.11 At the time of the construction of the E.R. Squibb & Sons Building, Keyser was known for his Modern Movement designs of commercial wholesale and industrial buildings in the Fairfax, Kansas, industrial area and in Kansas City, Kansas. Earlier, during the late 1920s, he executed several of the largest commissions in Kansas City, Kansas, including the Kansas City Kansan newspaper plant and offices, the Washington Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church, as well as the City Hall Annex tailored to the earlier design by the local firm of Rose and Peters. His residential work included at least nine homes in the Westheight Manor subdivision in Kansas City, Kansas, between 1923 and 1931.12 During this period, his commercial and residential designs incorporated restrained academic revival styles.

In the early 1930s, the majority of Keyser's work changed to commercial commissions and his design idiom shifted to the Modern Movement's Moderne and International Style treatments. By mid-decade, he began designing factory and warehouse buildings in the Fairfax Industrial District for the Kansas City

11 August 2009.
11 Cydney Millstein. Architectural and Art Historical Research, “Westheight Manor Phase 3 Survey.” (Kansas City, MO: Kansas City Kansas City Planning Division, 1989), 87-88. According to Millstein, he is first listed in the Kansas City, Kansas city directory in 1925, although an earlier entry of his work appear in Western contractor in 1923. In 1957, he was listed with a partner, Billy G. Asby, for the first time. He is not listed in any local directories after this date either as an architect or as a resident.
12 Ibid.
Industrial Land Company, a subsidiary of the Union Pacific Railroad. Over the next six years, he completed at least eighteen projects in the Fairfax District, all of which utilized Modern Movement, International style designs. Perhaps the most notable example of his shift from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century revival style to Modern Movement designs was the Anchor Savings and Loan Building erected in Kansas City, Kansas, in 1937, which featured a blank wall of black Vitrolite punctuated by a single large glass block window trimmed with polished aluminum.¹³

COMMERCIAL AND TRANSPORTATION

Commercial Distribution Offices and Warehouses

As a commercial distribution office and warehouse building, the E.R. Squibb & Sons Building at 2500 West Pennway has significant associations with the wholesale commercial businesses that developed in Kansas City near railroad shipping facilities beginning in the late nineteenth century and continuing through the mid-twentieth century. They are buildings specifically designed to serve as district headquarters for a particular corporation and to store and distribute the company's products. They also served as offices and showrooms for manufacturer's representatives. The plan of this functional property type incorporated administrative offices and/or show rooms at the front of the building and storage areas and loading spaces in the rear, sides, and on upper floors. The earliest examples in Kansas City of this property sub-type were similar in outward appearance to large (four-to-eight-story) manufacturing buildings and warehouses erected in the late nineteenth century. However, many examples of this sub-type, especially those built after World War I, were small buildings that resembled office buildings. These buildings almost always incorporated popular academic “high style” architectural treatments. Even those with more restrained designs feature more decorative styling than manufacturing plants or warehouses. Whatever the style or treatment, because they often served as regional or corporate headquarters, the entrances of these buildings are accentuated and different fenestration patterns often delineate first floor office space from storage or loading areas.¹⁴

The Development of Transportation Facilities in Mid-Town, Kansas City.

The Commercial Distribution Offices and Warehouses property sub-type was an integral part of Kansas City’s freight districts. The history of the Crossroads freight area in Midtown Kansas City where the E.R. Squibb & Sons located both of their regional office and distribution centers has inextricable connections with the development of transportation within the city.

¹³ Ibid.
The completion of the Hannibal Bridge in 1869 linked Kansas City, Missouri, to national transportation and service corridors and spurred the city's industrial development, commercial expansion, and population growth. The new rail traffic drew people to the West along passenger lines, and freighting services offered both import and export trade opportunities. Connections to small rural communities to the west and large commercial centers in the northeast, south, and west established Kansas City as a national center for livestock trade, meatpacking, grain storage, and milling. Kansas City also emerged as a regional and a national center for wholesale distribution of manufactured and agricultural goods and products.

Despite a depression in 1893, Kansas City continued to prosper and, by 1900, the presence of almost 500 "jobbing" companies, dealing in everything from agricultural implements to dry goods and wholesale groceries to pharmaceuticals to hardware to clothing and jewelry, attested to Kansas City's place in national commerce. The communities serviced by these companies covered nearly half the land area of the United States, and their annual business totaled nearly 200 million dollars.

