

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER
LISTED

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

OCT 08 2009

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Helmert Manufacturing Company Building

other name/site number 103-3020-0062

2. Location

street & town 300 Santa Fe Street / 2500 South Second Street N/A not for publication

city or town Leavenworth N/A vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Leavenworth code 103 zip code 66048

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.)

Patrick Zollner 8-17-09
Signature of certifying official/Title Patrick Zollner/Deputy SHPO Date

Kansas State Historical Society
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:) _____

Helmets Manufacturing Company Building
Name of Property

Leavenworth County, KS
County and State

8. Description

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- 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
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

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

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1909

Significant Dates

1909

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

9. Major Bibliographical 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:

Leavenworth Public Library

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Helmets Manufacturing Company Building
Name of Property

Leavenworth County, KS
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 13 Acres

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/5 3/3/5/7/9/3 4/3/5/1/0/2/7
Zone Easting Northing

2 1/5 3/3/5/7/9/0 4/3/5/0/7/7/0
Zone Easting Northing

3 1/5 3/3/5/6/3/2 4/3/5/0/7/7/6
Zone Easting Northing

4 1/5 3/3/5/5/7/1 4/3/5/1/0/2/5
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Section 1 Township 9 Range 22 E, Southside Park Subdivision beginning in the southeast quarter.

Property Tax No. 052-101-01-0-40-04-056-00-0-01

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary for the historic property includes the parcel of land associated with the resource.

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Rosin, Principal, and Rachel Nugent, Associate

organization Rosin Preservation, LLC date December 2008

street & number 215 W. 18th Street telephone 816-472-4950

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64108

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

name/title Greenamyre Rentals Inc.

street & number 2500 South 2nd Street telephone 913-651-9717

city or town Leavenworth state KS zip code 66048

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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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Helmets Manufacturing Company Building
Leavenworth County, Kansas

SUMMARY

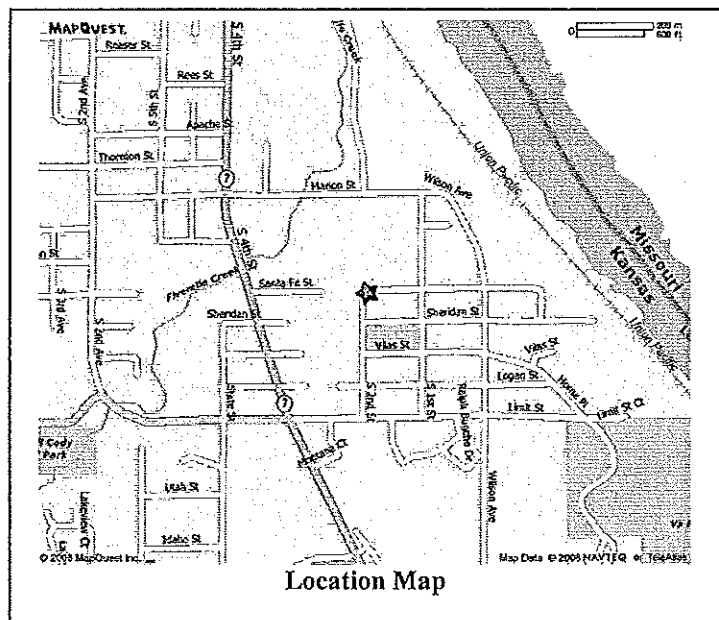
The Helmets Manufacturing Company Building occupies a large tract of land southeast of downtown Leavenworth, Leavenworth County, Kansas. The property includes two red brick buildings constructed in 1909. The main manufacturing structure is a U-shaped building with a traditional wood post-and-beam structural system. The primary, long narrow rectangular block has a shed roof. The north half is four stories tall, and the south half is three stories tall. Smaller one-story brick blocks extend toward the rear (east), perpendicular to the ends of the primary block. As the property evolved over the past century, the additions included several large shed structures on the rear elevation. Interior changes also reflect its evolving function. Temporary partitions were erected and office spaces were expanded into the open manufacturing floors. Corrugated fiberglass panels currently fill the window openings. The second building on the property is the coal house and engineering shop, located approximately 20 feet west of the main building. This two-story building has a gable roof with stepped parapets and fire walls. Despite the alterations to the main building, the imposing mass of the Helmets Manufacturing Company Building changed little. It clearly communicates its original use as a large-scale manufacturing facility constructed at the turn of the twentieth century.

ELABORATION

SETTING

The Helmets Manufacturing Company Building occupies the central portion of an irregular 13-acre lot southeast of the downtown industrial district. The formal address of the property is 2500 South 2nd Street, but city directories historically described the address of the Helmets Manufacturing Company as 3rd Street and Santa Fe Street. Third Street does not actually contact the west line of the property, but the building is oriented north-south as though it did.

The massive industrial facility is nestled in a heavily wooded area that is barely visible from the main thoroughfares, 4th Street to the west and Limit Street to the south. The lot interrupts Sheridan Street and Santa Fe Street, which terminate at both the east and west property lines. Driveways extend onto the property from Santa Fe Street on the west and from Sheridan Street on the east. Second Street follows the



Location Map

Second Street follows the

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Helmerts Manufacturing Company Building
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east property line until it intersects Santa Fe Street, at which point it stops. The lots surrounding the Helmerts Manufacturing Company property contain small houses or are vacant and wooded. The exception is one other industrial facility located directly north of the nominated property. A steep bluff along the property line separates the two complexes.

The Helmerts Manufacturing Company lot slopes gradually upward to the east on the main approach from the west end of Santa Fe Street. The grade continues to rise across the property so that the entry level on the east elevation is in the second story of the building, while the ground level on the west elevation is in the first story. Wood and stone retaining walls line the base of the wooded bluffs that dominate the northeast corner of the lot as one approaches the east property line. The ground surrounding the building is a patchwork of concrete and asphalt paving, gravel driveways, and grass. The areas used regularly are paved while those used less often, such as on the north side of the main building, are gravel. Two railroad spurs previously serviced the property. One ran along the west elevation of the building, and one ran adjacent to the east end of the rear wings. Non-historic paving has covered both sets of tracks.

The coal house and engineering shop stands about twenty feet west of the manufacturing building, centered on the west elevation of Section A. The west railroad spur ran between the main building and the coal house.

