

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

1. Name of Property

historic name Sweet Springs Historic District

other names/site number n/a

2. Location

street & number along portions of Lexington, Marshall, Miller, and Spring streets [n/a] not for publication

city or town Sweet Springs [n/a] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Saline code 195 zip code 65351

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this
[X] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my
opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered
significant [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [])

Claire F. Blackwell 20 October 1997

Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date

- [] entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet [].
- [] determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet [].
- [] determined not eligible for the
National Register.
- [] removed from the
National Register
- [] other, explain
See continuation sheet [].

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	26	6
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	0	0
		26	6

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

Name of related multiple property listing.

Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

Commerce/Trade/business
Government/city hall
Government/post office
Domestic/hotel

Current Functions

Commerce/Trade/business

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Queen Anne
Classical Revival
Other: One/Two Part
Commercial Block

Materials

foundation brick
 walls brick
 roof asphalt
 other iron
wood

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Commerce

Architecture

Periods of Significance

circa 1875-1947

Significant Dates

n/a

Significant Person(s)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository: _____

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Sweet Springs Historic District
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Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

Major Bibliographical References

Brown County Historical Association. History of Sweet Springs 1818 to 1991. (Sweet Springs, Missouri, 1992)

Brownsville Herald. Various dates.

"The Famous Sweet Springs, Missouri, Season of 1887." (Brochure, author and publisher unknown, 1887)

History of Saline County, Missouri. (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Company, 1881)

History of Saline County, Missouri. (Marcelline, Missouri: Walsworth Publishing Co., 1967)

Napton, William B. Past and Present of Saline County, Missouri. (Indianapolis and Chicago: B. F. Bowen and Co., 1910)

Pelot, J. M., "Sweet Springs," Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society, July 1955 (condensed from Ware's Valley Monthly: A Journal of Western Thought and Life, May 1875)

"Prospectus of the Sweet Springs Property in Saline County, Missouri." (Brochure, author and publisher unknown, circa 1890)

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1883, 1888, 1900, 1909, 1914 and 1929.

Sweet Springs Herald. Various dates.

"Sweet Springs, Missouri: Health Resort, Playground and Chautauqua Center." (Brochure, Missouri Pacific-Iron Mountain Railway, 1909)

"Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri." (Brochure, Missouri Pacific Railway, 1882)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.6

UTM References

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	463750	4312895	15	463830	4312895
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	463830	4312780	15	463880	4312780

[X] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Roger Maserang
organization Pioneer Trails Regional Council date January 17, 1997
street & number 122 Hout Street telephone 816/747-2294
city or town Warrensburg state MO zip code 64093

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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Section 7 Page 1

Sweet Springs Historic District
Saline County, MO

Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

Summary: The Sweet Springs Historic District is a concentration of one-and-two-story commercial buildings, within an area of approximately 3.6 acres, located along four streets in downtown Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri (see MPS cover document, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO: Associated Property Types: Early Commercial Buildings and Late Commercial Buildings"). Constructed of brick from circa 1875 through circa 1920, the 26 contributing and six noncontributing buildings are architecturally as well as historically cohesive. The Early Commercial Buildings property type is represented by 10 contributing buildings and the Late Commercial Buildings property type, by 16. Included in this small district are buildings with Queen Anne and less-specific Victorian references, a Classical Revival bank and other early 20th century buildings with classical styling, and buildings with no style. Several buildings are individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places while others contribute to the district by providing necessary linkages. Some noncontributing buildings retain historic material behind their altered facades. Gaps where razed and collapsed buildings have not been replaced are indicative of the town's chronic difficulty in attracting new investment. Despite alterations, the district retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and consequently the commercial center's past is still readable in its architecture.

Elaboration: Sweet Springs is located in Saline County's Salt Fork Township in west central Missouri. Davis Creek and the Blackwater River are west and south of portions of Sweet Springs. The city is bounded by Interstate 70 on the north and is bisected from north to south by Missouri Highway 127 (Locust Street). Marshall, the county seat, is approximately 16 miles to the northeast. The Sweet Springs Historic District is an irregular-shaped, elongated area within the west central portion of the city. The district encompasses most of the historic business center that evolved following the arrival of a branch line of the Missouri Pacific Railroad in 1871.

Although Sweet Springs was platted (as Brownsville) several years before the Lexington and St. Louis Railroad was completed between Sedalia and Lexington in 1872, the railroad was responsible for an immediate reshaping of the business district. Dr. Edwin S. West, credited with helping bring the railroad through Brownsville, began developing Lexington Avenue along the right-of-way, as well as Marshall Avenue. Several Main Street businesses moved to Lexington Avenue, a distance of about two blocks, to be nearer the depot. The former City Hotel at 210-212 Lexington Avenue is believed to have been constructed (and partially rebuilt following a tornado in 1882) during this period in the early 1870s. South Miller Street, connecting Lexington and Main, was subsequently developed. Between Marshall and Main, South Miller Street angles slightly toward the southeast. This is the configuration that persists today.¹

The railroad right-of-way crossed Sweet Springs horizontally at a slight angle just north of Lexington Avenue, then angled more steeply between Locust Street and the northeast corner of town. The depot was on the north side of Lexington Avenue at Spring Street. Stockyards were north of Lexington Avenue between South Miller and Locust. Depot, stockyards and railroad track are no longer extant.

¹ History of Saline County, Missouri. St. Louis: Missouri Historical Company, 1881, pp. 500-503; History of Saline County, Missouri. Marcelline, Mo.: Walsworth Publishing Co., 1967, p. 341.

