

The Upjohn Company



Jeremy Winkworth

My Time at Upjohn

- Started in May 1980 at Upjohn in Portage
- Worked in Quality and Regulatory areas
- Had 9 different assignments
- Retired in October 2017 from Pfizer



STATEMENT OF EARNINGS AND DEDUCTIONS

UNIT	NAME	SOCIAL SECURITY NO.	PERIOD ENDING	Upjohn	
7832	JEREMY M WINKWORTH		800515	Year to Date Gross Earnings	65455
				Year to Date F.I.C.A.	4012
				Year to Date Fed. With. Tax	9183
				Year to Date City/State Tax	2723
				Federal Dependents	1
				City - State Dep	1
				Savings Bonds Purchased	
				Accumulation	
				Credit Hrs. Avail	
				Vacation Hrs. Avail	
				Vac. Adv. Bal	
GROSS EARNINGS		65455	COMMENTS	1.	\$800.00
NET					49537
NEW 5-5 DED 2 DAS PE 5-15					
COMMENT TYPES					
1 YOUR RATE HAS CHANGED TO ABOVE AMOUNT					
2 ADV. VAC. BALANCE IS DUE UPJOHN					
3 ADV. VAC. BALANCE IS DUE EMPLOYEE					
4 NO ADV. VAC. BALANCE REMAINING					
5 E.I.C. ADDED TO NET PAY					

Memories of The Upjohn Company Website

www.upjohn.net

Memories of The Upjohn Company

Welcome to upjohn.net, a place to browse photos and information about The Upjohn Company of Kalamazoo, Michigan (1886-1995) ** What's New on Upjohn.net **

Search Memories of The Upjohn Company

----- News -----

January 2026 - A new book on the Upjohn Pharmacy in Disneyland by Stephen Hall is now available. [See the details here.](#)

November 2025 - I returned to the former Upjohn Company Portage site (now Pfizer) to give a presentation on the history of quality in the 19th and 20th centuries. [Here's my summary of the visit.](#)

August 2025 - It has now been 30 years since the Upjohn Company ceased to exist. The [news of the merger](#) with Pharmacia broke on the 21st August 1995 in the Kalamazoo Gazette.

Recent Employee Obituaries - [Marv Hoffman](#) [Dick Walter](#) [Bruce Fletcher](#) [Jerry Roberts](#) [John Marsh](#) [Dick DeWolf](#) [Dolores Leitch](#) [Hugh Hendershot](#) [Lee Henby](#) [Bob Salisbury](#)

The Upjohn Pill & Granule Co.,

1886 to 1902

Company Names

Upjohn

1902 to 1995



Pharmacia
& Upjohn

1995 to 1999

Pfizer

2003 to date

PHARMACIA

1999 to 2003

W.E.Upjohn



Dr. Wm. E. Upjohn, at the time he founded The Upjohn Company, then known as The Upjohn Pill and Granule Company



W.E.Upjohn

- Country doctor
- Invented the friable pill
- With his two brothers started The Upjohn Pill and Granule Company
- Wrote the City Charter for Kalamazoo
- Mayor of Kalamazoo
- Donated money to build The Civic Theater
- Donated money for parks, athletic fields and other buildings

Person of the 20th Century

Kalamazoo Gazette

1, 2000

Kalamazoo, Michigan

50¢

Everything's Y2-OK

Upjohn made his mark on Kalamazoo

Here was a person whose creations and contributions set the course for this community during his life – and long after his death.

● **Editor's note:** Today the Kalamazoo Gazette is naming a person of the century who, in our opinion – and that of a majority of readers who made nominations – had the greatest impact on this community over the past 100 years.

BY ROGER KULLENBERG
KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

With Dr. W.E. Upjohn gone from the Kalamazoo scene for more than 67 years, there aren't a lot of people alive today who spent time with this great man.

Among those fortunate few is Martha Gilmore Parfet, one of Upjohn's grandchildren and today a prominent Kalamazoo businesswoman, civic leader and benefactor.

"I remember, as a child, that we would visit my grandfather at his home at Brook Lodge (near Au-

gusta)," Parfet said. "He would pick us up and swing us around. I would be sitting on his lap, and he'd poke my cheek and make funny noises. He adored his grandchildren, and he was a wonderful family man."

He was that, and more. For achievements that shaped this community and beyond, the Kalamazoo Gazette has chosen Upjohn as the local Person of the Century.

Many might be surprised to

**PERSON
EXTRA!
OF THE
CENTURY**

learn that, in a physical sense, Upjohn wasn't very big. He was stocky but stood only 5 feet 6 inches tall – a blue-eyed, square-jawed, cigar-smoking man blessed with boundless energy and vision.

But in the context of his life's work, Upjohn was nothing less than a giant. During the eight decades he lived, Upjohn, among other things:

Please see **UPJOHN, A2**

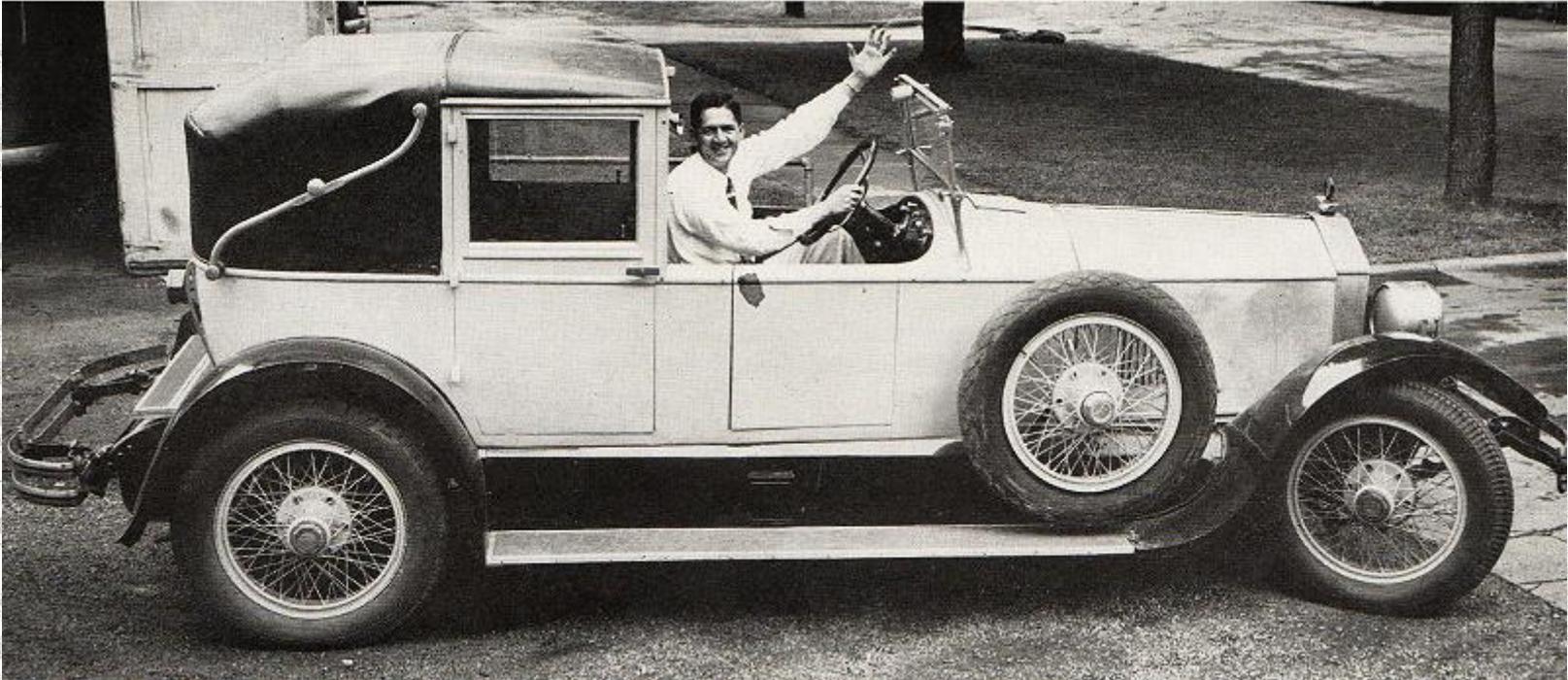


W.E. Upjohn

First Automobile in Kalamazoo



Bob Boudeman's Roamer





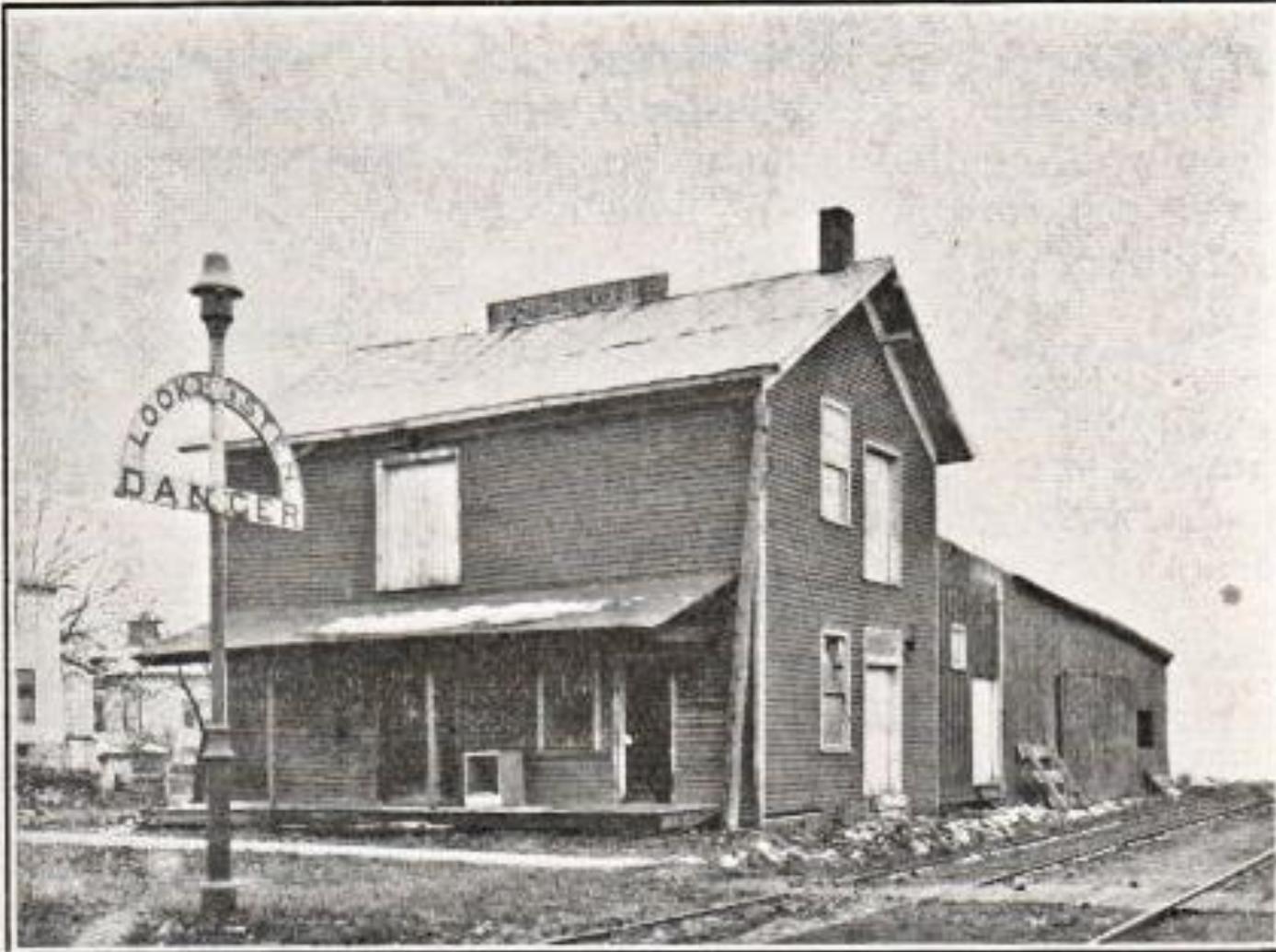
New Upjohn Company Patrol Car March 1959

NOTICED THE "NEW LOOK" of Patrol Car No. 15? It's a Checker Cab, manufactured locally, and pictured here with one of its several drivers, Night Watchman Hiram Baker.

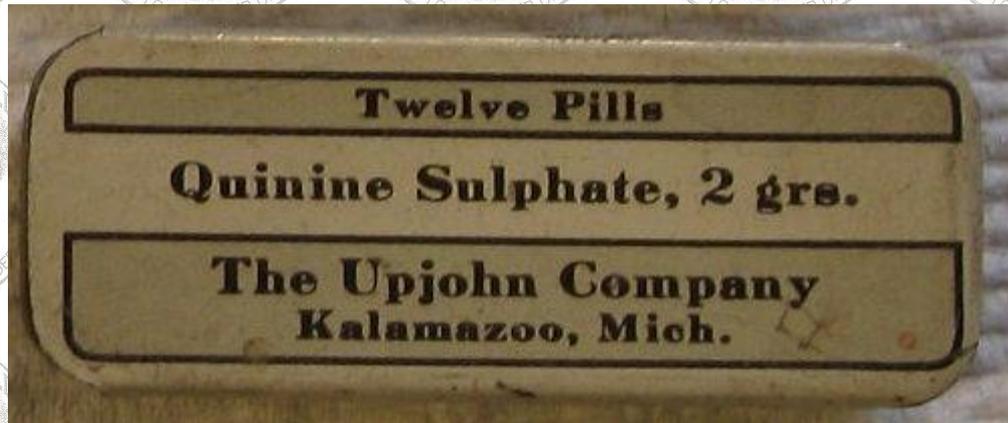
Chalking up approximately 70,000 miles of running time plus many hours of idling time over a two-year period, the patrol car receives extremely hard usage. It is on duty from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. every weekday and runs continually from Friday evening to Monday morning. The car is used for patrolling the Portage Plant area including hangar, pump houses, and picnic grounds. Constant contact with the fire station is maintained by two-way radio.