MAIN MANUFACTURING BUILDING

Exterior

The main building is composed of several large, rectangular masses that create a well-defined industrial facility (*see plan*). The largest portion of the building is the long and narrow, four-story brick section (A) at the north end of the main block. The south end of this mass steps down to a three-story height (B). Roughly at the midpoint of the three-story section, the brick block bends to the southeast creating an obtuse angle with the main axis of the building (C). Sections B and C have shed roofs. A one-story, flat-roof addition (D) covers roughly the north half of the east elevation of Section A. Two, large single-story flat-roof blocks (E & F) extend east from this addition. Construction materials for Sections D – F include brick, wood, metal siding, and concrete block. Two, two-story flat-roof brick blocks (G & H) project from the east elevation of Sections B and C. The final component of the building (I) is a small, flat-roof block composed of open metal sheds and enclosed concrete block structures, that projects from the east elevation of Section G. Review of available Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps indicates that Sections A, B, C, and E were constructed in 1909; Sections D and F were added between 1924 and 1949; and Sections G, H and I were added after 1949.¹

¹ Sanborn Maps are available for the years 1913, 1924 and 1949. Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, Ltd, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Leavenworth, Kansas*, (New York: Sanborn Map Company), 1913, Sheet 28, Database online, <http://sanborn.umi.com.proxy.mcpl.lib.mo.us/ks/3010/dateid-000005.htm?CCSI=45n>; 1924, Sheet 26, Database online, <http://sanborn.umi.com.proxy.mcpl.lib.mo.us/ks/3010/dateid-000006.htm?CCSI=45n>; 1924, Corrected to 1949, Sheet 26,

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The red brick exterior walls of the manufacturing building lack ornamentation. Articulated vertical pilasters and flat horizontal spandrels create a grid that delineates banded window openings on each floor and on all elevations. The pilasters resemble shallow buttresses with setbacks at each of the top two stories. This detail and the stepped parapet on the west elevation of the Section A are the only stylistic elements of an otherwise utilitarian factory design.

Three brick elements rise above the roofline of the primary block (Sections A-C). The circulation tower for Section A is a small external block that rises at the center of the east wall. It rises one full story above the roofline. A second head-house extends above the roofline at the junction of Sections B and C on the west elevation, indicating the location of a second freight elevator. At the southeast corner of Section A, four brick piers rise above the roof to support a frame of steel I-beams (*see photo 10*). Historic images reveal that this grid once supported a large metal water tower that is no longer extant.

The main entrance to the first story is on the southern end of the west elevation in Section A. A non-descript modern metal and glass door fills the entrance. All of the windows associated with the finished interior spaces on the first and second floors are also non-historic. Alternating first story bays on west elevation of Sections B and C contain freight doors and loading docks. On the east elevation at the junction of Sections A and G a non-historic metal-slab door provides an entrance to the second-story office. Due to the slope of the lot, this entrance is only a short run of steps above the grade of the parking lot. Freight entrances and loading docks pierce the first story walls in various locations of the remaining Sections (D – I). The east end of Section F opens into a tall, narrow shed that is open on the south end (*see photo 24*).

The tripartite window openings have brick sills and steel lintels. The building retains almost all of its original wood window frames. These openings originally contained nine-over-nine hung wood sashes. Most of the sashes have been removed, although the wood frames and sash pulleys are intact. Fiberglass panels cover the exterior of openings. They allow light into the interior while protecting it from the elements. A few original sashes remain scattered throughout the building (*see photo 9*). The remodeled first and second story offices have non-historic single-light, fixed aluminum windows.

Interior

The main entrance opens into a small vestibule and a finished office area in Section A. The 1913 Sanborn Map confirms that this was the historic function of this space. While the original layout of the offices is unknown, the current configuration leaves many of the distinctive heavy-timber posts visible. A more-finished wood veneer

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Helmers Manufacturing Company Building
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covers many of the structural members, and some of the posts are encased within partition walls. The walls and ceilings have a plaster finish and wood box beams (*see photo 16*). The office area presently includes a larger area of the first floor than is shown on the Sanborn Maps. The first floor also includes unfinished storage areas and machine shops.

The south half of the second floor of Section A was converted into offices in the 1980s. All of the posts and beams remain at least partially visible. The finishes include exposed brick walls, exposed spiral ductwork, and, in some locations, hardwood flooring. Plywood walls frame smaller storage spaces in the unfinished, north half of the second story.

Section D is accessible through an opening in the east wall of Section A, where the removal of a window and spandrel now provides access between the two blocks. This space retains a peaked, metal skylight with its original mechanized operating system. Sections E and F have high ceilings and house storage, machine shops, and loading areas. The structure of these Sections, added between 1924 and 1949, is a system of wood posts and trusses that support the flat roof. Newer partition walls are either plywood or concrete block. A series of openings, some filled with pedestrian doors or freight doors, connects these Sections. The entire east end of Sections E and F is open to the exterior. A protective shed stands between the end of the building and the steep hill that rises behind it. The shed originally sheltered trains approaching the building to load or unload materials and merchandise.

Section G and H are constructed in much the same manner as the main building (Section A – C), with heavy wood posts and beams, brick walls, and wood floors. Metal fire doors separate the sections (*see photo 22*). Section I, is a concrete block shed with a metal roof. It has a loading dock at its north end and set of large doors at the south end.

The third floor of Sections A-C is completely open (*see photo 19*). The two rows of painted wood posts define bays in the floor plan. Each post has a metal (cast iron) cleat that supports the large, painted wood beams. The brick walls are painted; tongue-and-groove wood covers the ceiling; and narrow wood planks cover the floor. Small painted wood signs hang from the beams to identify each bay by number. Many of the signs remain in their original positions. Tall window openings line each exterior wall and the original wood frames are clearly visible (*see photo 18*). Fire sprinkler pipes and bare-bulb electrical fixtures run along the ceiling. The heating system includes metal steam pipes attached directly to the brick walls. Metal fire doors separate the circulation towers from the open floors.

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The fourth floor is identical to the floor below in layout, finishes, and mechanical features (*see photo 17*). The slope of the shed roof is noticeable at this level. An original or early lavatory occupies a brick alcove adjacent to the central stair on the east side of the building.

There are two circulation towers in the building. The tower centered on the east elevation of Section A contains a wood stairwell and a freight elevator (*see photo 20*). Both elements are original to the building; the elevator retains its original mechanical system. This tower sits outside the plane of the wall so as not to encroach on any of the manufacturing floor space. The second circulation tower (serving Sections B & C) also contains a wood stairwell and an original freight elevator (*see photo 21*). Metal fire doors separate the tower from the manufacturing spaces on either side. There is a small drinking fountain adjacent to the stairs. Below the water tower structure is a third wood stairwell. Metal fire doors also separate this stairwell from the manufacturing floor.

COAL HOUSE AND ENGINEERING SHOP

Exterior

The two-story coal house and engineering shop is located approximately 20 feet west of the manufacturing building near the center of Section A. The red brick building has a concrete foundation and an asphalt-shingled gable roof with a north-south orientation. The end walls have stepped parapets. A brick firewall at the center of the building also rise above the roofline, mimicking the shape of the parapets. The south elevation has three large bays. Non-historic stone panels now infill the bays and the decorative panels above each bay (*see photo 25*).