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Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

The district's northernmost boundary is behind a group of seven contiguous buildings from 201-217 Lexington Avenue (the north side of the street). These buildings faced away from the railroad track, but their loading docks were only a few feet south of the siding. Probably no more than one or two of these extant properties dates from the 1870s, but the buildings at 201, 203, 205 and 207 were standing in 1882 when a tornado devastated Brownsville. The building at 201 Lexington Avenue, then Bellamy's Shoe Store, constructed in 1881, was demolished and rebuilt, and the upstairs of the adjacent building at 203 Lexington Avenue also was demolished and rebuilt.² This contiguous group also includes buildings constructed in 1912 and 1915. In the early 20th century, development spilled southward from Lexington Avenue along South Miller Street. The district includes a contiguous grouping of west-facing buildings, constructed in the 300 block of South Miller Street from the 1880s through circa 1915. The south end of this group includes the former Smith Stores Company, a colonnaded shopping strip from 313-325 South Miller Street. The east side of South Miller Street includes a contiguous group of six buildings, anchored by the circa 1905 Chemical Bank at 300 South Miller Street, and three circa 1890s buildings with High Victorian storefronts. Also included are three individual buildings associated with food processing and commerce--two creamery buildings and a produce store--in the 300 block of Spring Street, dating from the early 20th century.

The buildings are related by their heights of one and two stories, common forms and materials, workmanship and style. The best Lexington Avenue buildings have generally similar Victorian storefronts with brickwork cornices. Five buildings on South Miller Street (four on the west side of the street and one on the east) are linked by their ornate, High Victorian metal cornices. The three primary buildings of the Smith Stores Company complex on South Miller Street are literally linked by a colonnaded front. Other buildings in the district lack formal styling and are relatively austere, and in that sense they are also related. Some buildings on South Miller Street sport canvas awnings similar to those depicted in historic photos.

The district buildings also may be categorized according to Longstreth's typology for American commercial architecture. Longstreth classifies blocks of commercial buildings according to the arrangement of their primary elevations as well as the details of individual buildings. Thus according to Longstreth's typology, the Sweet Springs Historic District would be further described as consisting of one-part (one-story) and two-part (two to four story buildings) commercial blocks, plus a few free-standing buildings. Longstreth described the one-part commercial block as "a simple box with a decorated facade and thoroughly urban in its overtones." The two-part commercial block consists of "shop-houses" with public spaces on the first level and living quarters, offices, meeting rooms or other more private spaces upstairs.³ In Sweet Springs, the types are mixed in each block with the exception of the south side of Lexington Avenue, which is exclusively a two-part commercial block.

²Brownsville Herald, April 21 and 28, May 5 and 19, 1882.

³Longstreth, Richard. The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture. Washington, D.C.: Preservation Press, 1987, pp. 24-68.

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Sweet Springs Historic District
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Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

All properties in the historic district were constructed for commercial or government purposes. While commercial uses persist for most buildings, today several are used exclusively for storage. On Lexington Avenue, several of the district's oldest and least altered buildings are used by a local lumber yard for the storage of lumber and other materials. Because there is no shortage of on-street parking in downtown Sweet Springs, gaps where razed buildings have not been replaced are covered with grass rather than asphalt for parking lots as in many larger cities. On South Miller Avenue, today's "main street," asphalt has been removed from the surface to reveal the original brick pavement. Light standards are modern versions of an older, cast iron type formerly used in Sweet Springs.

Surrounding the district are residential and commercial properties and vacant lots. The most conspicuous commercial properties are grain elevators north and east of Lexington Avenue, and lumber yard facilities on the west side of Spring Street. A group of commercial and public buildings is on the west side of South Miller Street, south of the district boundary. Two other groups of commercial buildings are on Main Street between South Miller and South Bridge Streets. Two or three significant buildings are included in one of these groups. The First Christian Church, 400 Bridge Street, listed in the National Register in 1980, is at the southwest corner of Main and Bridge.

Individual building descriptions are organized as follows: North side of Lexington Avenue, from east to west; south side of Lexington Avenue, from east to west; West Marshall Avenue; west side of South Miller Street from north to south; east side of South Miller Street from north to south; west side of South Spring Street; and east side of South Spring Street. Current names of businesses are used if applicable and, if not, current usages are given in place of the name. Whether properties are contributing or noncontributing is also indicated. Early Commercial Buildings and Late Commercial Buildings (subtypes described in the MPS cover document) are indicated by the abbreviations ECB and LCB. (In Section 8, entries include original business names or early historic names when known, and various usages over the years. Current usages are also indicated.)

North side of Lexington Avenue:

201 Lexington Avenue. (Storage; circa 1881; ECB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls. This building and the adjacent building at 203 Lexington Avenue have individual storefronts but were constructed simultaneously, with an upstairs hall over both addresses. This storefront is relatively unaltered. The cornice is moderately corbeled above a decorative band and a recessed horizontal panel. Second floor windows (double-hung 2/2s) have pediment-shaped, cast iron hoodmolds and iron sills. The lower storefront features a recessed, double-leaf, transomed entrance flanked by square cast iron posts and transomed display windows. The posts feature a female head in profile and a floral pattern within a recessed panel. Sills are also made of iron. Tall entrance doors contain vertical glass panels above panels with octagonal moldings. Display windows have been replaced with plywood, but most glass transoms are intact. There is a decorative metal ceiling. This building was rebuilt, apparently in its original form, after sustaining extensive tornado damage in 1882. Contributing. (See photos #1-3, 5-6)

203 Lexington Avenue. (Storage; circa 1881; ECB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls. This building was constructed simultaneously with the adjacent east building and they share an upstairs hall.

