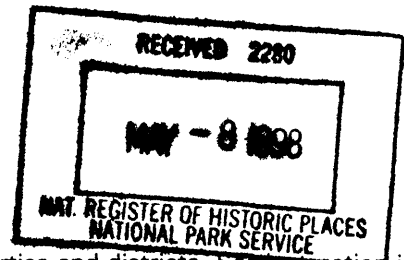


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination 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 Denver Medical Depot

other names/site number U.S. Air Force Accounting and Finance Center/5DV5142

### 2. Location

street & number 3800 York Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Denver [N/A] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Denver code 031 zip code 80205

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  [ X ] 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  [ X ] meets  [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  [ ] nationally  [ ] statewide  [ X ] locally.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ]. )

*[Signature]* Signature of certifying official/Title February 24, 1998 Date

State Historic Preservation Office, Colorado Historical Society  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  [ X ] meets  [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ]. )

*Constance Werner Ramirez* Signature of certifying official/Title Federal Preservation Officer April 30, 1998 Date

GSA  
~~State~~ or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- [ X ] 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]* Signature of the Keeper 6-3-98 Date  
Edson A. Beall

Denver Medical Depot

Denver / Colorado

Name of Property

County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
14	4	buildings
0	0	sites
0	2	structures
0	0	objects
14	6	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

DEFENSE/military facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE  
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY  
REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE  
walls BRICK  
WOOD  
roof ASPHALT  
other CONCRETE

Narrative Description

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

8.Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

[X] 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

MILITARY

ARCHITECTURE

Periods of Significance

1942-46

Significant Dates

1942

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Buell, Temple H.

Kirchhof, F.J., Construction Co.

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:

[X] State Historic Preservation Office

[ ] Other State Agency

[X] Federal Agency

[ ] Local Government

[ ] University

[ ] Other:

Name of repository:

National Archives

Denver Medical Depot  
Name of Property

Denver / Colorado  
County/State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 37.4 acres

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A. Zone 13 Easting 504330 Northing 4402140

B. Zone 13 Easting 503500 Northing 4402140

C. Zone 13 Easting 503500 Northing 4401940

D. Zone 13 Easting 504330 Northing 4401940

[ ] 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 R. Laurie Simmons and Thomas H. Simmons, historians

organization Front Range Research Associates, Inc. date 28 November 1997

street & number 3635 West 46th Avenue telephone (303) 477-7597

city or town Denver state CO zip code 80211

#### 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 U.S. General Services Administration, Real Property Disposal Division, ATTN: John Robinson

street & number 819 Taylor St., Room 11A09 telephone (817) 978-4245

city or town Fort Worth state TX zip code 76102

**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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Denver Medical Depot  
City and County of Denver, Colorado

### DESCRIPTION

The Denver Medical Depot is an historic army medical supply storage facility created on 37.4 acres of land in northeast Denver, Colorado, in 1942. The depot is located on a rectangular tract of land eight blocks long and one block wide, south of the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway (formerly the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy) tracks and extending east of York Street to the west line of Steele Street. North and west of the complex are industrial facilities, while residential areas lie to the south and east. With the exception of the two-story Administration Building and the Post Engineer's Building, the buildings of the depot are one-story in height. Most of the buildings are constructed of brick, although a few small frame buildings are located in the southeast part of the installation. The red pressed brick buildings are laid in common bond, while many of the frame buildings have drop siding. The Colonial Revival style Administration Building is the most architecturally distinguished building in the district, although some other buildings also display elements such as gabled roofs with eave returns, symmetrical fenestration, eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash windows, and elaborated entrances. Most of the brick and all of the frame buildings have no distinguishable architectural style. The buildings' designs reflect modified Army standard plans as well as plans developed specifically for the site by the project architect/engineer Temple Hoyne Buell.

The original depot complex was divided into three main service areas: the administrative area on the west; the warehouse area, occupying the largest amount of acreage, in the central part of the depot; and the carpentry, maintenance, and repair sections on the east (see Sketch Map and Figure 1). From the main entrance to the complex on York Street, five brick buildings--the Boiler House, the Administration Building, the Gate House, the Fire House, and the Post Engineer's Building--extend along a north-south axis and are set back from the street, fronting a large paved parking and landscaped area (Photographs 1 and 2). Behind the Administration Building to the east is an open, landscaped quadrangle, which is flanked on the north by the brick Inflammable Storage Building and on the south by the brick Mess Hall. Extending east of these buildings are the quarter-mile-long parallel twin brick Warehouses No. 1 and No. 2 (Photograph 3). The area separating the warehouses is paved with concrete and leads to the eastern end of the complex. A railroad spur to the site originally branched from the main line at the northeast corner of the property, with tracks running along the north side of each warehouse. Three other brick buildings are located at the east end of the district: the Motor Repair Shop; the Medical Equipment Repair Shop; and the Gasoline Station/Pump House. Six small frame buildings are also located in this area (Photographs 4 and 5).

The site is enclosed with a chainlink fence topped with barbed wire and access to the buildings is provided by concrete roads and sidewalks. Landscaping is mostly confined to the areas around the buildings along York Street, and includes grass, small deciduous trees, and evergreen bushes; in

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Denver Medical Depot  
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front of the Administration Building is a rectangular landscaped area with a tall metal flagpole. The site and buildings appear much the same as they did during the time they were used by the Army. The site has been vacant for several years and many of the buildings have suffered vandalism; the buildings are in fair condition. The complex is awaiting planned rehabilitation and redevelopment.

The complex consists of twenty resources, including eleven semi-permanent brick and concrete buildings, one permanent brick and concrete building, six temporary frame buildings, one semi-permanent structure, and one temporary frame structure. Of the twenty resources in the district, fourteen (70 percent) are contributing and six (30 percent) are noncontributing. Principal alterations to the resources include broken and boarded up windows; addition of doors and windows, and the concentration of temporary buildings in the eastern part of the site. The noncontributing resources (two small structures and four small frame buildings) were erected or moved to their present sites after 1946. The Sketch Map accompanying this form identifies the location of buildings and their contributing/noncontributing status within the district. None of the buildings included in the district has been previously listed in the National Register.

### Description of Resources Within the District

The following sections describe all of the buildings within the district, grouped by contributing and noncontributing resources. Following these descriptions is a table providing a complete list of all resources by current building number, with date of construction, and contributing/ noncontributing status listed. In the discussion below, the building number is that currently assigned to the buildings. The numbers given to the buildings during the period of significance are shown in parenthesis. Temporary buildings are identified by the letter "T" followed by a number. The names of the buildings reflect their original functions. State identification numbers ("5DV5142.\*") are also supplied. The date listed in descriptions is the date of construction. The persons/firms listed are the architect/engineer, if known, followed by the construction company. The drawing series number or special drawing numbers are listed, if known. The photograph number refers to photographs included as part of this nomination. Photographs are identified on the Sketch Map of the district by a number enclosed by a circle.

### Contributing Buildings

*Buildings 1 and 2 (1 and 2). 5DV5142.1 and 5DV5142.2. Warehouse No. 1 and Warehouse No. 2. 1942. Temple Hoyne Buell; F.J. Kirchof Construction Co. 800 Series Drawings, Revised. Photographs 3, 6, 7.* The two mammoth one-story rectangular (1,440' X 180') warehouses, each more than one-quarter mile long, extend east-west facing each other in the central portion of the depot and reflect the facility's major function: receiving and shipping medical equipment and supplies. Warehouse No. 1 is located to the south, while Warehouse No. 2 is located on the north.

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Denver Medical Depot  
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Each building was divided into six sections, with brick firewalls between each section. The brick warehouses have low arched roofs with metal coping and widely overhanging eaves on the north and south with thick exposed rafters. The interiors display wood post supports throughout.

Each warehouse has a continuous concrete loading dock which faced railroad tracks on the north and a truck loading area on the south; the docks now have metal railings. Concrete vehicle ramps are located at the ends of the buildings and concrete stairs and pedestrian ramps are located at the ends and along the sides of the buildings. Windows include groups of four two-over-two-light double-hung sash windows with concrete sills and lintels and original eight-over-eight-light windows with concrete sills and lintels located near the centers of the buildings. Louvered metal vents are located along the upper walls of the north and south sides and metal drum ventilators are on the roofs. Pedestrian entrances are inset, with tiled entrance walls and double doors. Large, insulated metal pipes suspended by brackets near the roof extend along the south walls of the warehouses. Warehouse No. 1 contains 259,200 square feet of space and Warehouse No. 2 contains 269,800 square feet.

The warehouses originally featured numerous sliding wooden garage door entrances onto the docks and platforms on the north and south sides of each building. When the facility was converted to offices in 1951, inset entrances were created and windows were added or altered while other openings were covered up. The added windows were two-over-two-light double-hung sash with concrete sills and lintels in groups of four. The pedestrian entrances included tiled entrance surrounds and double doors with transoms.

Alterations to Warehouse No. 1 include covered up entrances on the east and west. The west side of Warehouse No. 1 is altered by the addition of two brick projections. In 1997, a fire destroyed two sections in the western half of Warehouse No. 1, leaving only the concrete dock and ramps, foundation, and metal railings in those sections.<sup>1</sup> The missing sections are flanked by intact portions of the building. Both buildings have many broken and boarded up windows.

Warehouse No. 2 has a small, set back brick projection on the west, which was a post-1942 addition. Alterations to Warehouse No. 2 also include some plate glass windows on the south wall. An inset entrance with projecting gabled hood is on the east wall, flanked by factory style windows with security grilles. At the north end of the east wall is a sectional overhead garage door and a newer dock with metal deck. Most windows on the north have metal grilles and one part of the dock has been removed and an overhead garage door added. Toward the west end of the north wall is a projection with stuccoed walls and large metal louvered vents.