On the west elevation, brick pilasters define six irregular bays. The two southern bays each contain two narrow windows with brick segmental arches. The second bay from the south also contains a door with a brick segmental arch. While these are second-story openings, they are at ground level on the south end of the building. The lot slopes down towards the northwest corner of the building. The northern four bays contain, in order from north to south, a pedestrian door, a non-historic freight entrance, a window, and another non-historic freight door. Removal of a brick pilaster created a single non-historic freight bay that encompasses the two northern-most bays (*see photo 26*).

The north façade contains two windows in the first story and a non-historic entrance to the second story. A rectangular brick projection that extends northward from the northeast corner of the building was the foundation for a smokestack that is no longer extant.

The east elevation contains an irregular pattern of doors and small windows, all with brick segmental arches.

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Helmets Manufacturing Company Building
Leavenworth County, Kansas

Interior

The interior of the coal house and engineering shop has been altered. A concrete floor slab was added within the last twenty years above the original boiler pit. Portions of the original wood truss system have been replaced with steel. Non-historic partition walls divide the space.

INTEGRITY

The Helmets Manufacturing Company Building retains the character-defining features that communicate its significance as a historic industrial facility. Only the original dry kiln at the north end of the building, half of Section E (during the construction of Section D), and the smoke stack north of the coal house have been demolished. The original building mass has evolved over the past century with the construction of additions that enhanced its functional capabilities and economic viability. All of the additions occur on the rear (east) elevation, leaving the primary, west elevation largely unaltered. Interior changes mainly involved cosmetic alterations that left exposed the character-defining post-and-beam structural elements and brick walls. Partition walls added in various locations are easily removable. Removal of the original window sashes was the most significant alteration. A few solitary sashes and most of the original window frames remain intact. No changes were made to the window openings, and the fiberglass panels currently in place reinforce the regular pattern of the historic fenestration. The vast number and large size of the window openings that allowed light and fresh air into the building continues to convey important information about its period and function that is equally important to the design of the missing sashes themselves. Constructed in the early part of the twentieth century, the Helmets Manufacturing Company Building has remained a viable manufacturing and warehouse facility until the present day due to its location, its access to transportation, and its open interior plan. The nominated property retains the size, massing, and details of design, workmanship, and materials necessary to convey the industrial manufacturing functions and warehouse activities historically associated with the facility.

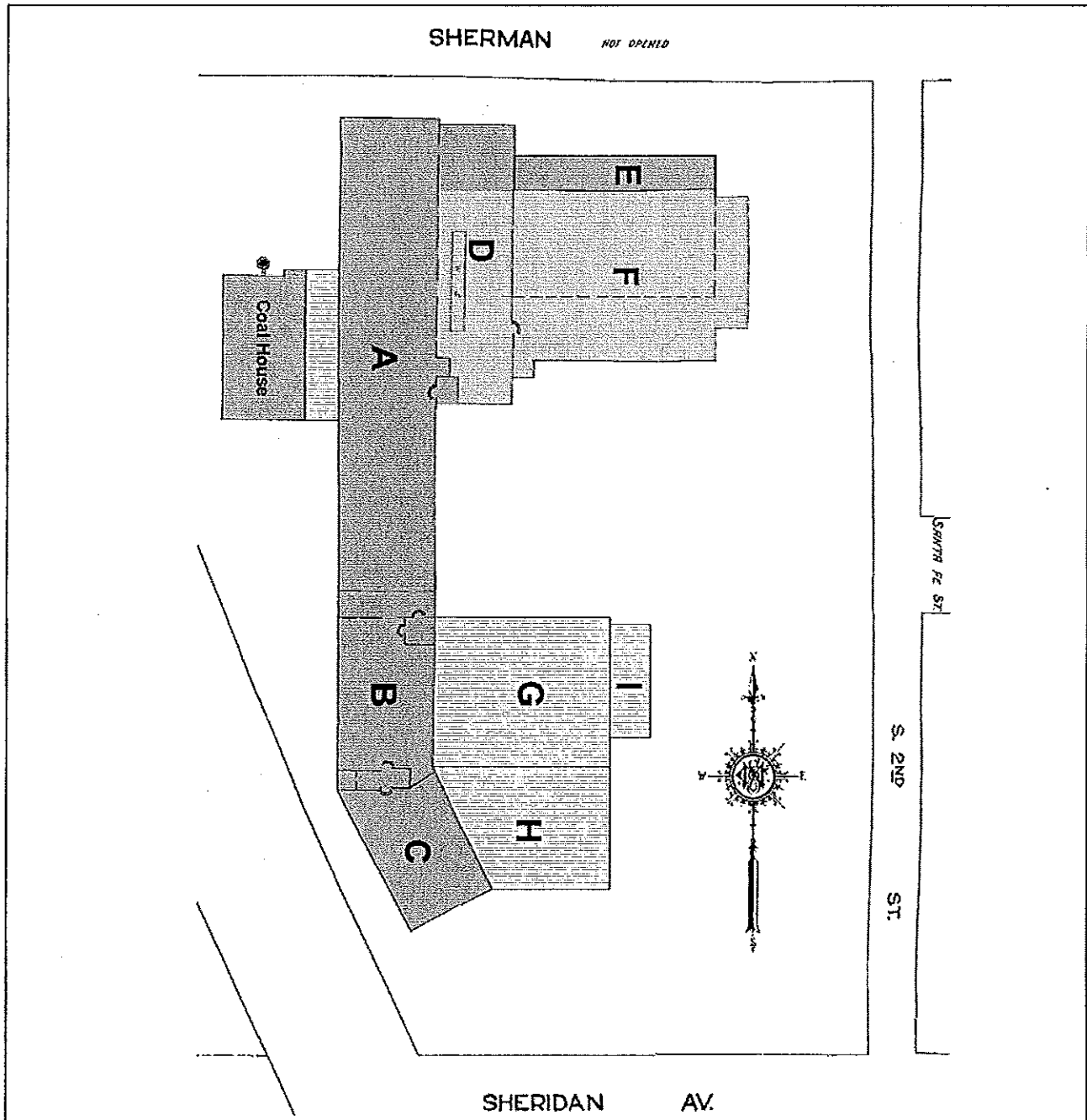
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PLAN



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Helmets Manufacturing Company Building
Leavenworth County, Kansas

SUMMARY

The Helmets Manufacturing Company Building, located at 2500 South 2nd Street, Leavenworth, Leavenworth County, Kansas, was constructed in 1909 for the Helmets Manufacturing Company. It is locally significant under National Register Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE. The building is an excellent example of an early twentieth-century manufacturing facility constructed at the juncture of traditional and modern building technologies. Like many industrial buildings of this vintage, Helmets Manufacturing Company Building has a very plain, utilitarian design with load-bearing brick walls and heavy timber framing. Vertical pilasters form subtle buttresses that supplement the more obvious structural systems. Other features that reflect evolving industrial building technology include steel lintels that provide the structural capacity for grouped windows, instead of single openings, and modern mechanical systems (most notably light, heat, and fire safety) that improved working conditions and building safety. The period of significance is 1909, the date of construction.