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The cornice is moderately corbeled above a decorative band and a recessed horizontal panel. The three upstairs windows (double-hung 2/2s) have pediment-shaped, cast iron hoodmolds and iron lugsills. The lower storefront consists of a recessed, double-leaf, transomed entrance flanked by square, cast iron posts and sills and display windows with transoms. Posts contain recessed panels with female heads in profile and floral patterns. Entrance doors and display windows are smaller on this building than on the nearly similar building at 201 Lexington, and transom windows are larger. The storefront is relatively unaltered. The first floor ceiling is decorative pressed metal. Much of this building, including all of the upper floor, was rebuilt after sustaining tornado damage in 1882. Contributing. (See photos #1-6)

205 Lexington Avenue. (Storage; circa 1870s; ECB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls (stuccoed). Although the upper storefront is essentially featureless under stucco, this building's lower storefront retains important original features. These include transomed, single doors on opposite sides of a recessed entranceway, a transomed display window on the west, a double-leaf doorway leading upstairs, three cast iron posts with a woman's profile and a floral pattern in a circular design, and metal sills. The four upstairs windows (double-hung 1/1s) have been shortened. The east display window has been replaced with a pair of small windows and overlapping layers of what appears to be fiberboard. Entrance doors contain vertical glass panels above small horizontal panels. This building is believed to have been damaged by a tornado in 1882. Contributing. (See photos #1-2, 5-6)

207 Lexington Avenue. (Apartments; circa 1870s; ECB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls with vinyl sheathing. With the exception of an elaborate brickwork cornice painted in contrasting colors, this building's storefront has been substantially altered. Upper halves of the four upstairs windows have been sealed and vinyl sheathing has been installed from the base of the cornice to just above the entrance, covering the transoms. Historic material in the lower storefront has been replaced with brick infill and modern windowing. This building probably sustained tornado damage in 1882. Noncontributing. (See photos #1-2, 5-6)

209 Lexington Avenue. (Storage; circa 1915; LCB) Rectangular plan, one story, brick walls. A narrow, dentilated band of limestone trim crosses the upper storefront of this small building. Limestone also accents a brickwork rectangle in the upper third of the facade, and provides a base for the two corners. The lower area of the storefront, including a front door, is covered with corrugated metal. Noncontributing. (See photos #1-2)

213 Lexington Avenue. (Storage; circa 1912; LCB) Rectangular plan, one story, brick walls. The dominant feature of this small building is its arcaded front. (It was constructed as a post office.) Three round archways are supported by two square brick posts which rest on an iron sill. The original transomed storefront with two separate entrances is intact. Below the corbeled cornice and the arches are three recessed panels with two stepped courses (reverse corbeling). The arches consist of three header rows. Contrasting with the predominant red bricks in this building, yellow bricks are used in the cornice, recessed panels and piers. From left to right, storefront fenestration is single-leaf entrance/large display window/single-leaf entrance/small display window. Decorative metal ceilings are intact in the arcade as well as inside the building. Presumably, this building was designed to complement the adjacent west building at 217 Lexington Avenue. Contributing. (See photos #1-2)

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217 Lexington Avenue. (Storage; circa 1885; ECB) Rectangular plan, one story, brick walls. The transomed central entrance and flanking transomed display windows of this small building have round arches consisting of three rows of header bricks. Beneath the plain brick cornice is a large recessed panel with two small vents. The display windows are probably intact behind wood panels. Display transoms consist of three small rectangular lights. The single-leaf entrance door contains a glass window and horizontal panels. The sill is cast iron. A building which formerly shared the west wall has been razed. Contributing. (See photos #1-2)

South side of Lexington Avenue:

200 Lexington Avenue. (Storage; circa 1882; ECB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls. Like the adjacent west building, this building has storefronts on two streets, Lexington and Marshall. This building was rebuilt after extensive tornado damage in 1882. On Marshall, the facade has corner pilasters, more distinctive corbeling, window heads with flat instead of segmental arches, and more massive lugsills than on Lexington. Lower storefronts have been reworked on both streets. On Marshall, the lower storefront has brick infill with a central, single-leaf entrance flanked by small display windows. On Lexington, the lower storefront has concrete block infill with a double-leaf central entrance flanked by small square windows. Visible upstairs windows are double-hung 4/1s. Some window openings are covered with plywood. Contributing. (See photos #5-7, 13-14)

202 Lexington Avenue. (Sweet Springs Flea Market, circa 1882; ECB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls. The north elevation (facing Lexington) has a corbeled brick cornice but corrugated metal covers the remainder of the upper storefront. The lower storefront retains its original configuration with a central recessed entrance flanked by large display windows. There is a cast iron sill and a well-worn stone stoop. PermaStone infill is under the displays. The south (Marshall Street) elevation lacks cornice elaboration and has been stuccoed. The lower south storefront is three-bay with a central flush entrance flanked by two vertical window openings which are covered with wood. An overhang is supported by iron piping. Upstairs windows (double-hung 2/2s) have segmental arches. Noncontributing. (See photos #5-7, 13-14)