During this period, the Crossroads Area emerged as a commercial center serving rail-reliant commercial and industrial businesses. During the real estate boom in the 1880s, construction of the Grand Avenue Railway cable car line along Grand Avenue and Main Street linked commercial and residential districts between the river levee and the community of Westport near today's 40th Street and development mushroomed along this route. By 1888, railroad tracks passed through the 24th Street and Grand Avenue area where the Kansas City Belt Railroad operated a small freight and passenger depot near Grand Avenue. The same year, the Chicago-Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad Company erected a freight station north of their tracks on West 22nd Street. The convenience of these facilities prompted the initial industrial development of what became known as the Crossroads Area. A series of modest brick warehouse buildings with loading docks along railroad sidings appeared south of 20th street. Most had minimal architectural ornament -- patterned brickwork, sparse terra cotta ornamentation and, occasionally, Romanesque-inspired arched openings.

15 Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri. *Historic Resources Survey Plan of Kansas City.* (Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri, 1982), 100.
16 Ibid., 26-27.
18 Later demolished.
19 Sherry Piland, and Ellen J. Ugaccononi, 12.
These were the first of an enclave of rail-reliant commercial and industrial businesses that emerged as a commercial center in the early twentieth century, an area roughly bounded by 15th Street on the north, the Union Station and tracks on the south (at approximately 23rd Street), Broadway on the west, and Grand Avenue on the east. The announcement of plans in 1905-06 for a new Union Station stimulated new construction south of 20th Street near the concentration of warehouses and manufacturing facilities erected during the previous two decades. During this period the appearance of the surrounding area changed. The Union Station site, its grade and proximity to existing street systems, presented a number of practical challenges that resulted in substantial changes in topography and infrastructure. In all, the railroad constructed twenty-six viaducts and eleven subways.

While construction activities in the city slowed during World War I, the erection of new buildings between the close of the war and the start of the Great Depression matched that seen earlier in the century. Commercial and industrial facilities continued to be constructed on vacant lots in the Crossroads Area throughout the 1930s, 1940s and post-World War II period. While these buildings continued the tradition of simple masonry construction, the later buildings typically have modern, streamlined styling and are often clad with light colored brick.

Regional and National Wholesale Distribution: Shift from Rail to Road
The location of the E. R. Squibb and Sons first building at 2020 Grand Avenue just after the end of World War I, near the Grand Street Kansas City Terminal Railway Company depot, reflects the pharmaceutical company’s reliance on the railroad for distribution of its goods throughout the surrounding multi-state region. The 1954 relocation to the southwest edge of the Crossroads Area near both railroad sidings and arterial streets of the E.R. Squibb & Sons’ regional office and distribution building (designed with loading docks for truck transportation) reflects a continued reliance on rail services, but also the transition to the use of trucks for regional and inter- and intra-city distribution of pharmaceuticals. As such, the E.R. Squibb and Sons building reflected new buildings erected beginning in the 1920s that constitute a distinct phase in the evolution of commercial buildings associated with freighting services in Kansas City.

21 Ibid.
22 One of these viaducts encompassed the land at 2020 Grand Avenue and stimulated the construction of tall buildings with basements and loading docks opening onto the ground level rail spurs and formal pedestrian entrances opening onto the viaduct sidewalks.
Prior to this time during the last half of the nineteenth century railroads controlled inland transport of goods and services and wagons drawn by pack animals met the intermediate regional freighting needs not accessed by rail lines. It was not until after World War I when the advent of advanced transmissions and gear drives for internal combustion engines that motor trucks slowly began to compete with the railroad lines in hauling freight among city and industrial centers. During the first major trucking boom in the 1920s, trucking companies with multiple drivers and a fleet of large trucks with balloon tires and closed cabs began transporting commodities within and between cities. Although the motor carrier industry made great strides during the 1920s, railroads continued to provide the primary transportation for goods from point of manufacture to point of sale. Trucks were used for less than full-load shipments. Distribution centers and warehouses in railroad freight areas began to specialize in breaking down loads from box cars and transferring goods to trucks that could efficiently and economically reach smaller regional markets. As early as 1931, the motor truck industry, with its flexibility of movement and ability to undercut rail rates, began an intense competition with railroads and grew so successful that, in 1935, Congress passed the Motor Carrier Act, authorizing the Interstate Commerce Commission to regulate the trucking industry. The Act established freight-hauling rate regulations, limited the number of hours that truckers were allowed to drive, and oversaw trucking company’s range as well as the type of freight they could carry.

