

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name Pennington Drug Company

Other names/site number N/A

Name of related Multiple Property Listing Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri

2. Location

Street & number <u>512-520 Virginia Avenue</u>	n/a	not for publication
City or town <u>Joplin</u>	n/a	vicinity
State <u>Missouri</u> Code <u>MO</u> County <u>Jasper</u> Code <u>097</u> Zip code <u>64801</u>		

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Joni M. Prawl AUG 21 2017
Signature of certifying official/Title Toni Prawl, PhD, Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Pennington Drug Company
Name of Property

Jasper County, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/ warehouse

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/ NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

NO STYLE

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete
walls: Brick
roof: Other: Membrane Roofing
other: _____

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Pennington Drug Company
Name of Property

Jasper County, Missouri
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Areas of Significance

Commerce

Period of Significance

1919-1960

Significant Dates

ca. 1919

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Pennington Drug Company
Name of Property

Jasper County, Missouri
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 37.086145° -94.512607° 3 _____
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

2 _____ 4 _____
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

_____ NAD 1927 or _____ NAD 1983

1 _____ 3 _____
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

2 _____ 4 _____
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Debbie Sheals
organization Historic Preservation Consulting date June 9, 2017
street & number 29 South Ninth St. #210 telephone 573-874-3779
city or town Columbia state MO zip code 65201
e-mail debsheals@gmail.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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.460 et seq.).

Pennington Drug Company
Name of Property

Jasper County, Missouri
County and State

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log:

Name of Property: **Pennington Drug Company**

City or Vicinity: **Joplin**

County: **Jasper** State: **Missouri**

Photographer: **Debbie Sheals**

Date Photographed: **October 2016-April 2017**

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 26: Façade, east wall. Camera facing west.
- 2 of 26: Façade, east wall. Camera facing west.
- 3 of 26: Façade, east wall. Camera facing west.
- 4 of 26: Southeast corner. Camera facing northwest.
- 5 of 26: Northeast corner. Camera facing southwest.
- 6 of 26: Northwest clipped corner. Camera facing southeast.
- 7 of 26: North (back) wall. Camera facing southeast.
- 8 of 26: West (back) wall. Camera facing northeast.
- 9 of 26: West wall. Camera facing east.
- 10 of 26: First floor, south side. Camera facing west. Door to north section is on the right.
- 11 of 26: First floor, south side. Camera facing east to front wall.
- 12 of 26: First floor north office. Camera facing south.
- 13 of 26: First floor, north office. Camera facing southeast.
- 14 of 26: First floor, north shipping area. Camera facing southwest.
- 15 of 26: First floor, auto room. Camera facing northeast.
- 16 of 26: Mezzanine above auto room. Camera facing west.
- 17 of 26: Second floor, south side. Camera facing west.
- 18 of 26: Second floor, south side. Camera facing east to front wall.
- 19 of 26: Second floor, north side. Camera facing northeast.
- 20 of 26: Second floor north side. Camera facing west.
- 21 of 26: Second floor above mezzanine. Camera facing north.
- 22 of 26: Third floor, south side. Camera facing west.
- 23 of 26: Third floor, south side. Camera facing east.
- 24 of 26: Third floor north side. Camera facing west.
- 25 of 26: Third floor north side. Camera facing east.
- 26 of 26: Third floor north side. Camera facing southwest to elevator and door into south side.

Pennington Drug Company

Name of Property

Jasper County, Missouri

County and State

Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

1. Aerial photo map with coordinates. Source: Google Earth, Accessed June 8, 2017.
2. Aerial photo map of the area. Source: Google Earth. Accessed April 12, 2017.
3. Joplin Downtown Historic District Map, with property location marked.
4. 1950 Sanborn Map of the building.
5. First Floor Plan, with photo key.
6. Second Floor Plan, with photo key.
7. Third Floor Plan, with photo key.
8. Advertisement for Pennington Drug Company, Jan. 20, 1924
9. Advertisement for Pennington Drug Company, June 8, 1924
10. 1950 Sanborn Map of the Area
11. Photo of the façade in 2016.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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Pennington Drug Company
Name of Property
Jasper County, Missouri
County and State
Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Summary

The Pennington Drug Company building is located at 512-520 Virginia Avenue, Joplin, Jasper County, Missouri. It is a three-story commercial warehouse with red brick walls, a concrete foundation and a flat roof. The building has a nearly square footprint, with one clipped rear corner. It occupies a large level lot on the east side of downtown Joplin. It is the only resource on the property, and the building covers most of the lot. The façade faces east to Virginia Avenue. The façade has textured red brick and light stone accents, and the unadorned side and rear walls utilize simpler smooth red brick. The façade is divided into six vertical bays which are separated by brick piers and topped by segmental arches. The upper two stories of the façade are filled with large window openings, which contain early or original steel-framed windows. The first floor of that wall is lined with larger openings that have been partially enclosed with brick and stone. That first-floor infill is modern, but the original masonry openings are intact, and the changes are reversible. The façade features historic painted wall signs that were added to the building sometime before 1924. The largest reads PENNINGTON DRUG CO. The interior of the building is divided into two nearly equal main sections which are separated by brick walls. Almost all interior spaces reflect the building's original warehouse function, with open floorplans, exposed structure, and original fire doors. The building is a good example of the Factory and Warehouse Building, Sub-type II.F, as discussed in the Multiple Property Submission cover document "Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri."¹ It meets the registration requirements for the property type that are set forth in that document, and it is in fair to good condition.

Elaboration:

Setting and Site

The Pennington Drug Company building occupies a lot on the west side of Virginia Avenue, between Fifth and Sixth Streets. (Figures 1 and 2.) Virginia Avenue is one block east of Main Street, which is the primary commercial artery of downtown Joplin. Downtown Joplin contains a significant concentration of late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings, many of which have been listed in the National Register. The Pennington property is just south and east of the Joplin Downtown Historic District, which was listed in the Register 07/16/2008. Three of the properties that border the Pennington lot are located within that district.² (Figure 3.) Those neighboring properties contain masonry commercial buildings, which vary from two to six stories. The lots to the south of the nominated parcel contain one- and two-story commercial buildings, and there is a large surface parking lot across Virginia Avenue to the east. (Figure 1, and Photo 4.)

¹ Sally F. Schwenk, "Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri," *National Register MPS Cover Document*, National Park Service (May 30, 2008): F.20-F.21.

² The Pennington building was likely left out of that district because of integrity issues; the façade was obscured by modern sheathing at that time.

National Register of Historic Places
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Pennington Drug Company
Name of Property
Jasper County, Missouri
County and State
Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

The three-story Pennington Drug Company building occupies most of its lot. The only part of the lot not covered by the building is at the back of the lot, along a vacated alley, and in a small triangle of land at the northwest corner of the lot where the building has a small cut-away corner. (Figure 1 and Photos 5-8.) The front wall sits directly on the sidewalk, facing east to Virginia Street, and the south side wall adjoins a two-story brick commercial building. (Photo 4.) There is one small paved alley north of the property, and another one which runs along its back (west) wall. The lot includes half of the rear alley, which has been vacated. Those alleys access a small paved parking area located at the back of the commercial property west of the Pennington lot. (Photos 4-6, and Figure 1.) There are two elevated, enclosed walkways that run above the north alley, at the second and third floors. (Photo 6.) They originally linked the Pennington Building and the building to the north, but are now internally closed off.

Façade

The wide brick façade is the only part of the Pennington Drug Company building to utilize any architectural embellishment. (Photo 1.) That wall is faced with textured wire-cut brick that is more ornamental than the plain red brick used elsewhere. It is adorned with smooth light-colored limestone accents. The front wall is topped by stone coping, and there are two thin string courses of matching stone above the third floor windows. The façade also features ornamental patterns of fenestration, with six evenly spaced arched bays. Each bay has a three-story, slightly recessed section that is topped with a segmental masonry arch. (Photo 2.)

The upper floors of each bay are filled with large multi-light steel shop windows. Each window opening contains two intact 25-light sashes, which are early or original and in fair condition. (Photos 1 and 2.) The windows and recessed sections of the bays were covered with perforated metal panels from ca. 1970 to late 2016. (Figure 11.) Their recent removal was accomplished without significant damage to the surrounding masonry, and all historic masonry elements of the façade are intact and in good condition.

Large brick spandrel panels below the windows have ornamental brick borders that have square stone corner pieces. (Photos 2 and 3.) The spandrels on the north three bays feature painted wall signs that were added by the Pennington Drug Company ca. 1919. The company moved into the building in 1919, and the signs were definitely in place by January 1924, the date of the oldest known photo of the façade.³ (See Figures 8 and 9.) The signs are worn, but legible; they have black backgrounds and white borders, with white lettering. Three of the second floor spandrels contain individual signs which read, from south to north: NOVELTIES NOTIONS; DRUG SUNDRIES; PHARMACEUTICALS. A larger sign located between the second and third

³ "Announcement: The Pennington Drug Company will Enter Into General Wholesale Drug Business..." *Joplin Globe* (Joplin, MO), Jan. 20, 1924, 6, accessed April 18, 2017, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/1837503>.

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Pennington Drug Company
Name of Property
Jasper County, Missouri
County and State
Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

floors covers the spandrels and the piers between them. Most of the paint has been removed from the piers but the sign is largely intact on the spandrels. It reads: PENNINGTON DRUG CO. (Photo 2.)