ELABORATION

INDUSTRIAL ARCHITECTURE IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Through the nineteenth century a series of forces converged that catapulted the growth of the American industrial economy in ways that were previously incomprehensible. These forces included the continued growth of the nation and the opening of new territories for settlement; the rise of disposable income and the corresponding spread of consumerism; the introduction of new technologies for construction and manufacturing; and the expansion of the nation's transportation network, most importantly the railroad system. Companies that began in Main Street storefronts often found they were not able to function at maximum capacity, even if their operation expanded the full block. Industrial entrepreneurs desired a single facility capable of supporting their entire manufacturing process. It was possible to erect such a building, or even a multiple-building industrial complex, in areas where the necessities of mechanical power, transportation, and consumer demand converged. Leavenworth was one such city where these elements came together to support a strong manufacturing climate.

Early nineteenth century mill buildings provided the prototype for manufacturing facilities of the industrial age. Load-bearing masonry walls (usually brick) enclosed wood post-and-beam structures. The manufacturing floors had open plans punctuated by regularly spaced structural posts. The spacing of the wood posts affected the size of the machinery the building could hold. These buildings stood adjacent to streams and rivers, which provided the power to operate the machinery. The development of coal and steam powered engines enabled manufacturing facilities to move further inland.

Into the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, most industrial and manufacturing buildings remained strictly utilitarian structures that rarely displayed complex or ornate architectural detailing. Buildings typically

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had rectangular footprints and were between three and five stories tall. These buildings, however, were not without aesthetic qualities and subtleties. Architectural expression was found in simple features such as brick corbelling, stringcourses, and fenestration patterns that enhanced large expanses of brick walls.²

The Helmets Manufacturing Company Building, like its contemporaries, is an overwhelmingly utilitarian design devoid of ornament. Articulated brick pilasters are the key architectural feature. These vertical elements, occurring between each bay of windows, serve as a counterpoint to the wide brick spandrels below the window openings, creating a grid design over the walls of the building. The pilasters also have an unusual form that projects further from the building wall at the base and steps back toward the top, reminiscent of a medieval buttress used to enhance the structural design of large buildings. Like the many European precedents, the slender buttresses at the Helmets Building supplemented the other structural systems. The result is thinner load-bearing masonry walls, and, perhaps most significantly, on the interior a less-dense post-and-beam system and a less-cluttered, more open floor plan.

Fenestration was also a critical element of industrial buildings. Windows provided the primary source of light and fresh air to the manufacturing floors. Fenestration also became an important character-defining feature of industrial buildings, especially following the advent of electric lights. While window sashes might be wood or metal, the size and shape of openings reflected the period of construction. Early, load-bearing masonry buildings were less tolerant of large openings in the walls. In order to support the wall above the opening, windows were typically narrow with segmental or round arch heads.

Advances in steel technology in the late nineteenth century affected the size and shape of windows. Steel lintels not only permitted square-headed (rather than arched) openings but also provided structural support for much larger expanses. Architects could design buildings with larger window openings or groupings of windows that increased light and fresh air for workers. By the early twentieth century, architects and builders began using reinforced concrete and steel skeletons to erect taller buildings with delicate masonry veneers covering their structural members. These technologies made it possible for bands of windows to replace expanses of masonry as the dominant architectural feature of manufacturing buildings.³

The Helmets Manufacturing Company Building, constructed in 1909, represents the juncture of traditional and modern building technologies. The original building has a traditional wood post-and-beam structure enclosed by load-bearing brick walls, yet the windows of the Helmets Manufacturing Company Building belie the crossroads of construction technology. Unlike traditional, heavy timber mill buildings, the window openings at the Helmets Building have flat steel lintels that span an opening wide enough to hold three double-hung sashes. These

² Carole Rifkind, *A Field Guide to American Architecture* (New York, NY: The Penguin Group, 1980) 271-273.

³ *Ibid.*, 293-297.

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windows clearly belong to the design aesthetic of the twentieth century rather than the nineteenth century. In addition to the steel lintels, the building incorporates other metal structural components, such as cast iron cleats that support the wood beams on top of the wood posts in Sections A, B, C, G, and H.

Traditional industrial buildings were notoriously dangerous places. Machinery had few safeguards; production areas were crowded with machinery, structural posts, and people; and the wood structures and floors were susceptible to catastrophic fires. To protect their corporate holdings and worker lives, as well as to project their products as modern, factory owners utilized available new technologies to improve safety. The advance of steel and concrete technology accommodated greater interior spans between support columns. This resulted in floor plans with fewer interruptions and supported larger factory equipment, which was itself becoming increasingly safer. Steel and concrete were also significantly less flammable than wood, offering inherent fireproofing capabilities.⁴ While the general design of the Helmets Manufacturing Company Building was strongly rooted in traditional industrial design, the owners incorporated modern systems for productivity and safety. The 1913 Sanborn map lists electric lights, restrooms, steam heat, and automatic fire sprinklers as features of the plant.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN LEAVENWORTH

The city of Leavenworth was established in 1854, along the western shore of the Missouri River, although commercial interests had been active in the area for almost three decades. After the establishment of the Santa Fe Trail in 1821, Colonel Henry H. Leavenworth built a fortification near the eventual town site in order to protect traffic along the trade route.⁵ Support services and commercial entities quickly sprang up near the fort. Commercial trade sustained the area until the eastern lands of the Delaware and Shawnee tribes opened for settlement in May of 1854. Groups of settlers came from several states across the country, including Missouri, Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. The settlers formed associations in order to maintain the laws and rights of a civilized society in the absence of an established government. One month after moving into the territory, an association of settlers laid out 320 acres of land for the town of Leavenworth adjacent to the fort.⁶

The new town was nestled between the fort to the north, the Missouri River to the west, and Three Mile Creek to the south. Leavenworth grew rapidly from its inception. The nascent community developed along the Missouri River, with a concentration near the confluence with Three Mile Creek. As was typical of frontier settlements, a sawmill was the first commercial business. Other necessities soon followed, such as a post office and a boarding house. Within a few years many small businesses and manufacturers had established facilities within the original town limits. As settlers continued to flow into Kansas, the population of the state and of the city exploded. Industries of every type found customers and their businesses quickly expanded. The proximity to river

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *The WPA Guide to 1930s Kansas*, (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1984), 234.