During World War II, the trucking industry benefitted further by defense contracts that encouraged large, heavy-duty truck vehicle production. As a result, new engine designs, as well as trucks built for longer distances, higher speeds and heavier loads emerged after the war. During the post-war period, trucking gained significant ground from the railroad industry. By 1950, the ratio of truck-to-train ton-miles was twenty percent, twice that of two years earlier. At this time, the plan for interregional highways augmented the shift from rail to road. The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1944, enacted to strengthen the national defense, authorized creation of a 40,000 mile paved, all-weather highway network connecting major metropolitan areas, industrial centers, and border points with major Canadian and Mexican routes.

The erection of the E. R. Squibb & Sons Building at 2500 West Pennway occurred during this transition in rail to truck freighting, particularly the shift to motor transport to serve inter- and regional intra-city freighting needs. After 1953, the railroads carried less than fifty percent of the total inter- and intra-city

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26 Ibid.
freight traffic as opposed to seventy-five percent in 1929. As a result of the changing freighting patterns, low density, high-rated merchandise such as pharmaceuticals, traveling on short, medium and long hauls represented the railroad’s initial and principal loss to motor carriers. The E.R. Squibb & Sons Building location near rail yards and spurs and designed to incorporate truck docks, reflected the breakdown from railroad boxcar to motor truck in the regional distribution of manufactured goods.

COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE IN THE CROSSROADS AREA

The architecture of the Crossroads Area is overwhelmingly commercial and industrial in character and represents a typical cross-section of commercial and industrial functional and architectural property types. Identified by their plan and form, the vast majority of these buildings feature little if any architectural styling. Reinforced concrete technology typically faced with a brick veneer developed in the early twentieth century supplemented the durable masonry construction of the nineteenth century. While massing distinguishes between smaller commercial enterprises and larger commercial and industrial warehouses and factories, both types of buildings share the use of simple, functional styling with minimal brick, stone or terracotta ornament. Railroad-related commercial property types included office buildings, wholesale distributorships (a combined sales office/storage function such as the E.R. Squibb & Sons Building), commercial warehouses as well as retail enterprises, banks, hotels and restaurants. Industrial property types included manufacturing, manufacturing/storage facilities, and industrial warehouses and ranged from small sheet metal fabricators to large chemical processors.

Design of commercial buildings present a greater variety of plan shapes and forms than the industrial buildings in the Crossroads Area. Architectural styling for even simple commercial buildings reflects the prevailing architectural styles of the time of construction. In the late-nineteenth century this included Victorian and Romanesque features. Early in the twentieth century, traditional classical motifs were common, and Chicago-style and Spanish Colonial and Moorish Revival features appeared. The colorful geometry of Art Deco and Moderne styling became prevalent in the second quarter of the twentieth century, while simple Modern Movement style designs dominated post-World War II commercial and industrial buildings found near railroad freight areas.

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31. Ibid.
32. Sally Schwenk and Elizabeth Rosin, 14-15.
33. Ibid.
There are a number of early-to-mid-twentieth century examples of the property type that share the same function as the E.R. Squibb and Sons Building and its neighbor, the Coca Cola distribution building in the southwestern part of the Crossroads Area that reflect the evolution of the Commercial Distribution Office and Warehouse Building, functional commercial sub-type. An updated survey conducted in 2000 of the Crossroad Area documents that throughout the 1950s, commercial and industrial facilities continued to be constructed on vacant lots. There is also a unique collection at the north side of the Crossroads Area of distribution office and warehouse buildings constructed after World War I and through the 1950s that reflect Art Deco, Moderne, and International Style designs associated with Modern Movement architecture. Some of these Modern Movement buildings are associated with the distribution of movie film. Those erected in the 1940s and 1950s are clustered on West 17th and 18th Streets between Broadway and Baltimore. They are one- and two-story buff brick buildings with a pronounced horizontal emphasis. Distinguishing characteristics are flat roofs, ribbon and horizontal windows, and a simple row or rows of projecting brickwork at the building cornice or as belt courses. Brickwork also emphasizes the entrances.

