

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Faultless Starch Company Building

other names/site number N/A


2. Location

street & number 1025 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street [N/A] not for publication  
city or town Kansas City [N/A] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Jackson code 095 zip code 64104

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 [ ] )

  
Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO

25 March 2002  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Faultless Starch Company Building  
 Jackson County, Missouri

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property		
		Contributing	Noncontributing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)			
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	1	0	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0	structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	0	0	objects
		1	0	Total

**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**

**Historic Function**  
 INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION:  
 Manufacturing facility and industrial storage

**Current Functions**  
 INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION:  
 Manufacturing facility and industrial storage

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
 LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
 AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commercial Style

**Materials**  
 foundation brick  
 walls brick  
 stone  
 roof asphalt  
 other

**Narrative Description**  
 (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**8. Statement of Significance****Applicable National Register Criteria**

☒ **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.

☐ **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**  
**INDUSTRY**

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**Periods of Significance**1903-1951

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**Significant Dates** 19031937**Significant Person(s)**N/A

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**Cultural Affiliation**N/A

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**Architect/Builder**Shepard and Farrar; architects, 1903Hoit Price and Barnes; architects, 1934 & 1937Bayerl, Emil; architect, 1955Kingman, Alex; builder, 1903Swenson Construction Company, 1937

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**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:**

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State Agency

☐ Federal Agency

☒ Local Government City Hall

☒ University Western Historic Manuscripts Collection

☒ Other:

Name of repository: Kansas City Public Library

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** approximately one acre

**UTM References**

A. Zone            Easting            Northing  
                    15            361930            4329680

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 Cydney E. Millstein

organization Architectural and Historical Research, LLC date August 24, 2001

street & number P.O. Box 22551 telephone 816.363.0567

city or town Kansas City state Missouri zip code 64113

**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 Faultless Starch/Bon Ami Company

street & number 510 Walnut Street telephone 816.842.1230

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64106-1209

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Faultless Starch Company Building  
Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri  
MPS Listing "Railroad Related Historic  
Commercial and Industrial Resources in  
Kansas City, Missouri."**

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**Summary**

The Faultless Starch Company, located at 1025 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, Missouri, was originally designed by the noted Kansas City architectural firm of Shepard and Farrar in 1903 and constructed the same year. A subsequent historical addition was constructed in 1937 based on designs by Kansas City architects Hoit, Price and Barnes, while a modern addition, designed by Emil Bayerl, was built in 1955. The six-story brick and stone industrial complex, designed with Classically-inspired embellishments at the main façade of the 1903 unit, is located in the heart of the Central Industrial District (CID), commonly known as the "West Bottoms." Generally speaking, the CID consists of industrial, commercial and warehouse facilities dating from the 1870s through the 1940s. As defined in the MPS cover document, the Faultless Starch Company Building is an intact example of an "industrial facility and commercial distribution building." Furthermore, this property type "comprise[s] the core of commercial and industrial resources found in railroad freight areas in Kansas City," such as the CID. The Faultless Starch Company Building, rectangular in shape and sited adjacent to multiple rail tracks, features minimal exterior ornamentation, loading docks, ample fenestration "to capture light and provide ventilation," and a flat roof — all characteristic of that property type.<sup>1</sup>

Expansion of a number of manufacturing and industrial businesses, such as the Faultless Starch Company Building, was common practice due to the changing needs and requirements of operation. Although various building campaigns have expanded the facility over the years, the Faultless Starch Building has retained the majority of its historic features to convey its significance. Its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association has been retained in both the exterior and interior, meeting the registration requirements as set forth in the MPS cover document. It should be noted that the additions to the main building of Faultless Starch are "subsidiary to the original and are located on secondary facades," thereby satisfying the MPS registration requirements.<sup>2</sup>

To the north of the building is a vacant lot, the future location of the manufacturing plant for the Faultless Starch/Bon Ami Company. An asphalt parking lot is sited to the west of the building and to the east is a one-story steel building, constructed in 1972, that links the Sewall Paint and Glass Company Building (1009-1013 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street) to the Faultless Starch complex. Multiple railroad tracks are located directly to the south of the industrial facility. Thus the Faultless Starch Company property was strategically located in an area of Kansas City "which

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<sup>1</sup> Sally F. Schwenk, "Railroad Related Historic Commercial and Industrial Resources in Kansas City, Missouri." NRHP Multiple Property Documentation Form, November 2000, Section F, Page 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, Section F, Page 4.