⁶ Ibid, 48.

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Leavenworth County, Kansas

transportation and established trade routes gave manufacturers regional as well as local markets for their goods. By the 1880s, Leavenworth boasted several of the largest and/or oldest manufacturing companies in Kansas. This diverse collection of enterprises included J. Wollman's clothing house; R.N. Hershfield's wholesale and retail jewelry houses; and J.F. Richardson & Company, the largest wholesaler of hardware and cutlery west of St. Louis.⁷

As the city of Leavenworth expanded south and west, the original commercial and industrial areas of Leavenworth became more concentrated. The blocks between the Missouri River on the east and Fifth Street on the west, and between Three Mile Creek on the south and Seneca Street on the north were densely packed with large manufacturing facilities and small commercial buildings. By 1876 Delaware Street was the main commercial street in Leavenworth, with storefronts of varying widths forming a solid streetscape for three full blocks. It was the only area of the city at the time to boast such density. South of Delaware Street, along Cherokee and Choctaw Streets near Three Mile Creek, larger manufacturing complexes sprang up that occupied entire blocks.⁸ In 1883 the businesses lining Three Mile Creek included Munson & Burrows Planing Mill, O. Duffy Woolen Mill, Great Western Manufacturing Company, Great Western Stove Company, Kansas Canning & Preserve Works, Leavenworth Gas Light Company, Missouri Iron & Bridge Company, and Union Stove Manufacturing Company.⁹

HELMERTS MANUFACTURING COMPANY

The dense commercial milieu developing along Delaware Street at the end of the Civil War became the ideal location for Henry J. Helmers, Sr. to establish his first business, a barbershop, in 1865. Helmers' fortunes mirrored those of the city. Within a decade, Helmers broadened his endeavors to include the sale of barber supplies. By 1879, Helmers closed the barbershop to focus on the supply business. He added the manufacture of barber furniture in 1881 in a partnership with William Parmelee. The partnership lasted until 1887, when fire destroyed the business and the men had to use insurance money to begin anew.

⁷ William G. Cutler, "Manufacturing Interests," *History of the State of Kansas*, (Chicago, IL: A.T. Andreas, 1883), Part 13. Available from Kansas Collection Books online. http://www.kancoll.org/books/cutler/leavenworth/leavenworth-co-p13.html#MANUFACTURING_INTERESTS. Accessed 26 August 2008.

⁸ *Plan of the City of Leavenworth, Kansas*, Map (Leavenworth, KS: Ado Hunnius, 1876) Available online through the Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri. http://www.kchistory.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/Maps&CISOPTR=1551&CISOBX=1&REC=17. Accessed 2 December 2008.

⁹ Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, Ltd., *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Leavenworth, Kansas*, (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1883), Sheet 1, Database online. <http://sanborn.umi.com.proxy.mcpl.lib.mo.us/ks/3010/dateid-000001.htm?CCSI=45n>. Accessed 30 July 2008. The buildings associated with the Great Western Manufacturing Company, the Great Western Stove Company, and the Union Stove Manufacturing Company were listed in the National Register as part of the *Leavenworth Historic Industrial District* on 29 April 2002.

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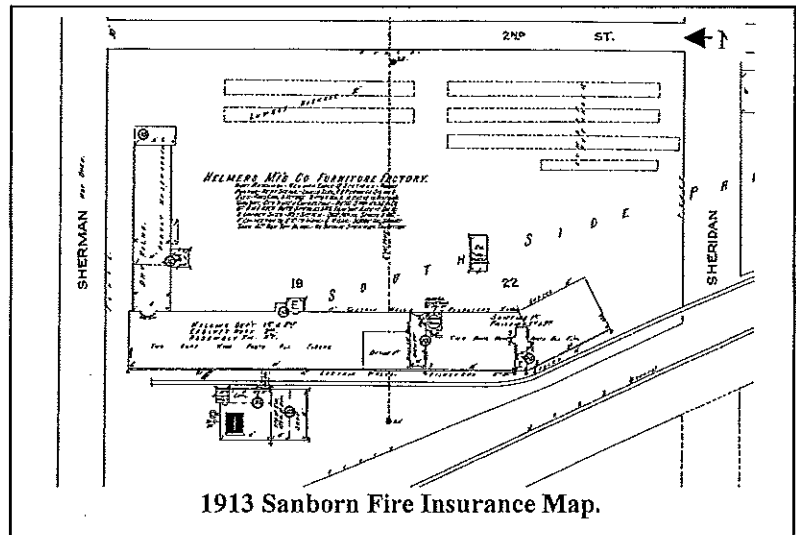
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Helmerts Manufacturing Company Building
Leavenworth County, Kansas

Again on his own, Helmerts organized the Helmerts Manufacturing Company, as a manufacturer of furniture and barber chairs. In 1889, the company occupied two storefronts at 203-211 Delaware Street in the heart of the city's industrial area.¹⁰ By 1897 the company had expanded into five storefronts, making it the largest manufacturing facility on Delaware Street.¹¹ The business continued to succeed, grow, and evolve. Just before the turn of the century, Helmerts closed the barber fixtures department in order to specialize on producing general lines of furniture.¹²

The company flourished through the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. Deciding to open a warehouse in Kansas City, Missouri in 1901, Helmerts constructed a seven-story brick building on West 8th Street in Kansas City's West Bottoms industrial district. Opened in 1905, the 213,000 square foot structure was built as a jobbing house to distribute merchandise throughout the Kansas City metropolitan area.

The Helmerts Manufacturing Company occupied its Delaware Street location until 1909, when Helmerts determined that the company had outgrown the space and needed a new building. He commissioned the construction of a large, industrial facility south of the saturated downtown industrial district in an undeveloped area between the Missouri Pacific Railroad and the Missouri River. The only other industrial development nearby at the time was the Pittsburg Vitrified Paving & Building Brick Company, which was northwest of the new Helmerts property.¹³ During construction Helmerts moved the entire manufacturing operation to Kansas City.



1913 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

¹⁰ This location is one block north of the Leavenworth Historic Industrial District, which was listed in the National Register on 29 April 2002.

¹¹ Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, Ltd., *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Leavenworth, Kansas*, (New York: Sanborn Map Company), 1889 and 1897, Database online. <http://sanborn.umi.com.proxy.mcpl.lib.mo.us/ks/3010/dateid-000002.htm?CCSI=45n>. Accessed 30 July 2008.

