

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Newman Brothers Building  
other names/site number N/A

## 2. Location

street & number 602-608 S. Main Street N/A not for publication  
city, town Joplin N/A vicinity  
state Missouri code MO county Jasper code 097 zip code 64802

## 3. Classification

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

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/ANumber of contributing resources previously  
listed in the National Register N/A

## 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  
☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the  
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official G. Tracy Mehan III, Director Date 6/11/90  
Department of Natural Resources and State Historic Preservation Officer  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

## 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National  
Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the  
National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE - Department Store

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE - Specialty Store

RECREATION AND CULTURE - Music Facility

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

AMERICAN MOVEMENTS - Chicago

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Copper

Steel

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Newman Brothers Building is a two-part, five-bay, rectangular plan, five-story commercial building constructed in 1910. The design of the Newman Brothers Building shows influences of the Chicago Style with the large expanses of glass on each floor and well defined storefront and cornice. The building has major facades facing both 6th Street and Main Street and has an original storefront and upper story detailing on both facades. The west facade faces an alley and has no decorative detailing. On the south facade the building shares a party wall with a two-story masonry structure and above this party wall the building has minimal detailing.

The Newman Brothers Building is located in downtown Joplin, Missouri (1980 pop. 40,100). The building occupies a prominent corner lot in the historic commercial section of the city along Main Street. Like most other commercial buildings on Main Street the building is sited on a rectangular lot, is flush with the sidewalk, and occupies all of the lot. There are no outbuildings. The building has primary entrances and storefronts facing both 6th Street and Main Street. The building's exterior has not been significantly altered and it retains its original historic character.

The storefront on the Main Street facade consists of five bays with the central bay containing the facade's primary entrance. This entrance has two sets of original wood and glass double doors of single light paneled design. Above each set of doors is a rectangular single light transom. Flanking the doors are small display windows which are elliptical in form and have elliptical glass panels resting on stone bulkheads. The display windows in the flanking bays have copper or steel muntin bars and rest on stone bulkheads or sills. Above the display windows is a cast iron transom bar decorated with a Greek fret band.

Above each transom bar is a three light transom with wood muntin bars. Dividing each storefront bay are stone Doric pilasters. Extending above the display windows is an original cast iron canopy supported by large brackets and decorative rods anchored into the face of the building. This canopy has roof detailing of finials designed as small bound torches and a single light and cast iron valence. The glass lights of the valence have been painted in recent years. The canopy support brackets also contain original hanging glass globe fixtures.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1 Newman Brothers Building, Joplin, Missouri

Above the storefront is a stone entablature and cornice. The second, third, and fourth stories have identical plan arrangements and detailing. Each story is divided into five bays with each bay containing tri-part Chicago Style windows. Each window has a central fixed rectangular light with flanking single light hinged casement windows. Above each window is a rectangular single light transom. Each window has a stone sill, bracketed sheet metal lintel, and corner floral and ribbon medallions. Between each window on the second, third, and fourth stories are recessed brick panels in the spandrels. At the third story central window is a cast iron balcony with its railing resting on a stone platform. The platform is supported by stone volute brackets and beneath are stone modillion blocks. The railing has square balusters and inset wreaths which contain the letter "N".

Dividing the fourth and fifth stories is a copper cornice with ball and ribbon medallions. Above the fifth story is a large projecting copper cornice with modillion blocks, voluted brackets, egg and dart molding, and acroterions at the roofline. Between each bay is a relief of a lion's head design and copper cartouches. Below the cartouches are wreaths which contain original electric light glass globes and below the wreaths are copper strips arranged in the letter "N".

The Sixth Street facade has a similar five-bay configuration and is identical in all respects to the Main Street facade with only a few exceptions. At the storefront on this facade the original single light glass and frame doors have been removed and replaced with ca. 1970 solid wood doors. Several windows on the upper stories of this facade have been covered with plywood and the roofline lacks electric glass globes.