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<sup>1</sup>Plans for the damaged portion of the building have not been developed. The building sections might be rebuilt or the area might be used for open storage.

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Denver Medical Depot  
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*Building 3 (3). 5DV5142.3. Inflammable Storage Building. 1942. Temple Hoyne Buell; F.J. Kirchof Construction Co. Drawings IS 1-5. Photograph 8.* This one-story rectangular (100' X 150') brick building has a flat roof with metal coping, a parapeted fire wall on the east, and widely overhanging eaves on the north and south which flare slightly upward and are supported by concrete rafters. The building has a raised concrete foundation and concrete loading dock on the north and platform on the south. A concrete ramp leads to the dock, which has metal railings. The building has grouped two-over-two-light double-hung sash windows with concrete sills and inset entrances with brick entrance areas and double doors. A large, insulated, metal pipe is suspended by brackets near the top of the north wall, which also has metal louvered vents. The building was a modified mobilization type and was the only permanent building erected at the depot. It is fireproof throughout and has a reinforced concrete roof deck. It was used to store highly inflammable medical supplies, such as ether and alcohol. The building contains 15,000 square feet of storage space.

The Inflammable Storage Building is connected to Warehouse No. 2 by a postwar addition between the two buildings. Originally, the building had sliding wood garage doors and several single pedestrian doors. Alterations in 1951 included addition of windows and inset entrances and removal of garage doors. Other alterations to the building include a bricked in window opening on the north, boarded up windows and security grilles, and a metal cage on the outside of the building on the west.

*Building 4 (4). 5DV5142.4. Boiler House. 1942. Temple Hoyne Buell; F.J. Kirchof Construction Co. Drawings B1-6. Photograph 9.* The boiler house is a large, one-story, double height, rectangular (47' X 82') building with side gabled roof with overhanging eaves with raking cornice. Small triangular vents are located along the roof. The building has a raised concrete foundation and brick walls with vented gable ends. The south, east, and west walls of the first story of the building have extremely tall, evenly spaced windows filled with glass blocks and with wide concrete lintels. Upper walls on the west and east have short window openings with central paired one-over-one-light double-hung sash windows flanked by glass block windows. A double door entrance is located on the east wall. The building contains 3,850 square feet and houses four boilers which provided steam heat for the depot's complex of buildings.

Adjacent to the east wall of the boiler house is a brick smokestack with octagonal concrete base topped by an octagonal brick section surmounted by a round brick section with concrete cap and aviation lights. The brick of the smokestack is variegated shades of red on the lower part and a single shade of red on the upper part. At the northeast corner of the boiler house is a metal ash disposal structure topped by a gabled superstructure connected to a square brick ash loader by a metal pipe. The ash loader has a concrete lintel and an area covered with board and batten siding on the east wall which contains double hinged doors. On the north wall of the ash loader is a shed



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roof metal projection with boarded up door. A metal coal loading tower is located at the northwest corner of the building and is attached to a round brick coal silo with conical roof.

*Building 5 (5). 5DV5142.5. Administration Building. 1942. Temple Hoyne Buell; F.J. Kirchof Construction Co. 800 Series Drawings, Revised. Photographs 10 and 11.* This I-shaped brick two-story building contained the administrative offices of the depot and is the most architecturally distinguished building in the district. The original building consisted of the center, side gabled section (38' X 145'); gabled wings (34' X 90' each) doubling the space of the building were completed in 1943. The building has overhanging eaves, a molded, raking cornice, vented gables, and small triangular vents along the edges of the roof. The symmetrical building has a central entrance on the west and evenly spaced windows on the first and second stories. The entrance, accessed by semi-circular concrete stairs, is elaborated by paired, two-story, engaged wood pilasters and has double doors with a divided transom surmounted by a wood entablature. The windows of the central section are twelve-over-twelve-light double-hung sash with concrete lintels and sills on the first story and eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash with concrete sills on the second story. Similar windows are found on the flanking wings, with windows on the gable ends having concrete sills and lintels on both stories.

The east side (rear) of the building has gabled dormers with eight-light windows and weatherboard siding, interspersed with triangular vents. Five entrances on the east have concrete lintels and metal slab doors with small lights. On the rear, near the intersection of the south wing with the center section of the building is a small brick projection with double door entrance. Several windows and the front entrance to the building have been boarded up and other windows are broken.

*Building 6 (8). 5DV5142.6. Gate House. 1942. Temple Hoyne Buell; F.J. Kirchof Construction Co. 800 Series Drawings, Revised. Photograph 12.* This one-story brick building with concrete foundation originally consisted of the 397-square-foot side gable roof front section and was expanded during the war with an extension to the south and a rear wing, creating the current L-shaped footprint. The building has overhanging eaves and vented gables. The front (east) has three entrances facing concrete steps with metal railings. Adjacent to each entrance is an eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash window. The south wall has twelve-over-twelve-light and eight-over-eight-light windows, while the north wall has six-over-six-light double-hung sash windows. Windows have concrete sills and lintels. The west wall of the front section has an entrance facing concrete steps with metal railings. Some windows and the west wall entrance are boarded up.

*Building 7 (6). 5DV5142.7. Fire House. 1942. Temple Hoyne Buell; F.J. Kirchof Construction Co. 800 Series Drawings, Revised. Photograph 13.* The Fire House is a one-story, T-shaped brick building with concrete foundation consisting of two gabled sections, the taller, broader section

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toward the front (east). The building has overhanging eaves and a louvered vent with concrete lintel on the front gable face. The front has a wide, continuous, concrete lintel above a central entrance flanked by large multi-light windows. The entrance has a wood door flanked by fluted engaged pilasters and topped by a divided transom. A center entrance is also found on the west wall facing concrete steps with metal railings and concrete stairs on the south lead to another entrance. Windows on the north and south walls are eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash, with concrete lintels and sills. Some windows are boarded up and some have security grilles. Originally, the Fire House featured two central garage door entrances on the east and was designed to hold two vehicles, as well as a dormitory and bedrooms; the present entrance was created after the war.

*Building 8 (7). 5DV5142.8. Motor Repair Shop. 1942. Temple Hoyne Buell; F.J. Kirchof Construction Co. 800 Series Drawings, Revised. Photograph 4.* The Motor Repair Shop was one of the original facilities erected at the depot in 1942 and was designed with capacity for twenty-one vehicles, offices, repair shops, and storerooms. The tall one-story brick building has a low-pitched gabled roof with flush eaves and a concrete foundation. The rectangular (62' X 144') building originally had a series of garage doors between triple windows on the west wall, all with thick concrete lintels. Three of the garage door openings are now bricked in and have pedestrian entrances. All windows have been covered with plywood. The south wall has a central double door entrance and a single door near the southwest corner. Flanking the central entrance are single windows and a double window is near the southeast corner. The east wall has two garage door entrances and one garage entrance is bricked in. Windows of the east wall have been covered with plywood. The north wall has a lower, flat roof, brick addition with concrete foundation.

*Building 9 (11). 5DV5142.9. Gasoline Station and Pump House. 1942. Temple Hoyne Buell; F.J. Kirchof Construction Co. 800 Series Drawings, Revised. Photograph 4.* The small one-story Gasoline Station and Pump House has a shed roof with flush eaves and a large metal ventilator on the roof. The brick building has a concrete foundation. The south wall has two entrances with thick concrete lintels; one of the original paneled and glazed doors is still in place. A small louvered vent with concrete lintel is on the south wall near the foundation. The east wall has an eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash window with concrete lintel and sill and the north wall features two such windows.

*Building 10 (15). 5DV5142.10. Medical Equipment Repair Shop. 1945. Drawings A6/531.1-531.6A-1. Photograph 14.* The one-story Medical Equipment Repair Shop was erected near the end of the war to facilitate repair of used medical equipment and was later employed as a salvage building. The building is L-shaped, with a rectangular (30' X 100') side gabled brick section intersected on the rear by a gabled frame wing extending to the east. The brick part of the building is divided into two sections by a gabled firewall. The building has overhanging eaves, roof ventilators, and a concrete foundation. The west wall originally had five large entrances with

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double hinged garage doors; these entrances have been filled in with brick and now have double and single doors. Six-over-six-light double-hung sash windows between the entrances have brick sills. The east wall has one entrance covered with plywood and other entrances bricked in, as well as a series of windows, some covered and some broken. The north and south walls are divided by central wall pilasters.

A small, shorter, shed roof, corrugated metal addition was added at the southeast corner of the brick building prior to 1948. The frame wing to the east was attached to the shed roof addition during the 1950s. The frame wing has overhanging eaves and a gabled cupola clad with drop siding. Adjacent to the south wall of the wing the terrain is elevated and extends about one-third of the way up the wall of the building. The wing has a concrete foundation, walls clad with corrugated metal siding, and gable faces clad with drop siding. The wing has six-over-six-light double-hung windows on the north wall and a paneled overhead garage door flanked by windows on the east wall. Many windows are covered with plywood.

*Building 11 (13). 5DV5142.11. Mess Hall. 1943. Drawings Nos. A-1, A-6, 2, 295. Photograph 15.* The Mess Hall was erected as part of the expansion of the depot in 1943. The building was originally basically T-shaped, with a projecting gabled entrance bay on the west. Following the war, a gabled addition was made to the south, producing the current building footprint. The Mess Hall is a one-story brick building with concrete foundation. The building is composed of intersecting gables and has overhanging eaves with returns, vented gables, and some cornice molding. The main (west) entrance has a concrete lintel and double doors surmounted by a transom; there are several entrances on the south and a small brick entrance projection with double doors on the north. The north wall has evenly spaced brick wall pilasters between windows with concrete lintels and sills. Windows are boarded up and three windows on the west wall south of the main entrance are bricked in.