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[was] associated with the manufacture, distribution and storage of goods and merchandise for later distribution that relied on railroad freighting services."<sup>3</sup>

**Elaboration**

**The Original 1903 Building, designed by Shepard and Farrar**

The main façade faces north. The first story features a recessed entrance with a non-original double-leaf aluminum-framed door at the east bay. Original transom has been covered with aluminum paneling and features the words "Faultless Starch" in metal and punctuated with a star at its center. The remaining bays of the first story, separated by prominent brick piers with Doric style stone capitals, have been modified over the years with aluminum-framed one-over-one sash windows at the second and fourth bays (moving east to west) and brick infill at the third bay.<sup>4</sup>

The original wood fenestration of the upper stories, was replaced in the 1950s with operable, multipaned, industrial sash units. Windows at the second story, west bays, main façade have been infilled with glass block. Additional features of the original building include brick denticulation between the first and second story, continuing along the end bays of the upper stories through the sixth floor fenestration. Additional features of the main façade include stone embellishments and a wide water table placed below the parapet.

Embellishments of the main façade, including fenestration and brickwork, are carried through to the east façade, which also features a fire exit bay with metal fire escape at the far north end. Fenestration of the south façade, seen only at the fifth and sixth floors, is the same as that of the main and east facades. The west façade, partially obscured by the 1970s addition, is devoid of any articulation, except for the words "FAULTLESS STARCH COMPANY" painted at the top story.

**Historic addition to the Faultless Starch Company: Hoit, Price and Barnes, 1937**

A four-story addition, designed to double the company's production and warehouse space, was built to the rear of the 1903 unit in 1937. The construction of this large addition made

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> The MPS document discusses in section E, page 4, that due to flooding, alterations to window openings, "especially on the ground level is expected." This was the case with Faultless Starch.

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it necessary to raze a two-story unit connected to the rear of the 1903 building.<sup>5</sup> Extant features of the 1937 facility include industrial sash windows similar to the units of the original building, with each floor separated by stone stringcoursing and brick spandrels. A large loading dock, placed at the north façade, also features two man doors at the west end.

The south façade of the 1937 addition, placed adjacent to the rail tracks, is characterized by bands of metal, industrial sash fenestration (windows pivot at the center), with stone lug sills and separated by wide brick spandrels. The first floor features two large freight doors at the third and fifth bays (moving west to east). A wide concrete loading dock runs the length of the façade, while a metal canopy, supported by side steel brackets, is anchored above the second story.

Partially obscured by modern additions, the west and east facades remain devoid of any articulation.

A seven-story steel silo, originally used to store materials for manufacturing starch, now stores calcium carbonate necessary for the manufacturing of the Bon Ami™ product. A seven-story elevator shaft addition, placed to the north of the 1937 addition and to the east of the 1903 building at the "el" was constructed in 1955. This non-historical unit features industrial sash fenestration at the far west bay of the north façade. Each floor is visually separated by stone stringcoursing. The remainder of the façades are devoid of any articulation. Circa 1955, a two-story brick addition was constructed at the west façade of the original 1903 building.

The interior of the Faultless Starch Building is fairly typical of commercial/industrial warehouses constructed during the first half of the twentieth century. The first floor, while modified from the original, features company offices. The upper floors house the manufacturing facilities and laboratories and are designed as open spaces with exposed columns.

<sup>5</sup> The two-story unit was the location of Beaham's coffee business (see Section 8). At the insistence of the city's leading grocery wholesalers whom he had been supplying, Beaham continued to roast coffee. Subsequently, the 2-story unit became part of the starch plant. See "Specializing Has Brought Growth to a Family Concern," *The Kansas City Star*, 23 May 1937, n.p. The H. P. Wright Collection, Roll 14, 10:122. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri-Kansas City.