The rear, or west, facade is divided into five bays and has an exterior of five course common bond brick. Entrances on the first story face an alley and have ca. 1970 glass and metal doors. Windows on each floor are three-over-three vertical light sash with stone sills and wire glass lights. The upper facade windows are grouped together in threes on each floor. At the roofline is a brick smokestack for the heating system and also on the rear facade is an original full height steel fire escape. The south facade shares a party wall with an adjacent two-story brick building. The upper floors have a five course common bond exterior and three light vertical sash windows. Above the fifth story on this facade is a raised brick penthouse story which houses the building's elevator machinery and mechanical rooms.

## 8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance

1910-1939

1910

Significant Dates

1910

1910

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Allen, Austin--Architect

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Newman Brothers Building in Joplin, Missouri, is significant under Criterion A and C for its role in city commerce and its architectural design. The building was constructed in 1910 as one of the city's largest and finest department stores and the business held commercial prominence during much of the early 20th century. The building's design is reflective of the Chicago Style of commercial architecture and it remains as the city's most representative high-rise example of this style. The Newman Brothers Building retains the majority of its original storefront and interior detailing and alterations to the building have not been extensive. The building is presently under renovation on the basement and first floor levels for commercial use.

Joplin is situated in the southwest corner of Missouri and this area was originally farmland containing a few residences and stores in the early 19th century. The discovery of extensive lead deposits in the 1850s brought attention to the area,<sup>2</sup> but it was not until after the Civil War that mining efforts became significant. In 1871, landowner John Cox platted a seventeen acre townsite on Joplin Creek to take advantage of the many miners coming to the area. Later that year a newspaper in Carthage wrote of a "new town in Jasper County. Its name is Joplin, and it is located fourteen miles southwest of Carthage on the farm of J.C. Cox. It has lead in unlimited quantities under it. Everybody out of employment ought to go there and dig."<sup>3</sup>

The lead mining boom resulted in the establishment of Joplin as a major community by the late 19th century. From a temporary mining camp of tents and frame dwellings, the town grew to a city of 26,000 by 1900.<sup>4</sup> Stone and brick churches, schools, and social buildings were constructed in these years and residential areas expanded to the east and west from the commercial section along Main Street. Numerous German immigrants came to Joplin and started industries such as a cigar manufacturing plant, a brewery, and woolen mill.<sup>5</sup>

☒ See continuation sheet

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS): n/a

- ☐ 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

A 15 36 55 65 41 10 52 05  
Zone Easting Northing

C                        

B                          
Zone Easting Northing

D                        

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies Lots 21 and 22 of Pitcher's Addition, City of Joplin.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary for the Newman Brothers Building includes all property which has historically been associated with the building.

☐ See continuation sheet

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title 1. Philip Thomason/ Teresa Brum

organization Thomason and Associates

date 11/7/89

street & number P.O. Box 121225

telephone 615-383-0227

city or town Nashville

state TN

zip code 37212

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1

Newman Brothers Building, Joplin, Missouri

One of the German families which came to Joplin in these years was that of Joseph Newman. Joseph Newman emigrated to Pennsylvania from Germany before the Civil War and opened a clothing store in Harrisburg.<sup>6</sup> Disatisfied with his business, Newman moved his family to Pierce City, Missouri, in 1871 and founded the Newman Mercantile Company, selling clothing, gentlemen's furnishings, boots, and shoes. Newman became a prominent resident of Pierce City but the growth and development in Joplin caught Newman's attention. In 1898, Newman sent his son Albert, and son-in-law, Gabe Newburger, to Joplin to open a store at the corner of Fourth and Main Streets. This store immediately prospered and a few years later the store moved to a larger location at 517 S. Main Street.<sup>7</sup>

Newman's decision to open a store in Joplin made good business sense. In the 1890s Joplin began a period of intensive growth and development which lasted until 1920. Between 1900 and 1920 the community grew from a population of 26,000 to 33,500, and it became the major commercial center for the Tri-State region of Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas.<sup>8</sup> The lead and zinc mines in the area were some of the most productive in the country and Joplin was the commercial and residential center of this mining area. Main Street became transformed during these years as numerous masonry commercial and public buildings were constructed.

