

Historical Marker - S582C - The Upjohn Company / William E. Upjohn (Marker ID#:S582C)



Front - Title/Description

The Upjohn Company

The Upjohn Pill and Granule Company was founded on this site in 1886 by Dr. William E. Upjohn and his three brothers—Dr. Henry U., Frederick L., and Dr. James T. Upjohn. The pill-making factory began in the basement of a commercial block, where the Upjohn brothers turned out their specialty, “friable pills.” By year’s end the company employed twelve people, manufactured 186 different medicinal formulas and had moved to a new building on Farmer’s Alley. In 1888 the company moved again, this time to Lovell Street, where it celebrated a century of operations in 1986. The Upjohn Company (renamed in 1902) is a worldwide provider of pharmaceutical, agricultural and chemical products, and health care services.

Significant Date:

Industry and Invention (1875-1915)

Registry Year: 1986 **Erected Date:** 1986

Marker Location

Address: Kalamazoo Mall

City: Kalamazoo

State: MI **ZipCode:**

County: Kalamazoo

Township: Kalamazoo

Lat: 42.29132600 / **Long:** -85.58347400

Web URL:

Back - Title/Description

William E. Upjohn

Dr. William E. Upjohn (1853-1932), founder of the Upjohn Company, was known as Kalamazoo’s “First Citizen” because of his active role in the community. He helped institute the commission-manager form of government and served as the city’s first mayor under the new system (1918-1921). He helped direct the construction of Bronson Hospital (1904) and several area churches (1926). He also established the Kalamazoo Foundation (1925) and the W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research (1932). His belief in the “happy use of leisure time” led him to donate land for Upjohn Park (1919), to help fund an “Art House” (1928) and a municipal golf course (1929), and to build the Civic Auditorium (1931).