210-212 Lexington Avenue. (Storage; circa 1870s; ECB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls. Constructed as a hotel, this double building has an original storefront with decorative, curvilinear hoodmolds and cast iron posts and window sills. Much original wood and glass is present. This property was rebuilt after sustaining tornado damage in 1882. The brickwork cornice is moderately corbeled, and six double-hung windows are evenly spaced across the second floor. Five of these upstairs windows are 2/2s; one is a slightly smaller 1/1. On the east building, the front wall is recessed under the overhanging second floor. Supports are square iron posts with ornate capitals. From left to right, fenestration consists of a display window (covered except for a tripartite transom), a transomed single-leaf entrance, and an upstairs stairway. On the west building, fenestration from left to right consists of a shallow, recessed double-leaf entrance with a transom, and two transomed display windows. Each building is divided into three bays by cast iron posts. A razed building, which had been adjacent on the east, apparently was similar in appearance and its upstairs was presumably part of the hotel. (See photos #5-6, 8-10, 12-13)

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214-216 Lexington Avenue. (Barbee Lodge 217 AF&AM; circa 1880s, 1919; LCB)

Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls. The Classical Revival primary elevation of this former bank building dates from 1919 when two adjacent buildings were reconstituted. The west half had been a bank earlier. This refronted building has a three-bay facade with a central entrance flanked by two large, tall window openings containing rows of small panes. Spanning the building just below the cornice is a dentilated limestone band with three decorative circles. Aligned with the uppermost row of windows are two limestone panels with a swag design and a centered limestone panel with the words BANK OF SWEET SPRINGS. A curved and dentilated limestone pediment is above the entrance. Within each multipaned window opening are two wood octagonal columns with square bases. The single-leaf entrance and adjacent wood panels are non-original. Non-original wood panels also are found in the lower window openings, while overlapping horizontal pieces within the window openings appear to be fiberboard. The rear elevation has been stuccoed. Rear door and window openings have round arches. Contributing. (See photos #8, 11-12, 15)

North side of West Marshall Avenue:

214 West Marshall Avenue. (Apartments; circa 1880; ECB) Square plan, two stories, brick (stuccoed) walls. This is a former hotel kitchen which has been converted into apartments. The primary south elevation is four-bay with a window/door, door/window arrangement. Openings have moderately rounded segmental arches. There is a two-story porch with a shed roof. A small, one-story concrete block building is connected to the east wall. Noncontributing. (See photos #15-16)

West side of South Miller Street:

300 South Miller Street. (Chemical Bank; circa 1905; LCB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls. A corner entrance is the defining architectural feature of this building but it is also distinguished by fine brickwork with sandstone trim. In a circa 1960s remodeling, sandstone pilasters flanking the corner entrance were replaced with brick but courses of rough sandstone blocks above the entrance and the sandstone bases were retained. Other rock-faced sandstone is present as cornice trim, as pilaster accents, as a string course aligned with second floor lugsills, as a lower belt course or water table, and as lintels with descents. Brickwork features decorative corbeled panels in the front and side parapets which are stepped on the long north and south axis, and pilasters in the entrance ensemble accented by alternately projecting courses. Along the north elevation, brick pilasters define window bays and an intact storefront with a central recessed entrance and flanking display windows at the west end of the building. Window openings in the more public elevations along Miller and Marshall have flat sandstone arches while those on the west and south have segmental brick arches. Contributing. (See photos #16-19)

302 South Miller Street. (Chemical Bank addition; circa 1890s, 1960s; ECB) Constructed as an addition to the adjacent Chemical Bank, this building has a modern masonry front but the original south wall and part of the original rear facade are retained and readily visible. The recessed lower storefront has been infilled with brick with the exception of two contemporary windows. The upper storefront is covered with

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imitation stone paneling. Original materials are not evident in the frontal view from Miller Street.
Noncontributing. (See photos #18-19)

304 South Miller Street. (Chemical Bank drive-through; circa 1890s; ECB) Rectangular plan, one story, brick walls. This "building" retains its ornate pressed metal cornice but the front and rear walls were removed in converting it into a drive-through. The original pressed metal ceiling is intact in the front portion. Noncontributing. (See photos #19-21)

306 South Miller Street. (Fashion Fabric and Bridal Shop; circa 1890s; ECB) Rectangular plan, one story, brick walls. Like other buildings in the north part of this block, this small building has a relatively original storefront with an ornate pressed metal upper portion painted in contrasting colors. The lower storefront has cast iron posts and sill. Display windows flank a recessed central entrance. Modern paneling has been installed over the transom windows. The entrance door consists of a large rectangular glass panel in a wood frame. A canvas awning is across the storefront. Contributing. (See photos #20-23)

308 South Miller Street. (D & D Heating & Cooling; circa 1890s; ECB) Rectangular plan, one story, brick walls. While this building is slightly narrower than the adjacent north building, its pressed metal cornice and cast iron posts are identical to those on the neighboring building. The single-leaf entrance is recessed in the north corner of the storefront. A display window across the south half angles into the entrance. An awning, made of canvas, shields the storefront. Contributing. (See photos #20-23)

310 South Miller Street. (Brick Street Bar & Grill; 1891; ECB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls. This building has an impressive High Victorian storefront of substantially original materials. The south wall is indented at approximately midpoint, making the front half slightly wider than the rear half of the building. The entire upper story is covered with ornate pressed metal. Painted in fading letters in the parapet are the words "CITY HALL" and the date "1891." The lower storefront is equally impressive, with five cast iron posts dividing the facade into four bays. A recessed double-leaf entrance, flanked by display windows, is off-center toward the north. The southernmost bay contains a flush single-leaf upstairs entrance. A molding with a pyramidal pattern separates painted-over transom windows from the lower windows. Entrance doors are wood with large rectangular glass panels. Missing from the metal cornice are four stocky finials. Bases are missing from the cast iron posts. The door to the upstairs and its surrounding paneling is non-original. Contributing. (See photos #20, 22-23)