By the early 1900s the shopping habits of the country had become more sophisticated, resulting in the rise of large department stores in major urban areas. High-rise department stores offering a wide selection of merchandise became popular among shoppers and, by 1910, Joseph Newman's sons Albert and Sol felt that Joplin was ready for such a store. A large lot containing several small buildings was purchased at the southwest corner of Sixth and Main Streets and construction began on a five-story department store which would contain 50,000 square feet of shopping area.<sup>9</sup>

Joplin architect Austin Allen was selected to design this building which was to be one of the largest ever built in the city. Allen grew up in Joplin and later studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania and in Europe. He worked for a New York architectural firm for several years before returning to Joplin in 1905. Allen became a noted architect of the city and designed a number of residences and commercial buildings between 1905 and 1917.<sup>10</sup> His design for the Newman Brothers Building followed the influence of the popular Chicago Style with a transparent skin over the structural skeleton.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2

Newman Brothers Building, Joplin, Missouri

Allen's design for the building called for concrete and steel construction with large expanses of windows on the main facades facing Main and Sixth Streets. Windows influenced by the Chicago School were added with large central rectangular lights flanked by narrow hinged casement lights. Exterior detailing featured a large copper cornice at the roofline and cast iron balconies. The interior was composed of large open spaces on each floor supported by concrete and steel columns. The Newman Brothers Building was considered one of Allen's finest designs in the twelve years in which he practiced, and upon his untimely death at age thirty-six in 1917, he was widely regarded as one of the area's leading architects. The Newman Brothers Building and the Elk's Club Lodge (NR, 1985) are regarded as his finest designs built in Joplin. <sup>11</sup>

The opening of the Newman Brothers Building in 1910 was heralded as a major event in Joplin. The Joplin News Herald reported that "no achievement accomplished in the city of Joplin stands out so clearly as a monument to the planning and labor which it brought forth," and called it a "palatial home of merchandizing."<sup>12</sup> The day of the grand opening featured a thirty piece symphony and hundreds of patrons passed through the doors. Shoppers were greeted by a sumptuous interior with ornate gilded plasterwork, parquet floors, bronze elevators, and an ornate cast iron staircase. Across the storefront on both 6th and Main Streets was a large cast iron awning to shield patrons from inclement weather. Upon its completion the building cost \$150,000 while interior fixtures and elevators cost an additional \$100,000. At the roof the company erected the largest illuminated sign in Joplin. <sup>13</sup>

Newman Brothers was the city's best known department store during much of the early 20th century. By 1913, the store employed 200 salespersons and clerks with an annual payroll of \$75,000, and had annual sales of over one million dollars.<sup>14</sup> The value of the building and its merchandise was estimated to be over \$500,000. As a center for shopping Newman Brothers overshadowed all other department stores of the period in Joplin such as Christman's and Ramsey's. The store specialized in men's and women's clothing but also sold furniture, household goods, and many other items.

The Newman Brothers company prospered throughout the 1920s and expanded operations in the Midwest. In 1922, they purchased the Kennedy Dry Goods Company in Enid, Oklahoma and in 1928 bought the Denneky Dry Goods Company in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.<sup>15</sup> The Depression of the 1930s ended this period of expansion. However, the company was able to continue operation of its stores, including the flagship store in Joplin. Newman Brothers continued to be regarded as Joplin's finest department store during these years.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Newman Brothers Building, Joplin, Missouri

Following World War II, Newman Brothers once again expanded, opening stores in several states. The company opened branch stores in Springfield, Missouri, Hutchinson, Kansas, and Midwest City, Oklahoma. In Joplin a furniture division was opened at 8th and Main Streets and a furniture annex store was opened at 286 S. Main Street.<sup>16</sup> The company had continued success for two decades, but by the mid-1960s the opening of suburban shopping centers and changes in retailing resulted in a decline in sales at the original Newman Brothers Building. In 1972, the company left its downtown building and moved into the Northpark Mall on the edge of the city. The building was sold to the Pentecostal Church of God which used it as a publishing house and bookstore. This denomination owned the building until its recent sale to the present owners who are renovating the basement and first floor levels into a teen center with a dance floor and shops.<sup>17</sup>

Recent renovations to the building have retained the original storefront and upper facade detailing. Interior renovations have included some subdivision of the original first floor area, however, these changes are largely the addition of temporary partition walls and no extensive removal of original detailing has occurred. The Newman Brothers Building continues to exhibit its original design and detailing and is the city's finest remaining example of a high-rise Chicago Style commercial building. Through its architectural design and mercantile heritage the Newman Brothers Building is a significant structure of Joplin, Missouri.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Newman Brothers Building, Joplin, Missouri

Major Bibliographical Sources

Joplin Globe, 26 February 1989

"Joplin, Missouri, Architectural/Historical Inventory." Missouri Office of Historic Preservation, 1987.