¹² *Ibid.*

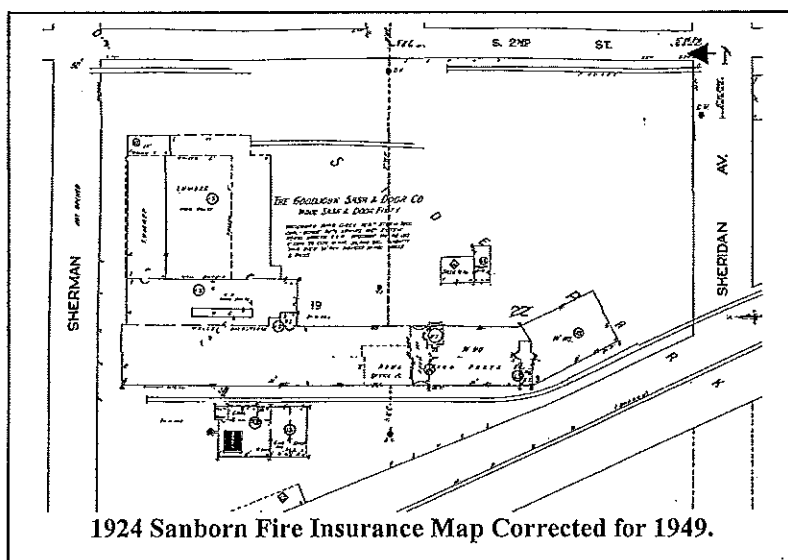
¹³ Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, Ltd., *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Leavenworth, Kansas*, (New York: Sanborn Map Company), 1913, Sheet 28, Database online. <http://sanborn.umi.com.proxy.mcpl.lib.mo.us/ks/3010/dateid-000005.htm?CCSI=45n>. Accessed 30 July 2008.

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Helmerts Manufacturing Company Building
Leavenworth County, Kansas

The newly-constructed Helmerts Manufacturing Company Building was a four-story brick industrial building with a traditional wood post-and-beam structure. With nearly 200,000 square feet of space, the new building greatly expanded the capacity of the business. The long, narrow rectangular main block (Sections A and B) housed the main manufacturing facility. A three-story arm that angled to the east (Section C) contained the paint shop, and a long, one-story wing extending east from the north end of the main block (Section E) housed the dry kilns. A small external bump on the east wall housed the main stairwell and freight elevator. Firewalls and sliding metal fire doors separated the manufacturing floors from the paint shop, which had its own stairwell and freight elevator. A small building west of the plant housed the coal house and engineering shop. A spur of the Missouri Pacific Railroad ran between the two buildings, facilitating the transfer of raw materials and finished products, as well as the delivery of coal to fuel the operation.¹⁴ The complex also included a small oil house east of the main building, which was expanded with the construction of a small warehouse structure between 1913 and 1924.¹⁵



Around the time that the new facility opened, Henry J. Helmerts, Sr. retired and his son, Henry J. Helmerts, Jr. assumed control of the business. Henry Helmerts, Jr. continued the manufacturing operation until 1940, when he decided to transition from manufacturing to wholesale distribution. Henry J. Helmerts, Sr. died in 1934 at the age of 91. Henry J. Helmerts, Jr. died in 1948 at the age of 81, and the Helmerts Company was dissolved.¹⁶

THE SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF THE HELMERTS MANUFACTURING COMPANY BUILDING

After the Helmerts Manufacturing Company closed in 1940, the property stood vacant for six years before the

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Comparing *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Leavenworth*, 1913 and *Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, Ltd., Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Leavenworth, Kansas*, (New York: Sanborn Map Company), 1924, Sheet 26, Database online. <http://sanborn.umi.com.proxy.mcpl.lib.mo.us/ks/3010/dateid-000006.htm?CCSI=45n>. Accessed 30 July 2008.

¹⁶ "Death Comes Last Night to Henry Helmerts," *Leavenworth Times*, Date unknown, from the collections at the Leavenworth County Historical Society and Museum, reprinted with permission from the Leavenworth County Historical Society and Museum and the Leavenworth Times, Donated by Debra Graden, Located online at the GenWeb Project. <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/genweb/leavenwo/Biographies/HELMERTS.htm> Accessed 26 August 2008.

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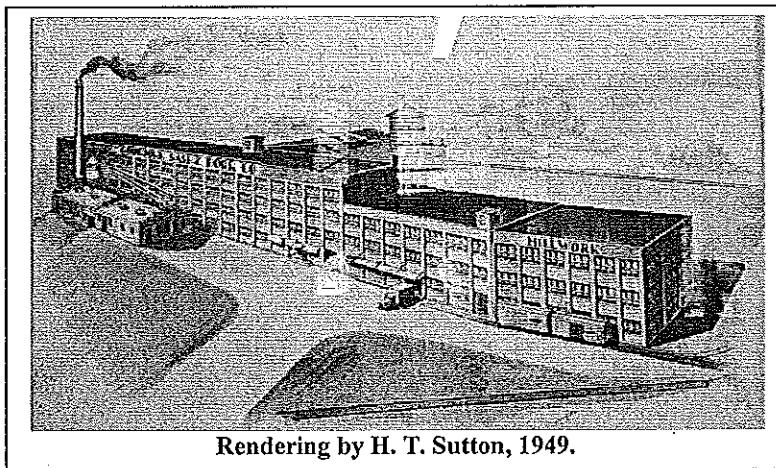
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Helmerts Manufacturing Company Building
Leavenworth County, Kansas

Goodjohn Sash & Door Company purchased the building and moved their manufacturing facility to that location in 1946. Brothers Amos and William Goodjohn incorporated the Goodjohn Sash & Door Company in 1907 when they purchased the facilities of the Broadway Manufacturing Company located on Delaware Street. After fire destroyed the building in 1908, the Goodjohn Company relocated to 614-624 Delaware Street. They remained at this location through World War II. In 1946, when the company decided to expand, they purchased the Helmerts Manufacturing Company Building and moved their 135 employees to the vacant factory. By 1956, the Goodjohn Company was the largest millwork manufacturer in Kansas, producing one-half million units each year.¹⁷

The building received a series of additions between 1924 and 1949. It is not clear if these were completed by the Helmerts Manufacturing Company or the Goodjohn Company, although it seems likely that they were the made by Goodjohn as the facility was retooled for its new owners. The additions included Sections E and F. A second railroad spur along the eastern edge of the property provided access to the east end Section F for the transfer of goods.¹⁸



Rendering by H. T. Sutton, 1949.

The Georgia-Pacific Company purchased the Goodjohn Sash & Door Company in 1966, although the factory continued to operate under its original name.¹⁹ The building stood vacant again after the plant closed in 1969.²⁰

The facility experienced a second round of expansion after 1949. Again, it is unclear if Goodjohn or Georgia-Pacific made the alterations, although the nature of the addition suggests that these additions were made while the property functioned as a factory. These additions included Sections G and H at the south end of the east elevation and a shed roof over the spur line between the main building and the coal house.²¹ Sections G and H have brick walls and post-and-beam structures that mimic the open floor plans of the original building.