*Building 12 (12). 5DV5142.12. Post Engineer's Building. 1943. Drawings A-1, A-6, 7, 296. Photograph 16.* This two-story brick building with concrete foundation and one-story rear wing was erected as part of the expansion of the depot in 1943 to house offices and storage rooms of the Post Engineer. The two-story portion of the building has a side gable roof with overhanging eaves with molded, raking cornice and vented gables. The front (east) has a first story entrance near the northeast corner with concrete lintel and slab door flanked by divided sidelights. The entrance is sheltered by a porch with flat roof and metal pole supports above concrete deck. A second entrance is located near the southeast corner and has double slab doors; slightly to the north is another pedestrian door; above the doors is a continuous concrete lintel. Between the southern doors are boarded up windows with concrete sills and lintels. The upper story has a paneled and glazed door facing a metal balcony with retractable fire stairs. Windows of the upper story are eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash with concrete lintels and sills. The rear wing has

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similar windows evenly spaced along the north and south walls and metal ventilators along the roof. Many windows of the building are boarded up. The brick wall, doors, and window beneath the continuous concrete lintel of the east wall are alterations which were completed after the war; the wall originally had an open vehicle entrance, with a similar entrance on the east.

*Unnumbered World War II Temporary Building (T-4).<sup>2</sup> 5DV5142.13. Post Engineer Lumber Yard. Circa 1943. Photograph 17.* This long, rectangular, one-story frame building is located in the southeast quadrant of the depot and has drop siding, a wood foundation, and a shed roof with wide overhang with exposed rafters and braces. The building faces west and has a series of hinged board doors with concrete thresholds and an eight-light horizontal window. The building has a slightly lower, shed extension on the south which has an entrance on the west wall. The east wall has two windows, one covered with plywood.

*Building T-6 (T-5). 5DV5142.14. Equipment Shed. World War II Temporary Building. Circa 1943. Photograph 18.* This one-story, rectangular, shed roof frame building with concrete foundation is located in the southeast quadrant of the depot and has a shed overhang supported by diagonal braces on the south sheltering five wood garage doors. The building is clad with drop siding.

### Noncontributing Buildings

*Building T-5. 5DV5142.15. Original use unknown. Construction date unknown; erected or moved to this location in late 1940s or 1950s. Photograph 19.* This building, located in the southeast quadrant of the depot, appears to consist of two originally separate rectangular buildings joined together along their back walls.<sup>3</sup> Each portion of the building has a roof which slopes upward from back to front so that the middle of the building now has the lowest section of roofing and the roofs slope upward on the north and south and have wide overhangs with exposed rafters. The building is clad with drop siding. An oblique aerial photograph of the depot (ca. 1946-47) does not show a building in this location nor any frame building with this roof shape; it does appear on a 1960 aerial photograph.

*Unnumbered Brick Structure. 5DV5142.16. Natural gas structure. Circa 1960s-1970s. Photograph 9.* This small, one-story, gabled brick structure is located in the northwest corner of the facility adjacent to the Boiler House and is connected to that building by pipes. The structure has a gabled roof with slightly overhanging eaves and weatherboard siding on the gable faces; a slab door with louvered vent on the east and west wall; and no windows. The 1962 Sanborn

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<sup>2</sup>Several of the buildings have no identifiable building numbers.

<sup>3</sup>Alternatively, a longer building may have been cut in two and the two halves joined back to back.

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Insurance map does not show the structure. It is associated with the introduction of natural gas to fuel the Heating Plant's boilers in the 1960s or 1970s.

*Unnumbered Frame Structure. 5DV5142.17. Electrical equipment structure. Circa 1970s-1980s. Photograph 20.* This small, one-story frame structure has a front gable roof with slight eave overhang and houses electrical equipment. The building has no windows, a center entrance on the south wall, and is clad with vertical panel siding. The structure does not appear on a 1970 aerial photograph of the site and was probably built in the late 1970s or early 1980s, during the City and County of Denver/Denver Public Schools use of the facility.

*Unnumbered Frame Building. 5DV5142.18. Original use unknown. Circa 1960s. Photograph 4.* This one-story rectangular frame building near the northwest corner of Building 8 has a gabled roof with flush eaves. The walls are composed in board and batten fashion of plywood and board. Multi-light windows covered by grilles are on the north and south walls. The east wall has a hinged double garage door and the west wall has a sliding double garage door. The building appears on a 1970 aerial photograph of the site but is not present on a 1960 aerial photograph. It was built or moved to the site during the 1960s, during the Air Force Accounting and Finance Center occupation of the facility.

*Unnumbered Frame Building. 5DV5142.19. Original use unknown. Construction date unknown; erected or moved to this location in the late 1940s or 1950s. Photograph 21.* This one-story, front gable roof frame building with overhanging eaves and exposed rafters is located in the southeast quadrant of the depot. The building has drop siding and a concrete foundation. The west wall has an entrance with paneled and glazed door and a window adjacent to the door; both openings are covered with metal grilles. The north wall has a series of square windows with metal grilles and central paneled double doors. The east wall has a double door entrance and boarded up windows. The south wall has paired six-light windows. An oblique aerial photograph of the depot (ca. 1946-47) does not show a building in this location nor any frame building with this roof shape; it does appear on a 1960 aerial photograph.

*Unnumbered Frame Building. 5DV5142.20. Original use unknown. Construction date unknown; erected or moved to this location in the late 1940s or 1950s. Photograph 22.* This one-story frame, rectangular, shed roof building is located in the southeast quadrant of the depot and has a raised, poured concrete foundation. The roof has a slight eave overhang and exposed rafters. The building is clad with drop siding and the east and west walls have small square windows. The south wall has a large hinged board door facing an elevated wood stoop. The north wall has a paneled door and two small windows. An oblique aerial photograph of the depot (ca. 1946-47) does not show a building in this location; it does appear on a 1960 aerial photograph.

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### RESOURCES IN THE DISTRICT

<b>Building Number/ Building Name</b>	<b>State ID Number</b>	<b>Contributing To District?</b>	<b>Year Built</b>
Building 1, Warehouse Number 1	5DV5142.1	Yes	1942
Building 2, Warehouse Number 2	5DV5142.2	Yes	1942
Building 3, Inflammable Storage Building	5DV5142.3	Yes	1942
Building 4, Boiler House	5DV5142.4	Yes	1942
Building 5, Administration Building	5DV5142.5	Yes	1942
Building 6, Fire House	5DV5142.6	Yes	1942
Building 7, Gate House	5DV5142.7	Yes	1942
Building 8, Motor Repair Shop	5DV5142.8	Yes	1942
Building 9, Gasoline Station and Pump House	5DV5142.9	Yes	1942
Building 10, Medical Equipment Repair Shop	5DV5142.10	Yes	1945
Building 11, Mess Hall	5DV5142.11	Yes	1943
Building 12, Post Engineer's Building	5DV5142.12	Yes	1943
Unnumbered frame building	5DV5142.13	Yes	1943
Building T-6 (frame building)	5DV5142.14	Yes	1943
Building T-5 (frame building)	5DV5142.15	No	Late 1940s or 1950s

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<b>Building Number/ Building Name</b>	<b>State ID Number</b>	<b>Contributing To District?</b>	<b>Year Built</b>
Unnumbered brick structure (natural gas)	5DV5142.16	No	1960s or 1970s
Unnumbered frame structure (electrical)	5DV5142.17	No	1970s or 1980s
Unnumbered frame building (near Building 8)	5DV5142.18	No	1960s
Unnumbered frame building	5DV5142.19	No	Late 1940s or 1950s
Unnumbered frame building	5DV5142.20	No	Late 1940s or 1950s

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### SIGNIFICANCE

The Denver Medical Depot is a concentrated and architecturally cohesive group of historic resources representing military activities on the homefront during World War II, having been erected as a regional medical equipment and supply facility in 1942. The depot is significant under Criterion A, in the field of military history, for its operation as a U.S. Army storage and distribution center for medical equipment and supplies necessary for the war effort. As one of eleven facilities designated as medical depots in the United States during World War II, the Denver Medical Depot was the only one to serve the Rocky Mountain region. The depot is also associated with Denver's efforts to attract and maintain military facilities during World War II and with wartime employment at military installations in the city.

The depot is significant under Criterion C, for its architecture, as an example of World War II era military installation construction, as reflected in its use of standardized plans, the erection of temporary buildings, and employment of rapid construction techniques to facilitate operational readiness and conserve scarce resources. One resource, the Administration Building, is representative of the Colonial Revival style as applied to military construction. Buildings such as Warehouses No. 1 and No. 2 reflect design features and innovations developed to address technological challenges presented by the war effort. As a totality, the buildings of the district reflect the layout and design of medical depots during World War II. The depot is also significant as an example of the work of Denver architect Temple Hoyne Buell and represents Buell's work on a complete military medical installation.

The period of significance for the district encompasses the years in which the facility was established and operated as an Army medical depot, 1942-1946. The district includes nine resources erected in 1942, four resources completed in or about 1943, one resource built in 1945, and six resources built or moved to the site after the depot closed in 1946.

The criteria employed for evaluating contributing resources were: date of construction; historic associations; integrity of design, materials, setting, and workmanship; and the ability of resources to convey their appearance during the period of significance and their original functions. Many of the buildings exhibited alterations to fenestration. These buildings were judged to be contributing if their original materials, plan, scale, setting, and other design elements were apparent. Six resources were evaluated as noncontributing since they were moved in or built at their current locations after the district's period of significance.