Joplin News Herald, 10 November 1910

Kirkman, Kay, and Roger Stinnett. Joplin: A Pictorial History. Norfolk/Virginia Beach: Donning Company, 1981.

Longstreth, Richard. The Buildings of Main Street. Washington, D.C.: Preservation Press, 1987.

Renner, G.K. Joplin: From Mining Town to Urban Center. Northridge, California: Windsor Publications, 1985.

"Souvenir Book of Joplin", 1913. Manuscript on file at the Joplin Public Library.

Notes

1. Joplin, Missouri. "Architectural/Historical Inventory." Missouri Office of Historic Preservation, 1987.

2. Kay Kirkman and Roger Stinnett, Joplin: A Pictorial History (Norfolk/Virginia Beach: Donning Company, 1981), 15.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid, 63.

5. Ibid, 25.

6. G.K. Renner, Joplin: From Mining Town to Urban Center (Northridge, California: Windsor Publications, 1985), 100.

7. Ibid.

8. Kirkman and Stinnett, Joplin: A Pictorial History, 101.

9. Renner, Joplin: From Mining Town to Urban Center, 100.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

Newman Brothers Building, Joplin, Missouri

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10. Joplin Globe, 2 March 1917, p. 4.
11. Joplin, Missouri, "Architectural/Historical Inventory."
12. Joplin News Herald, 10 November 1910, p. 1.
13. Renner, Joplin: From Mining Town to Urban Center, 101.
14. "Souvenir Book of Joplin", 1913. Manuscript on file at Joplin Public Library, unpaginated.
15. Renner, Joplin: From Mining Town to Urban Center, 101.
16. Ibid.
17. Joplin Globe, 26 February 1989, Section 2, Page 2.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 11 Page 1 Newman Brothers Building, Joplin, Missouri

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2. Steven E. Mitchell  
National Register Historian  
and State Contact Person  
Department of Natural Resources  
DPRHP/Historic Preservation Program  
P. O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102  
Date: May 30, 1990  
Telephone: 314/751-5368

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 1 Newman Brothers Building, Joplin, Missouri

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Photograph Continuation Sheet, Newman Brothers Building

Newman Brothers Building  
602-608 S. Main Street  
Joplin, Jasper County, Missouri  
Photo by: Thomason and Associates  
Date: June, 1989  
Neg: City Planning Office, Joplin, Missouri  
Photo # 1 of 8  
View: Main and 6th Street facades, view towards southwest.

Photo # 2 of 8  
View: 6th Street facade, view towards southwest.

Photo # 3 of 8  
View: Main Street facade, view towards southwest.

Photo # 4 of 8  
View: View of first floor interior showing Ionic columns, cast iron staircase, mezzanine level and railing.

Photo # 5 of 8  
View: View of cast iron staircase connecting the mezzanine and second story levels.

Photo # 6 of 8  
View: Interior view of the second floor.

Photo # 7 of 8  
View: Interior view of the third floor.