¹⁷ "Good Doors by Goodjohn," *To the Stars* 11, no. 4 (July-October, 1956). 3; J.H. Johnston, III. *Leavenworth: Beginning to Bicentennial*, (Leavenworth, KS: Johnston, 1976), 120.

¹⁸ *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for Leavenworth, Kansas*. 1924 and 1924 corrected to 1949.

¹⁹ Johnston. 121.

²⁰ *Polk's Leavenworth (Leavenworth County, Kansas) City Directory*, (Kansas City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1969).

²¹ Observations comparing 1949 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map to current configuration.

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Helmerts Manufacturing Company Building
Leavenworth County, Kansas

The next owner of the Helmerts Manufacturing Company Building was Hallmark Cards. Hallmark Cards established an assembly plant in 1947 and soon became Leavenworth's largest non-federal employer.²² Encouraged to expand its facilities within the city limits, in 1973 Hallmark purchased the Helmerts building for a warehouse, which it operated until 1980.²³

In 1985, Greenamyre Rentals, Inc. purchased the Helmerts Manufacturing Company property. The company renovated a portion of the second floor for its offices. Besel Roofing & Heating occupies the first floor.²⁴ These two companies are the current building occupants.

Henry J. Helmerts

Henry J. Helmerts, Sr. came to the United States from Germany in 1842 as an infant with his parents John H. and Sophia Helmerts. The family settled on a farmstead near Hermann, Missouri. At the age of 16 and with no formal education, Helmerts moved by himself to Leavenworth, Kansas, where he worked at odd jobs and unskilled tasks. Among his jobs, Helmerts spent a year traveling across the state of Missouri as a cabin boy on a steamboat. In 1860, Helmerts began an apprenticeship with a barber in St. Louis. The experience allowed him to open his own barber shop in his hometown in 1861. During the Civil War, Helmerts enlisted in the Missouri State Militia. After his service, he opened and closed another barber shop in Raleigh, Missouri, and decided to move to Leavenworth, Kansas.²⁵ Shortly after marrying his childhood friend, Paulina Christel, Helmerts opened his barbershop in 1865.

²² Ironically, Hallmark's original Leavenworth facility was at 614 Delaware Street, the former home of the Goodjohn Sash & Door Company.

²³ Johnston, 121. *Polk's Leavenworth (Leavenworth County, Kansas) City Directory*, (Kansas City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1973, 1981).

²⁴ *Polk's Leavenworth (Leavenworth County, Kansas) City Directory*, (Kansas City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1985).

²⁵ William E. Connelley, "Henry J. Helmerts, Sr.," *A Standard History of Kansas and Kansans*, (Chicago, IL: Lewis Publishing Company, 1918), Transcribed 16 December 1988 by Kim Willis for the Kansas GenWeb Project online. <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/genweb/archives/1918ks/bioh/helmerhj.html>. Accessed 26 August 2008. This source locates Helmerts' barbershop in the town of Raleigh, Missouri. This is not an actual place name, and may instead refer to Rolla, Missouri, which is not far from Hermann.

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Helmers Manufacturing Company Building
Leavenworth County, Kansas

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Helmets Manufacturing Company Building
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Section Number Photographs Page 19

Helmets Manufacturing Company Building
Leavenworth County, Kansas

PHOTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

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

Date of Photographs: 25 June 2008

Digital images submitted with nomination on CD-ROM

Photograph Number	Description	Camera View
1.	Main Building and Coal House -- West Elevations	NE
2.	Main Building -- West Elevation -- North End	E
3.	Main Building and North Ell -- North and East Elevations	SW
4.	Main Building North Ell -- North Elevation	SW
5.	Main Building North Ell -- North Elevation	SE
6.	Main Building -- East Elevation	W
7.	Main Building -- North Ell -- South Elevation	N
8.	Main Building -- East Elevation and South Wing	W
9.	Main Building -- Window Detail	W
10.	Main Building -- Water Tower Support Detail	SW
11.	Main Building and South Ell -- South Elevation	NW
12.	Main Building and South Ell -- South Elevation	N
13.	Main Building Three-Story Portion -- West Elevation	NE
14.	Main Building -- West Elevation	SE
15.	Main Building -- West Elevation	E
16.	Main Building -- Interior -- 1 st Floor Office	SW
17.	Main Building -- Interior -- 4 th Floor Warehouse Space	N
18.	Main Building -- Interior -- 4 th Floor Window Detail	W
19.	Main Building -- Interior -- 3 rd Floor Warehouse Space	SW

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Section Number Photographs Page 20

Helmets Manufacturing Company Building
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Photograph Number	Description	Camera View
20.	Main Building – Interior – 4 th Floor Circulation Core Detail	NE
21.	Main Building – Interior – 3 rd Floor Circulation Core Detail	SW
22.	Main Building – Interior – 2 nd Floor South EII Warehouse	W
23.	Main Building – Interior – North EII Wire Glass Skylight	N
24.	Main Building – North EII Covered Shed	S
25.	Coal House – South and West Elevations	NE
26.	Coal House – West Wall Entrance Detail	E
27.	Coal House – North Elevation	SE
28.	Coal House – Interior – Wood Truss System	S
29.	Covered Shed between Main Building and Coal House	SE