East side of South Miller Street:

301 South Miller Street. (Whitsett Drugs; circa 1885; circa 1920; LCB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls. This circa 1885 building has a circa 1920 storefront. The north wall has a much older appearance than the storefront and two iron posts which probably flanked an original entrance are present. This and several other buildings in this block are skewed to accommodate the off-axis alignment of Miller Street. In this case, the building tapers rearward. When this building was expanded into the adjacent south building, an entrance was removed and display windows with aluminum

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frames were installed across the lower storefront. The brick cornice contains moderately decorative brickwork. Three window openings on the second floor of the primary elevation contain double-hung 1/1 sash. Boards have been used to replace or stabilize some old concrete lugsills. Side windows are similar to front windows. A canvas awning extends across the front of this and the adjacent south building. Contributing. (See photos #17, 24-26)

303 South Miller Street. (Whitsett Drugs; circa 1885; circa 1920; LCB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls. The brickwork cornice of this building is plain except for a narrow band with a simple pattern. Three second floor window openings have concrete lugsills. Sash are double hung 1/1s. The lower storefront has been reworked, with aluminum frame doors and windows installed. The central recessed double-leaf entrance is flanked by display windows, possibly the building's original configuration. Internal structural changes have converted this building and the adjacent north building into a single unit. Canvas awning. A metal sign, WHITSETT DRUGS, is suspended at the second floor level. Contributing. (See photos #24-26)

305 South Miller Street. (Ronald L. Hinton Dental Office; circa 1890s; ECB) Rectangular plan, one story, brick walls. Beneath its elaborate Victorian metal cornice, the lower storefront of this building has been reworked to contemporary standards. There is a central, recessed entrance flanked by two vertical window openings. These openings have round segmental arches. The metal cornice is painted beige with green trim. Contributing. (See photos #24, 26)

307 South Miller Street. (Knight's Bookkeeping Service; circa 1915; LCB) Rectangular plan, one story, brick walls. This narrow building is the northernmost of three small buildings with identical, moderately corbeled brickwork cornices. The original storefront consists of a recessed entrance at the south end of the facade, and a display window. A transom above the display window is plywood-covered. The wood door contains a large vertical window. Contributing. (See photos #24, 26)

309 South Miller Street. (Elmwood Mercantile Mini-Mall; circa 1915; LCB) Rectangular plan, one story, brick walls. This building continues the moderate cornice pattern of the adjacent north building, and has similar end pilasters and a plain panel beneath the cornice and lower storefront. The storefront with its central, recessed, single-leaf entrance flanked by display windows is original. The door is wood with a large vertical window of beveled glass and a classical molding. Above the door is a split transom. Slender side panels contain wood infill. Transom lights above an awning appear to be painted glass. Contributing. (See photos #24, 26)

311 South Miller Street. (Gene's Barber Shop; circa 1915; LCB) Rectangular plan, one story, brick walls. This storefront retains its original configuration but has been partially rebuilt with nonhistoric material. The brickwork cornice is moderately corbeled between corner pilasters, resulting in a recessed, plain panel above the lower storefront, as in the two adjacent buildings north. The central, single-leaf entrance is recessed between two display windows with aluminum joint supports. The apron area consists of vertical boards. The transom is covered with similar (non-original) material. A small portion of the original storefront is retained in the projecting south end. A canvas awning has been installed. Contributing. (See photos #24, 26-27)

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313 South Miller Street. (Connie's Corner Salon; circa 1915; LCB) Rectangular plan, one story, brick walls. This small shop was constructed within an alley at the north edge of an adjacent, three-building shopping complex. Because the colonnaded space of the adjacent complex was extended across the driveway, this storefront is also recessed, although less so than in the large buildings to the south. The cornice contains decorative brickwork with a design similar to that above other former alleys in the complex. The storefront seems original and consists of a single-leaf transomed entrance at the south end with a display window across the rest of the facade. The three window sections are set within wood sash, with copper or bronze dividers. The door is wood with a large vertical window. This building has a shade-type awning. Contributing. (See photos #24, 26-27)

313a-315a South Miller Street. (B & N Brickstreet Flea Market; 1911; LCB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls. This is the northernmost of three two-story brick buildings, individually constructed in 1911. The buildings share a colonnaded front of a continuous design, resulting in a strongly horizontal effect which is enhanced by such details as belt courses of limestone and bands of window openings. Overall, the building group has classical overtones and balance. This building is not quite as deep as the middle and southernmost buildings. Five of the 14 square brick piers supporting the overhanging second level of all three buildings are in front of this unit. Upstairs, recessed window groupings are between pilasters which are extensions of the piers. Each grouping consists of a triple window (a one-light sash flanked by a pair of narrower, double-hung 1/1s) and a multipaned transom of lavender glass. Limestone is used for trim including a coping layer, a dentilated band, capitals and bases, and lugsills. Separate transomed, single-leaf entrances to 313a and 315a are recessed in a central alcove, and the rest of the storefront consists of display windows with metal dividers. The 313a door contains a large vertical window and is original but the 315a door appears to be a modern replacement. The ceiling under the overhang is decorative pressed metal. The interior ceiling has been lowered but original wood paneling and moldings with an egg-and-dart design are intact near the display windows. Contributing. (See photos #24-25, 27-28, 30-32)