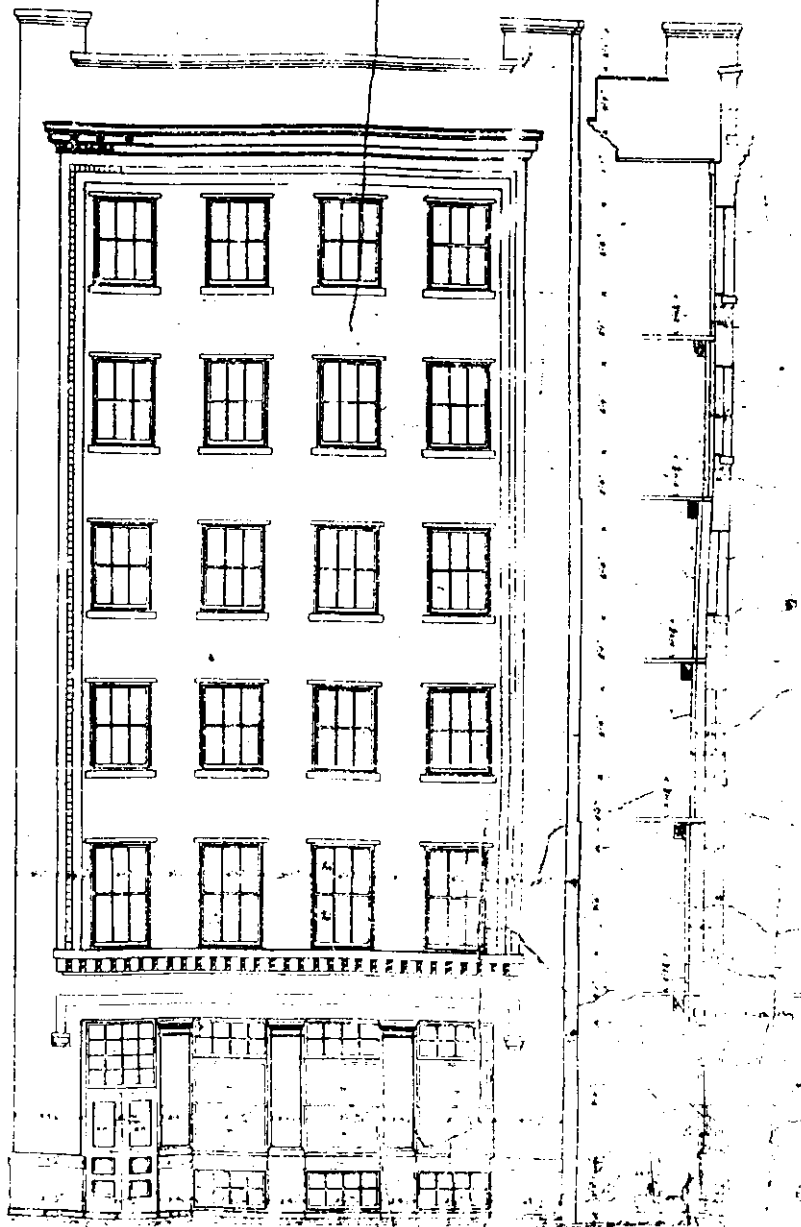
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Shepard and Farrar. Plans for The Faultless Starch  
Company, North Façade, 1903



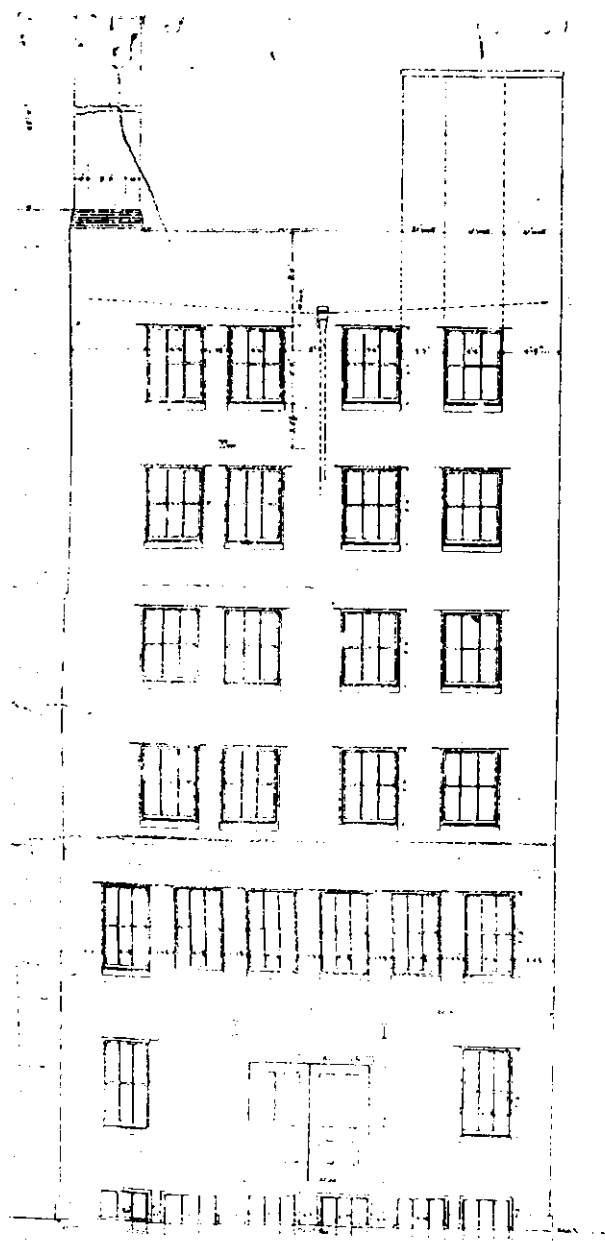
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**Shepard and Farrar. Plans for The Faultless Starch  
Company, South Façade, 1903**