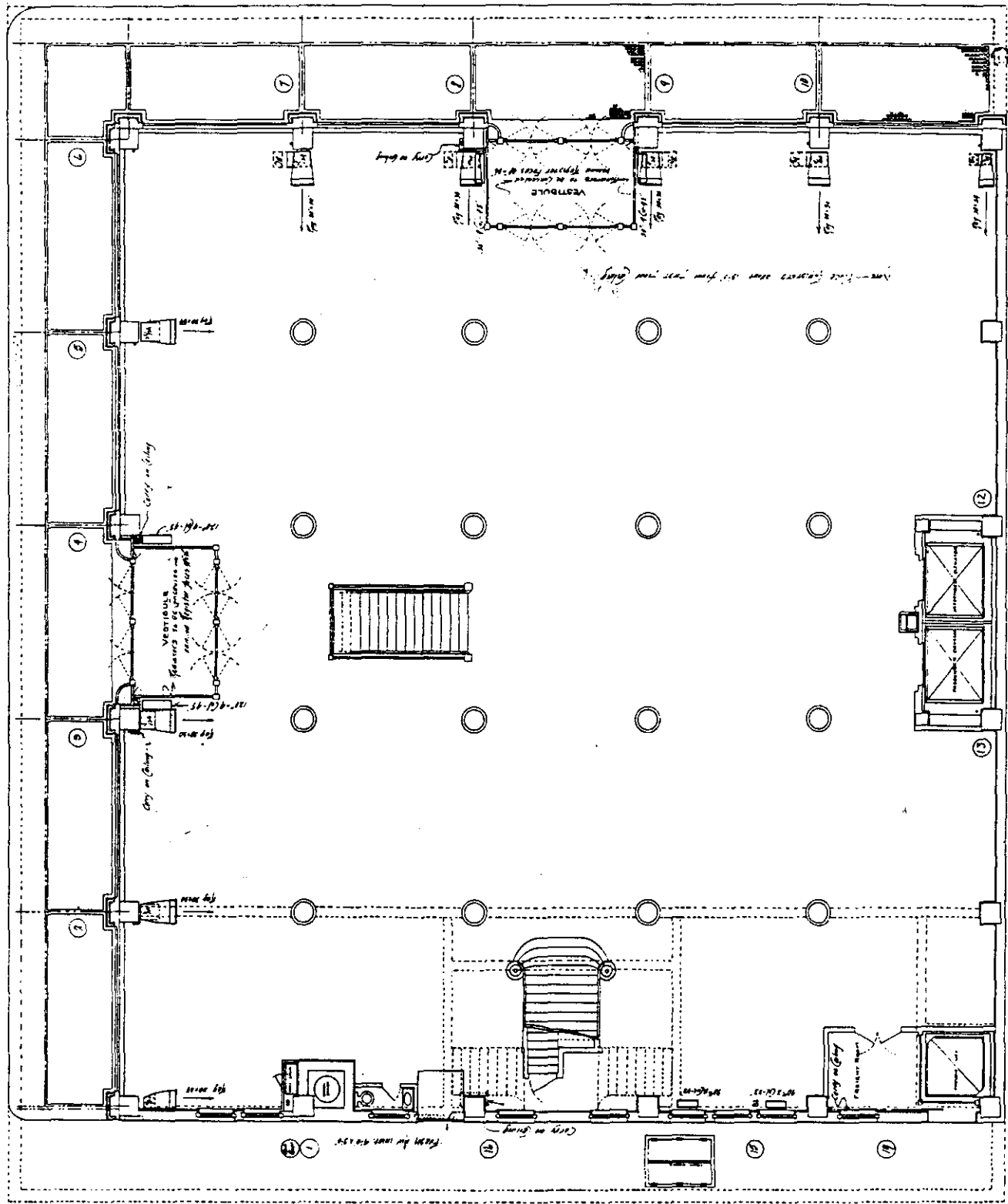
Photo # 8 of 8  
View: View of rear (west) and south facades, towards northeast.

Newman Brothers Building  
Floor plan for the first  
floor.

• DEPARTMENT STORE FOR NEWMAN REALTY CO.  
• COR. 6TH & MAIN STS. JOPLIN, MO.  
• AUSTIN ALLEN & CE WILLIAMS, JR. ARCHTS. 612 JOPLIN ST. JOPLIN, MO.  
• SEPTEMBER, 20, 1909.