317-319 South Miller Street. (Servistar/McKeage Hardware; 1911; LCB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls. This is the middle and largest of three two-story brick buildings constructed more or less simultaneously and sharing a colonnaded front supported by square piers of brick. Although no specific style is indicated, classical influences are suggested by design elements of this and the flanking buildings. *Pilasters with limestone capitals above each pier define a long row of recessed window openings on the second floor.* Short pilasters reappear in the cornice above a dentilated limestone band across the width of the complex. This middle building contains a north store and a south store, with an inner dividing wall. Each of these extensively windowed stores has a recessed entrance with two doors, separated by a beveled glass panel, opening into a large sales area. Doors are combinations of vertical panels, beveled glass, and egg-and-dart moldings. Display windows with wood framing flank the entrances. Floors of the recessed entrances have mosaic surfaces. Contributing. (See photos #24-25, 27-32)

321 South Miller Street. (Silhouette Family Hair Care; circa 1915; LCB) Rectangular plan, one (two) story, brick walls. The first floor space occupied by a small shop was originally a driveway between the middle and southernmost of three buildings constructed simultaneously and connected by a colonnaded front portion. The shop was probably constructed soon after the larger buildings were completed in 1911. The upstairs is a connecting part of the colonnade overhang, and contains office space. Storefront details are similar to those of neighboring buildings. The entrance is recessed and the display window retains its

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wood and metal framing and support members. An air conditioner fills the transom opening above the entrance. Contributing. (See photos #24, 26-27, 29-30)

323-325 South Miller Street. (Daniel's Dollar Den; 1911; LCB) Rectangular plan, two stories, brick walls. This is the southernmost of three two-story brick buildings constructed in 1911, all sharing a colonnaded front supported by square piers of buff-colored brick with bases and capitals of limestone. While the sidewalls are of softer red brick, the colonnaded portion consists of pressed brick of a darker shade, trimmed in limestone. This building is somewhat narrower than its two companion buildings, with four piers instead of five supporting its share of the overhang. The piers continue upward as pilasters, creating recessed openings for triple windows with multipaned transoms of lavender-hued glass. Larger but otherwise similar glass panels just above the piers have been covered for protection. Horizontal bands, including one of dentilated limestone at the cornice which wraps around the side of the colonnaded portion, are continued from building to building and contribute to a modern look. This building retains its original storefront configuration, with an entrance recessed within the central portion of the fully-windowed facade. The single entrance is flanked by panels of beveled glass. The underside of the overhang is decorative pressed metal. Alterations include replacement window aprons which are somewhat taller than the original aprons. Today's window framing is aluminum rather than wood as in the original versions. On the exposed south elevation, square window openings with concrete lintels and lugsills are covered with plywood. Inside, two rows of square wooden posts provide support for the ceiling, which has been lowered. Contributing. (See photos #24-25, 27-28, 30-32)

West side of South Spring Street:

300 South Spring Street. (Bob's Auto Care; 1910; LCB) Square plan, one story with full basement, brick walls. Brick pilasters divide the primary east elevation of this building into thirds. Pilasters in the side walls define door and window openings. The parapet is stepped and the upper edge is corbeled above a course of alternately projecting headers. Overhead doors have been installed in the original wide central entrance and an adjacent bay which formerly contained a triple window. The north third of the main elevation contains a transomed single-leaf entrance and a window opening. Side windows have moderately rounded segmental arches. Contributing. (See photos #33-34, 38)

East side of South Spring Street:

310 South Spring Street. (Storage; circa 1915; LCB) Rectangular plan, one story, brick walls. Modest decorative brickwork is contained in the parapet of the primary, four-bay elevation on Marshall Avenue. Side parapets are stepped. A drive-through with a gable roof, supported by three small columns of brick on concrete bases, is on the west (Spring Street) elevation. A tall brick chimney projects from the southeast corner. In the north elevation, original fenestration consists of two individual but closely-spaced windows near the east end and a transomed single-leaf entrance and another window (all double-hung 2/2s) near the west end. A transomed double-leaf loading entrance is in the west elevation, along with two single-leaf entrances and three 2/2 windows. Additional entrances and windows are in the two secondary elevations. Lintels and lugsills are concrete. The painted name, SWEET SPRINGS CREAMERY CO., is visible in the north facade. On the west, fragments of the same words are visible in the drive-through gable. (See photos #35-36, 38)

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316 South Spring Street. (Storage; circa 1915; LCB) Rectangular plan, one story, brick walls. The north elevation contains a double-leaf entrance and a window opening and the west elevation contains three evenly spaced window openings (double-hung 2/2s). Lintels and lugsills are concrete. A concrete block addition with sliding vehicle doors wraps around the east and south facades. An open storage area with a shed roof is on the west. This was a support building for the nearby creamery. Contributing. (See photo #37)

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Summary: The Sweet Springs Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C and is significant in the areas of COMMERCE and ARCHITECTURE. Historically, the district consists of a relatively intact grouping of commercial buildings which are significant for their association with the 19th century development of Sweet Springs as a railroad town and health resort, and with a vigorous rebuilding effort in the early 1900s which transformed the business center (see MPS cover document, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri: Railroad Growth and Development in Sweet Springs, 1870-1890s; Sweet Springs as a Popular Spa in Western Missouri, 1877-1896; and 20th Century Redevelopment in Sweet Springs, 1900-1930"). Architecturally, the 26 contributing properties range from one and two-story Queen Anne and vernacular Victorian renderings to more academic designs stressing unity, order and balance with reference to Classical Revival and other formal styles, as well as buildings with no particular style. Ten contributing buildings are representative of the Early Commercial Buildings property type, and 16 are Late Commercial Buildings (see MPS cover document, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri: Associated Property Types"). The district's six noncontributing buildings include otherwise historic properties with significantly altered facades. The period of significance for the district, circa 1875-1947, represents the date of the oldest extant buildings to the arbitrary cut-off required by the National Register, as the commercial significance of this district continued into the mid-20th century. Boundaries encompass primarily brick buildings which are evocative of their period of significance, and which overall retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Although the business center's commercial significance has waned somewhat in recent decades, Sweet Springs remains a viable community today.