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## Summary

The Faultless Starch Company Building, 1025 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and is locally significant in the following area: INDUSTRY. The development the Faultless Starch Company coincides with historic contexts identified in the MPS cover Document: "The Evolution of Kansas City Railroad Freight Industry, 1859-1950," ("Railroad Development in the West Bottoms"), "Commercial and Industrial Businesses Located Near Rail Freight Facilities, 1865-1950" ("Manufacturers") and "Commercial and Industrial Architecture in Kansas City's Railroad Freight Districts, 1869-1950" ("Commercial and Industrial Buildings and Structures 1900-1950"). As a representative example of a notable Kansas City industry, the Faultless Starch Company, at its West 8<sup>th</sup> Street facility, grew to be one of the nation's largest manufacturers and distributors of dry white starch. Located adjacent to the historic Missouri Pacific RR and Wabash RR tracks, the Faultless Starch Company easily transported its extensive line of products. Faultless Starch Company has remained a Kansas City family-owned business concern since Maj. Thomas G. Beaham acquired the formula for his product in the 1880s.

The period of significance is 1903 through 1951, the end date established by the discretionary cut-off period by the National Register.

## History and Significance

### *The Development and Growth of Faultless Starch, Kansas City, Missouri*

In May 1886, Frank Smith of Smith and Moffatt Tea, Coffee and Spice Company located at 9<sup>th</sup> and Santa Fe Street, Kansas City, Missouri, was killed when a beam fell and brought down the ceiling of his company.<sup>6</sup> In response to the tragedy, J. J. Squier, president of Citizens National Bank, sent a wire advising his nephew, Major Thomas Graham Beaham, that he should purchase Smith's share of the spice business that was to be put up for sale. Squier's knowledge of the firm's previous success and future potential convinced Maj. Beaham that it was an excellent business venture to pursue. Late in 1886, Major Beaham moved his wife, Salena Jane, and his two children, Gordon and Helen, to Kansas City. One year later, Smith and Moffatt became Beaham and Moffatt.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The spelling of the name Moffatt appears several different ways, including "Moffit." However, the majority of sources use Moffatt.

<sup>7</sup> "Gordon T. Beaham," *The Kansas City Star*, 21 June 1931, n. p. (Many of the newspaper articles for this report are included in the Mounted Clippings' File; Special collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri. Typically, the articles are not paginated.)

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Shortly after his arrival to Kansas City, Maj. Beaham acquired a formula for a dry white starch. The formula for the starch acquired by Beaham, was originally sold to Harvey Bosworth, a Kansas City druggist, from a North Carolina businessman. By 1887, Beaham and Moffatt purchased the formula from Bosworth. Subsequently, Beaham began manufacturing the dry white starch, and in 1891, he adopted the name Faultless for his new product. It found quick acceptance by housewives because it was simple to use and required no boiling. Customers found many other uses for the product besides starching clothes including the treatment of skin irritations, as an after bath talc and baby powder, and for putting a stiff finish on lace and embroidery work.<sup>8</sup>

Although Faultless Starch had been in use since May 1890, Beaham did not file for trademark protection with the United States Patent and Trademark office until 1905. The Faultless trademark consisted of a design, words and lettering style. The official description of the mark stated:

The trademark of said corporation consists of the representation of a star with rays radiating therefrom and associated with the words "Faultless Starch."<sup>9</sup>