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### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### Introduction

The Surgeon General of the United States Army operated the Denver Medical Depot as one of eleven branch medical supply depots in the United States during World War II. The 37.4-acre depot with eleven original buildings, was constructed in 1942. The facility was designed by architect Temple Hoyne Buell and erected by F.J. Kirchof Construction Company, both of Denver. Responding to wartime needs, new buildings were erected in 1943 and 1945. During World War II, the depot employed as many as 775 workers, including a large proportion of women. The depot received, repackaged, and shipped approximately 250 million tons of medical supplies during the war, supplying Army facilities in the eight Rocky Mountain states and western Texas. Although described as a permanent facility when it opened, the Army declared the facility surplus and closed it in 1946. The site was subsequently used by the Veteran's Administration as a supply depot (1947), the City and County of Denver to house city departments (1949-50), the Air Force Accounting and Finance Center (1951-1977), and the City and County of Denver and Denver Public Schools (1977-1993). The property, currently vacant, is proposed for redevelopment as an industrial/office park.

#### Site Selection

By the late 1930s, Denver was often described as "Little Washington" and "the second capital" because of the large number of federal civilian workers who lived in the Mile High City. The Denver Chamber of Commerce promoted the image, and, by 1940, some seven thousand federal employees worked in Denver. The Denver area's inland location, urban workforce, sunny climate, and railroad connections made it an attractive location for defense production and military training installations. The Denver Medical Depot was one of several military complexes located in the Denver region during World War II. Other facilities created in the mobilization for war included Lowry Field (1938), the Denver Ordnance Plant (1941), the Rocky Mountain Arsenal (1942), and Buckley Field (1942). An important Army medical post, Fitzsimons General Hospital, had been established in 1919 and expanded with a large main hospital building completed in late 1941.<sup>4</sup>

As the international situation deteriorated in the late 1930s, the American government took steps

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<sup>4</sup>Stephen J. Leonard and Thomas J. Noel, **Denver: Mining Camp to Metropolis** (Niwot, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 1990); Stephen J. Leonard, "Denver at War: The Home Front in World War II," **Colorado Heritage** (1987):30-39; Gerald D. Nash, **The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War** (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1985), 82-83.

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to increase the nation's defense preparedness. The expansion of military forces and installations required a concomitant increase in the medical supply system. As late as 1939, the Army's facilities for storing and distributing medical supplies "were geared to serve a small Military Establishment in the quiet days of peace." By the end of 1940, the Medical Department of the Army had 1.2 million square feet of storage space for medical supplies and equipment. With the expansion of existing facilities and construction of new depots, this number rose to 5.7 million square feet by the end of 1941 and to a peak of 13 million square feet in July 1943. The Denver Medical Depot was part of the wartime expansion.<sup>5</sup>

Congressman Lawrence Lewis (Democrat-Denver) played an important role in acquiring the Denver Medical Depot and other federal plums for his district and the state. Representative Lewis, who was first elected in 1932 and served until his death in December 1943, took a keen interest in locating and maintaining federal facilities within the Denver region. In February 1942, when Lewis learned that Denver might be considered as a site for an Army medical supply depot, he immediately alerted Denver Mayor Benjamin F. Stapleton and members of the Chamber of Commerce.

Captain Donald A. Peters of the Office of the Surgeon General of the Army visited Denver in February 1942 to assess the area's suitability for a branch depot. Local realtor Barclay Ivins showed Peters various industrial tracts in the Denver area as prospective sites. Local business and civic leaders hosted a luncheon at which they "presented facts about Denver as the most advantageous location for the depot." Also in attendance were the commanders of existing military installations in the Denver area, including Colonel Frederick S. Wright of Fitzsimons General Hospital.<sup>6</sup>

The preferred location among the Denver sites examined was a vacant, relatively flat 37.4-acre tract lying northeast of East Thirty-eighth Avenue and York Street. The parcel was bordered on the west by York Street, on the east by Steele Street, on the north by the tracks of the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad, and on the south by the unbuilt alignment of East Thirty-eighth Avenue. Newspaper accounts referred to the land as "the old circus grounds." Most of the acreage was owned by the City and County of Denver, with 0.72 acres owned by the Walter S. Cheesman Realty Company. A site on the grounds of Fitzsimons General Hospital was considered, but was rejected by the Surgeon General's office.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Charles M. Wiltse, ed., **Medical Supply in World War II** (Washington: Department of the Army, Office of the Surgeon General, 1968), 17 and 128.

<sup>6</sup>"Community Teamwork Scores Again," **Denver**, 2 April 1942, 1.

<sup>7</sup>"Denver Gets U.S. Medical Supply Base," **Denver Post**, 26 March 1942.

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On 26 March 1942, the Army announced that it had chosen Denver as the location for a new branch medical supply depot. It was reported that both Omaha, Nebraska, and Salt Lake City, Utah, had "exerted every effort to win it." The Chamber of Commerce newsletter gave Representative Lewis major credit for securing the depot and labeled the prize another example of "Community Teamwork--pulling together to sell Denver's advantages to a prospective enterprise."<sup>8</sup>

### Construction

The Construction Team. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Denver District, Missouri River Division, supervised the project, with Colonel Carl H. Jabelonsky as the District Engineer and First Lieutenant William D. Mitchell as the Area Engineer. Colonel Jabelonsky had also overseen construction at Fitzsimons General Hospital. The actual design and construction of the facility was undertaken by two well-known Denver firms: Temple Hoyne Buell and Associates, architectural and engineering services, and by the F.J. Kirchhof Construction Company, general contractor.

Architect Temple Hoyne Buell had come to Denver in 1921. Born in Chicago in 1895, he graduated from the University of Illinois and received a master's degree in architecture from Columbia University. Buell served in World War I and was wounded in a gas attack at Chateau-Thierry. After his discharge, he returned to Chicago where he briefly worked in the firms of Marshall and Fox and C.W. and George L. Rapp. He developed tuberculosis and traveled to Denver in 1921 for his health. Buell was associated with Mountjoy and Frewen before starting his own firm in 1923.

Buell designed a wide variety of buildings in the Denver area, including the Paramount Theater, more than two dozen public schools, the Colorado State Service Building at East Colfax Avenue and Sherman Street, and the Lincoln Park Housing Project (razed). During the war, Buell's firm was also involved in the design of the Army Air Corps Bomber Modification Center located at Denver Municipal Airport (later renamed Stapleton International Airport). In the 1950s, the architect emerged as a major land developer, building the Cherry Creek Shopping Center in Denver and the Midtown Shopping Center in Pueblo, Colorado.<sup>9</sup>

Construction. Work on the plans for the depot began on 8 April and was completed 30 April 1942. Construction commenced on 12 May 1942, and in June, the **Denver Post** observed that "with a speed astonishing even in these record-making days, the army's huge new medical supply depot . . . is taking form on the old circus grounds in northeast Denver." The depot's two large warehouses each contained 1,250,000 bricks; the first warehouse was erected in just twenty-two

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<sup>8</sup>"Community Teamwork Scores Again," **Denver**, 2 April 1942, 1.

<sup>9</sup>Thomas J. Noel and Barbara S. Norgren, **Denver: The City Beautiful and Its Architects, 1893-1941** (Denver: Historic Denver, Inc., 1987), 192-93.

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days. Roughly one thousand workmen were involved in the depot's erection; alternate shifts were employed to make round-the-clock construction possible.<sup>10</sup>

As soon as individual compartments of the warehouses were enclosed, equipment was installed, and the Army began using the space. Except for the Boiler House, all of the buildings were completed by 30 September 1942. Work on the Boiler House was not finished until late December due to delays in receipt of some of the steam generation equipment.

The formal dedication of the \$2.5 million Denver Medical Depot took place on 21 September 1942, ahead of the original construction schedule. A celebratory luncheon sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce drew 1,018 attendees, including Colorado Governor Ralph L. Carr, Denver Mayor Benjamin Stapleton, and "the most prominent civilian and military men of the Rocky Mountain region." The luncheon was held in one of the giant warehouses, and was marked by numerous speeches and music by the Lowry Field Air Forces Band.<sup>11</sup>

Initial Layout. At its dedication, the Denver Medical Depot consisted of eleven buildings situated on a long, east-west rectangular parcel (See Figure 1).<sup>12</sup> The two most significant and physically most impressive buildings on the post were the two 1,440' X 180' warehouses. Each warehouse had railroad access along its north side and truck loading along its south side; one warehouse was used for receiving goods and the other for shipping them. Masonry firewalls divided each warehouse into six separate compartments. In addition, the north warehouse (Warehouse Number 2) had subterranean vaults for the storage of narcotics and rubber. An inflammable materials warehouse (Building Number 3) for the storage of such supplies as ether and alcohol was located just west of Warehouse Number 2. The warehouses provided the depot with 535,000 square feet of storage space.

The east and west ends of the depot contained support and administration buildings. A two-story administration building (Building Number 5) was located in the center of the western edge of the installation (See Figure 2). The building faced west, with a tall flagpole and landscaped parking area sited immediately in front of the building and the mountains visible in the distance. To the

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<sup>10</sup>"Medical Depot Work Speeded," **Denver Post**, 10 June 1942 and "Fast Work on York Street," **Rocky Mountain News**, 26 July 1942, 18.

<sup>11</sup>**Rocky Mountain News**, 22 September 1942, 5.

<sup>12</sup>Building numbers used in this section are those used in the 1943 completion report for the installation, see U.S. War Department, United States Engineer Office, Office of the Area Engineer, "Completion Report for Denver Medical Depot, Denver, Colorado, Job P-1," under the supervision of the U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers, Denver District, Missouri River Division, Denver, Colorado, 30 March 1943. Some buildings were renumbered after 1962.