Background: Early settlement in the vicinity of what became Sweet Springs has been documented back to 1818, with the arrival of migrating Kentuckians such as Edward Reavis who settled with his family and slaves near Westbrook Ford on the Blackwater River. Kentuckian Stephen G. Wentworth is credited with platting the original town of Brownsville in 1838. Brownsville grew slowly, reaching a population of a few hundred by 1860. Although Brownsville was the only significant settlement in Salt Pond Township, its continued postwar development hinged on local access to a railroad. The route of the Pacific Railroad across Missouri, on which construction resumed after the Civil War, was several miles south of Brownsville. But Brownsville was simply a latecomer in the railroad derby, not a scratch. In 1872, with completion of a branch line between Sedalia and Lexington by the Lexington & St. Louis Railroad, Brownsville became a bonafide railroad town with approximately 40 business establishments plus two banks, two mills, three churches, and at least two schools. In 1887, Brownsville was renamed Sweet Springs to capitalize on the growing popularity of a similarly-named health resort just south of the city limits. Not counting the many visitors on summer weekends, the official population was 1,168.⁴

Commerce: Historically, the Sweet Springs Historic District represents the core of the town's once-thriving commercial center. Early development of the business center coincided with Brownsville's emergence in the 1870s as a railroad town serving a diverse agricultural community. Development was

⁴History of Saline County, Missouri. St. Louis, Missouri Historical Company, 1881, pp. 500-503; History of Saline County, Missouri. Marcelline, Mo.: Walsworth Publishing Co., 1967, p. 341; Campbell, R. A. Campbell's Gazetteer of Missouri. St. Louis: Campbell, R. A., 1874, p. 584; Brown County Historical Association. History of Sweet Springs 1818 to 1992. Sweet Springs: 1992, p. 7.

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accelerated in the 1880s as the community gained significance as the host town for a popular health resort in western Missouri. Finally, the district represents an inspired attempt to overcome a depressed economy with a flurry of new construction, including buildings with a mall-like unity, in the early 20th century.

The impact of the Lexington & St. Louis Railroad on Brownsville was, as expected, considerable. The commercial center was directly affected by a rush of new construction on Lexington Avenue, a newly-created street along the right-of-way. Stockyards, an elevator, warehouses and other agricultural storage facilities were constructed, along with a passenger depot, and Brownsville became "an important shipping point."⁵ For example nearly 2,000 railroad cars of corn, the region's primary crop, were shipped from Brownsville in 1875.⁶ Before the railroad arrived, the nearest shipping point available to many area farmers for shipping their produce and stock was at LaMonte, a dozen or so miles south of Brownsville on the main line of the Missouri Pacific Railroad. Mineral water from local springs also became an item of local export.

Brownsville was the host community for the Sweet Springs Health Resort which capitalized on the health reform movement of the late 19th century. The resort featured springs which were believed to have medicinal value. The main spring was "noted for curing Dyspepsia, Sick Stomach, Kidney and Bladder Diseases, including Diabetes and Bright's Disease; also Diarrhoea of Children and Cholera Infantum (and) Nervous Prostration, Hysteria, Paralysis, and Diseases of Women."⁷ On summer weekends, special trains transported resort visitors from St. Louis and Kansas City. Resort guests arriving by train stayed in local hotels and boarding houses as well as in resort cottages or at the resort hotel, and many visitors shopped, dined and pursued other interests within the commercial center.

As early as 1874, the City Hotel on Lexington Avenue advertised busses running regularly to and from the resort which, by 1881, offered numerous recreational attractions including such things as bowling, swimming, riding, dancing and boating on the Blackwater River in addition to healing waters.⁸ When the Central Hotel was offered for lease in 1878, would-be proprietors were advised that the building "can easily be filled with persons wishing to enjoy the famous sweet springs and other mineral waters near the town."⁹ Numerous summer cottages were constructed on the resort grounds, today part of Sweet Springs. Influential Missourians who owned cottages at Sweet Springs included Governors John S.

⁵Campbell, op cit.

⁶History of Saline County, Missouri (1881), op cit.

⁷Brochures touting the medicinal benefits of drinking local spring water were periodically published during the resort years. This claim is from a brochure published in 1882 by the Missouri Pacific Railway, which operated special trains on summer weekends.

⁸Brownsville Herald, December 3, 1874.

⁹Brownsville Herald, August 16, 1878.

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Marmaduke, Thomas T. Crittenden and, prior to becoming governor, Lon V. Stevens; Senators George G. Vest and Francis M. Cockrell; and many others.¹⁰

Extant commercial buildings constructed during the 1870s or early 1880s include those at 200, 201, 202, 203, 205, 207, 210-212, 214-216 and 217 Lexington Avenue, the street just south of and parallel to the railroad right-of-way. The earliest Sanborn map for Brownsville (1883) depicts numerous extant buildings. Some of these early buildings, which provided essential goods and services, are mentioned in the Brownsville Herald in the late 1870s and early 1880s. Businesses at these locations provided groceries, dry goods, hardware, drugs and meats, and there were hotels, restaurants, millineries, blacksmiths, carpenter shops, harness shops, barbers and lodge halls within their walls, Sanborn maps indicate. The former Bank of Sweet Springs at 214-216 Lexington Avenue, originally two individual buildings from this period, has been refronted (and restyled).