The hour-after-hour cruising at slow speeds and the stop-and-start driving of the patrol car almost exactly duplicate driving conditions of a taxi cab. Construction and Maintenance people feel that this rugged vehicle is ideally suited to the job they have planned for it.

A Start in Hastings



Quinine



19th Century Products



More 19th Century Products





100 Pills
Coated Red
Hematic Tonic
(Upjohn)

Each pill represents:
 Bland-Upjohn,* 3 grs.
 Manganese Dioxide, 1/4 gr.
 Strychnine Sulphate, 1/60 gr.
 Arsenous Acid, 1/100 gr.
 Mercuric Chloride, 1/80 gr.
 Aloin, 1/20 gr.
 Zinc Phosphide, 1/16 gr.

*Bland-Upjohn contains in permanent form 75% more available Ferrous Carbonate than is found in freshly prepared Bland's Mass.

Dose--1 or 2 pills after each meal.

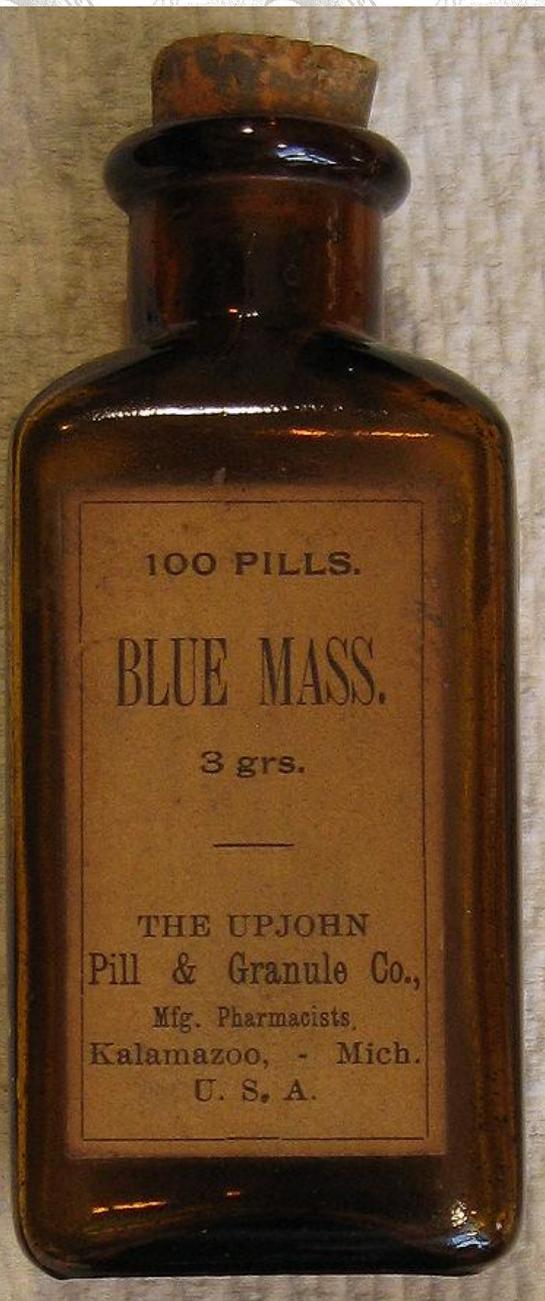
The Upjohn Company
 Makers of Fine Pharmaceuticals
 Kalamazoo, Mich.
 39275

Questionable Ingredients

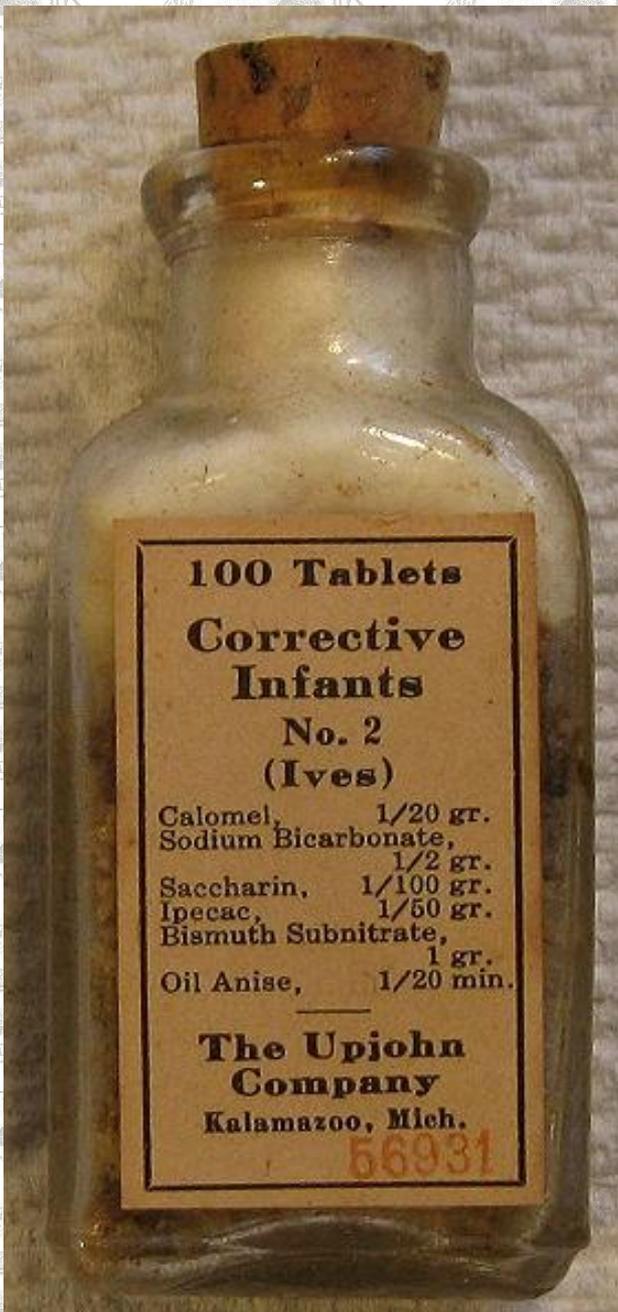
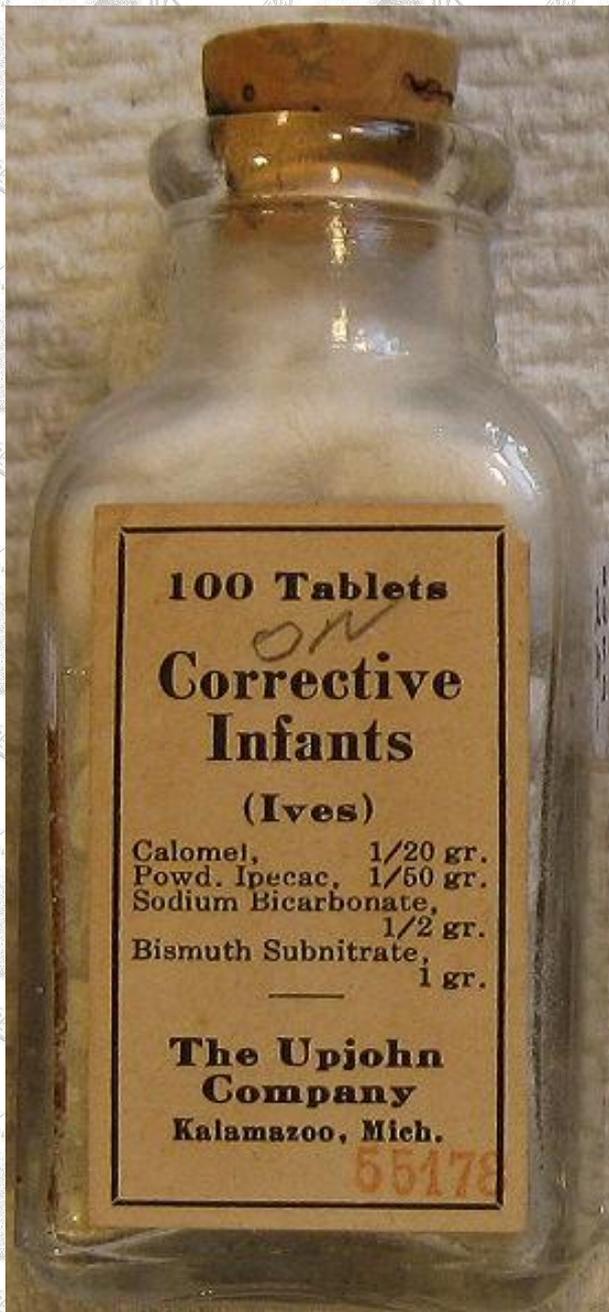
- Antimony
- Arsenic
- Belladonna
- Calomel
- Cannabis
- Henbane
- Heroin
- Mercury
- Opium
- Quinine
- Strontium
- Strychnine
- Turpentine