The first floor of the façade is lined with large masonry openings that originally contained a mix of storefronts and truck bays. (See historic photos in Figures 8 and 9.) Those openings are fully intact, but filled with ca. 1970s brick and stone walls. Moving south to north, the first bay has a modern garage door, the next is filled with newer brick, and the third bay has brick infill, plus one modern glass and metal door. (Photo 1.) Bays four and five each have a combination of glazing and stone veneer, and bay six at the north end, has stone infill and another glass and metal door. All of the modern infill is set at the back of the historic masonry openings, and those changes appear to be readily reversible.

Side Walls

The side walls are much more utilitarian than the façade, with flat red brick surfaces and no architectural embellishment to speak of. The lower south wall of the building is covered by the neighboring two-story building; it has simple flat red brick at the third floor, with no windows or doors. The north side wall overlooks the alley that borders the property to the north, and that wall also contains the elevated walkways above the north alley. The north wall has a total of six window openings, all of which have smooth stone lugsills and early metal-framed window units that are similar to those of the façade. (Photos 5 and 7.) The windows on the side wall are in poor condition. The north wall also contains four doorways. There are two single pedestrian doors near the front (east) part of the side wall, and two larger loading doors near the back. The loading doorways have early or original metal-clad fire doors that are in fair to poor condition. (Photo 7.)

The angled wall at the back northwest corner contains a column of large window openings that have stone lug sills and early metal-framed windows. There is a large window at the first floor, two smaller windows at the mezzanine and second floor levels, and one large window on the third floor. (Photo 6.) Those windows are all intact and in fair to poor condition.

The back wall is also unadorned; it is faced with plain red brick and filled with large window openings. All of those window openings are intact; they have stone lugsills and early or original metal-framed windows that are in poor condition. (Photos 6, 8 and 9.) The back wall is divided into two sections that are separated by simple flat brick chimney. The north part of the back wall has the same four levels as the angled corner wall: first, mezzanine, second and third floors. That section has a total of seven large windows and one large doorway, all of which are original. That doorway is filled with a modern overhead garage door. (Photo 6.) The south part of the back wall has just three levels: first, second and third. (There is no mezzanine level in the south part of the building.) There are twelve large window openings, all of which are early or original,

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Pennington Drug Company
Name of Property
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and one small early doorway. (Photos 8 and 9.) The doorway is located at the base of the wall. That doorway was probably a loading door when the building was new. It appears to have been bricked in to reduce the size of the opening to accommodate a single pedestrian entranceway, probably within the last thirty years. That doorway change is the only apparent modern alteration that has taken place on the back wall or either of the side walls.

Interior

The interior of the building features open plans. Each floor has a long east-west brick wall that divides the south part of the warehouse from the north. The south part is open on each floor. The back part of the north section includes a small mezzanine level between the first and second floors. The north section also contains original stairs and a freight elevator on each floor. (See 1950 Sanborn Map and current floorplans, Figures 4-7.) The brick-walled freight elevator shaft is just south of the stairs; it runs from the first floor to the third. (The elevator doors can be seen to the right of the large arched opening in Photo 14, and on the right in Photo 26.) The stairway, which has narrow wood stairs and brick walls, provides access to each floor and to the roof. The roof has a small brick-walled penthouse which shelters the staircase. The roof is covered with newer built-up roofing and edged with short brick parapets.

The south end of the first floor contains a single large warehouse and loading area. (Figure 5 and photos 10-11.) That room is accessed by one garage door and a single pedestrian door, both located on the front wall. (Photo 1 shows the doorways; Photo 10 shows the view from the front of the room.) It has a concrete floor, brick walls and a tall ceiling with exposed joists and beams. There are three rows of square support posts. The center posts and beam are steel; they were likely added after the period of significance. The other two sets of posts and beams, which are early or original, are wood. Two low frame rooms located at the back part of the main room appear to have been added in recent decades.

The first floor warehouse and loading area is connected to the north part of the first floor by a wide arched doorway. (Visible to the right in photo 10.) The north part of the first floor contains a large office space, a shipping and receiving area, the stairs and freight elevator, and a room that was described as the "Auto Room" on the 1950 Sanborn map of the building. (See Figure 4 and photo 15.) The office space, which is located in the front of that section, appears to have functioned as office space since the mid-1920s. (See Figures 8 and 9, which show the main entrance to the Pennington Company in this part of the building.) It is the only part of the interior that has seen extensive modern alterations. It has modern frame partitions, which are finished with gypboard and wood paneling, plus lowered suspended tile ceilings and carpeted floors, all of which appear to have been added during the late twentieth century. (See Photos 12 and 13.) The original brick wall on the south of that space remains exposed in several of the offices. (Photo 13.)

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Pennington Drug Company
Name of Property
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The first floor shipping and receiving area is in the center of the north section, next to the stairs and elevator. (Figure 5, Photo 14.) It has brick walls, a concrete floor, and a loading door that opens to the north alley. The auto room at the northwest corner of the first floor is separated from the shipping and receiving area by a brick wall and a large original fire door. (The door is visible on the right in photo 15.) The modern garage door on the back wall opens to the auto room. The floor of the auto to room is several feet lower than the rest of the first floor. The auto room has a concrete floor, steel support posts, and a concrete ceiling structure. (Photo 15.) All other parts of the first floor and mezzanine have exposed wood structural systems. There is a small low-ceilinged mezzanine above the auto room, which appears to have been used as office space at some point. The mezzanine has brick walls and wood flooring. (Photo 16.)

The second and third floors each contain large warehouse spaces that are served by the centrally located stairs and elevators. (Figures 6 and 7.) The brick walls between the two sections of the building each contain a wide arched doorway, and each of those doorways is covered by one or two original metal fire doors. (Fire doors are visible in Photos 17, 23 and 26.) The back end of the second floor is several feet taller than the main room, to accommodate the mezzanine level below. That raised area is reached by a large ramp and, like the mezzanine, served by a stop on the freight elevator. (See Photo 20.) Some of the frame walls around that ramp appear to have been added in recent decades. The rest of the second floor contains open warehouse spaces that have brick walls, wood floors and exposed wood structural members.

The third floor has just two large rooms—one on the north and one on the south. The room on the north includes the stair and elevator. (Figure 7.) Like the other upper floor rooms, the third floor warehouse spaces have brick walls, wood floors and exposed wood structural members. Those finishes are all in fair to good condition.

Integrity

The building retains integrity, inside and out, and it meets the registration requirements listed in the MPDF. The exterior is little changed, except for the modern materials located in the first floor openings of the façade. Those materials represent a notable change, but the historic masonry openings are all intact, and the infill is within the range of acceptable alterations cited in the registration requirements included in the MPDF. That document notes that “replacement of door and window units (while retaining the original openings) is acceptable when this infill can be removed without damaging or altering the original opening and framing units.”⁴ Additionally, the effect of the ground floor changes is offset by the large amount of surviving original material elsewhere, which includes all exterior masonry and architectural detailing, most early windows and loading doors, and the historic wall signs of the façade.

⁴ Schwenk, “Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri,” F.15

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The interior spaces are notably intact. With the exception of the modern offices in the northeast corner of the first floor, all interior spaces strongly reflect the building's historic function as a warehouse and distribution center. The changes to the northeast corner represent an acceptable level of alteration for this property type, which the MPDF notes should "preferably, although not necessarily," retain "the basic configurations of the original plan outlining the public and private spaces."⁵ That description of the distinction between public and private spaces relates more to retail buildings than warehouses, but the description applies to this building as well. That separation of function remains apparent here; the office spaces in the mezzanine are intact and the offices at the front are still separate from the ware rooms.

The building is in fair to good condition, and it clearly reflects its long association with the Pennington Drug Company. It exhibits integrity of **location and setting**. It is in its original location, and the lot has seen no alterations since the period of significance. Many of the surrounding properties are part of a National Register district, evidence that the setting is intact. The building has integrity of **feeling and association**, with a commercial warehouse form and the original painted signs on the façade. Integrity of **design, workmanship and materials** are also clearly evident, inside and out. The building has seen no additions or other changes to its form, and it retains a large amount of original fabric. Intact elements include all original exterior masonry and patterns of fenestration, and warehouse spaces that have seen no changes of note in the past century.

⁵ Schwenk, "Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri," F.12

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Pennington Drug Company
Name of Property
Jasper County, Missouri
County and State
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Summary: The Pennington Drug Company building, 512-520 Virginia Ave, in Joplin, MO, is locally significant under Criterion A, in the area of Commerce. It is a representative example of the property type *Factory and Warehouse Building, Sub-type II.F*, described in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) cover document "Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri." It is relevant to the historic context "Evolution of Joplin as a Regional Commercial and Industrial Center: 1871-1960." This brick warehouse meets registration requirements laid out in the MPDF; it was built to serve a commercial purpose, and it has retained most of its original materials and architectural features. The building was constructed ca. 1919, the same year it became the headquarters of the Pennington Drug Company, one of Joplin's first major drug wholesalers. The Pennington Drug Company was established by S. Thomas Pennington in 1918, at a time when Joplin was rapidly expanding as a commercial manufacturing and wholesale center. The town's early economic stability was spurred by mining, primarily lead and zinc, which supported the development of an extensive railroad and highway transportation system linking Joplin to the surrounding towns and states. By the late 1910s, businesses were able to take advantage of Joplin as a regional transportation hub, including S. T. Pennington's wholesale drug company. Originally located at 1625 Main Street, the growing company moved into the building on Virginia Avenue in 1919, and by 1924 the Pennington Drug Company was shipping to some 1,500 drug stores, in four states.⁶ The building on Virginia Avenue served as the company's administrative headquarters and warehouse until 1967, when they moved to a new location.⁷ The period of significance runs from the time the company moved into the building in 1919, to 1960, the end of the period of significance for the MPDF. The Pennington Drug Company was one of the largest wholesale concerns in the region when it incorporated in 1924, and it was the only wholesale drug company in the city for much of the period of significance. The building has seen few major permanent changes since that time, and it appears today much as it did when the drug company moved out in 1967. It is an important link to the commercial history of Joplin.