Initially, Beaham and Moffatt sold the "Faultless" product through the tea and spice business, located at the southwest corner of Santa Fe and 9<sup>th</sup> Street in Kansas City's West Bottoms.<sup>10</sup> Eventually the company became known as Beaham Manufacturing, however, in 1898 Beaham decided to sell his holdings in the tea and spice business at which time he devoted his efforts organizing and marketing the Faultless Starch Company as its proprietor.<sup>11</sup> In 1903, the year following the incorporation of the company, the Kansas City area was hit by severe flooding. The ensuing floodwaters damaged the Beaham's building beyond repair. As a result, a

<sup>8</sup> Sherry Lamb Schirmer and Richard D. McKinzie, *At The Rivers Bend: An Illustrated History of Kansas City, Independence and Jackson County* (Woodland Hills, California: Windsor Publications, Inc., 1982), 296.

<sup>9</sup> The filing date was July 18, 1905 under serial number 71010549. However, the registration was not issued until April 3, 1906. Goods and services were described as "Powdered Laundry Starch, first use: 18900501. First use in commerce: 18900501." Owner of record was listed under "Faultless Starch Co. Corporation Missouri 1025-27 West Eighth Street Kansas City Missouri." This trademark has been renewed every twenty years since 1906. It is currently on its fourth renewal dated April 3, 1986. April 3, 2006, will mark its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary under trademark status.

<sup>10</sup> "Gordon T. Beaham, President, Faultless Starch Company, 1025 West Eighth Street, Kansas City, Missouri." Typewritten manuscript for the Citizens Historical Association, Indianapolis, April 1, 1939, 54-55. It is unclear as to the exact date that the Faultless Starch product was introduced into the overall product line. All resources indicate that it occurred sometime during the early 1890s.

<sup>11</sup> Schirmer and McKinzie, *At The Rivers Bend: An Illustrated History of Kansas City, Independence and Jackson County*, 296.

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larger and more modern facility was constructed at 1025 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Major Beaham's foresight resulted in a building plan that had a generous amount of room for expansion. Although Maj. Beaham sold off his coffee business, area grocers insisted that he retain several accounts in the Kansas City area. This accounted for a two-story unit at the rear of the original six-story structure. The coffee business was eventually phased out and the space was modified for starch production. In addition, the upper floors were leased out as warehouse storage space. As Faultless grew, they reclaimed floor space as needed.<sup>12</sup>

The popularity of Faultless Starch spread throughout the southwest when John Nesbitt, a salesman in the Texas territory (which included the current states of Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma), attached brochures to the starch boxes with a rubber band. These small publications were designed as primers and could be supplemented or substituted for textbooks. Volume Numbers 1 through 36 were published by Faultless beginning in the 1890s until the 1930s. It is of the opinion that many people in the Texas and the surrounding Indian Territory learned to read using these books during the first three decades of the twentieth century. As a result, the Faultless name was stamped in Texas memories. To date, Texas has remained one of Faultless' strongest market areas throughout the company's history.<sup>13</sup>

Business steadily increased under the leadership of Thomas's son, Gordon Taylor Beaham, who had joined the business as a shipping clerk in 1901.<sup>14</sup> The younger Beaham would spend the next fifty years with Faultless Starch as the primary contributor to the growth of his father's company.<sup>15</sup> During his presidency (1909-1951), Gordon hired the colorful figure Huey P. "Kingfish" Long as a salesman. Long persuaded Beaham to expand the Faultless marketing area to the entire southeastern portion of the United States. Long was highly successful in introducing the starch product to the Cotton Belt, a new territory that expanded from just south of

<sup>12</sup> "Specialization Has Brought Growth to a Family Concern," H. P. Wright Collection, Microfilm, Roll 14, 10:122. Western Historical Manuscript Collection. University of Missouri Kansas City Missouri.

<sup>13</sup> Schirmer, 296. According to Gordon T. Beaham III, Chairman of the Board and CEO, the company was "still getting letters from older people around the Southwest, saying that they had learned to read using the Faultless Starch booklets!"