Upjohn's Worst Product



- **Blue Mass is 33% mercury. It was used to treat syphilis, tuberculosis, constipation, toothache, parasitic infestations and the "pains of childbirth".**
- **3 grains of Blue Mass per pill in this 1890's bottle amounts to 65mg of mercury.**
- **People who took one pill per day of this would have a mercury level 2000 times higher than today's safe limit!**



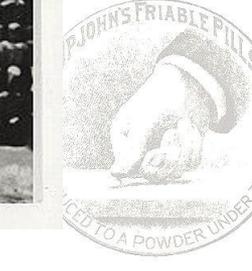
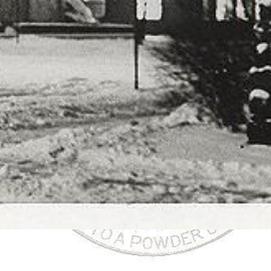
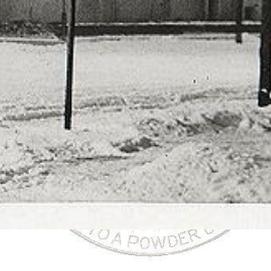
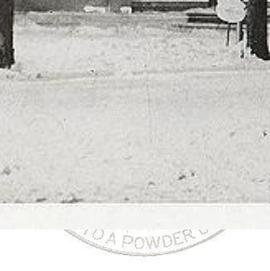
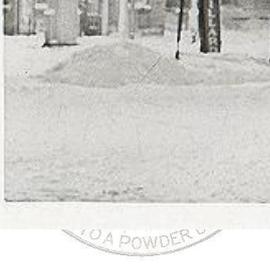
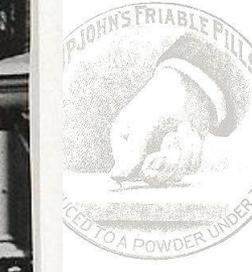
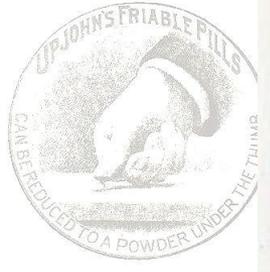
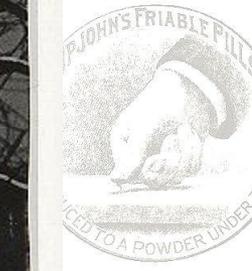
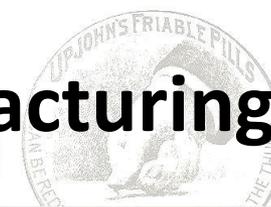
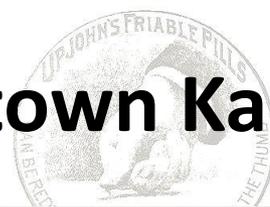
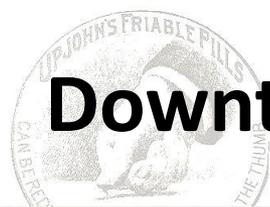
Mercury for Infants



