

MALLINCKRODT CHEMICAL WORKS, Building No. 117

HABS No. MO-1929-J

(~~Mallinckrodt Inc.~~)

Destrehan Street between Hall Street and Wharf Street
St. Louis, Missouri

HABS
MO
96-SALU,
134 J-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Great Plains Support Office
1709 Jackson Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68102-2571

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MALLINCKRODT CHEMICAL WORKS, BUILDING 117
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Location: Destrehan Street, between Hall and Wharf streets, St. Louis, Missouri
USGS Granite City, Illinois-Missouri Quadrangle (7.5'), Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 744626 E; 4282883 N

Present Owner: Mallinckrodt Inc.

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: One of 16 buildings at Mallinckrodt Chemical Works associated with the Manhattan Engineer District/Atomic Energy Commission (MED/AEC) – sponsored program to process uranium for use in the development of atomic weapons, Building 117 was the service and security building for Plant 6E, providing a laundry, cafeteria, check-in for identification badges, and a guard tower.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. **Date of erection:** Building 117 was built in 1950.
2. **Architect:** The architects for this building were Wedemeyer and Hecker of St. Louis. The engineer was Otto E. Heinicke and Company of St. Louis.
3. **Original and subsequent owners:** The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission acquired the property in August 1947 from Mallinckrodt Chemical Works (MCW). It was given back to MCW, after cleanup, in 1960.
4. **Builder-contractor:** The contractor is unknown.
5. **Original Plan and construction:** Built in 1950 as part of Plant 6E, this rectangular building (measuring 62' x 153'-8") was used for security, and as a laundry, change house, and lunchroom for workers.
6. **Alterations and additions:** The interior of the building is inaccessible because of contamination. The exterior windows have been boarded up.

B. Historical Context

Building 117 was built in 1950 as part of Plant 6E, as the service and security building. On the first floor the western one-third of the building housed a security office and changing room, north and south guard areas, with a turnstile, a guard room, visitor's room, doctor's examination room, and bathrooms. Wood stands holding identification badges were located at the guard areas. The eastern two-thirds of the first floor was taken up with a large locker room, clothing room with metal shelves, changing room, shower, and drying room, and east and west stairways to the second floor. Double doors on the north side led to Building 116.

On the second floor was a drafting room, three lunchrooms (one large one for the men, and two smaller, one for women and one for contractors). The contractors also had locker, shower, change and clothing rooms. The eastern

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one-third of the second floor contained a laundry for washing the special work clothing.¹

At some date between 1951 and 1956, an overhead passageway (catwalk) was built to connect the green salt building (705) with Building 117. In this way, workers could travel to 117 to change dirty clothing without having to cross Destrehan Street, a public roadway. The catwalk led to the rear staircase at the northeast corner, and from there workers could go to the laundry on the second floor or downstairs to the shower and change rooms. Jutting from the southeast corner of the second floor was a small guard tower. (Because Plants 6, 6E, and 7 were all constructed along Destrehan Street, a public road, security precautions were necessary.) In the 1950s, Destrehan Street was open and ran almost to the Mississippi River, where it connected with a small roadway running parallel to the river. Today, Destrehan Street is part of the Mallinckrodt Inc. gated plant. Several small houses and storage areas were located along the banks of the river, as well as the E.I. duPont de Nemours and Company Ammonia Plant.²

The plants were surrounded by chain link fences. The guard tower in Building 117 provided a vantage point up and down Destrehan Street. Other elevated towers were built along the fence lines. The guard towers were operated by Mallinckrodt Chemical Works guards, armed with side arms and riot guns. The towers were manned 24 hours per day.³

In 1947, the newly formed Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) established offices at MCW, and an MCW security office was set up to administer the AEC's security regulations for handling restricted data. At this time, security checks and visitor controls were established, and rules for shipping classified materials were set up. The security program included processing personnel clearances for project employees, contractors, and consultants, who were photographed, fingerprinted, and given identification badges. Guards were required to escort classified material from plant to plant.⁴ When Building 117 was constructed the security office functions mentioned were housed in this building.

¹ Construction drawings MCW Nos. 3611-1 through 3611-3. Mallinckrodt Inc. Engineering Department, 1948-49.

² Personal communication, Samuel M. Tuthill, Ph.D., Retired consultant, Technical Committees and Quality Standards, Mallinckrodt Inc. [December 12, 1996].

³ Harold Schlueter, "20 Years of Plant Security without a Serious Violation," *Uranium Division News*, June 1962: 54.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 54-56.

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PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. **Architectural character:** Building 117 is a post-World War II concrete block industrial building.
2. **Condition of fabric:** The fabric is in poor condition.

B. Description of Exterior

1. **Overall Dimensions:** Building 117 is rectangular in shape and measures 62' in width x 153' in length. A second-story guard house, of corrugated siding with a widely overhanging roof, juts from the southeast corner of the building. The building is attached to Building 116 to the north.
2. **Foundation:** The foundation is raised concrete.
3. **Walls:** The walls are concrete block with decorative rows of brick headers and stretchers between every two rows of concrete block.
4. **Structural system, framing:** The framing system for Building 117 is unknown.
5. **Porches and steps:** A concrete porch with four concrete steps wraps around the southwest corner.
6. **Chimneys:** There are no chimneys.
7. **Openings:**
 - a. **Doorways and doors:** Building 117 has seven exterior doors. On the south side are two single doors. On the west side are two single doors, and one metal overhead door; on the east side is one single door and one loading door.
 - b. **Windows:** Multi-paned fixed and transom windows in metal sash, are located on the south, east, and west sides of the building.

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8. **Roof:**

- a. **Shape, covering:** The flat roof is covered with black composition roofing.
- b. **Cornice, eaves:** The parapet wall is topped with a glazed tile coping.
- c. **Dormers, cupolas, towers:** A third-floor enclosed catwalk, of metal with multi-paned windows in metal sash, leads from the southwest corner of Building 117 to Building 705.

C. **Description of Interior**

The interior is inaccessible because of asbestos contamination.

D. **Site:**

1. **General setting and orientation:** Plant 6E, of which Building 117 is a part is located on the eastern edge of the Mallinckrodt Inc. property. It is oriented east-west and is located on the north side of Destrehan Street.
2. **Historic landscape design:** The setting is industrial, and there is no landscaping.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. **Original Architectural Drawings:** Original drawings for Building 117 are located at Mallinckrodt Inc. Engineering Department, Building 91-2. Architectural drawings dated 1948-49 include:

#MCW No. 3611-1	First Floor Plan
#MCW No. 3611-2	Second Floor Plan
#MCW No.3611-3	Elevations

B. **Bibliography:**

Construction drawings MCW Nos. 3611-1 through 3611-3. Mallinckrodt Inc. Engineering Department, 1948-49.

Schlueter, Harold. "20 Years of Plant Security without a Serious Violation." *Uranium Division News*. June 1962: 54-56.

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Tuthill, Dr. Samuel. Retired consultant, Technical Committees and Quality Standards, Mallinckrodt Inc. [December 12, 1996]. Personal communication.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This HABS documentation project was undertaken as mitigative recordation required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The United States Department of Energy Former Sites Restoration Division plans to demolish the buildings.

The documentation was prepared by Alexandra C. Cole, architectural historian at Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), Santa Barbara, California, in February 1997. Large-format photography was done by Bruce Harms of Louis Berger and Associates, Inc., Marion, Iowa, in August/September 1996. Measured floor plans were prepared under the supervision of Michael Poligone of Bechtel National Incorporated (BNI), Oak Ridge, Tennessee, in December 1996.

*FOR SITE PLANS SEE MO-1929 FIELD NOTES