<sup>14</sup> Gordon was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, June 26, 1877. He was ten years old when his parents moved to Kansas City. His father was strict about Gordon's educational pursuits. Upon his graduation from Kansas City Central High School in 1896, Gordon entered Princeton University. While at Princeton, Maj. Beaham kept a close watch over his extracurricular activities knowing that his son was fond of any activity that took him outdoors and when he discovered Gordon had made the bicycling team, it quickly became "taboo." With his studies taking precedent, it was no surprise that in 1901, Gordon graduated *cum laude* from Princeton with a Bachelor of Science degree. He returned to Kansas City and in 1902 was made secretary of the newly incorporated Faultless Starch Company.

<sup>15</sup> "Gordon T. Beaham, President, Faultless Starch Company, 1025 West Eighth Street, Kansas City, Missouri," 54-55.

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the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi River.<sup>16</sup> This was prior to Long's political career in 1928 when he was elected as governor of Louisiana.

Faultless Starch shipped its product via the railroad. The company's main market was "south and west of Kansas City, extending south of the line from Kansas City to San Francisco and west of the line from Kansas City to Birmingham, Alabama. This sales territory evolved for two reasons: the climate was warmer and sunnier for greater parts of the year...allowing cotton clothes to be worn almost year-round, and laundry starch does work best on cotton fabric."<sup>17</sup> Additionally,

the railroads' milling and transit rates were attractive to the company. Generally, farmers in Iowa, Illinois and Indiana grew the corn that the cornstarch was milled from. The railroads charged the wet corn millers freight rates from the cornfields to the Faultless Starch plant in Kansas City. Consequently, the railroads charged Faultless a freight rate, less what had already been paid for transporting starch from the cornfields to Faultless. There were some markets where the railroads actually refunded cash to Faultless when they shipped its finished product to markets, because it cost more to ship the starch from the cornfields to Faultless than from the cornfields to the respective customers!<sup>18</sup>

The greatest growth in sales occurred between 1934 and 1962. Every square foot of the building was now utilized fully by the Faultless company. In 1937 Beaham found it necessary to add a four-story addition to the existing six-story facility. This addition which doubled the production and storage space and tripled the amount of railroad dockage, called for the demolition of the two-story unit that was originally dedicated for production of processed ground coffee.

The success experienced by Faultless Starch Company was not only product based but also the result of a loyal staff. On Friday, July 13, 1951, the company suffered yet another devastating flood, when then first floor of the company containing both the plant and business office was flooded under 14 feet of water during the worst flood to hit Kansas City. While most businesses in the West Bottoms struggled to reopen, Faultless was the first business back in operation in just two weeks. Merrill W. Hoyt, sales manager, was credited with getting the

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Gordon T. Beaham, III, written transcript dated October 4, 2001.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* Beaham stated that the rate was not effective when the finished product was shipped back near the direction where the starch came from. So the "milling in transit" rate was available to Faultless for shipments to markets to the south and west of Kansas City.

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business back on its feet and operating as usual by the end of 1951, the same year that Gordon T. Beaham Jr. took over the presidency of the company.<sup>19</sup>

The original dry starch formula from 1887 and its' sister product with added bluing remained the company's main sources of income until 1960. In 1960, working with Arthur D. Little, Inc., a research and development firm, Faultless produced an aerosol spray starch that revolutionized and once again simplified the ironing process for housewives in America.<sup>20</sup> In 1962, Faultless began to export their products, which included Faultless Fabric Finish, Hot Iron Cleaner and Faultless Spray Pre-Wash. With a heavy marketing campaign in the early 1960s, Faultless Starch products became a stocked shelf item in United States military commissaries and post exchanges overseas, which it remains today.

With the growth in business the firm needed to expand its manufacturing plant. In 1968, the company purchased and renovated the New England Building at 9<sup>th</sup> and Wyandotte streets. The renovation began in the mid-1970s and the Faultless Starch business offices moved in 1978 thereby opening floor space for the manufacturing plant.<sup>21</sup>

The fourth generation of the Beaham Family took over the presidency in 1969 as Gordon Jr. became chairman of the board. It was under the leadership of Gordon T. Beaham III that Faultless Starch diversified their product line. Kleen King metal cleaners had become part of the Faultless family in 1968. However, the Faultless Starch Company's major acquisition was made in 1971 when they purchased the faltering Bon Ami Company. A strong advertising campaign was unleashed which capitalized on the original Bon Ami trademark. The company name was changed in 1974 to Faultless Starch/Bon Ami Company. To further diversify the product line, in 1976, Faultless acquired exclusive sales rights in the United States for the patented German tool, the Garden Weasel.<sup>22</sup>

Additionally, the company has been a proponent in testing its product line for environmental safety, as well as in the development of new uses for their existing product line.