An appreciation of the E.R. Squibb & Sons' Building's local significance in architecture requires an understanding of the role of modern design after World War II when viewed within the context of the local evolution of post-war Modern Movement style architecture. Following the barren years in private construction due to the Great Depression and World War II, the revival of the Modern Movement in the United States can be traced to a number of factors. Underlying specific events was the fact that the dormant ideals of the Modern Movement, particularly the evolving International Style, resurfaced and exerted a powerful influence on architects, major corporations, and institutions. As the economy shifted from wartime to civilian production, there was also a pent-up desire to demolish decaying nineteenth and early twentieth century structures and erect new buildings that reflected the optimism of a new era. Contributing to this dynamic was the complexity of social, economic, and governmental institutions transitioning from a major war effort. Instead of nostalgia for the past or a retreat into romanticism, the approach to architectural designs was to continue the institutional methods that had so efficiently marshaled resources during the war. As a result, a "pragmatic utilitarianism" became the motivating factor in commercial and institutional architecture in the United States.

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34 Piland and Uguccioni, 14.
35 Terminology of the category and subcategory is based on architectural Classifications found in National Register Bulletin 164 How to Complete the National Registration Form.
36 Sally Schwenk and Elizabeth Rosin. Examples of post-World War II Modern Movement design occur at the northwest corner of 18th and Wyandotte, the northeast and southwest corners of west 17th Street; the northwest corner of 17th Street and Broadway, and along west 17th Street.;
New commercial and institutional construction in Kansas City in the decade following the end of World War II moved cautiously toward the modernism that was taking hold of urban centers nationwide. In the 1950s, construction of Modern Movement style commercial buildings generally occurred outside the Central Business District in such areas as freight and industrial districts, or in small commercial areas adjacent to new suburban development. The use of a simple treatment incorporating the tenets of the Modern Movement style for the E.R. Squibb & Son’s Building erected in 1953-54 is, with the exception of Charles E. Keyser’s other work across the state line in the Fairfax, Kansas industrial park, and the buildings along film row near West 17th Street at the north side of the Crossroads area, an early introduction of the style in railroad freight areas locally. As noted by architectural historian, George Ehrlich, there was no sweeping surge of innovation in post-World War II commercial architecture. The E.R. Squibb & Sons Building is typical of the “... cautious movement toward an increase in modernism in architecture” in Kansas City at this time. In fact, there were a few “high style” versions of the Modern Movement introduced to Kansas City’s built environment in the early 1950s. Of note were the International style designs for the Midwest Research Institute near the Country Club Plaza designed by the local architectural firm of Neville, Sharp & Simon; and the 1950 design by Los Angeles architect Welton Becket completed in 1955 as the headquarters building for Hallmark Cards in the Mid-town area. Whether a high style iconic corporate headquarters building of the early 1950s or a smaller commercial building erected in a railroad freight area at this time, these buildings share common Modern Movement stylistic characteristics, particularly the avoidance of symmetry balanced with the creation of regularity found in the post-war International Style subtype. Other distinguishing characteristics of the 1950s high-style Modern Movement buildings, with its pronounced horizontal emphasis was the use of different materials to create a polychrome effect achieved through the use of bands of windows and solid smooth panels and/or brick of different coloration. Also of note as a common treatment was the use of geometric brickwork and the eschewing of other ornament. Both the use of brick work and a polychrome treatment of bands of different colored brick and stone to create a horizontal emphasis can be found in the simple E.R. Squibb & Sons Building. This is somewhat unique in comparison with other similar examples of modest office/distribution buildings found in freight and industrial areas on both sides of the Missouri-Kansas state line. In these areas, buff colored brick solely dominates the wall cladding of post-World War II office and warehouse distribution buildings.

ARGUMENT FOR SIGNIFICANCE

39 Ibid.
40 Ibid., 125
41 Ibid., 121
42 Ibid., 119
Because of the retention of all of its significant features and materials, the E.R. Squibb & Sons Building conveys its associations with the “Commercial Distribution Offices and Warehouse Property” functional property sub-type established in Kansas City in the late nineteenth century and which re-emerged in the post-World War II period. The building’s design incorporates identified distinctive components of the Modern Movement style as applied to commercial buildings of this functional sub-type and clearly contains enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of the style as well as a specific method of construction found in the post-World War II period.