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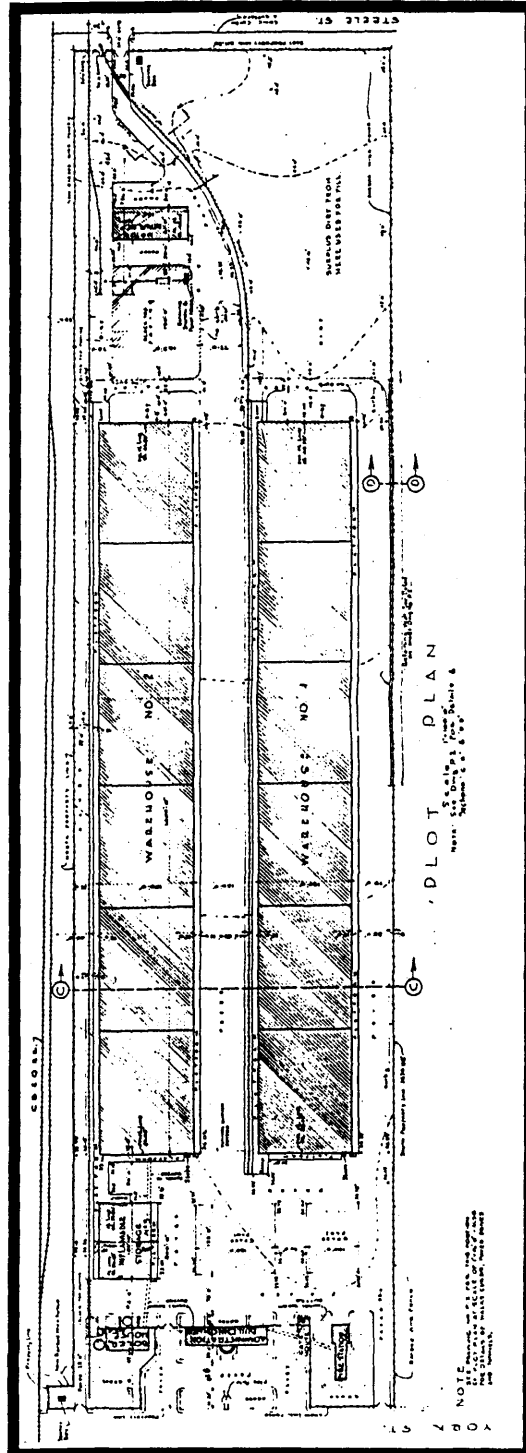


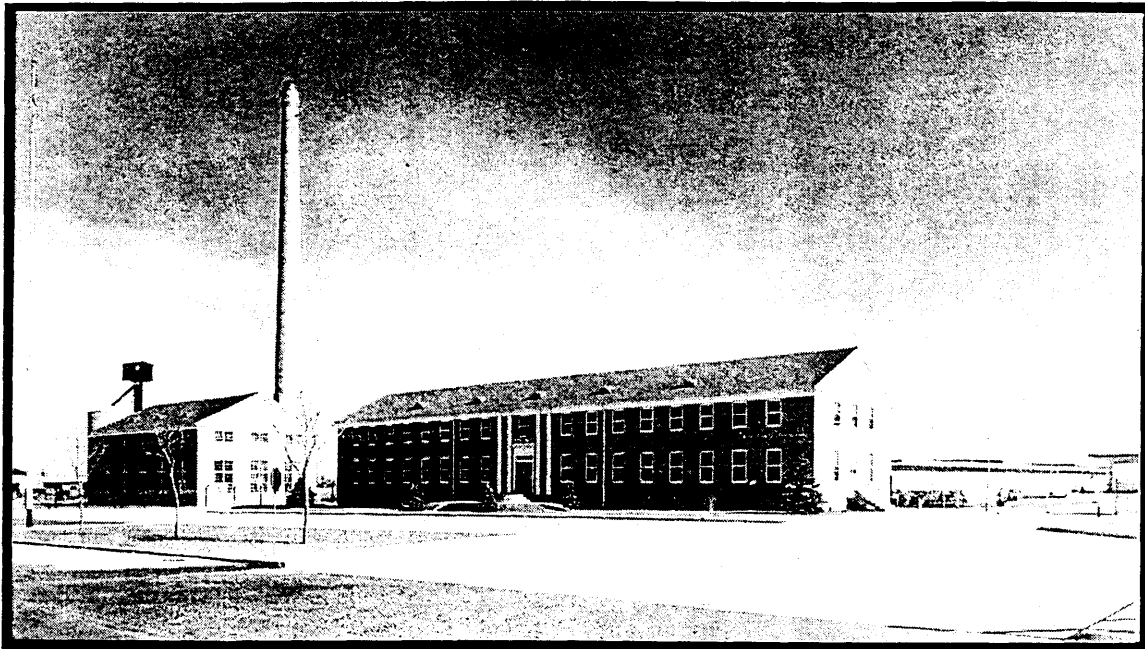
Figure 1. The completion report for the Denver Medical Depot showed the installation's layout and original buildings when it was constructed in 1942. SOURCE: U.S. War Department, United States Engineer Office, Office of the Area Engineer, "Completion Report for Denver Medical Depot, Denver, Colorado, Job P-1," 30 March 1943.

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**Figure 2.** This late 1942 or early 1943 view from York Street shows the Boiler House (left) and the Administration Building (right) prior to its expansion with north and south wings in mid-1943. SOURCE: Denver Public Library, Western History and Genealogy Department, photographic collection, negative number F47238, Denver, Colorado

south was a gate house (Building Number 8) and a fire station (Building Number 6). The heating plant (Building Number 4) and a sentry block (Building Number 9, no longer extant) lay to the north. The heating plant, which provided steam heat via underground tunnels to the depot's major buildings, had a coal silo, an ash storage structure, and a tall brick chimney. The eastern portion of the installation contained a motor repair shop (Building Number 7), a small gasoline station (Building Number 11), a sentry block (Building Number 10, no longer extant), and Building T-1, a maintenance supply structure used by the Post Engineer (no longer extant). The southeastern section of the tract was not developed.

With the exception of the two sentry boxes and the maintenance supply building, all of the depot's original facilities were of brick construction. Only the inflammable materials warehouse, however, was classified as permanent construction, since its roof rafters and supporting piers were built of concrete. The remaining brick structures were categorized as semi-permanent construction, while the frame buildings were deemed temporary construction.

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### Depot Operation During World War II

Mission. The Denver Medical Depot was established as a branch Army medical equipment and supply facility serving the western portion of the country. The Denver unit was the distribution center for Army facilities in the states of Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, and the western part of Texas, as well as for shipments to ports of embarkation for overseas destinations. The depot supplied general hospitals, such as Fitzsimons, as well as station and post hospitals. Complete hospital assemblies were put together at the Denver Medical Depot for shipment to the western United States. The Denver depot was a key depot for drugs, chemicals, biological products, surgical supplies and laboratory, X-ray, dental, pharmacy, hospital, and field equipment.<sup>13</sup>

Several newspaper articles described Denver's facility as one of the largest medical supply depots in the nation. Its first commander, Major Robert L. Black, explained that "the Denver depot, one of eighteen in the country, is one of the four largest. The only other stations of similar or larger size are those at Savannah, Ga., New York, and St. Louis. In regard to equipment and scientific warehousing methods, it is expected to be the most modern of all."<sup>14</sup> By late 1942, the depot was receiving ten railroad carloads of supplies daily. The depot stocked six thousand items in its catalogue, including surgical instruments, large hospital beds, operating tables, medicine, dental chairs, X-ray machines, and bandages and dressings.<sup>15</sup>

Workforce. The workforce of the Denver Medical Depot expanded from two Army officers and a handful of civilian employees to a total of 350 workers by the end of 1942. Nearly all of the depot's workers were civilian civil service employees, who were administered by a detachment of Army officers; no enlisted men were stationed at the post. By June 1943, the depot workforce had grown to 769 civilian employees and thirty-nine Army officers. About 47 percent of the workers were women (See Figure 3). Blacks and Hispanics were also part of the depot workforce. To boost morale, depot employees organized sports teams (including softball and baseball), drafted a depot song ("Three Cheers for the D.M.D."), and created a depot coat of arms and motto

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<sup>13</sup>Wiltse, **Medical Supply in World War II**, 566 and "Medical Depot Work Speeded," **Denver Post**, 10 June 1942.

<sup>14</sup>"Medical Depot Work Speeded," **Denver Post**, 10 June 1942. Sources varied on the total number of medical depots, a figure depending on the year (as additional medical depots were added to the system) and whether one counted just medical depots and/or the medical sections of other supply posts.

<sup>15</sup>"Army Medical Depot Serves Nine States," **Denver Post**, 31 December 1942, a and "Denver Medical Depot: Mercy in Wartime Major Role of Plant," **Rocky Mountain News**, 2 April 1943, 17. In April 1943, the depot reportedly had 17 million aspirin tablets in its stores.

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("Supplentes Celeriter Miseritum" or "Mercy Through Speeding Supplies").<sup>16</sup>

Operations. During its first year of operation (June 1942 to June 1943), the Denver Medical Depot shipped fifty-nine million pounds of medical equipment and supplies. Near the end of the war in



**Figure 3.** Approximately 47 percent of the depot workforce was women. This worker is stenciling a crate of sulfa drugs for overseas shipment in 1945. SOURCE: **Rocky Mountain News**, 27 July 1945, 11.

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<sup>16</sup>"Army Medical Depot Serves Nine States," **Denver Post**, 31 December 1942, 11A; "Denver Medical Depot Passes First Milestone," **Denver Post**, 8 June 1943, 4 and 10 July 1943, 15. The coat of arms featured a mountain range, caduceus, a mortar and pestle, a crate, a pallet, and a forklift.