<sup>19</sup> Schirmer, 296. At the close of September, Gordon Sr. suffered a fatal heart attack. Gordon Jr. had been with the firm since 1931.

<sup>20</sup> Arthur D. Little Inc. is a research and development firm that assists businesses in the area of product research and development of new and/or improved product lines. ADL did just this in 1960 when they assisted Faultless in the development of a superior aerosol spray starch formulation. The product revolutionized the use of starch. No longer was it necessary to wash the clothing in starch. Instead, the housewife was able to spray the starch directly onto the fabric prior to ironing.

<sup>21</sup> Schirmer, *At The Rivers Bend*, 297.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 298.

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They have worked closely with the Midwest Research Institute of Kansas City in testing formulas and new product development. Today, the Faultless Starch/Bon Ami Company sells their products worldwide in over 20 countries.<sup>23</sup>

***The Faultless Starch Company Building, 1025 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street***

Early records of the details of the starch company's business transactions are unknown, as the company records under the direction of Maj. Beaham were lost during the flood in 1903. The original location for Beaham Manufacturing, later Faultless Starch Company, was at 9<sup>th</sup> and Santa Fe streets. In June 1903, Mr. McTernan, superintendent for buildings, Kansas City, Missouri, issued his report on the condition of properties in the West Bottoms in the aftermath of the flood. According to his report, the Faultless building at 9<sup>th</sup> and Santa Fe was left beyond repair with one story, while the entire north side was completely destroyed. The floors in the remainder of the building were reported to be in dangerous condition. Subsequently, Maj. Beaham made the decision to relocate his flourishing business.<sup>24</sup> The location for the new plant, the present site of the company, was just a few blocks away at 1025 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>25</sup> The Kansas City architectural firm of Shepard and Farrar prepared plans for the six-story building in 1903.<sup>26</sup>

Under Gordon's leadership, the company grew steadily and in 1934, the prominent architectural firm of Hoit, Price and Barnes, Kansas City, was chosen to prepare plans to remodel the basement office area. H. H. Fax was named as the builder.<sup>27</sup> Because of its continued growth and success, Faultless was ready to expand the size of their plant just three years later. A building permit was taken out for \$80,000 to erect an addition of four stories and remodel the existing structure.<sup>28</sup> Hoit, Price and Barnes was again chosen as the architect with Swenson Construction Company as the builder.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 297-98.

<sup>24</sup> "Construction News, Kansas City, MO," *The Western Contractor* 2 (June 24, 1903), 2.

<sup>25</sup> *Tuttle and Pike Atlas of Kansas City, MO* (New York: Snyder and Black Lithographers, 1900), plate 2. The section of the Coates and Hopkins Addition lists the name T. G. Beaham on a 100-foot frontage of property on the corner of 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Herring in 1900.

<sup>26</sup> Shepard and Farrar. Plans, Faultless Starch-Bon Ami Company, 1025 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, Missouri. Missouri Valley Chapter-The Society of Architectural Historians: Architecture Record Collection, KC6, 1903-04. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri-Kansas City.

<sup>27</sup> Faultless Starch-Bon Ami Company Building Permit No. 98287, July 17, 1934. Landmarks Commission, Kansas City, Missouri.

<sup>28</sup> Faultless Starch-Bon Ami Company. Building Permit No. 4298-A, July 10, 1937. Landmarks Commission, Kansas City, Missouri.

<sup>29</sup> Hoit, Price and Barnes. Plans, The Faultless Starch Company, 1025 W 8<sup>th</sup> Street. The Alfred E. Barnes Collection; KC4 B47, 1934-38. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri-Kansas City.

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In 1951 a building permit was taken out in the amount of \$25,000 to repair the damage left by the great Kansas City flood.<sup>30</sup> Alterations and remodeling continued throughout the 1950s and 1960s. In 1955, alterations were made to the manufacturing building costing the firm \$72,500. Emil O. Bayerl was listed as the architect and Swenson Construction as builder. Other construction work completed during the 1950s and 1960s included the replacement of wood windows with new steel sashes. Flett Construction Company completed alterations to the boiler room in 1966.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Faultless Starch-Bon Ami Company. Building Permit 4298-A, July 10, 1937. Landmark Commission, Kansas City, Missouri.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

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Ad for Faultless Starch. Source: *Kansas City Manufacturer*, Vol. 3 (June 1901), 20.