Elaboration:

The history of the Pennington Drug Company reflects themes in the larger history of Joplin, as discussed in the MPDF. Joplin was founded in 1871, after the discovery of large deposits of lead in the area, and overland transportation played a critical role in the town's early development. There were no navigable rivers in the immediate vicinity, and while rail service was introduced to the region in 1870, no major lines connected to Joplin until later in that decade. As a result, wagon roads were developed in the early 1870s to connect lead mining facilities to railheads in nearby communities.

⁶ "Pennington Drug Company Does Part in Pushing Joplin to the Front in Manufacturing, Wholesaling, Jobbing," *Joplin Globe* (Joplin, MO), June 8, 1924, 26, accessed Aug. 30, 2016, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/1490832/?terms=joplin%2Bglobe%2Bpennington%2Bdrug>.

⁷ Missouri Secretary of State Business Search, March 2017. Accessed March, 2017, <https://bsd.sos.mo.gov/BusinessEntity/BusinessEntityDetail.aspx?page=beSearch&ID=40874>.

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Although the local lead deposits proved to be fairly shallow and began to be depleted within a decade, Joplin saw continued growth in the 1870s and 1880s. The discovery of additional lead deposits in other parts of the region kept mining interests in the area, and the economy of the town shifted to include mining-related businesses that supported those interests, such as smelters and mining equipment manufacturing. That growth was aided by improved transportation systems; by the late 1880s, Joplin had service from a number of major railroads, as well as an unusually well-developed regional road network.

As noted in the MPDF, “the presence of established wagon transport to nearby rail connections, and the expanding nature of the mining camps in the region led to more and more smelters being located in Joplin.”⁸ The smelters and mining equipment manufacturers, along with administrative offices for mining companies, provided a solid base for the local economy. They also supported financial institutions and other local businesses, as well as what the MPDF called “emerging wholesale businesses,” all of which “assured Joplin the role of the regional commercial center of the expanding Tri-State Mining Area.”⁹

That role was bolstered in the late 1800s by the development of what was for a time the largest interurban electric trolley system in the United States.¹⁰ Joplin was the hub of that network, which had routes to Pittsburg, Kansas, Pilcher, Oklahoma and numerous small towns in between.¹¹ That local network also provided access to national railroad lines. By 1906, all of the rail lines through Joplin were major trunk lines which offered passenger and freight service to all parts of the country.

Joplin also enjoyed access to an earlier than usual development of “all-weather” roads in the region, due to the ready access of inexpensive paving materials. Mining operators realized early on that chat, a mining waste by-product, worked well as a road surfacing material. The MPDF noted that by “1906, Jasper County boasted of 380 miles of macadamized roads that used the tailings from the mining plants.”¹² Those roads linked mining operations and small towns in the region to the regional and national rail networks, and helped spur the development of a strong wholesale distribution network that was based in Joplin.

The strong transportation network assured Joplin’s continued economic vitality, in spite of a decline in local mining activity in the early decades of the twentieth century. In 1914, rich

⁸ Schwenk, “Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri,” E.18

⁹ Schwenk, “Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri,” E.17. The Tri-State area consists of southwest Missouri, Southeast Kansas and Northeast Oklahoma.

¹⁰ Schwenk, “Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri,” E.18.

¹¹ Schwenk, “Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri,” E.18.

¹² Schwenk, “Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri,” E.24.

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deposits of lead and zinc were discovered in Pilcher, Oklahoma, and those fields soon developed into the premier source of ore in the Tri-State region.¹³ In spite of that change, Joplin retained its role as a regional trade center, and the local economy continued to diversify. Manufacturing expanded, as did the number and type of wholesale businesses in operation. The MPDF noted that Joplin's location away from other large manufacturing centers meant there was less competition, plus competitive shipping rates. Additionally, access to rail networks made it easy for local businesses to obtain raw materials and to ship finished products. The good local road system was also a boon to wholesale companies, and by the 1920s, Joplin was becoming what the MPDF described as a "major wholesale distribution center."¹⁴

That generally favorable climate attracted outside investors, including S. Thomas Pennington, who moved to Joplin in 1918.¹⁵ He established a small wholesale drug and sundries business in a modest shop at 1625 Main Street that same year, and enjoyed immediate success.¹⁶ A company history published a few years later gave a good explanation of why the local wholesalers were doing well: "Modern merchandising methods demand that the retail merchant buy his goods often and in small quantities...a jobber located in the immediate vicinity is a great asset, a fact that is being recognized to a greater extent every day."¹⁷

Pennington's wholesale business soon outgrew the modest one-story shop on Main Street, and in 1919 he moved to more spacious quarters in a newly constructed three-story brick building on Virginia Avenue.¹⁸ That building, which is the subject of this nomination, was to serve as the company headquarters for the next forty-eight years.

It appears that the Pennington Company was the first tenant of the building, which the county assessor lists as having been built in 1919.¹⁹ Construction of the building, with its formal façade facing Virginia Avenue, reflects the growing importance of Virginia Avenue as a commercial thoroughfare. Sanborn maps of the area show that in 1906, that property was occupied by

¹³ Schwenk, "Evolution of Joplin as a Regional Commercial and Industrial Center: 1871-1960," in "Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri," E.22.

¹⁴ Schwenk, "Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri," E. 24.

¹⁵ "Pennington Drug Company Does Part...," 26.

¹⁶ The building that housed that early shop does not appear to have survived.

¹⁷ "Pennington Drug Company Does Part ...," 26.

¹⁸ "Announcing the Enlargement and Expansion of the Pennington Drug Co.," *Joplin Globe* (Joplin, MO), June 8, 1924, 25, accessed Aug. 30, 2016. Although the exact construction date of the <https://www.newspapers.com/image/1490822/?terms=Announcing%2Bthe%2BEnlargement%2Band%2BExpansion%2Bof%2Bthe%2BPennington%2BDrug%2BCo>.

¹⁹ Jasper County Assessor records on file with the current owner. Later newspaper article about the company indicate that Pennington leased the space, at least at first. The name of the original owner of the building has not been identified.

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outbuildings of a large brewery.²⁰ City directories indicate that the Drug Company occupied only the north side of building at first, but no other tenants were listed for the south space.

The new headquarters on Virginia Avenue were much larger, and ideally located for a wholesale business, with ready access to both road and rail networks. The property is on a busy street near the edge of the commercial district, and only half a block north of major rail lines. (See Figure 10, a 1950 Sanborn map of the area, which also shows a second property the company acquired a few years later.) Additionally, the Virginia Avenue frontage provided an impressive and publicly accessible location for the company offices, which were located on the first floor, facing Virginia Street. (See Figures 8 and 9.)

The new location proved to be advantageous, and Pennington's business grew at a rapid pace. By late 1923, he was ready for yet another expansion. In January, 1924, Pennington undertook a reorganization and incorporation of the business, to create what he claimed would be the "largest wholesale drug corporation in southwest Missouri" and the Tri-State region.²¹ To achieve that goal, he put together a group of investors, and on January 30, 1924, the Pennington Drug Company was incorporated, with an authorized stock value of \$250,000. (That would be \$3,564,342.11 in 2017 dollars.)²²

The twelve initial shareholders included S. T. Pennington and his wife, Lyda Pennington, who together controlled the largest block of stock. The next largest shareholder was Walter O. Evans, a resident of Kansas City, and the only shareholder not from Joplin. Those three were also part of the first board of directors; Pennington was the founding president and Evans was vice-president. A newspaper article about the company expansion noted that Evans, who was formerly with the Evans-Smith Drug Company in Kansas City, would be moving to Joplin to take an active role in the operation of the company. He was slated to serve as the sales manager of the new firm.²³ Evans enjoyed a long tenure with the company; he was listed as the registered agent for the corporation until 1963.²⁴ Many of the other initial shareholders were employees of the company, who became part owners through a profit-sharing program that S. T. Pennington

²⁰ Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, Joplin, Missouri, 1906, 22, Mid-Continent Public Library, accessed June 8, 2017, <http://sanborn.umi.com.proxy.mcpl.lib.mo.us/mo/4718/dateid-000006.htm?CCSI=45n>.

²¹ "Pennington Drug Co. to Enlarge Business," *Joplin Globe* (Joplin, MO), Jan. 6, 1924, 2, accessed April 18, 2017, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/1835012>.

²² "Articles of Incorporation: PENNINGTON DRUG COMPANY," made Jan. 30, 1924, filed Feb 8, 1925, Missouri Secretary of State Business Search, accessed March 2017, <https://bsd.sos.mo.gov/BusinessEntity/BusinessEntityDetail.aspx?page=beSearch&ID=40874>, and "Inflation Calculator," Accessed April 18, 2017, <http://www.usinflationcalculator.com/>.