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July 1945, the depot's cumulative total had reached 250 million pounds. On occasion, the depot would receive orders by telegram to "Ship one 1,000 bed hospital" to a specified destination. This practice was developed by the Army to facilitate the efficient shipment of supplies and equipment meeting recurring, standardized needs. "Using equipment lists prepared during the emergency period, medical depots packed assemblages which included, within the limits of supplies and equipment available, all items needed to establish hospitals of various sizes and kinds, ranging from 25-bed station hospitals to 1,000-bed general hospitals." Within forty-eight hours, the thousands of items necessary to fulfill such an order, from X-ray machines to a broom and a front door mat, would be assembled and shipped.<sup>17</sup>

The Denver depot and other depots in the system used a variety of innovative special equipment and techniques to handle the unprecedented amounts of material and information. Supplies and equipment were received and unloaded onto wooden pallets, "a simple but ingenious aid." The supplies were then tallied in, inspected, and moved to storage.<sup>18</sup> Within the depot "a special device known as a forked-lift stacker is used to pile the supplies in orderly rows in the warehouse. Gasoline tractors pulling trains of four-wheeled trucks will be used to transport items from one part of the plant to another."<sup>19</sup> (See Figure 4)

"Electrical accounting machines" (forerunners of today's computers) were installed in the administration building to keep track of the depot's changing inventory of equipment and supplies. Lieutenant Colonel Black observed that "without the machines we would have been forced to hire an office force of at least a hundred to keep our books. Comparatively few trained technicians can operate the machines, however, and we were thus prevented from adding a further drain on the manpower of the region."<sup>20</sup>

Other innovative devices and techniques used at the Denver Medical Depot were discussed in the 1943 anniversary issue of the **DMD News**, a newsletter published by and for depot employees. A rolling typewriter desk was developed that permitted a typist and typewriter to roll from point

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<sup>17</sup>"Denver Army Medical Depot Third Largest in United States," **Denver Post**, 7 April 1943, 3; "Denver Medical Depot Passes Milestone," **Denver Post**, 8 June 1943; "Medical Depot Here Has Busy Three Years," **Rocky Mountain News**, 27 July 1945, 11; and Clarence M. Smith, **The Medical Department: Hospitalization and Evacuation, Zone of Interior**, United States Army in World War II, the Technical Services (Washington: Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, 1956), 137.

<sup>18</sup>Wiltse, 132.

<sup>19</sup>"Denver Medical Depot Turned Over to Army for Operation," **Denver Post**, 22 September 1942, 3.

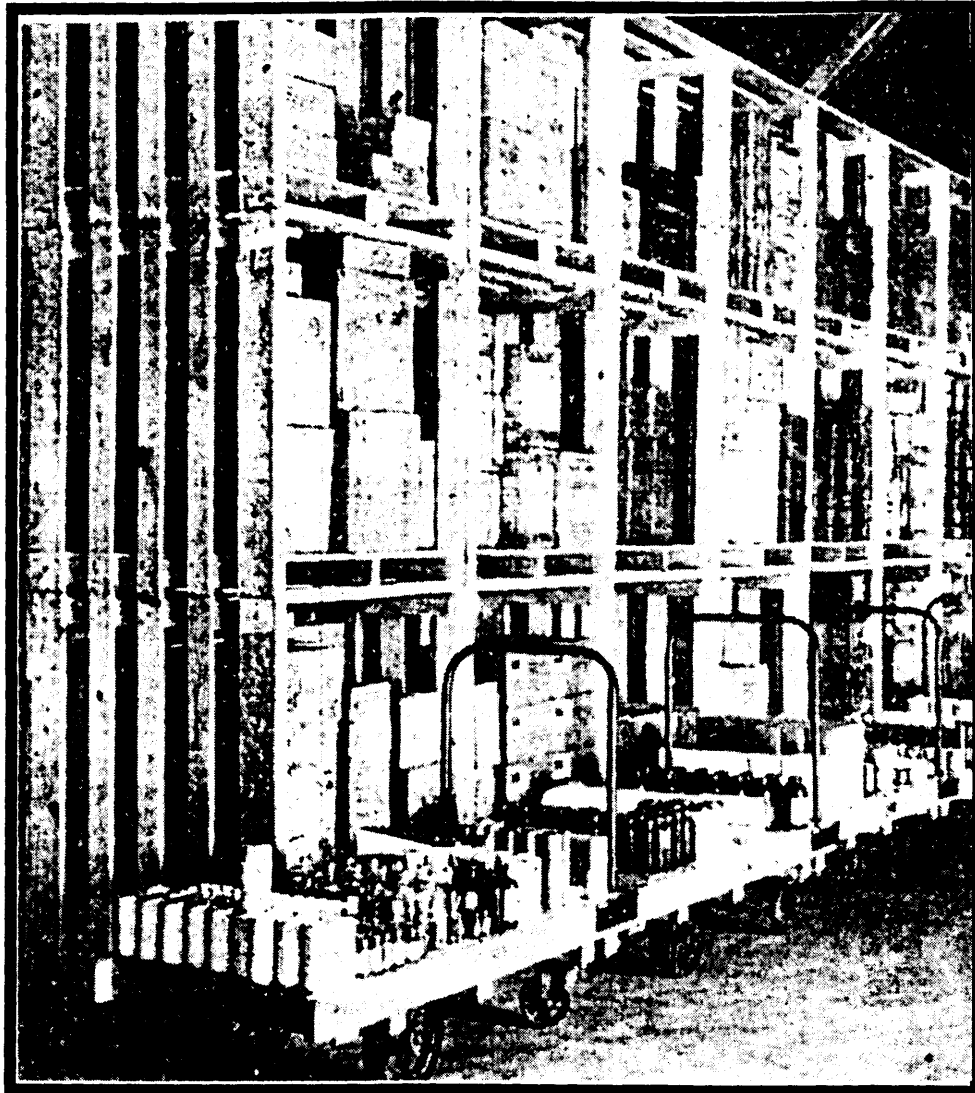
<sup>20</sup>"Army Medical Depot Serves Nine States," **Denver Post**, 31 December 1942, 11A.

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**Figure 4.** Stacked pallets laden with boxes and four-wheeled trucks facilitated the storage and shipment of supplies and equipment within the Denver Medical Depot. SOURCE: *Denver Post*, 7 April 1943.

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to point in the warehouses preparing packing lists. Production line carpentry, particularly for such items as pallets and crates, was instituted in the carpentry shop to enhance productivity and speed. Rolling stepladders with a top platform and safety railings were fabricated to permit safe and efficient access to overhead storage.<sup>21</sup>

In January 1943, Lt. Colonel Black was transferred to Washington and placed in charge of all Army medical supply depots. Army Surgeon General James C. Magee praised the Denver depot in April 1943, calling it "one of the most modern installations of its kind in the world." In September 1943, a clinic for commanders of other medical supply depots was held at the Denver depot to demonstrate operational features and methods. Denver was chosen as the location for the meeting "based on an opinion that the local depot's ideal and modern construction and its reputation for progressive methods in warehousing and shipping is outstanding."<sup>22</sup>

Expansion During the War. Building expansion and new building erection occurred at the Denver Medical Depot during the war. In 1943, two wings were added to the Administration Building (doubling its office space), a Post Engineer's Building was completed (Building Number 15), and a Mess Hall was erected (Building Number 13). The \$100,000 expansion in the western part of the installation did not increase the depot's storage space but did "materially increase the efficiency of the operation." The new buildings were of brick, semi-permanent construction.<sup>23</sup>

In 1945, a brick medical equipment repair building was constructed east of Warehouse Number 1. The expansion was aimed at relieving the workload of the St. Louis Medical Depot. During 1945, the Denver shop repaired nearly \$1.7 million worth of medical equipment.<sup>24</sup> The depot also gained a number of frame, temporary buildings during the war, which were constructed in the eastern end of the post. Included were two storage sheds, an equipment shed, and a lumber storage building (See Figures 5 and 6).<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>DMD News, Anniversary Number, 1943.

<sup>22</sup>"Surgeon General Praises Denver Medical Bases," **Denver Post**, 1 April 1943 and "Medical Depot to Demonstrate Supply Methods," **Denver Post**, 1 September 1943.

<sup>23</sup>"Medical Depot Will Have New Buildings," **Rocky Mountain News**, 2 June 1943.

<sup>24</sup>Wiltse, 113.

<sup>25</sup>U.S. War Assets Administration, Declaration of Surplus Property, WAA Form 1055, filed by the U.S. Veterans Administration, 20 May 1946, in the records of the U.S. War Assets Administration, Real Property Disposal Case Files, 1939-1962, Records Group 270, Box 38, National Archives-Rocky Mountain Region, Denver, Colorado.

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**Figure 5.** This circa 1946-47 oblique aerial photograph (view northeast) provides perspective on the extent of the Denver Medical Depot complex. SOURCE: Denver Public Library, Western History and Genealogy Department, photographic collection, O. Roach photograph, negative F32521, Denver, Colorado.