Manufacturing in Downtown Kalamazoo



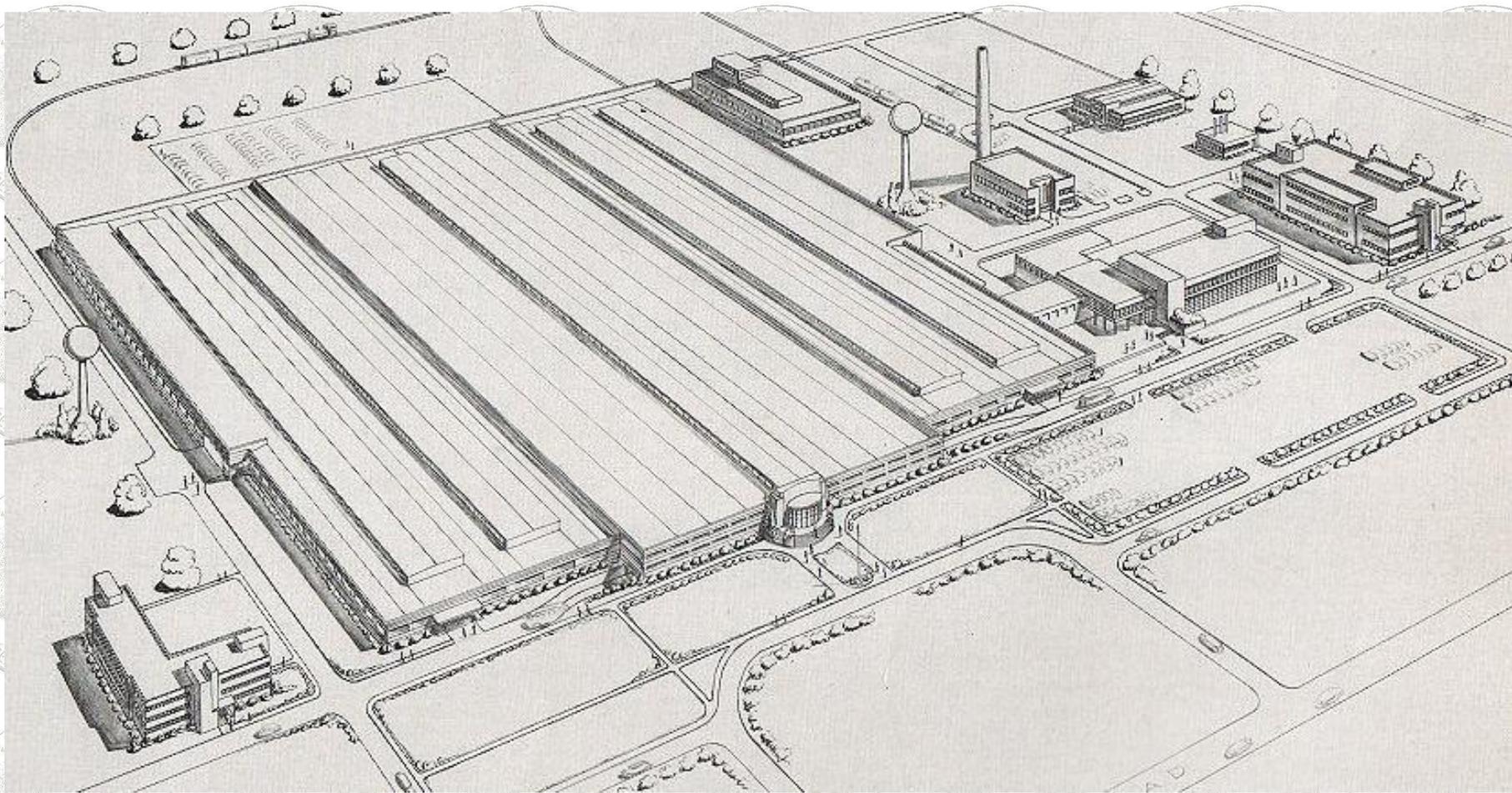
Downtown Kalamazoo Manufacturing





**Street sign in the
previous photo**

New Manufacturing Plant in Portage

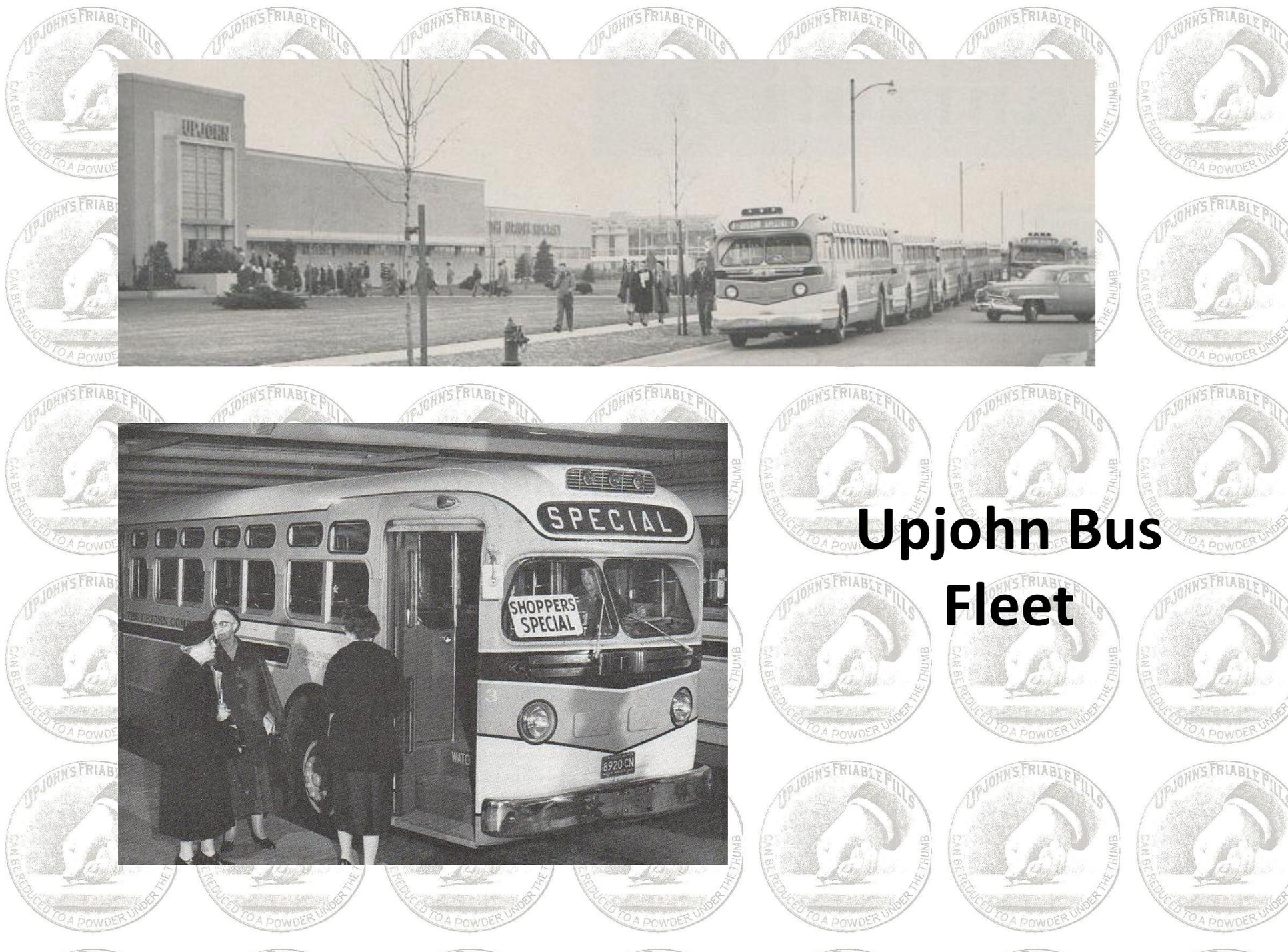


Building of the Portage Site

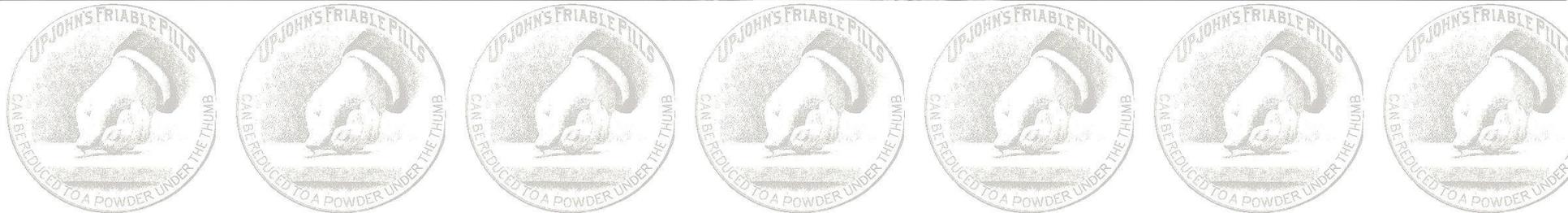
- A site on Kilgore Road was considered but rejected.
 - 1500 acres of farmland were purchased in Portage Township.
- Building construction started in 1946.
- Dynamite was used to blow up the trees and old building foundations that needed to be removed.
 - The first powerhouse boilers used at the site were from decommissioned World War II navy ships.
 - The large manufacturing building known as Building 41 had 1.5 million sq ft of space in it.
 - The site was fully open in 1951
 - The building process was extensively photographed and filmed.