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Dry Starch, Faultless Starch Co.

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The Faultless Starch Library consists of 36 Volumes originally published around 1889. The booklets were first distributed by an itinerant peddler as he traveled through the Indian Territory and Texas selling products from his wagon. Books were scarce in the early days of the Frontier, and many people have written to say they learned to read from these little Faultless Library Books.

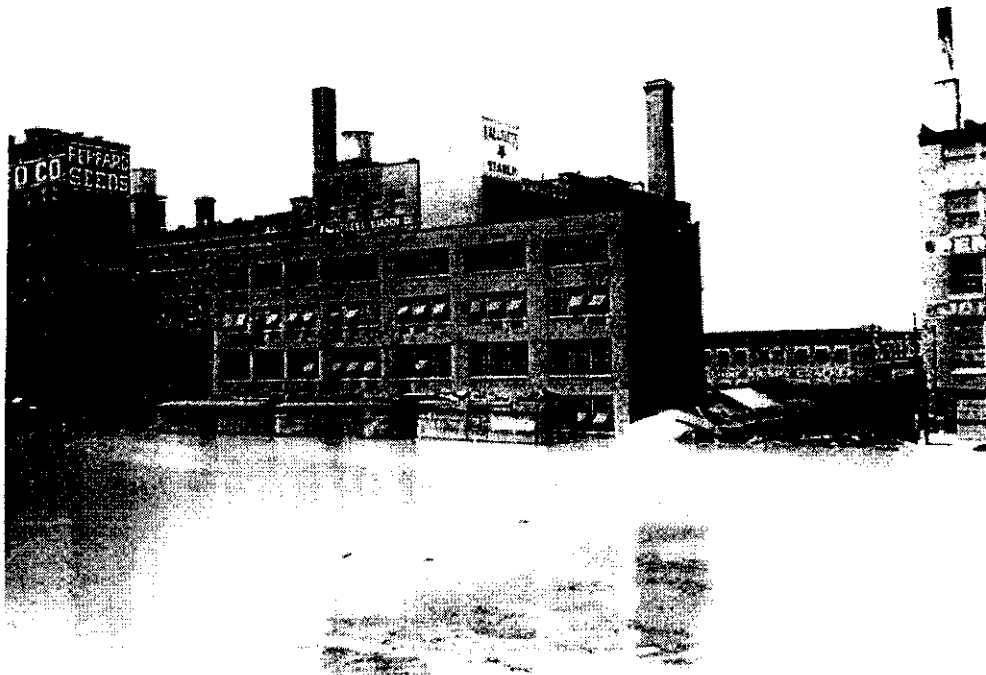
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Faultless Starch Company, 1025 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, rear of building, 1951. Flooding in the West Bottoms.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Photograph. Faultless Starch/Bon Ami, 1025 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, Missouri, 1951, #10003391. (Special Collections, Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.)

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Photograph. Faultless Starch/Bon Ami, 1025 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, Missouri, 1951, #10003391. Special Collections, Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

Shepard and Farrar. Plans, Faultless Starch-Bon Ami Company, 1025 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, Missouri. Missouri Valley Chapter-The Society of Architectural Historians: Architecture Record Collection, KC6, 1903-04. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri-Kansas City.

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The west 1/2 of Lot 35, all Lots 36-37-38-39 and east 16 feet of Lot 40, west 8 feet of Lot 40 and all of Lots 41-42, easterly 14 feet of Lot 43, Block 5, Coates and Hopkins 8th Addition, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri.

**Boundary Justification**

The property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Faultless Starch Company.

**Key to Photographs**

Photographer: Cydney E. Millstein, August 2001. All negatives remain the property of Architectural and Historical Research, Kansas City, Missouri.

1. The north and west façades of the complex showing the original 1903 building, the 1937 addition, the seven-story elevator shaft and silo and the 1976 addition; view facing southwest.
2. The north façade of the 1903 building; view facing south.
3. The south and west facades; view facing northeast.
4. The south façade; view facing north.
5. The south and west façades; view facing northwest.
6. Scene with Union Pacific train adjacent to the south façade; view facing north.

94°37'30" 360°00mE 692 500 METERS (KANS. JR 25 E R 33 W 362 169 35°00" 9 364







FAULTLESS STARCH COMPANY

FAULTLESS  
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