²³ "Pennington Drug Co. to Enlarge Business," 2.

²⁴ Missouri Secretary of State Business Search, March 2017. Accessed March, 2017. <https://bsd.sos.mo.gov/BusinessEntity/BusinessEntityDetail.aspx?page=beSearch&ID=40874>.

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initiated in 1920.²⁵ That profit sharing plan was credited with helping the company double sales between 1920 and 1922.²⁶

The incorporation was publicized with a special four-page “Expansion Section” in the Joplin Globe, published on Sunday June 8, 1924. (See Figure 9.) The special section was filled with articles about the company and some of the products it carried, and advertisements for related products. A long article titled “Pennington Drug Company Does Part in Pushing Joplin to the Front in Manufacturing, Wholesaling, Jobbing,” included a good summary of the company history to date, as well as information about why they located in Joplin:

They saw Joplin as a trade center serving the entire people of the southwest country...With its seven main line railroads, its two electric lines, its beautiful development of concrete and chat roads, its superiority over other towns in the district—all these facts caused the founders of the Pennington Drug Company to choose Joplin...²⁷

The article also noted that the area’s high-quality road system allowed the Pennington Company to quickly deliver supplies by truck, and projected that those roads would soon spur general growth in the city’s wholesale industry:

The fact that orders can be taken one day and delivered to the back door of the customer the next because of the good roads of this section is no small factor in a prediction that soon other truck lines will begin operation...this will benefit every retailer and wholesaler alike.²⁸

Although S. T. Pennington initially occupied only the north section of the building on Virginia Avenue, with the expanded company came a need for more space, and the company took over the south section of the building about the same time they incorporated in 1924. That change was mentioned in a newspaper article about the incorporation, which noted that “the splendid building acquired is well in keeping with the full and orderly stock of merchandise it houses.”²⁹ The company also added prominent painted wall signs to the façade, which included a large sign bearing the company name, as well as smaller panels above the north storefronts advertising “Drug Sundries, Novelties Notions, and Pharmaceuticals.” (See Figures 8 and 9, and Photos 1 and 2.)

²⁵ “Pennington Drug Co. to Enlarge Business,” and “Pennington Drug Company Does Part...,” 26.

²⁶ “Pennington Drug Company Does Part...,” 26.

²⁷ “Pennington Drug Company Does Part ...,” 26.

²⁸ “Pennington Drug Company Does Part ...,” 26.

²⁹ “Pennington Drug Company Does Part ...,” 26.

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The Pennington Drug Company was clearly proud of their new headquarters. Photos of the building were featured in advertisements throughout the 1920s. An ad announcing the upcoming expansion included a large photo of the building, and noted that the company was using approximately 20,000 square feet of floor space at that location.³⁰ (See Figure 8.) Another view of the building was included in the “Expansion Section” published later that year, with a note that “above is pictured the building at 512-514-516-518 Virginia Avenue, now occupied, where are located the offices, sample rooms, and main warehouse.”³¹ (See Figure 9.)

By the time that second ad was published, the company had purchased the Spring Drug Company, an early competitor, and was also using their nearby buildings as additional warehouse space. That purchase provided the Pennington Company with more direct railroad access, via a spur line next to the Spring Drug buildings. (See Figure 10.) Neither of the former Spring Drug buildings has survived. The Virginia Avenue building continued to serve as their headquarters and main warehouse after that purchase.

The Pennington Drug Company building on Virginia Avenue is a representative example of the Factory and Warehouse Building Property Sub-type discussed in the MPDF, in association with the historic context “Evolution of Joplin as a Regional Commercial and Industrial Center: 1871-1960.”³² As noted in that context, Joplin was founded as a result of mining in the region, but the city owes its continued existence in a large part to a subsequent diversification of the local economy. That included the development and expansion of wholesale and other commercial activities which supplemented and eventually replaced mining-related industries. As regional transportation networks developed and richer deposits of ore were discovered elsewhere, area businesses adapted to meet the changing economic climate, and by the end of the nineteenth century Joplin had become what the MPDF described as “a major wholesale distribution center.”³³ Early commercial and wholesale facilities in operation during the period covered by that context are therefore significant because they “reflect economic forces that contributed to the development of Joplin.”³⁴

A description of the Factory and Warehouse Building Property Sub-type included with the MPDF shows that the Pennington Drug Company building was in many ways a typical Joplin warehouse.³⁵ That document noted that larger examples of the sub-type “often feature a

³⁰ “Announcement: The Pennington Drug Company will Enter Into General Wholesale Drug Business...” *Joplin Globe* (Joplin, MO), Jan. 20, 1924, 6, accessed April 18, 2017. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/1837503>.

³¹ “Announcing the Enlargement and Expansion of the Pennington Drug Co.,” 25.

³² Schwenk, “Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri,” E.12-E.29, F.13-F.14, and F21-F.21.

³³ Schwenk, “Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri,” E. 24.

³⁴ Schwenk, “Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri,” F.13.

³⁵ Schwenk, “Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri,” F. 20-F.21.

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primary façade with an entrance into administrative offices and secondary elevations with loading docks facing streets and alleys.”³⁶ The floorplan of the Pennington Drug Company, which has seen few changes over the years, shows a similar pattern of use. The northeast front corner of the building appears to have always been used as office space, the rest of the building is set up for shipping and receiving or storage of goods, and three of the exterior walls contain truck doors. Historic photos and construction details of the building show that the north half of the façade had storefronts and a more traditionally commercial patterns of fenestration, while south end contained at least one large truck bay. (See historic photos in Figures 8 and 9; note the gaps in the light colored stone foundation that show location of entrances on the façade.) It is likely that even the shape of the Pennington building was impacted by its expected use as a warehouse. The northwest corner of the building is angled, which made it easier for vehicles to get around that corner to reach the loading door located on the back wall.

The building still shows evidence of its long tenure as the Pennington headquarters, with offices in the northwest corner and mezzanine, and unfinished warehouse space elsewhere. The finishes in the first floor office spaces have been modernized, but the general office layout is still apparent. There is also an early or original door on the back wall of the office space which leads to a shipping and receiving room in the northwest part of the first floor. That shipping area contains early or original dock doors that open to the alleys north and west of the building, as well as the central elevator and staircase which lead to the warehouse spaces on the upper floors.

The rest of the building is still used as warehouse space, including the south end of the first floor. That south ground floor space also likely served as a loading area; historic photos and physical marks on the building indicate that while most of the first floor openings had storefronts, the center south bay originally contained a truck entrance. That doorway provided the most convenient way for trucks to enter the building. It has access from Virginia Avenue, which is much wider than the narrow service alleys on the other sides of the building. That part of the building still has a truck entrance; it was moved one bay to the south during a late twentieth century remodeling project.

The first floor was also home to an early private wholesale club that was operated by the Pennington Drug Company. A 1929 article about the company noted that they had recently begun a “cash and carry” service.³⁷ That program allowed area merchants to save on shipping costs and credit charges, by simply stopping by the warehouse to pick up needed supplies. The cash-only program was only available to merchants, and they had to purchase goods in the

³⁶ Schwenk, “Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri,” F. 20.

³⁷ “Drug Distributor Scores Big Growth,” *Joplin Globe* (Joplin, MO), Aug 11, 1929, 16. Accessed Oct 25, 2016. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/1792073>.

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same large lots required for delivery. It was a hit with merchants, and the article noted that it was so successful that they kept allocating more floor space for it, until “today it occupies a goodly share of the ground floor space in the company’s quarters at 512-520 Virginia Ave.”³⁸

The Virginia Avenue building proved to be a good fit for the Pennington Drug Company, which saw continued success over the following decades. Within five years of incorporation, the company had expanded some 500%--growth that was once again credited in part to the quality of area roads. The 1929 article noted that “good roads were an absolutely necessary factor in the concern’s rapid expansion, concrete and good conditioned chat highways reaching out from the city in every direction which insure express delivery at all times....”³⁹ And, as before, the newspaper presented the company as an “outstanding example” of the city’s flourishing wholesale industry. That sentiment was echoed in a half-page ad for the company that was printed on the same page as the article. That Pennington Drug Company advertisement proclaimed that “We are proud to be a part of this fast growing district and to be recognized as one of its largest wholesale distributors.”⁴⁰

Favorable business conditions notwithstanding, the Pennington Drug Company would not have thrived if it was not well-run. The 1929 article noted that “good management, employee profit sharing and efficient distributional services” all played a role in their continued success, and other records indicate a consistent concern for the welfare of their customers.⁴¹ Customer service was frequently emphasized in advertisements, and the company appears to have put special effort into supporting independent drug stores, which were beginning to see competition from chain stores. The 1929 article claimed that “Pennington customers remain in business because they are able to buy wholesale at prices rivaling those made possible by the chain stores’ mass purchasing power.”⁴²

That attention to service continued for decades; customer support in the 1950s, for example, included the use of a movie to educate their patrons on the latest trends in retailing and the benefits of personalized customer service.⁴³ In 1963, the company received an award from the National Wholesale Druggists’ Association, for “unusual public service,” in honor of their policy

³⁸ “Drug Distributor Scores Big Growth,” 16.

³⁹ “Drug Distributor Scores Big Growth,” 16.