Sixth Street

Main Street



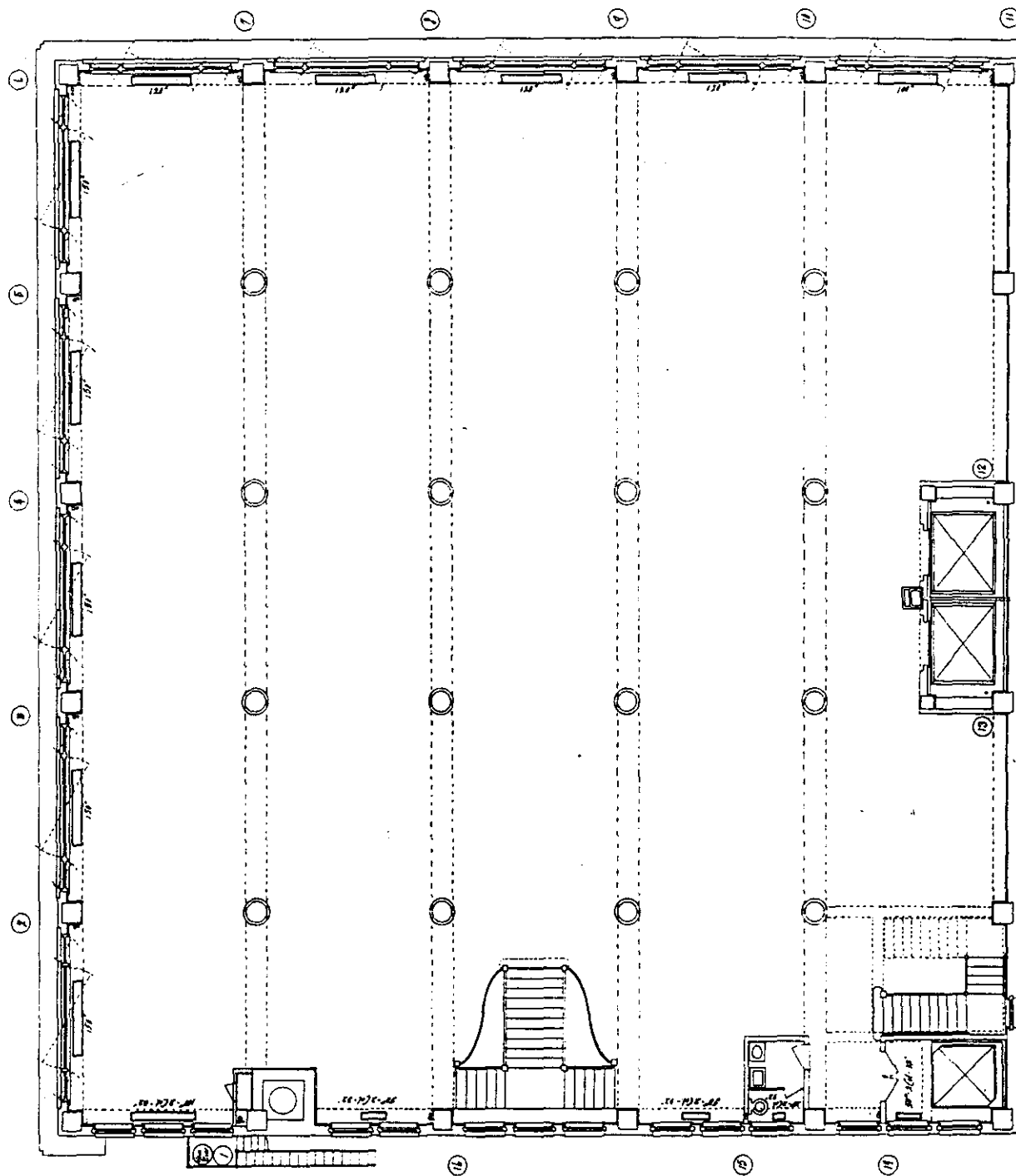
FIRST FLOOR HEATING PLAN  
SCALE 1/4" = 1' 0"

DEPARTMENT STORE FOR NEWMAN REALTY CO.  
 COR. 6TH & MAIN STS. JOPLIN, MO.  
 AUSTIN ALLEN & C. WILLIAMS, JR. ARCHTS. 612 JOPLIN ST. JOPLIN, MO.  
 SEPTEMBER 10, 1900.

Newman Brothers Building  
 Floor plan for the second  
 floor.

Sixth Street

Main  
Street



SECOND FLOOR HEATING PLAN.  
 SCALE 1/4" = 1'.

DEPARTMENT STORE FOR NEWMAN REALTY CO.