Upjohn Bus Fleet



Upjohn Fleet in February 1964



Buses Bear Higher Costs, Fewer Riders

Rising Metro Transit charter rates have pressed Upjohn into a 15 cents-a-ride fare increase for its charter bus passengers, according to Art Pula, Employee Relations.

Upjohn currently maintains four bus routes at a loss, says Art, who administers the program.

"Bus fares are not designed to recover the full charter costs, even if the buses run at capacity," he states, "but there has to be a point beyond which this doesn't make sense."

Currently, routes that average 25 or more are considered viable. When attendance falls below this level, the bus routes concerned are eliminated.

"I am concerned about the future of the buses," says Art. "We have had to discontinue three routes, one on Portage Street and two express routes from East Main and West Main, because our ridership was too low. We currently have one bus — Bus A, which runs at 7:00 A.M. — below the 25 person average. If ridership is low now, in good weather it may drop further."

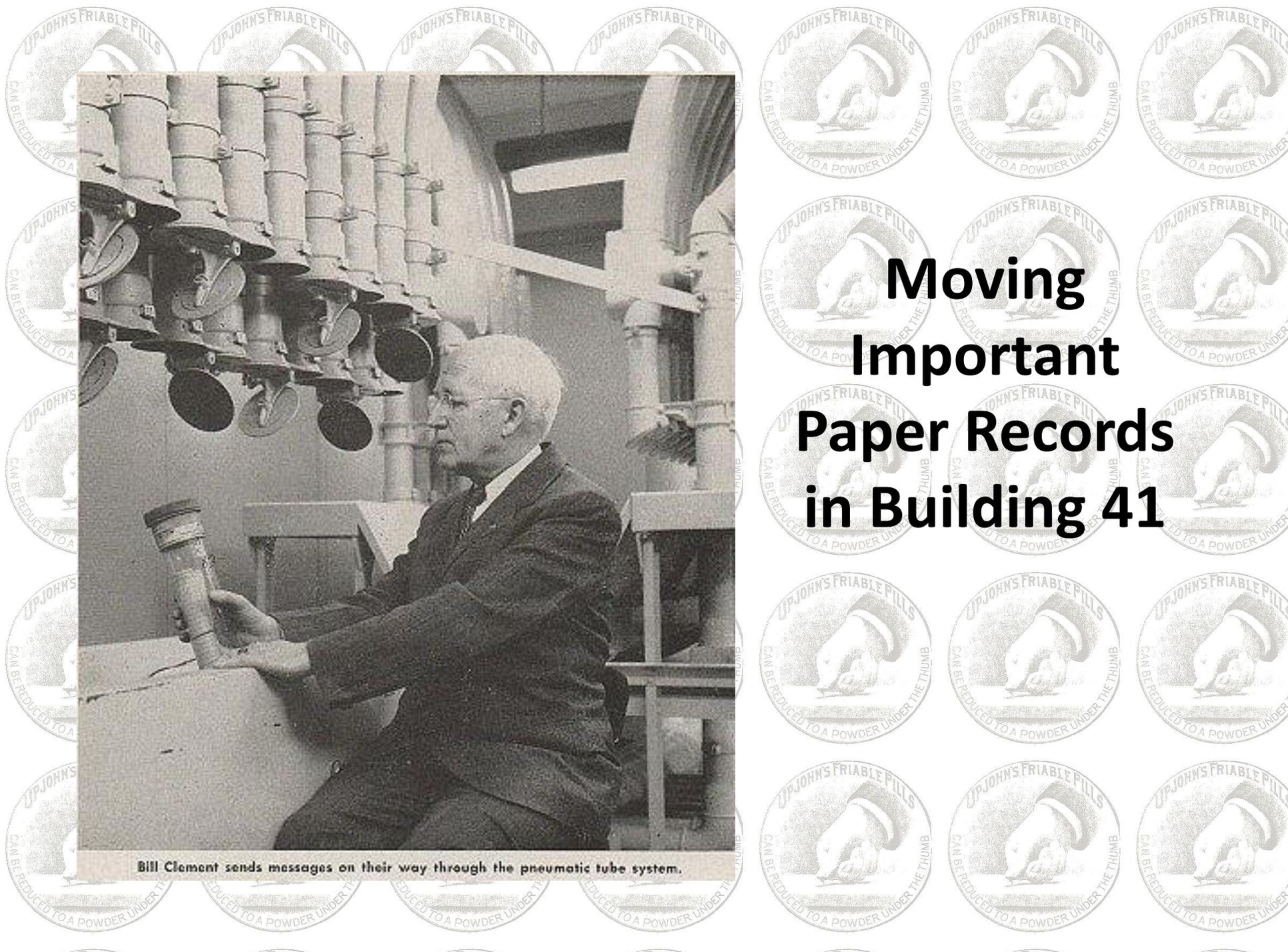


Upjohn bus passengers (l-r) David Norris, Joan Passage, Darryl Pickett, Mary Rogers, Harriet Goins, Doris Bentz, Barb Rogers and Don Elzinga don't appear too put out by a 15-cent fare raise.
—Photographic Services Photo



Bill Clement sends messages on their way through the pneumatic tube system.