⁴⁰ Pennington Drug Company Advertisement, *Joplin Globe*, Aug. 11, 1929, 16. Accessed April 18, 2017. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/1837503>.

⁴¹ “Drug Distributor Scores Big Growth,” 16.

⁴² “Drug Distributor Scores Big Growth,” 16.

⁴³ “Film Features Meeting of County Druggists,” *Joplin Globe*, 2-13-1958, 6. Accessed Oct 26, 2016. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/38511179>.

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of providing emergency service of scarce drugs to all parts of their service area, at all hours of the day.⁴⁴

The company also maintained a varied and up-to-date stock of products. They encouraged potential customers to visit the sample rooms and warehouse spaces at their headquarters, and prided themselves on being able to supply everything a local druggist would need. They carried everything from drugs and patent medicines to candy and cigarettes. They also offered products to help customers get set up in the business, including drug store fixtures and even complete soda fountains. In 1924, they had an exclusive contract with the Bishop and Babcock Soda Fountain Company, and their salesmen were trained to help customers determine the best layout for a new soda fountain in their store. The company even carried a full line of fountain accessories, including a line of fruits and syrups made by the Missouri-based Fox Company.⁴⁵ As times changed, they added new items, including a line of Hiram Walker whiskey products, which they began carrying in 1935.⁴⁶

The building on Virginia Avenue housed the Pennington Drug Company from 1919 to 1967, nearly half a century all-told. Although the building served as the headquarters and public face of the company throughout that period, they were not always the only occupants. The building has a nearly 12,000 square foot footprint and three stories. A few early company descriptions noted that the Pennington Drug Company's floor space covered approximately 20,000 square feet, which would generally correspond to two floors. It appears that part of the building was leased at an early date by the Christman's Department Store, which owned the building across the alley to the north. A pair of enclosed elevated walkways between the second and third floors of the two buildings have been in place since at least 1950, the date of the oldest available Sanborn map of the property. (Figures 4 and 10.) That map shows that the top two floors were being used for furniture storage by that time, while the first floor was still used as a wholesale drug company. (See Figure 4.)

The Pennington Company remained on Virginia Avenue until 1967, when they moved to a building located at Fifth and Grand, just a few blocks to the east. As noted above, the end of the period of significance has been set at 1960, just a few years before that move, to align with the years covered by the MPDF. In 1986, the Pennington Drug Company moved to St. Louis, and in 1987 they changed the name to Brown Drug Company. Just two years later, Brown Drug Company was absorbed by Alco Health Services, a national company that is still in operation.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ "Firm Receives Award for Service," *Neosho Daily News*, Nov. 8, 1963, 3. Accessed Oct 26, 2016. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/3631433>.

⁴⁵ "Pennington Drug has Big Line of Supplies," *Joplin Globe*, June 8, 1924, 28. Accessed Aug. 30, 2016. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/1490832/?terms=joplin%2Bglobe%2Bpennington%2Bdrug>.

⁴⁶ "Enlarged Hiram Walker Merchandising Program," *Joplin Globe*, Sept. 9, 1949, 3. Accessed April 18, 2017. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/38528901>.

⁴⁷ "Alco Health Services Corporation, Encyclopedia.com, accessed April 18, 2017,

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The Pennington Drug Company dominated the wholesale drug market in Joplin throughout the period of significance. It was the largest and the longest-lived wholesale drug company to operate in Joplin during the twentieth century. When the company was founded, the Spring Drug Company was the only other wholesale drug company in Joplin, and in 1924 Pennington bought the stock and property of the Spring Company. A review of city directories published during the period of significance shows that the Pennington Drug Company was generally the only wholesale drug company operating in Joplin from the time they took over the Spring Drug until the 1940s.⁴⁸ The only other wholesale drug company known to operate during that time was the Missouri Drug Company, which was listed in 1920 and 1925, but gone by 1926. In 1947, Pennington had two competitors, Ellis Wholesale Drug and Gibson Products Company, but by 1950, Pennington was once again the only wholesale drug company in Joplin. From 1951-1966, Pennington was routinely one of just two drug wholesalers in town, and their competitors rarely lasted more than a few years. Other wholesale drug companies in operation during that time include McKesson-Robbins in 1960, and Paul Porter in 1965.⁴⁹ None of those competitors came close to matching the half-century tenure of Pennington, and the building on Virginia represents a strong link to the wholesale drug business in Joplin.

Not long after Pennington vacated the building on Virginia Avenue, its façade and first floor office spaces were remodeled. The recessed window bays of the façade were each covered with a flat perforated metal panel, and the storefront openings on the first floor were largely infilled. (See Figure 11.) The offices in the northeast corner of the first floor also received all-new finishes and interior partitions. The remainder of the building, which continued to be used as warehouse space, saw only minor changes.

Those late twentieth century changes have proven to be largely reversible. The original masonry openings of the first floor were not impacted when the storefronts were removed, and the new infill is all set at the back edges of the openings, where it can be removed without further damage. The façade has already benefitted from recent attention; in early 2017, the perforated metal panels were removed from the façade to reveal the original multi-light windows of the second and third floors. Removal of those panels caused little to no damage to the masonry, and the building today looks much as it did during the period of significance.

Conclusion

<http://www.encyclopedia.com/books/politics-and-business-magazines/alco-health-services-corporation>.

⁴⁸ Polk's Joplin City Directory (Jasper Co. MO), (Kansas City: Polk and Sons Publishing Co.), various years from 1909 to 1970, accessed at Joplin Public Library.

⁴⁹ Polk's Joplin (Jasper Co. MO) City Directory 1960, (Kansas City: Polk and Sons Publishing Co.): Polk's Joplin (Jasper Co. MO) City Directory 1965.

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The Pennington Drug Company was one of the most prominent early wholesale companies in Joplin, as well as the longest-lived drug wholesale company in city history. It was for many years the only wholesale drug company in Joplin, and rarely had more than one other competitor. According to city directories, from 1919 to 1967, Pennington never had more than two local competitors at any one time, and between 1926 and 1940 they were the only wholesale drug company in the city.⁵⁰ Over the years, the company served innumerable independent drug stores in a four-state region, and helped establish Joplin as a regional trade center.

The Pennington Drug Company building meets the registration requirements for the property sub-type "Factory and Warehouse Buildings," under the historic context "Evolution of Joplin as a Regional Commercial and Industrial Center: 1871-1960." It is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce. As noted in the MPDF, intact factory and warehouse buildings "have important associations in the economic diversity of Joplin that evolved in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries."⁵¹ Wholesale companies played a major role in the diversification of Joplin's economy in the early twentieth century, and the Pennington Drug Company was often mentioned as a prime example of the favorable conditions the city of Joplin offered to wholesale concerns.

Timeline of Events

1918 S. T. Pennington moved to Joplin and opened the Pennington Drug Company (PDC).

1919, ca. This building constructed.

1919 Pennington had outgrown the Main Street shop and rented space at 512-514 Virginia Ave. (The north part of the building.)

1920 Directory shows no other occupants of the building. PDC and Missouri Wholesale Drug Co. are only wholesale drug companies in city directories.

1924 The firm incorporated and expanded their leasehold to include all four street addresses, and absorbed longtime competitor, Spring Drug Company.

1925, PDC One of two wholesale drug companies in the city, the other was Missouri Wholesale Drug Company, which was not listed after 1926.

⁵⁰ Polk's Joplin (Jasper Co. MO) City Directory 1960, (Kansas City: Polk and Sons Publishing Co.), various pages.

⁵¹ Schwenk, "Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri," F.20.

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1929 The company started a “cash and carry” department for businesses to come to them to save on shipping costs. That department took up most of the first floor of the building.

1926-1940 Regularly the only wholesale drug company listed in Joplin City directories.

1950 Sanborn shows Wholesale Drugs 1st, plus elevated links to Christman’s Annex to the north, and labels for Furniture on the 2nd and 3rd.

1963 PDC got an award from the National Wholesale Druggists’ Association for “unusual public service.”

1967, June 28th. The PDC filed papers with the Secretary of State showing their headquarters had moved to 5th and Grand, (417 E. 5th) where they stayed until 1986.

1987 PDC was renamed Brown Drug Company. (Secretary of State Records.)

1989 Brown Drug absorbed by/merged with Alco Health Services of Delaware. (Secretary of State Records.)

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Pennington Drug Company
Name of Property
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"Pennington Drug has Big Line of Supplies." *Joplin Globe* (Joplin, MO), June 8, 1924. Accessed Aug. 30, 2016. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/1490832/?terms=joplin%2Bglobe%2Bpennington%2Bdrug>.

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Verbal Boundary Description

All of the South 29 feet of Lot Numbered Seventy-two (72) and All of Lot Numbered Seventy-three (73) and All of the North One-Half of Lot Numbered Seventy-four (74) in PORTER'S ADDITION TO MURPHYSBURG, now a part of the City of Joplin, Jasper County, Missouri, according to the recorded plat thereof, together with the East One-half of the vacated alley lying West of the adjoining said Lots.

Boundary Justification

The current boundaries encompass all of the land currently and historically associated with the building.

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Pennington Drug Company

Name of Property
Jasper County, Missouri

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Figure 1. Aerial photo map with Coordinates.
Source: Google Earth, Accessed June 8, 2017.