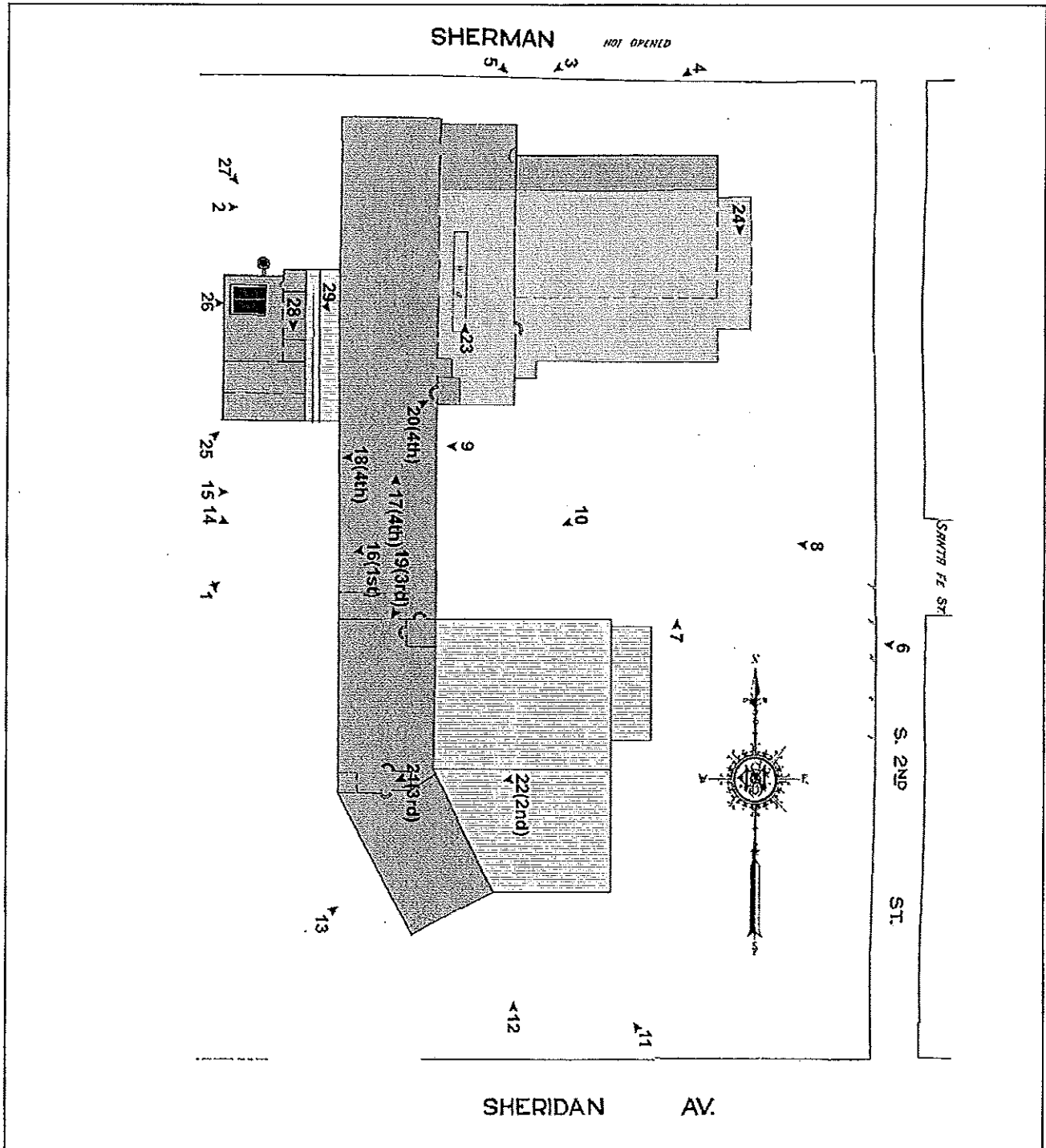
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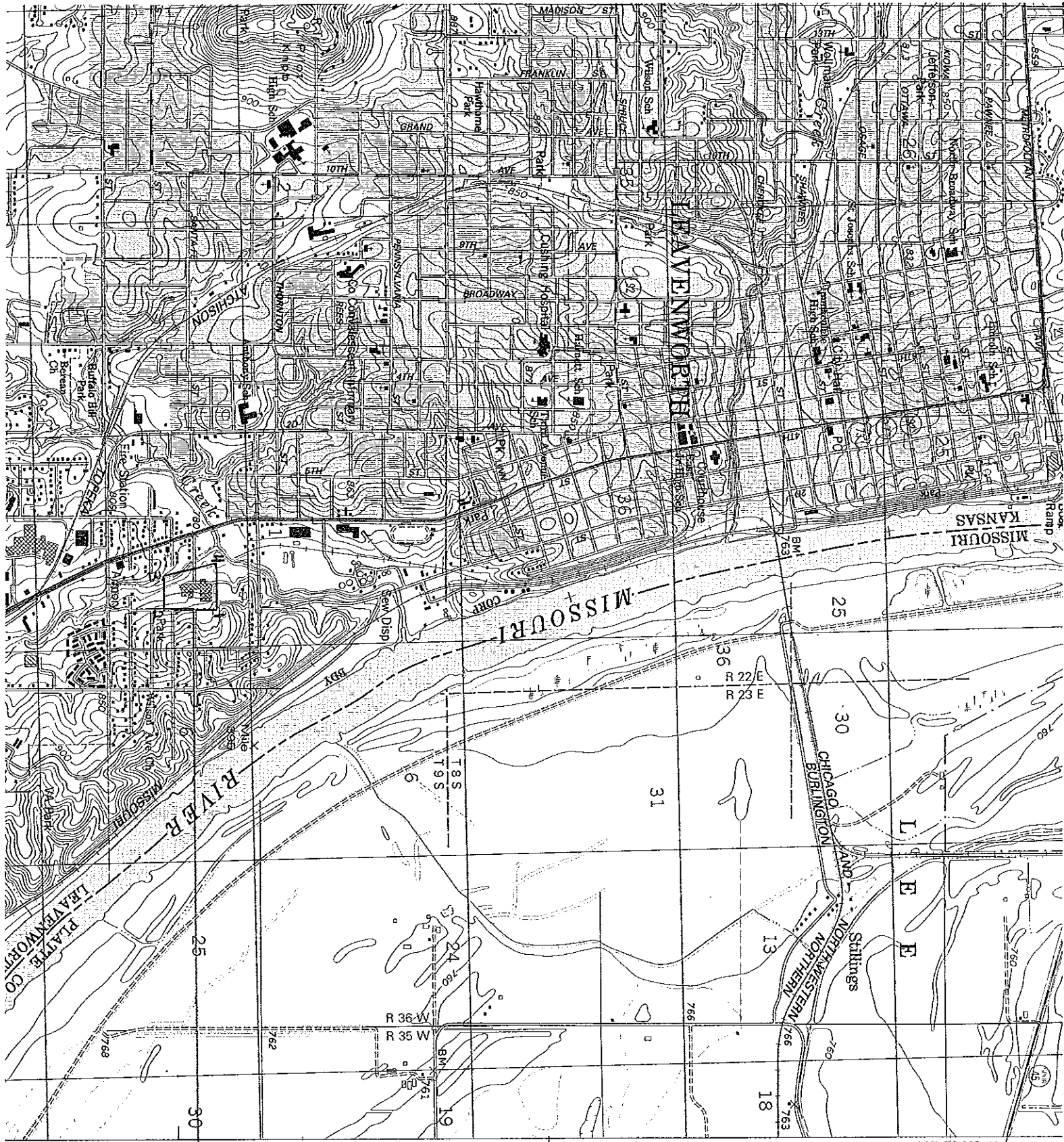
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Helmerts Manufacturing Company Building
Leavenworth County, Kansas

Photo Map





(PLATTE CITY)
7062 IV SE

14 MI. TO MO. 45
KANSAS CITY (VIA MO. 45) 27 MI.

HELMERS MANUFACTURING
COMPANY BUILDING

LEAVENWORTH,
LEAVENWORTH COUNTY
KANSAS

UTM References:

- 1 15 335793 4351027
- 2 15 335790 4350770
- 3 15 335682 4350776
- 4 15 335571 4351025