Moving Important Paper Records in Building 41



Steroids from Adrenal Glands



Breakthrough at Upjohn – Synthesizing Steroids from Soybeans

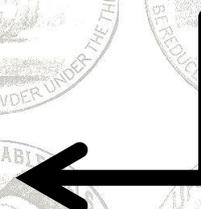
Soybeans



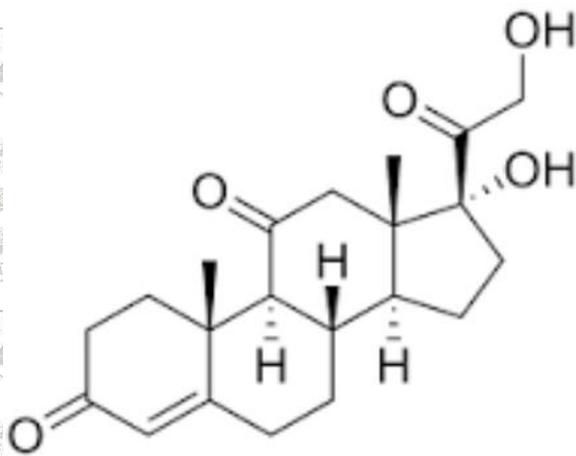
Stigmasterol



Progesterone

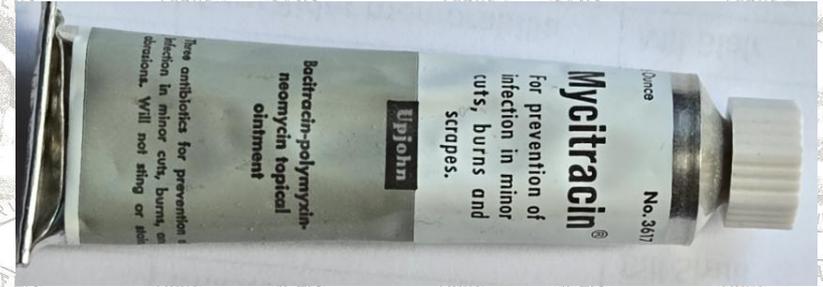


Cortisone



Other Breakthroughs

- Antibiotics
 - Lincomycin (Lincocin)
 - Clindamycin (Cleocin)
 - Spectinomycin (Trobicin)
- Vitamins
 - Multi-vitamins
 - UNICAP brand
 - Individual vitamins



New Corporate Headquarters



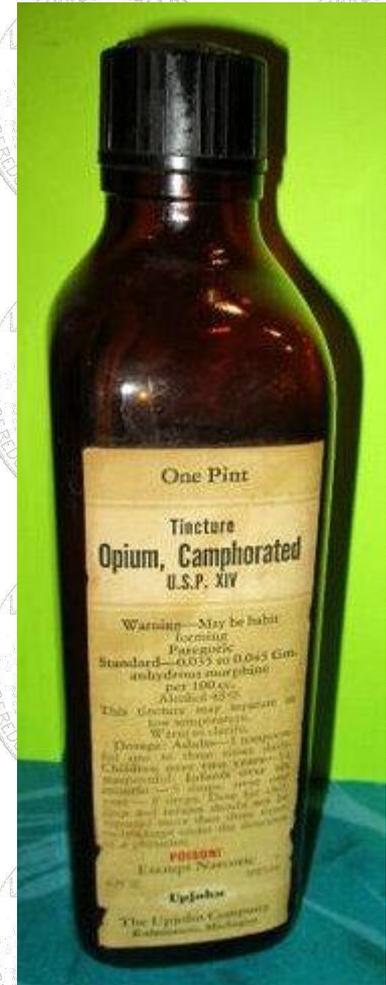
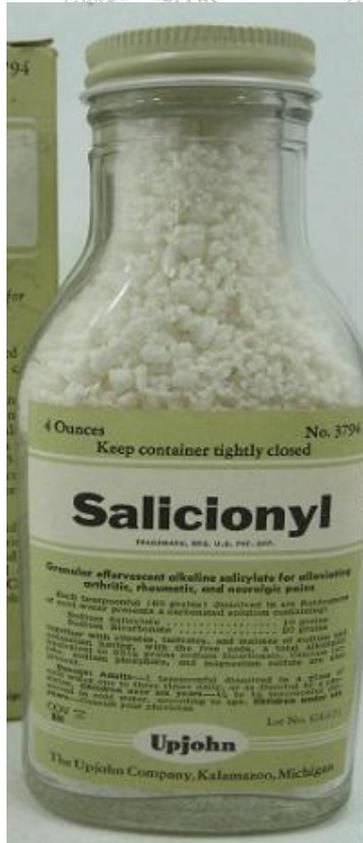
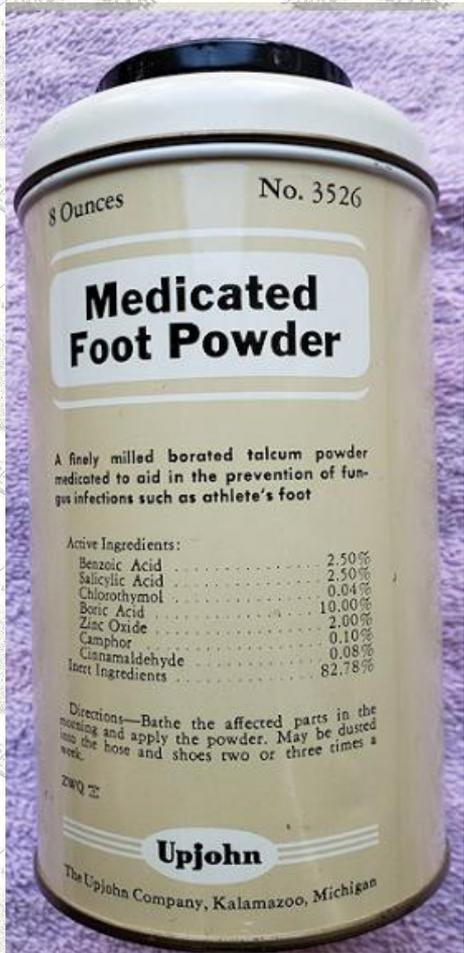
One of the Courtyards in the Building



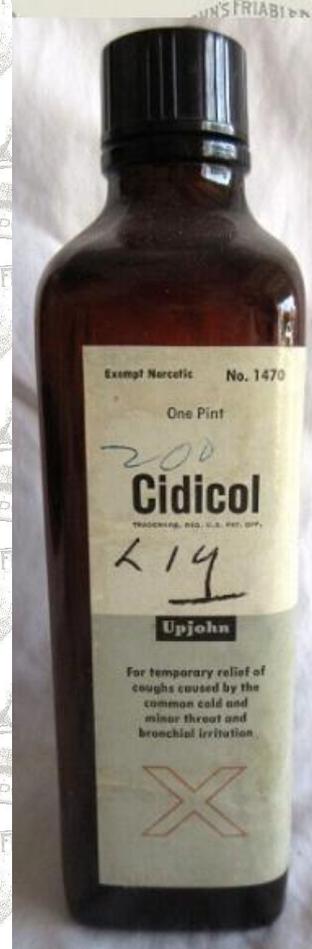
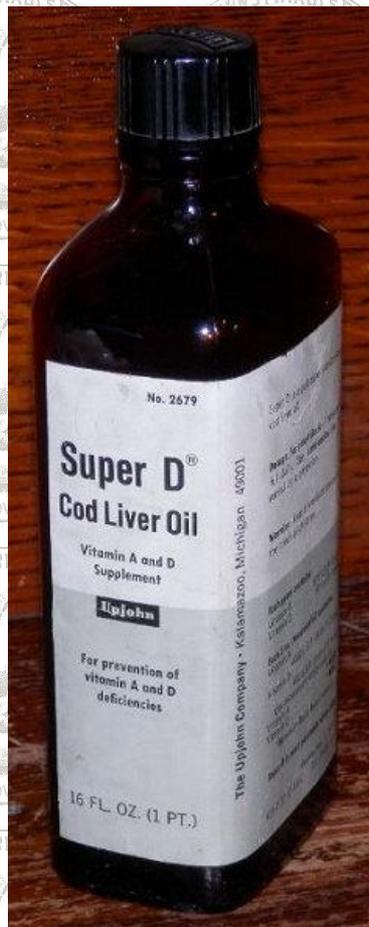
The Portage Site in the 1960s



Products made in the 1950s



Products made in the 1960s and 70s



Gelfoam



Four Sterile Sponges
Size 12

Gelfoam

TRADEMARK, REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

Stock No. 1-609-500

Absorbable Gelatin Sponge
Each approximately 20 x 60 mm.
(12 sq. cm.) x 7 mm.