Pennington Drug Company
512-520 Virginia Avenue, Joplin, MO 64801 Latitude: 37.086145° Longitude: -94.512607°



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Figure 2. Aerial photo map of the area.

Source: Google Earth. Accessed April 12, 2017.



Google Earth

feet 3000
meters 900



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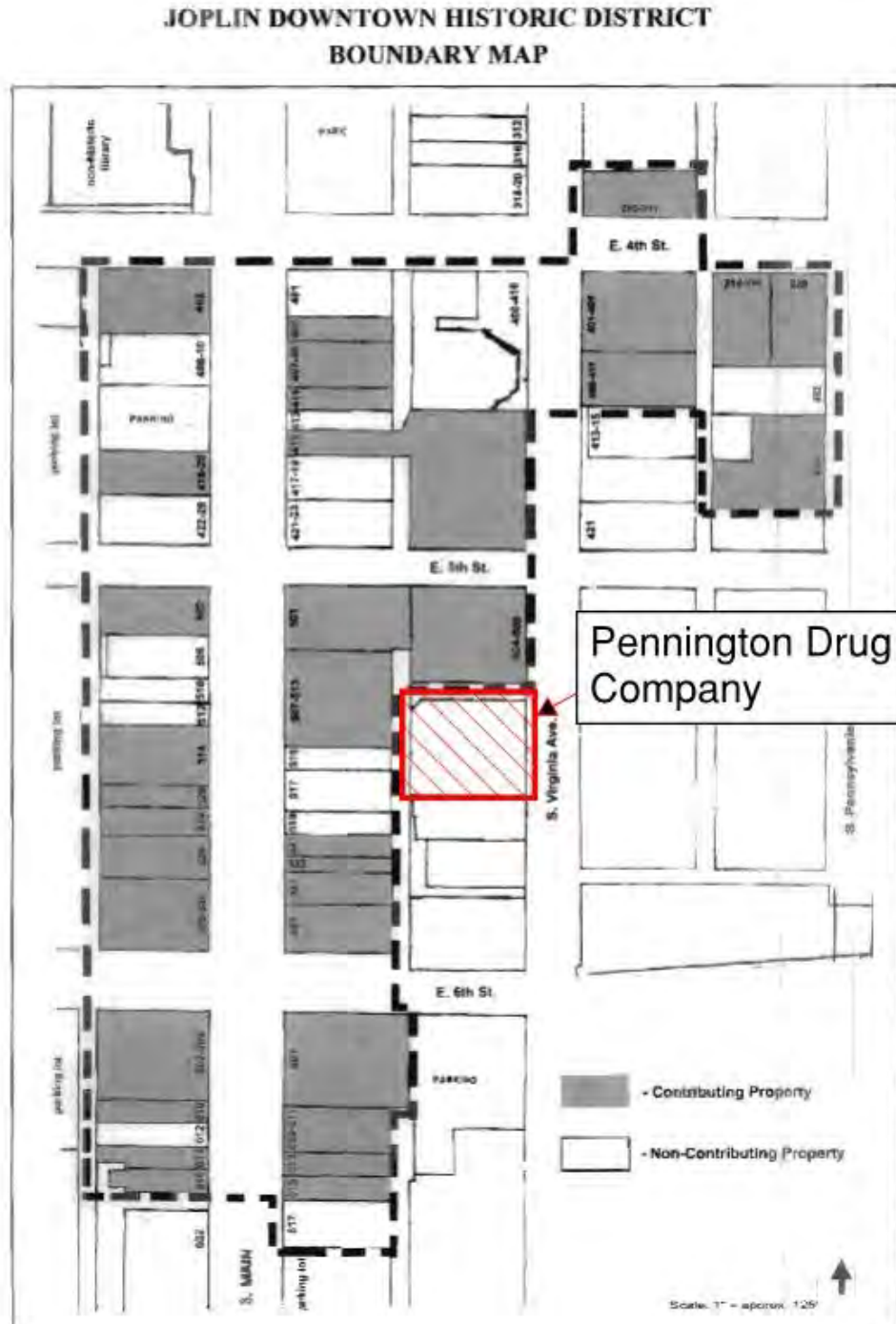
Pennington Drug Company

Name of Property
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County and State
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Figure 3. Joplin Downtown Historic District Map, with property location marked.
Sally F. Schwenk, "Historic Resources of Joplin, Missouri," *National Register MPS Cover Document*,
National Park Service (May 30, 2008).

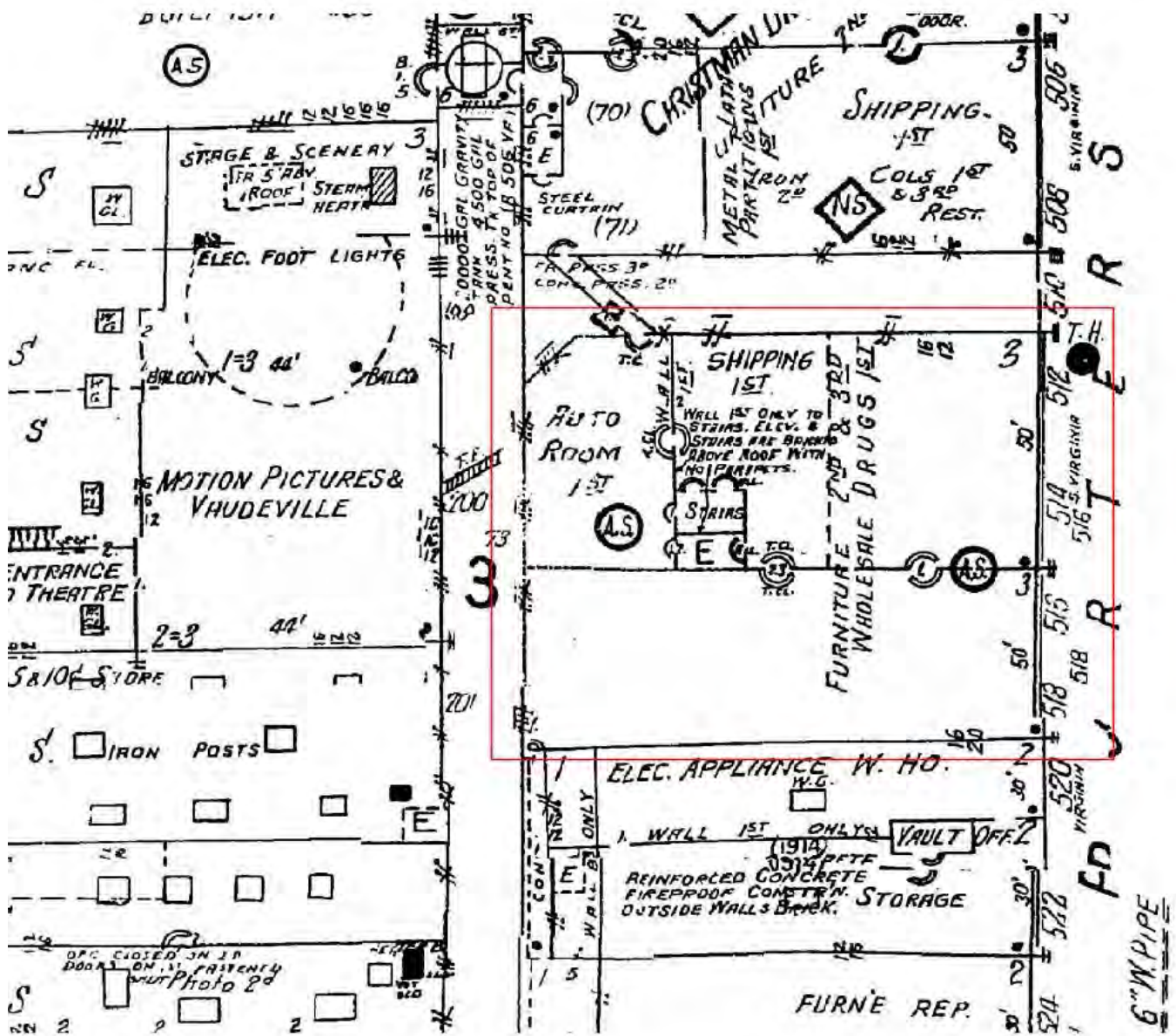


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Figure 4. 1950 Sanborn Map of the building. This is the oldest known map of the building. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. Joplin, Missouri, 1950, 33. Mid-Continent Public Library. Accessed October 26, 2016. <http://sanborn.umi.com.proxy.mcpl.lib.mo.us/image/view?state=mo&reelid=reel06&lcid=4718&image>.