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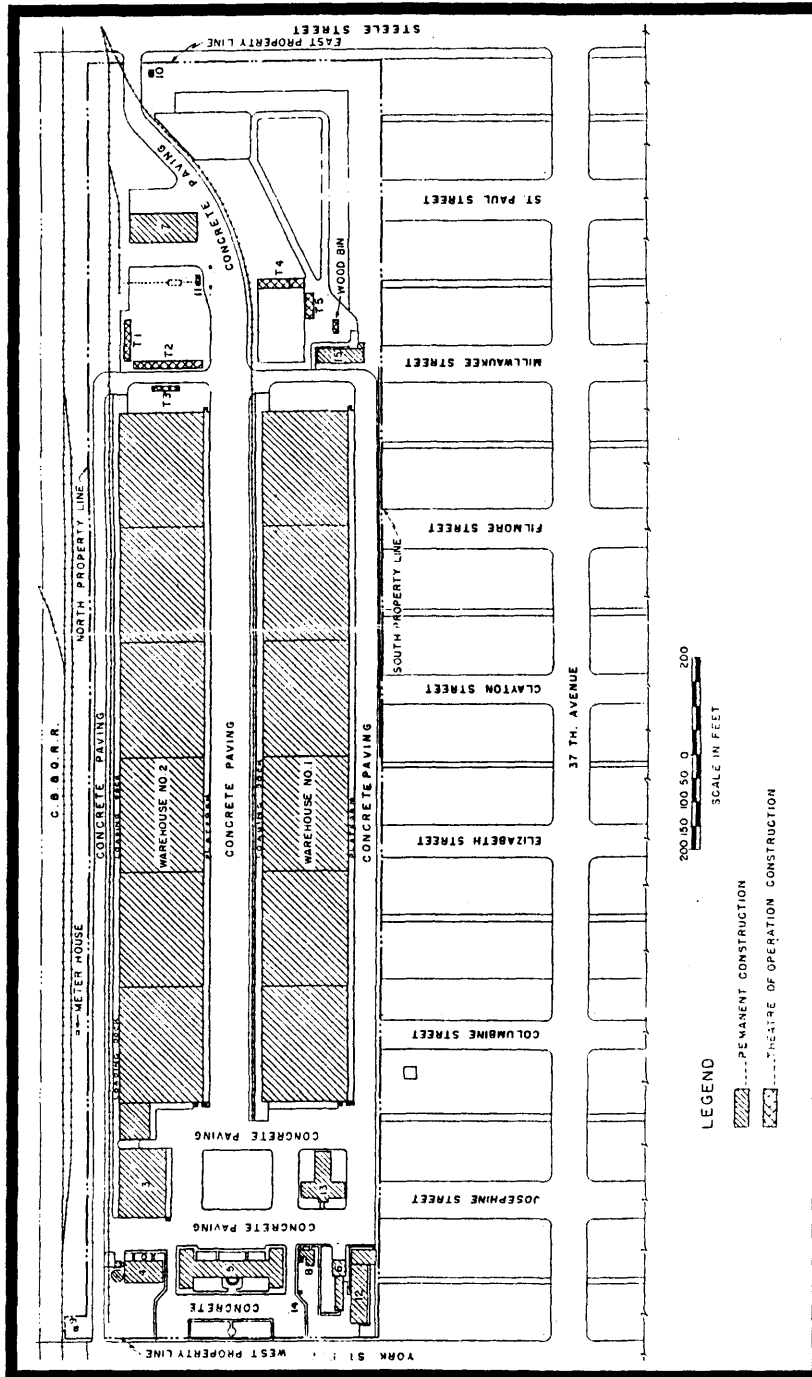


Figure 6. This map of the Denver Medical Depot was prepared in 1948, as the War Assets Administration prepared to dispose of the surplus facility. SOURCE: Records of the War Assets Administration, National Archives, Rocky Mountain Branch, Denver, Colorado.

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### Postwar Uses

Although many assurances had been made that the Denver Medical Depot was a permanent installation that would continue operations after the cessation of hostilities, the Army announced that the Denver facility would close 1 October 1946 and the five hundred remaining workers would be dismissed. Abandonment of the facility was averted in late September 1946, when the Veterans Administration (VA) acquired the post as a supply depot. The VA used the facility until late 1947, when the agency determined that the functions of the Denver supply center could be handled by depots in Alabama and California. The VA informed the War Assets Administration that the facility was surplus and suitable for disposal.<sup>26</sup>

The depot was described as "the choicest plum remaining among the war-built federal installations in Colorado," with considerable interest in the site expressed by trucking, manufacturing, and wholesaling firms. The buildings along the western edge of the facility were utilized by the Army Reserve in 1948, but the fate of the remainder of the depot remained unclear until early 1949. Denver's new mayor, Quigg Newton, saw the depot as an ideal facility for replacing many of the city and county's overcrowded, scattered, unsafe, and antiquated public buildings. In February 1949, a \$1.85 million lease-purchase agreement by the city was approved with the federal government. Such city departments as the auto license bureau, highway and fire department shops, and the traffic engineering department were moved to the depot property, but Denver's occupation was brief.<sup>27</sup> In November 1950, the federal government selected Denver as the site of the U.S. Air Force Finance Center. The former medical depot was seen as an ideal location for the new installation, and the city and federal government mutually agreed to terminate the lease-purchase agreement. The Finance Center had originally been located in St. Louis, Missouri, after the creation of the U.S. Air Force as a separate service in 1948. Mayor Newton hailed the center as a great economic stimulus for the city, with its 2,500 workers bringing a payroll of \$12 million to Denver.<sup>28</sup>

The immense warehouses at the depot were converted to office space with the addition of

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<sup>26</sup>"Medical Depot Workers Petition Against Firing," *Denver Post*, 13 September 1946, 3 and "Vet Administration Acquires Denver Army Medical Depot," *Rocky Mountain News*, 24 September 1946, 13.

<sup>27</sup>"U.S. Medical Supply Depot to be Sold," *Denver Post*, 30 July 1947, 1; "Mayor Seeks to Buy Medical Depot for Fire Dept. Expansion," *Rocky Mountain News*, 14 September 1947, 24; "City Signs Lease on Medical Depot," *Denver Post*, 31 January 1949, 2.

<sup>28</sup>"Denver Will Get Air Force's Giant Finance Center," *Rocky Mountain News*, 22 November 1950, 5; "Denver Named Finance Center for Air Force," *Denver Post*, 22 November 1950, 3; "AF Unit Boon to City, Mayor Says," *Rocky Mountain News*, 27 November 1950, 5.

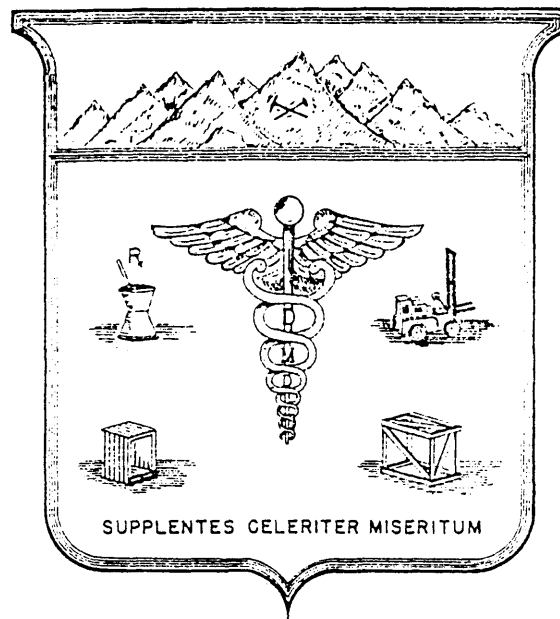
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windows, pedestrian doors, and dropped ceilings in a \$2 million remodeling completed in the first half of 1951. The Air Force Finance Center (later the Air Force Accounting and Finance Center) was formally dedicated on 31 July 1951. The workforce of the center reached its peak level of employment during the Korean War in 1953 with three thousand employees. The Finance Center continued to operate at the depot site until January 1977, when it moved to a new facility on the grounds of Lowry Air Force Base in east Denver.<sup>29</sup> From 1977 until 1993, the depot property was jointly occupied by the City and County of Denver and the Denver Public Schools (DPS). City agencies such as Wastewater Management, Building and Zoning, and elements of the Denver Public Library used the northern portion of the depot, while the schools used the southern part to house various administrative and program offices. The property has been vacant since 1993 and has suffered vandalism, neglect, and, in 1997, an arson fire which destroyed part of the southern warehouse. A redevelopment proposal is now pending to rehabilitate the depot buildings as an office/industrial park.<sup>30</sup>



<sup>29</sup>"A.F. Dedicates Finance Center," *Denver Post*, 31 July 1951, 2; "AF Finance Workers Support Center Shift," *Denver Post*, 21 March 1974; and "Schools, City to Take Over 38-Acre Site," *Rocky Mountain News*, 25 March 1977.

<sup>30</sup>"Fire Erupts in Abandoned Building," *Rocky Mountain News*, 9 August 1997, 4A and *Denver Post*, 17 October 1997, 1C.

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Denver Medical Depot  
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**Boundary Description**

The nominated property consists of the following parts of Township 3 South, Range 68 West, 6th Principal Meridian, City and County of Denver, Colorado: that portion of the south half of Section 24 lying south of the southerly line of the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad right-of-way and west of the westerly line of Steele Street and that portion of the south half of the southeast quarter of Section 23 lying southerly of the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad right-of-way and lying east of the easterly line of York Street. The historic district boundary is indicated on the Sketch Map.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes all of the land historically occupied by the Denver Medical Depot during the 1942-46 period.

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City and County of Denver, Colorado

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### Photographic Log

The following items are the same for all photographs:

Property Location: City and County of Denver, Colorado

Photographer: Thomas H. Simmons

Date: November 1997

Location of Original Negatives:

Colorado State Historical Society  
1300 Broadway  
Denver, Colorado 80203

Photograph Number	Camera Direction	Resource
1	Northeast	York Street frontage of the depot, showing (left to right) the Boiler House, the Administration Building, and the rear of the Post Engineer's building.
2	Northwest	Streetscape at western edge of the depot, showing (left to right) the Post Engineer's building, the Fire House, the Gate House, the Administration Building, and the Boiler House.
3	West	Warehouse Number 1 (left) and Number 2 (right), with the Administration Building in the background and the Rocky Mountains beyond.
4	Northeast	Group of buildings in the northeastern section of the depot, namely an unnumbered frame building (5DV5142.18), the Motor Repair Shop, and the Gasoline Station and Pump House (left to right).
5	West-Northwest	Cluster of frame buildings in the southeast section of the depot.
6	East	Warehouse Number 2 (left) and Number 1 (right). Note missing sections of Number 1 caused by a 1997 fire.
7	Northeast	Warehouse Number 2.
8	Northwest	Inflammable Materials Storage Building.