A porous, pliable, nonantigenic matrix prepared from purified, specially treated gelatin, readily absorbable without inducing excessive scar tissue formation or cellular reaction when implanted in tissues.

Directions for use: For maintaining hemostasis and other uses, read accompanying insert.

ZOO

Lot No. CH457 ZM

Upjohn

The Upjohn Company, Kalamazoo, Mich.

Four
Sterile Sponges
Size 12

Gelfoam

TRADEMARK, REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

Absorbable Gelatin Sponge
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CH457ZM

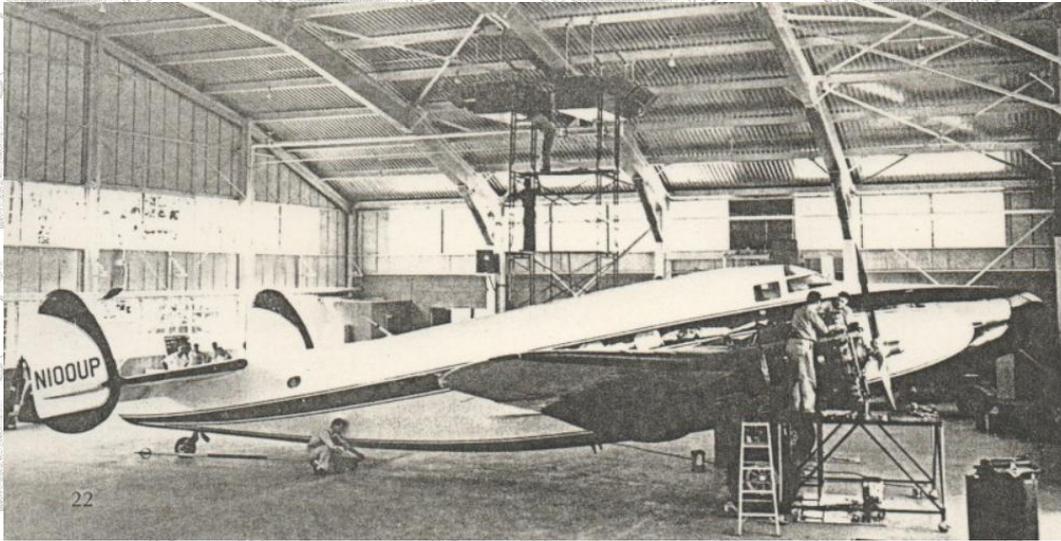
Upjohn

The Upjohn Company
Kalamazoo, Michigan

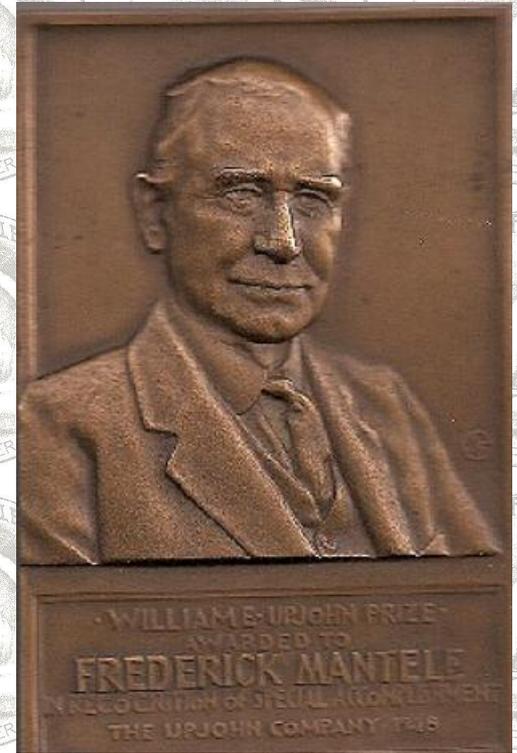
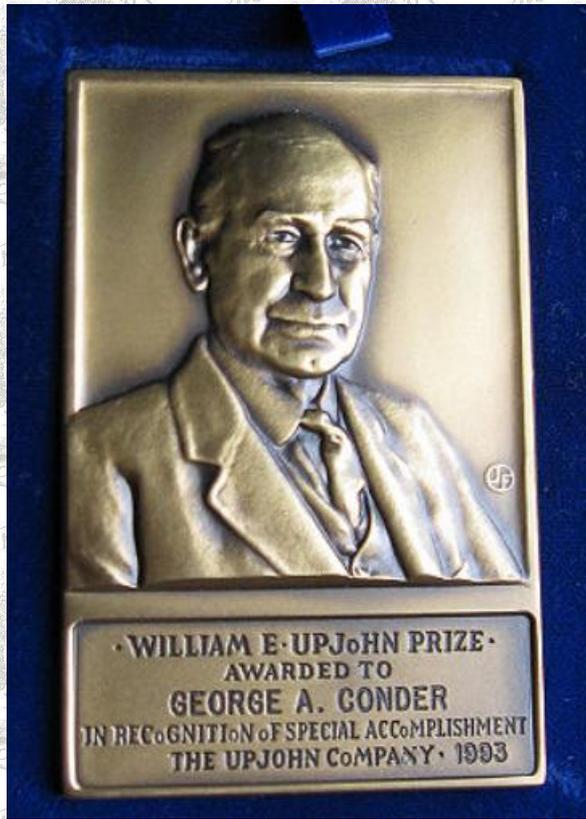
The Barbers Shop in Building 41



The Upjohn "Airforce"



The Upjohn Awards



Public Tours of Building 41



Upjohn

These Upjohn escorts are carefully selected and trained to make the visitors' plant tour both pleasant and worthwhile.



Blockbuster Upjohn Products

- Quinine
- Phenolax
- Steroids
- Antibiotics
- OTC Products
- Motrin
- Xanax and Halcion

End of The Upjohn Company

- No new blockbuster products were developed in the early 1990s
- There was one new steroid we were hopeful for - Tirilazad Mesylate/Freedox
- The Upjohn Company merged with Pharmacia in 1995
- Kalamazoo/Portage still remained a large and important site into the 2000s
- In 2026 only the main Portage manufacturing site remains in Pfizer

Questions?