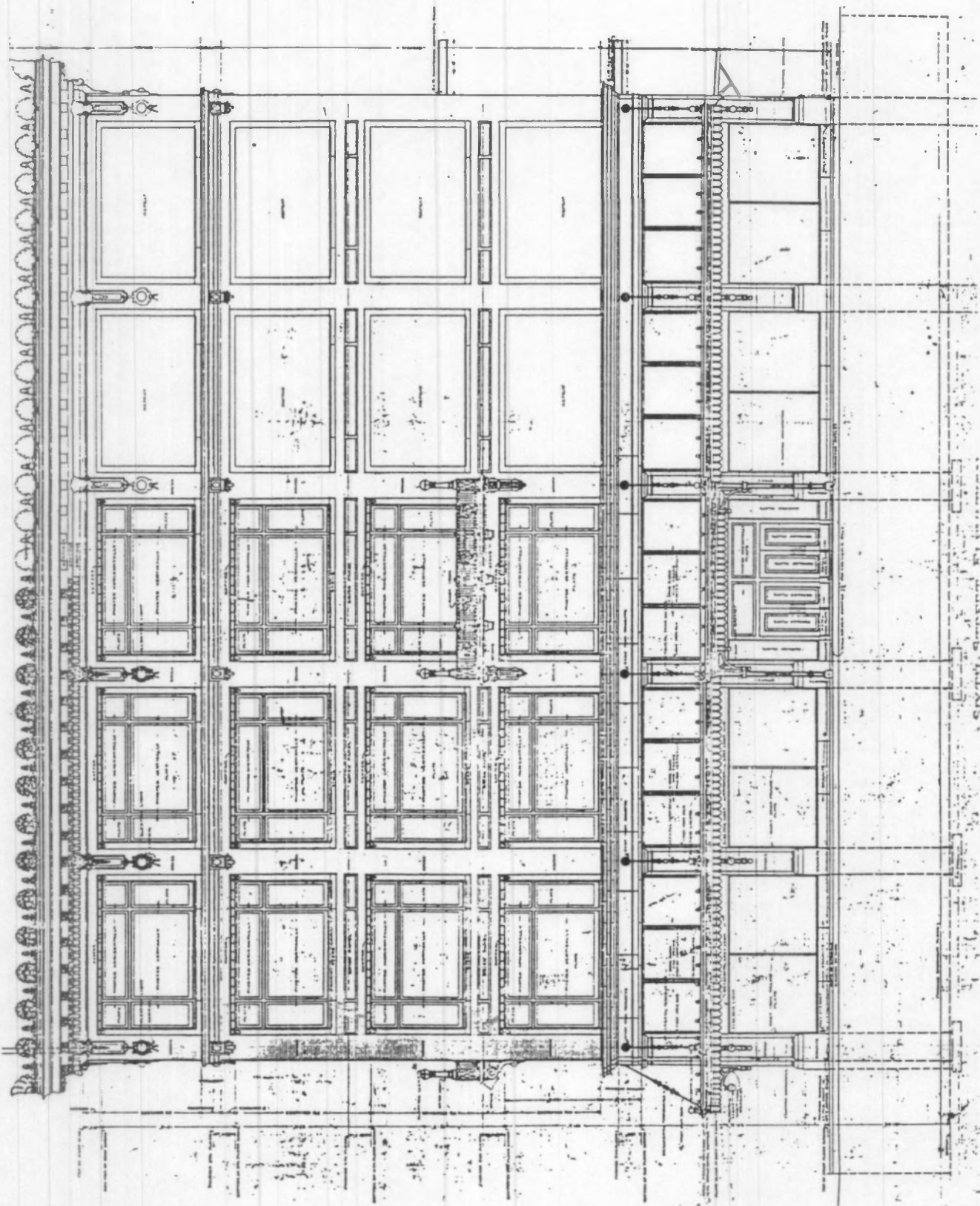
COR. 6TH & MAIN STS. JOPLIN, MO.

AUSTIN ALLEN & C. E. WILLIAMS, JR., ARCHTS., 612 JOPLIN ST., JOPLIN, MO.

SEPTEMBER 30, 1909.

Newman Brothers Building  
Original Sixth Street  
facade elevation.