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<b>Photograph Number</b>	<b>Camera Direction</b>	<b>Resource</b>
9	Northeast	Boiler House (center), flanked by small gas utility structure (5DV5142.16, left) and the Administration Building (right).
10	Northeast	Administration Building (front or York Street side).
11	West	Administration Building (rear).
12	Northwest	Gate House.
13	West- Southwest	Fire House.
14	Southeast	Medical Equipment Repair Shop.
15	Northeast	Mess Hall.
16	Southwest	Post Engineer's Building.
17	North- Northeast	Unnumbered frame building (5DV5142.13).
18	Northeast	Building T-6 (5DV5142.14).
19	Southwest	Building T-5 (5DV5142.15).
20	Northeast	Unnumbered frame structure (5DV5142.17).
21	Northeast	Unnumbered frame building (5DV5142.19).
22	Southwest	Unnumbered frame building (5DV5142.20).

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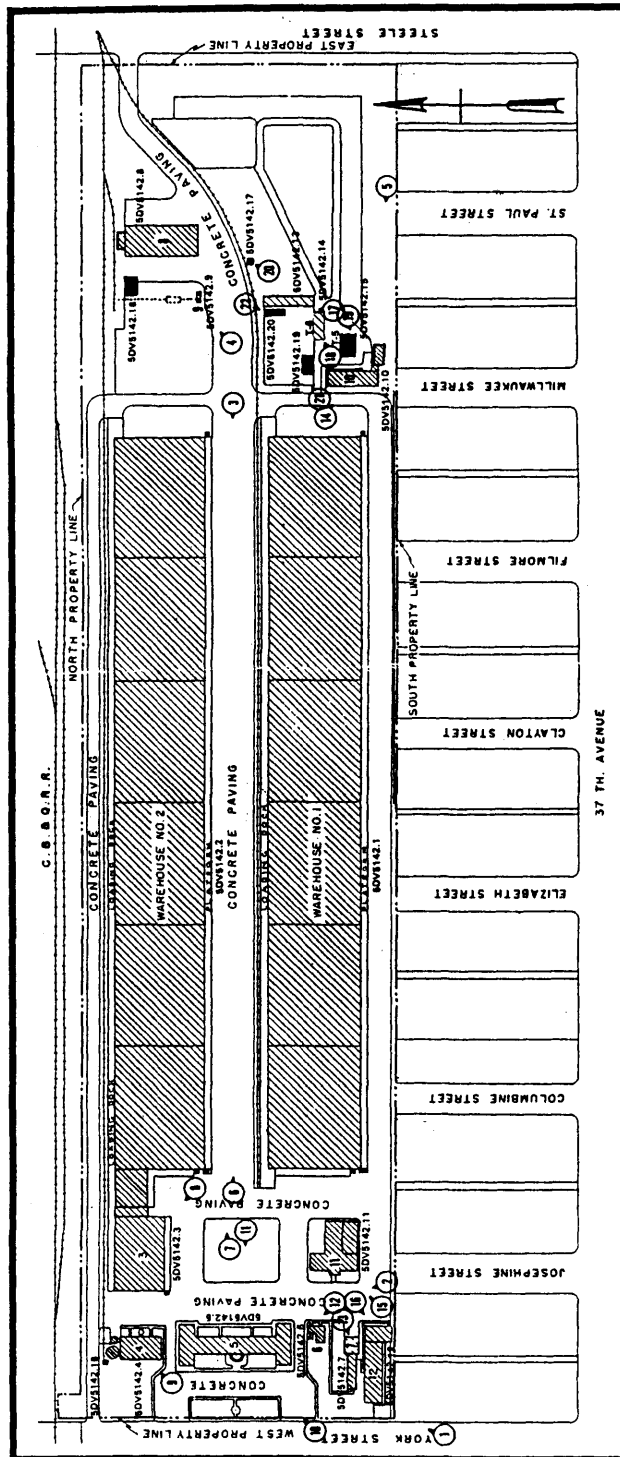
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Denver Medical Depot,  
City and County of Denver, Colorado

DENVER MEDICAL DEPOT (5DV5142)  
CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER, COLORADO



## SKETCH MAP



Numbers on buildings are current building numbers (if any) and state identification numbers. Circled numbers are photographic references showing location and camera camera direction of the photographs referenced in the nomination narrative. Dashed line indicates district boundary. Railroad tracks within the property are no longer present.



LEGEND

-  Contributing
-  Noncontributing

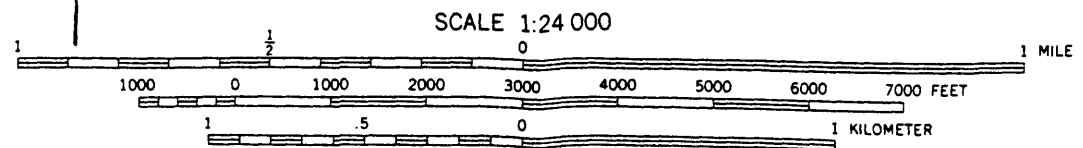
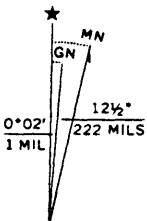
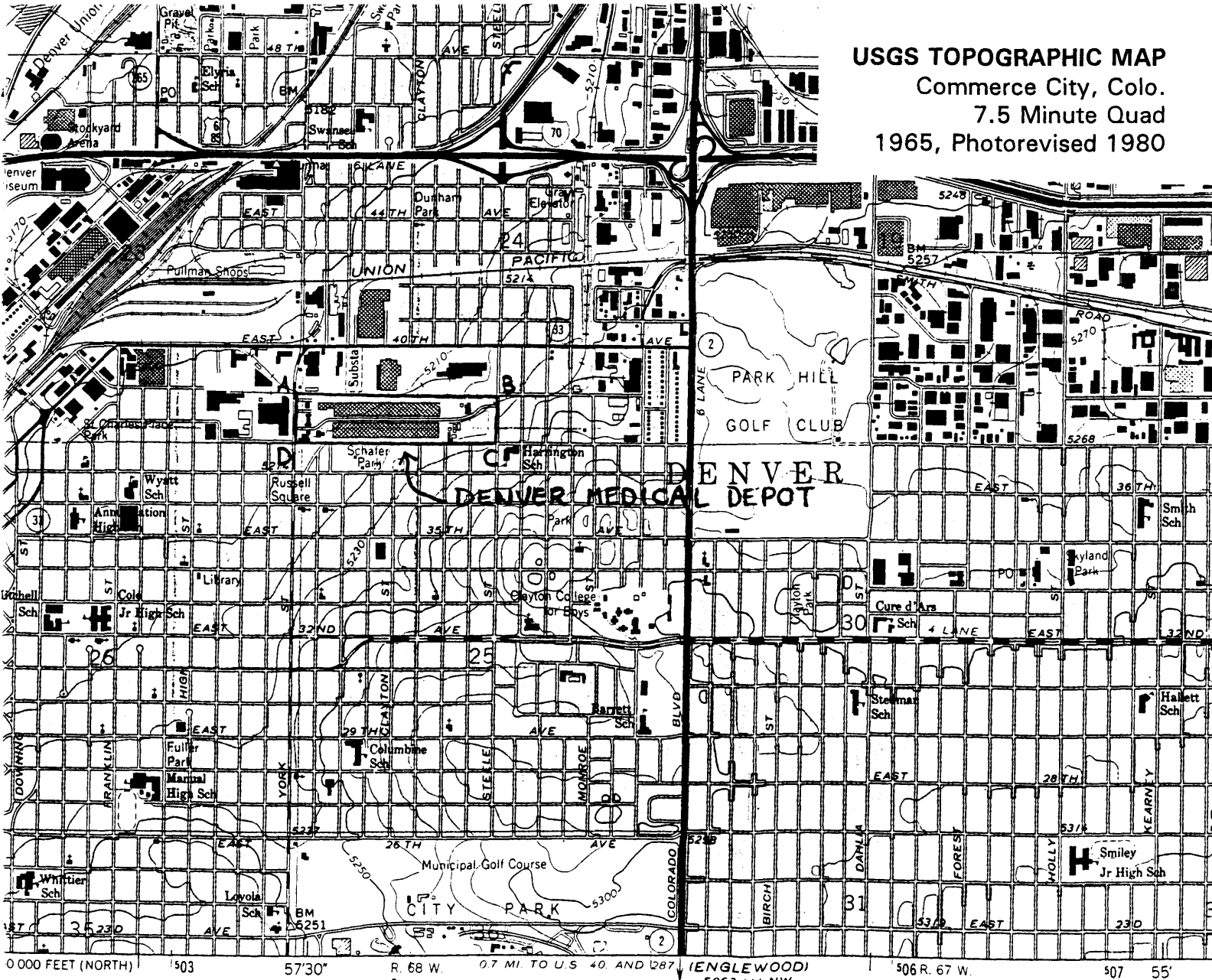
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Denver Medical Depot,  
City and County of Denver, Colorado

**USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP**  
Commerce City, Colo.  
7.5 Minute Quad  
1965, Photorevised 1980



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

ITM GRID AND 1980 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET