

MILLER PLAZA, 9 MILLER PLAZA  
Kansas City  
Jackson County  
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1892-H

HABS  
MO-1892-H

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

## MILLER PLAZA, 9 MILLER PLAZA

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### A. General Statement

Designed primarily as a commercial building with apartment space, this building is one of two buildings located on the corners of Main Street and Miller Plaza which were designed to be mirror images of each other and served as a gateway entrance to the apartment buildings facing onto Miller Plaza. The four-story common Flemish bond course brick buildings are irregular in shape, a plan that is roughly L shaped. The building design effectively serves as two buildings in one. The rectangular commercial section which faces west contains retail space on the first story and apartment space on the upper floors. An irregularly shaped four-story apartment wing faces north onto Miller Plaza. Like the other buildings in the Miller Plaza complex, it reflects the historical eclecticism of the post-World War I era through the restrained use of a mixture of Tudor and Colonial Revival stylistic influences. As one of fourteen buildings originally in the complex, this building features one of three design variations or "types" found in Miller Plaza. For the purposes of this narrative, the unique style/type of this building and its "twin" located at 3225 Main Street (HABS No. MO-1892-A) are designated as "Type I."

### B. Description of Exterior

The commercial section of the building is composed of five vertical bays on the west and north sides facing Main Street and Miller Plaza. A diagonal wall facing onto Miller Plaza connects the northeast corner of the commercial "building" with a narrower apartment wing which faces onto Miller Plaza.

#### West Side:

The first floor store fronts facing Main Street are visually separated and distinguished from the second and upper stories by a projecting stone stringcourse. A second stone stringcourse also separates the third from the fourth story. The parapet surrounding the flat, tar and gravel roof is clad in terra cotta and features intermittent vertical pinnacles. These elements and the stone coping visually create a cornice which is pierced by a decorative curvilinear projection above each center bay.

The first floor of the west side was originally designed to present a balanced appearance. Four entrance/display window bays were separated by brick piers with limestone bases and tabbed caps. The south, end bay incorporated a corner entrance. Alterations to the two bays on the south end of the west side includes brick infill and the installation of narrow, single pane ribbon windows and a

modern entrance. The upper portions of the display window bays on the north end have been boarded over. Modern plate glass windows and glass and metal doors have been installed. All of the original brick piers and ornamental tabbed caps appear to be intact.

The upper three stories feature a symmetrical arrangement of paired and single windows. A center vertical line is highlighted with a terra cotta medallion centered in the curvilinear projection above the parapet, a single rectangular window with stone quoins and a blind keystone arch on the fourth story, and single rectangular windows on the second and third stories. On each side of the single windows in the center bay are two sets of paired windows. Terra cotta pinnacled window embrasures surround the paired rectangular windows of the fourth story. All of the windows have stone sills and feature double hung sashes with six panes in the upper sashes and a single-pane lower sash.

North Side:

The north side includes the commercial portion of the building and the apartment portion which face onto Miller Plaza. Throughout the entire north side, the projecting stone stringcourse found on the west side continues to visually distinguish the first story from the second and upper stories. The stone stringcourse separating the third and fourth stories also continues. The terra cotta parapet repeats the use of intermittent vertical pinnacles and cornice and coping found on the west side. Decorative curvilinear projection above the parapet appear over the center bays in the commercial portion and the entrance bay in the apartment section.

The north side of the rectangular, commercial portion of the building has two distinct visual units: the corner entrance and an arrangement of half windows on the first story, and the asymmetrical arrangement of windows on the upper stories. The first floor contains the corner entrance with a display window and two bays created by horizontal half windows with stone sills located directly below the projecting stone stringcourse. The upper three stories feature an asymmetrical arrangement of paired and single windows creating five bays on each story. Directly below the curvilinear projection in the center of the parapet are two bays of single windows on each story. On the fourth story, they are linked by a blind keystone arch and feature tabbed window surrounds. To the west of the two center bays on each of the upper stories is a bay created by paired windows. To the east of the two center bays on each of the upper stories are a bay created by triple windows and an end bay of single windows. On the fourth story, terra cotta pinnacled window embrasures surround all but the two single windows in the center bays. All of the double hung windows have six panes in the upper sashes over a single-pane lower sash and stone sills.

The design of the apartment building section incorporates a diagonal side facing northeast onto Miller Plaza and an entrance side facing directly north. The diagonal segment of the building visually links the shallow commercial setback of the north side of the retail portion of the building with that of the connecting apartment building wing which has a deeper, residential setback.

The diagonal side facing Miller Plaza is composed of two bays on each story which incorporate a single window and triple windows. The side of the apartment building facing directly north is composed of five bays on each story. On each of the upper stories the bays consist of a single window in the west bay; narrow, triple windows in the entrance bay; another bay of triple windows and two bays of paired windows. This pattern is repeated on the first story with the exception of a wide, pedimented entrance embrasure with no supporting pilasters. Modern glass and metal doors replace the original double doors. A decorative curvilinear projection is located above the entrance bay. Narrow tripartite windows with tabbed stone surrounds contain a double hung center window with four panes in the upper sash and a single-pane lower sash and two narrow windows with a single pane in each sash. All of the windows have stone sills and, except for those located in the entrance bay, feature double hung sashes with six panes in the upper sash and a single-pane lower sash. All of the windows on the fourth story, except those in the entrance bay, have terra cotta pinnacled window embrasures.

### **C. Description of the Interior**

The commercial portion of the building which faces west onto Main Street is composed of retail space on the first story which has been altered significantly. Access to the apartments on the upper stories of the building is through the Miller Plaza entrance which opens onto a stair hall running north and south, which is bisected by a hallway running east and west with small apartments opening off the hallways.