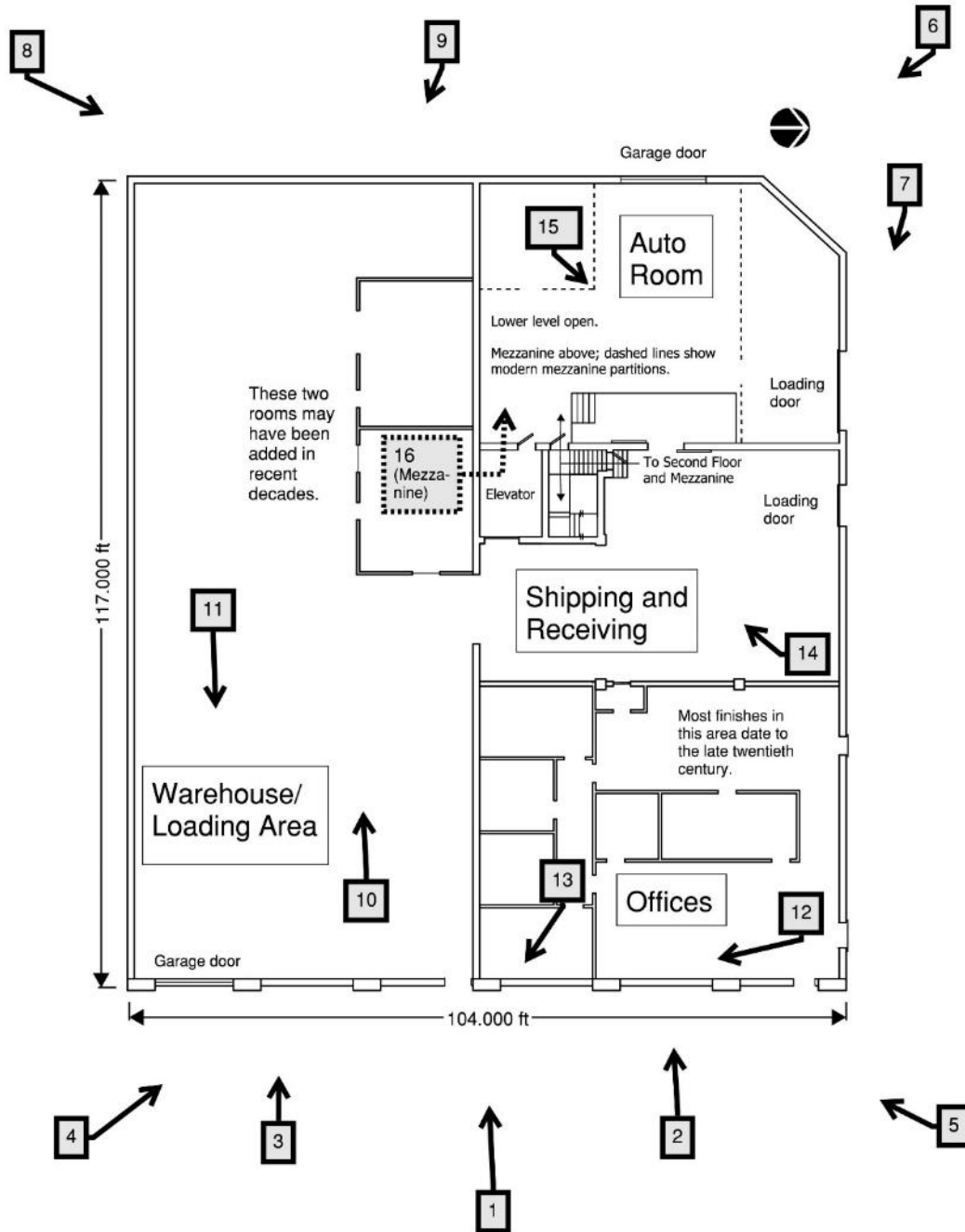


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Figure 5. First Floor Plan and Photo Key. Plan by Andrea Herries, 2017.

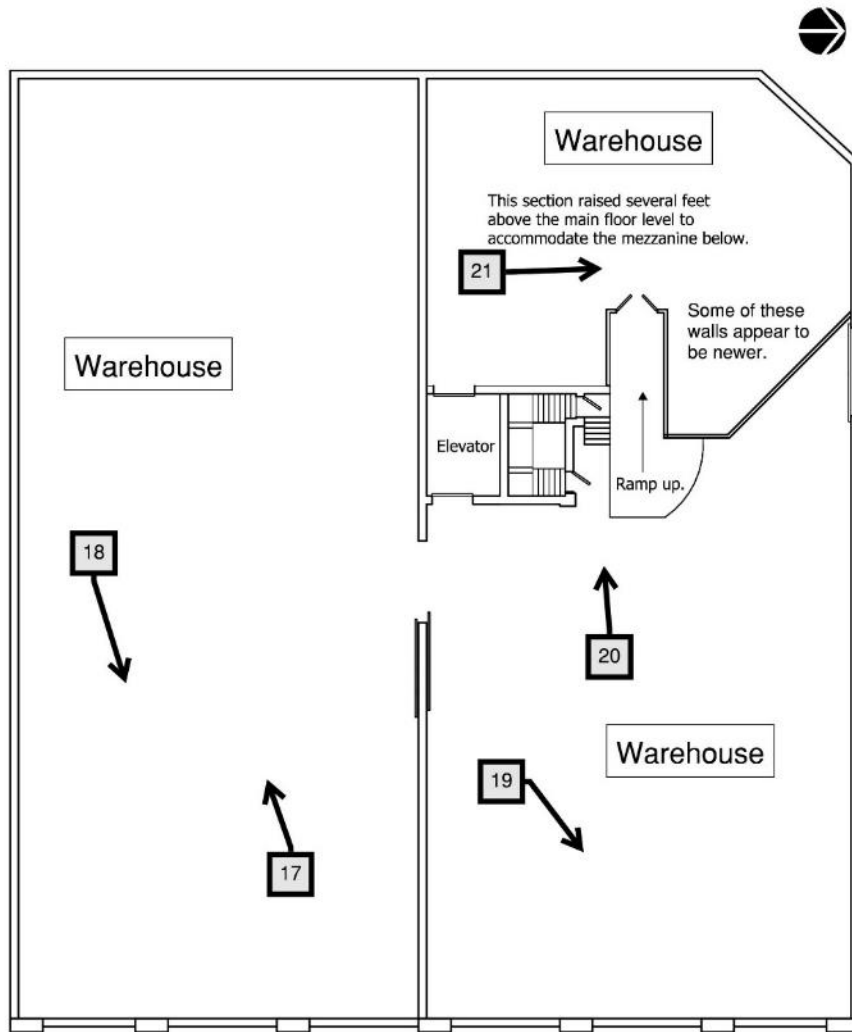


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Figure 6. Second Floor Plan and Photo Key. Plan by Andrea Herries, 2017.

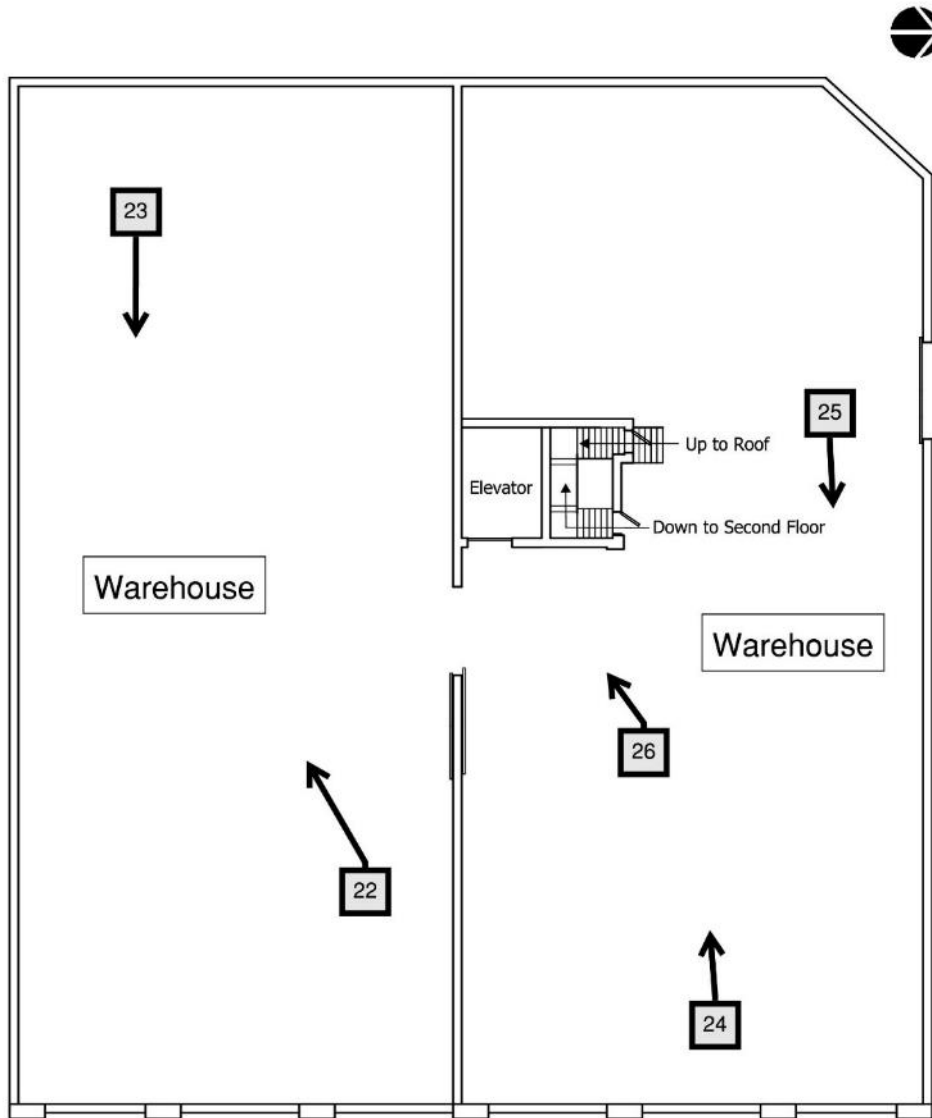


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Figure 7. Third Floor Plan and Photo Key. Plan by Andrea Herries 2017.



