

MILLER PLAZA, 35-37 MILLER PLAZA
Kansas City
Jackson County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1892-E

HABS

MO-1892-E

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MIDWEST REGIONAL OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1709 Jackson Street
Omaha, NE 68102

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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A. General Statement

Located on the south side of Miller Plaza, this building is one of fourteen original buildings in the Miller Plaza complex which reflected the historical eclecticism of the post-World War I era through the restrained use of a mixture of Tudor and Colonial Revival stylistic influences. The design of the apartment building is one of three architectural style variations or treatments which comprises the Miller Plaza complex and one of two which is repeated in alternating structures which face onto Miller Plaza, creating a streetscape of mirror images. This building and the buildings located at 16-18 Miller Plaza (HABS No. MO-1892-C), 19 Miller Plaza, 24-26 Miller Plaza, 27 Miller Plaza, and 32-34 Miller Plaza were designed as mirror images of each other. The unique styling of the original facing buildings is, for the purposes of this narrative, designated as "Type III."

B. Description of the Exterior

North Side:

Measuring approximately 66' x 37,' the three-story apartment building is clad in dark, common Flemish bond course brick. The building type is distinguished by the design features of its north facade which faces onto Miller Plaza and includes: the symmetrical arrangement of windows and openings, the use of brick banding and stone trim to define the stories and identify the individual bays, the use of stone for decorative keystones and quoins, and an accentuated entrance bay.

The central entrance bay which extends the height of the building and the arrangement of windows on each side creates seven vertical divisions. The use of brick laid in soldier course to outline the vertical divisions of the bays and in horizontal bands to delineate the stories is a significant design feature. Light colored square stone tabs are located at the intersection of the horizontal and vertical brick bands. Stone quoins appears where the horizontal bands turn the corners of the building. The repetition of the soldier coursing to form sills, lintels, stringcourses, banding and panels further distinguishes the brick design motif. In addition to the vertical and horizontal divisions created by the brick work, a stone stringcourse and random ashlar limestone foundation treatment visually separates the basement level from the first story. The original projecting cornice is missing. The parapet encircling the flat tar and gravel roof features terra cotta coping.

The central focal entrance the width of double doors is flanked by simple Doric pilasters above which extend three stories of vertical soldier bond banding capped with stone crosses. Enclosed in this brick banding are tripartite windows located on the stairway landings mid-way between the first and second and second and third stories. They are visually linked by horizontal panels of brick banding with stone tab corners above each window unit. The double hung, triple windows are composed of a central window with four panes in the upper sash and a single-pane lower sash flanked by narrower windows with two-over-one sashes. Most of the window panes are broken and the entrance is boarded over.

With the exception of the center entrance bay, window arrangements alternate between single and tripartite double-hung sashes. All of the windows on the first story are boarded over. All but one of the single windows on the upper stories have the original double hung sashes with six panes in the upper sash and a single-pane lower sash. The double hung, triple windows include a center window with six panes in the upper sash and a single-pane lower sash flanked by narrower windows which have four-over-one sashes. Only two of the tripartite windows retain their upper sashes. The windows on the first story have arched brick lintels while those on the upper stories feature horizontal lintels. The brick window surrounds feature light colored stone tabs at each corner of the sill and light colored stone keystones centered on window lintels on the first and second stories.

East Side:

The only elements distinguishing the east side of the building are its symmetrical appearance, the parapet with terra cotta coping, and the basement level masonry treatment of random ashlar stone. Two single windows flanked by paired windows in the end bay create four bays on the first, second and third stories. The single windows are smaller than the paired windows. The window treatment of the end bay on the northeast corner repeats that of the north side. The decorative horizontal brick banding found on the south side continues on the east side. Three windows have been cut in the foundation and are located in the center and end bays.

South Side:

The south, rear side is visible from Warwick Boulevard. With the exception of single windows and a single-width door in the center bay and a narrow brick chimney, this unadorned side of the building replicates the fenestration of the south side. The chimney is located east of the west end bay. The windows on the first story are boarded over. Many of the windows retain their original multi-pane upper sashes. Three windows have been cut in the foundation.

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C. Description of Interior:

Due to damage caused by vandalism and fires, the original elements of the interior no longer exist. A central stairway hall runs from the central entrance to the rear. Hallways to the east and west connected with the central hallway. Twelve, small apartment units which once incorporated Murphy beds opened off the east west halls.