**Criterion A**

The property is locally significant under National Register Criterion A for significance in Commerce for its association with the pattern of commercial development of the wholesale distribution businesses in Kansas City. It is part of a unique body of property types located near freight lines, railroad depots and terminals which evolved as a result of Kansas City’s role as a national railroad hub. The building meets the criteria for the functional property type “Commercial Distribution Offices and Warehouses” in the MPDF *Railroad Related Historic Commercial and Industrial Resources in Kansas City, Missouri* that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The property type is a building designed to serve a district headquarters for a particular corporation and to store and distribute the company’s products. As in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the plan of the E.R. Squibb and Sons Building incorporated specific spaces for offices, storage areas and vehicular loading docks. As a post-World War II era building the E.R. Squibb & Sons Building property type reflects an important era in the evolution of wholesale distribution and warehousing businesses in Kansas City. In particular, the relocation of the company’s regional distribution center from the vicinity of a railroad freight depot at 20th and Grand to 2500 West Pennway, an area on the south and west edges of the Crossroads Area with easy access to both railroad tracks and arterial streets and highways servicing Western Missouri and Eastern Kansas reflects changes in the patterns of development in local shipping and transportation, in particular, the shift to trucks for inland freighting and interregional shipping that affected wholesale distribution businesses associated with Kansas City’s role as a leading railroad center in the nation. The building is one of a limited number of post-World War II examples of the functional property sub-type in the Crossroads Area and represents the final phase of the property sub-type in the evolution of industrial and commercial expansion relating to railroad freighting industry in Kansas City.

**Criterion C**

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The building is also significant for its association with commercial designs of wholesale office and distribution buildings in the post-World War II Modern Movement style. Its One-Part Commercial Block form reflects the simpler more restrained appearance dating from the post-World War II era. Its Modern Movement style treatment, as executed in the design of wholesale commercial buildings in Kansas City and throughout the nation, features designs of low, simple buildings composed of simple cubic forms and flat surfaces with little or no ornamentation and, while balanced and regular in appearance, avoids artificial symmetry. The design of these buildings often featured banded windows of metal and glass, the use of horizontal bands of colored brick and/or utilized rows of double and triple glass and aluminum windows to create a visual horizontality that is an important aspect of the International style. In addition to the utilization of these stylistic characteristics, the E. R. Squibb and Sons Building represents the use of new twentieth century technologies such as reinforced concrete, CMU, welded steel framing and aluminum window and door enclosures, which all came into common usage by the mid-twentieth century. As such, the property meets National Register criteria for significance for Architecture in the following areas: (1) for its restrained Modern Movement design, which embodies “distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction;” and 2), its reflection of “the individuality, variation of features, and evolution that occurs within the general class” of Modern Movement commercial buildings located in Kansas City’s freight districts.

45 Longstreth, 63-65.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


The Early Days of Trucking.” Available from [www.fhwa.dot.gov/interstate/freight.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/interstate/freight.htm); Internet; accessed 12 August 2009.


VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The North 150 feet of Lot 1, Block 6 except the south 75 feet of the north 150 feet of the west 74 feet of A.J. Lloyds Subdivision.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary for this resource corresponds to the original lot configuration purchased for the construction of the E.R. Squibb & Sons Building and on which it was constructed and with which it has been historically associated as documented by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map Sheet 148 for the period 1939 to 1957 and the City of Kansas City GIS mapping (http://www.kcmo.org/GIS)
FIGURE 1. Location

Squibb, E. R. & Sons Building
Jackson County, Missouri
Railroad Related Historic Commercial and Industrial Resources in Kansas City, Missouri
FIGURE 2: Historic Setting, 1957

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Continuation Sheet Page 24

Squibb, E.R. & Sons Building
Jackson County, Missouri
Railroad Related Historic Commercial and Industrial Resources in Kansas City, Missouri
Squibb E R & Sons Building
Jackson County, Missouri
Railroad Related Historic Commercial and
Industrial Resources in Kansas City, Missouri

FIGURE 3. Current Setting
PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION

Photographer: Brad Finch
F-Stop Photography
Kansas City, Missouri 64116

Date of Photographs: October 2009

Location of Original Negatives: Historic Preservation Services, LLC
323 West 8th Street, Suite 112
Kansas City, Missouri 64105

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## National Register of Historic Places

### Continuation Sheet

**Squibb, E.R. & Sons Building**  
Jackson County, Missouri  
Railroad Related Historic Commercial and Industrial Resources in Kansas City, Missouri

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FIGURE 4: Photographic Map & Camera Angles