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Figure 8. Advertisement for Pennington Drug Company, *Joplin Globe*, Jan. 20, 1924, 6.



ANNOUNCEMENT

The Pennington Drug Company Will Enter Into General Wholesale Drug Business, Incorporating for Quarter Million Dollars.

We wish to announce that we have recently decided to enter the General Wholesale Drug Business. Previously we have been specializing in sundries and have done specialty jobbing in various lines. We expect to continue to specialize more than ever in the sundry business, which decision has made it necessary for us to add thousands of dollars worth of new merchandise, and consequently we are reorganizing and are incorporating for one quarter million dollars.

The same care and conservatism will be exercised in enlarging as has been used in building up our business from nothing six years ago to an organization which in 1923 sold several hundred thousand dollars worth of merchandise.

The Pennington Drug Company was started in 1918 with a small amount of capital and with but two people employed, and occupied floor space less than 1,000 square feet. Today there are eighteen people employed, there are six salesmen on the road, and our floor space covers approximately twenty thousand square feet.

It is our ultimate intention to give to Joplin and to our customers a real wholesale drug house that will compare favorably with those in the larger cities. We are indeed very grateful to our many loyal customers who have made possible our phenomenal success, and it will be a great pleasure for us to be able to serve the druggists of Joplin and surrounding territory with a thing they have long wanted, a complete and up-to-date wholesale drug concern. Our customers have proven their loyalty, and now we intend to do our part.

As soon as our intention to incorporate became known, several of our friends made voluntary subscriptions for stock, and a total of \$35,000 was taken without any solicitation. Subscriptions still come in and there is but little stock yet to be offered for sale at this time. There is to be no promotion expense, and any one investing in stock in the Pennington Drug Company will have the opportunity to get into an established, growing and profitable concern. Anyone interested in purchasing stock will be furnished with further information upon request.

PENNINGTON DRUG COMPANY
Exclusive Wholesalers, 512-514-516-518 Virginia Ave., Joplin, Missouri

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Figure 9. Cover Page, "Pennington Drug Company Expansion Section", *Joplin Globe*, June 8, 1924, 25.

JOPLIN GLOBE, SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 1924

The PENNINGTON DRUG COMPANY'S EXPANSION SECTION

**Announcing the
Enlargement and Expansion of the
*Pennington Drug Co.***

(Incorporated—\$250,000.00)

**Exclusive
Agents
for**

*Tyer's
Rubber Sundries*


*Owens'
Prescription Ware*

*Fritche's
Essential Oils*

*Fox
Fountain Fruits*

*Post's Malted
Grape Nuts*

*Bishop & Babcock's
Fountains*



**Distributors
of**

Drugs

*Prescription
Chemicals*

Sundries

Pharmaceuticals

Bottles

Patent Medicines

Acids

Heavy Chemicals

Fountain Supplies

Noelties

Notions

Papereries

Clocks

IT takes but a glance at the photographs on this page to show the results of the unusual development of the Pennington Drug Company. At the bottom of the page is shown a small building at 1625 Main Street where the business was begun in 1918. Above is pictured the building at 512-514-516-518 Virginia Avenue, now occupied, where are located the office, sample rooms, and main warehouse. On the corner of Sixth and Kentucky is another warehouse, two stories with basement, formerly occupied by the Spring Drug Company, now used by the Pennington Company.

Dependable Merchandise

The merchant who says that the public doesn't demand nationally advertised goods is misinformed or prejudiced. Usually an item that is nationally advertised is dependable. The Pennington Drug Co. is agent for many hundreds of advertised articles. Its stocks turn fast. Its merchandise is new, bright, up-to-date. A visit to the sample rooms and a trip through its warehouses will convince one that it is useless to send out of Joplin for the goods usually carried by wholesale druggists. This firm will stand by the goods it sells. It guarantees that dependable merchandise, fair prices, and courteous, instant service will be given at all times.



*The Original Home of the Pennington
Drug Co., Six Years Ago.*

**Prompt Shipments—
Cheap Delivery!**

No section in the entire southwest district is better favored for delivery of merchandise than Joplin. Merchants living in and near here, within a radius of twenty-five or fifty miles are enabled to put goods on their shelves the day after they are ordered from the salesman or by mail. Druggists of this district should take advantage of these opportunities. Live druggists in every section should buy in Joplin, carry smaller stocks, and turn their goods faster. Railroads, electric lines, concrete roads, trucking systems, all are at the disposal of the live druggist. Pennington delivers the goods in a hurry and economically.

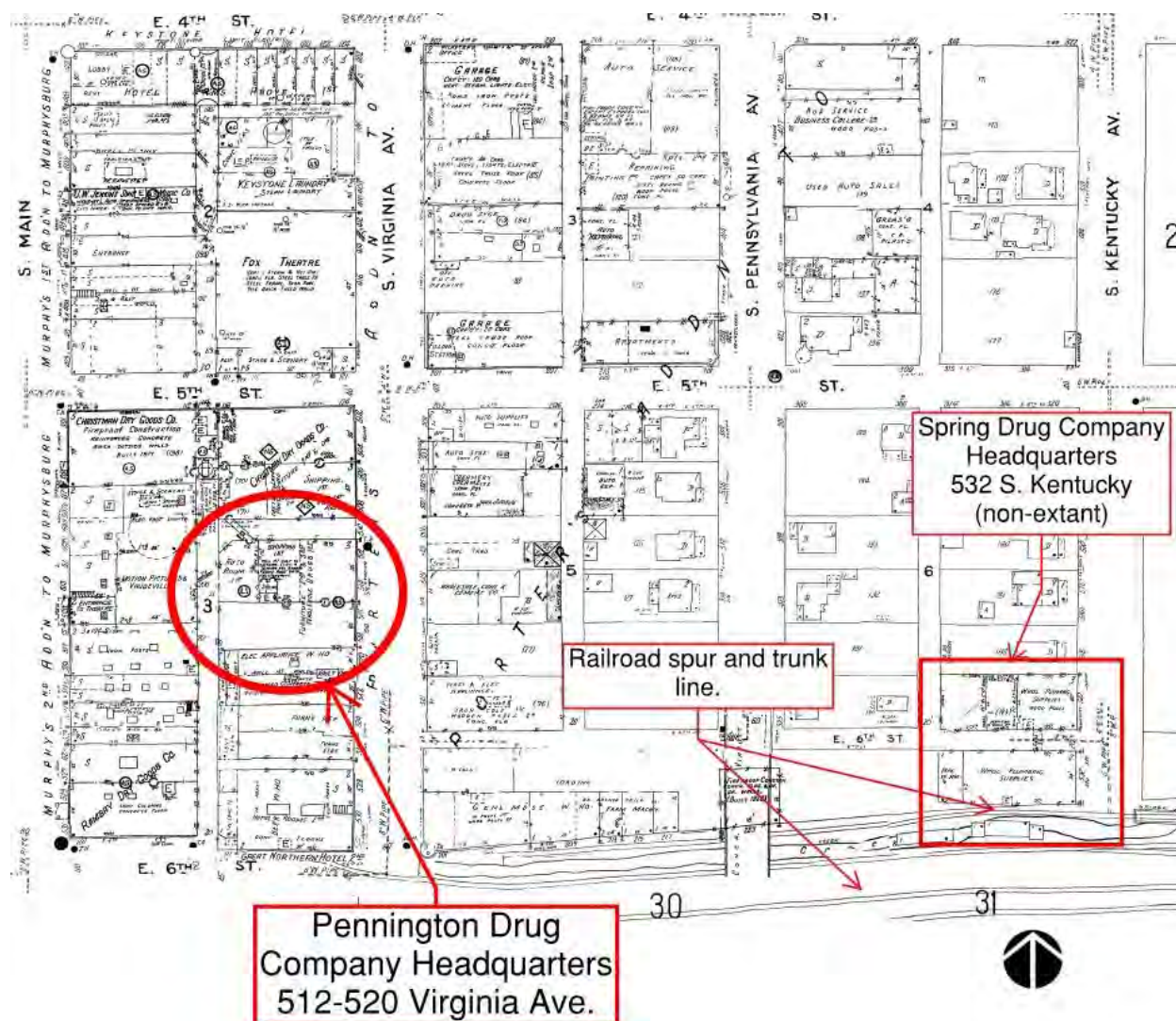
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Figure 10. 1950 Sanborn Map of the Area. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. Joplin, Missouri, 1950, 33. Mid-Continent Public Library. Accessed October 26, 2016. <http://sanborn.umi.com.proxy.mcpl.lib.mo.us/image/view?state=mo&reelid=reel06&lcid=4718&image>.

The Pennington Drug Company purchased the two Spring Drug Company buildings shown here for use as warehouse space in 1924.



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Figure 11. Photo of the facade in 2016, before the metal panels were removed.





522

38

512



NOVELTIES
NOTIONS

DEPT
SUNDRIES





526

524

522

Historic
Building
522-526
1880s
1900s



NOBEL'S
WOODS

DRUG
SUNDRIES

512











STAR

NETWORK





















W2
DR

Howsman's
OFFICE INTERIORS

57
508













THIS DOOR
MUST BE
KEPT
CLOSED

338