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12

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Newman Brothers Building  
Property Location  
Scale 1" = 200'

31





Newman Brothers Building  
602-608 S. Main St.  
Joplin, Jasper County  
15/365565/4105205



NEWMAN BROTHERS BUILDING  
Photo # 1068

Newman Brothers Building  
# 2 of 8







Newnam Brothers Building  
# 3 of 8

Newman Brothers Building  
# 4 of 8





Newman Brothers Building  
# 5 of 8



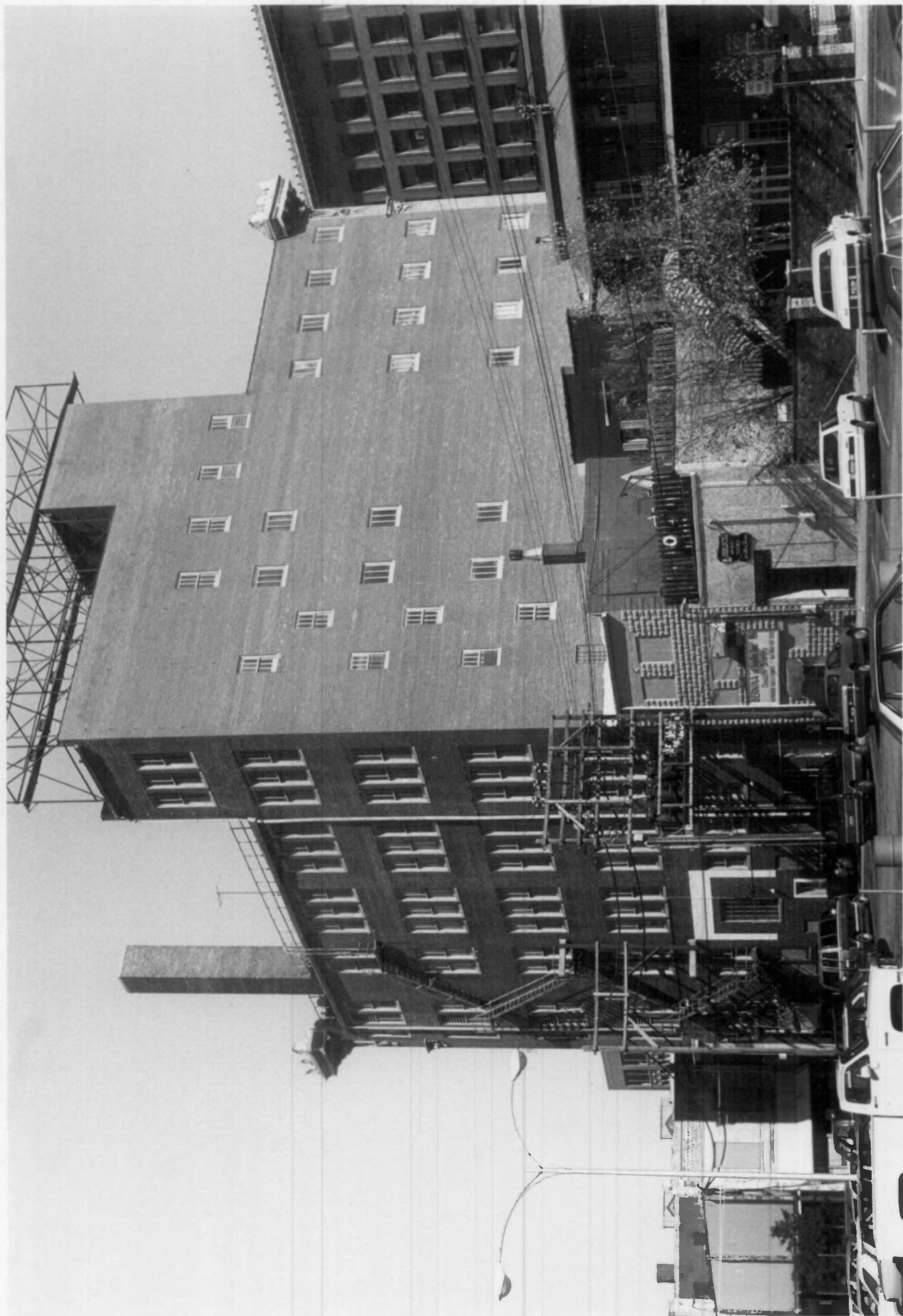
Newman Brothers Building  
# 6 06 8





Newman Brothers Building  
#7 of 8





Newman Brothers Building, Joplin, Missouri  
Photo # 8 of 2