On April 18, 1882, a tornado killed nine persons outright or shortly afterward, injured dozens of others, and damaged or destroyed several of the town's buildings, including buildings in the historic district. Brownsville was temporarily "thronged" with sightseers and excursion trains ran every day. Most, like the old City Hotel at 210-212 Lexington, were "rapidly...restored to (their) former condition of usefulness, with a good prospect of being much enlarged."¹¹ In 1887, Brownsville was renamed Sweet Springs.

Downtown development continued in the 1890s, most notably on the west side of South Miller Street southward from Marshall Avenue (although the Chemical Bank building on the southwest corner of Miller and Marshall was constructed somewhat later, in circa 1905). Construction during this period included the 1891 City Hall, a two-story building with a fine High Victorian facade at 310 South Miller Street. Three other extant buildings from this period retain integrity, and two of them have original-looking storefronts, at 306 and 308 South Miller Street. In addition to the local government, these particular buildings housed dry goods, hardware, grocery, harness, clothing and drug stores, along with millinery, bakery and tailoring establishments, Sanborn maps indicate. Whether any extant building was directly associated with the railroad or the resort is unknown but unlikely, although resort guests undoubtedly were customers in the various shops. By the 1890s, however, with business at the local health resort dwindling, the owners made a dramatic conversion and the Sweet Springs Health Resort became Marmaduke Military Academy. The resort hotel, newly modernized, became the barracks during the school year and was used by resort visitors during summers. This arrangement lasted five years, until the barracks/hotel was destroyed by fire on March 1, 1896.¹² When these facilities were not rebuilt, the city's prospects for continued growth and development seemed increasingly dim as the century turned.

¹⁰Sweet Springs Herald, March 18, 1881; May 14, 1909 (reprinted from The Independent, undated); History of Saline County, Missouri (1967), op cit., p. 343; Morrow, Lynn, "An Historic Preservation Survey in the Town of Marshall, Missouri," 1984, pp. 58-59; "Prospectus of the Sweet Springs Property," brochure, circa 1890, p. 10; "Sweet Springs, Missouri: Health Resort, Playground and Chautauqua Center," brochure published by Missouri Pacific-Iron Mountain Railway, St. Louis, 1909 (unpaged).

¹¹Brownsville Herald, April 21 and 28, May 5 and 19, 1882.

¹²"Missouriana," Missouri Historical Review, Vol. XXXVII, No. 1, October 1942, pp. 64-66.

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Sanborn maps indicate minimal construction in the historic district between 1900-09, but beginning around 1910, and apparently for the next few years, Sweet Springs experienced what the Sweet Springs Herald described as "an unprecedented building boom."¹³ With the city's population hovering at around 1,100, local entrepreneurs headed by Charles K. Smith, the son of a local lumber dealer, commenced developing a new block on the east side of South Miller Street. Determined to rejuvenate Sweet Springs, Smith apparently believed that if the shopping experience could be enhanced by the construction of attractive, convenient buildings, the decline could be reversed.¹⁴

The arrival of the railroad 40 years earlier reshaped the commercial center, and in circa 1911 Smith's buildings significantly changed the look of downtown Sweet Springs. Included were the Colonade Resort Hotel, a three-story building which also housed a bank and other commercial occupants (the hotel portion apparently was not opened for business until 1919 or so); a two-story, three-building shopping complex which soon came to be known as the Smith Stores Company; an ice plant; expanded facilities at the lumber yard between South Miller and South Spring Streets; and various other buildings in which he had an interest.

In 1912, the Smith Stores Company included a hardware store with a tinner, plumber and steamfitter; a furniture and undertaking establishment; a dry goods store and a grocery store. "We will under our method of buying and selling merchandise be able to save you money, time and worry on your purchases," the firm advertised in 1912.¹⁵ The hotel and shopping complex, both colonnaded and distinctly 20th century in appearance, were uncommonly cosmopolitan in a town with a population under 1,200.

Smith's three-story hotel and ice plant are gone but the colonnaded shopping complex is intact at 313a-315a, 317-319, 321 and 323-325 South Miller Street. Also intact is a short, contiguous strip of one-story buildings constructed north of the shopping complex, at 307, 309, 311, and 313 South Miller Street. Perhaps under Smith's influence, a few other owners significantly "modernized" their buildings with complete new facades during this period. On Main Street, the three-story Central Hotel--by this time a general store--was rebuilt in two-story form reflecting, on a smaller scale, the architecture of the more elaborate Smith Stores Company on nearby South Miller Street.¹⁶

However, the experiment failed to achieve the desired results. When the shopping complex opened in 1911, residents of the larger, regional cities of Sedalia and Marshall still were not drawn to Sweet Springs for their shopping. Between World War One's negative impact on the local economy and the probability that Sweet Springs' service area was not large enough or sufficiently populated to support the developments, no significant economic turnaround occurred to help Sweet Springs regain its earlier

¹³Sweet Springs Herald, August 12, 1910.

¹⁴History of Sweet Springs 1818 to 1992 (Sweet Springs, 1992), pp. 31-32.

¹⁵Sweet Springs Herald, August 9, 1912.

¹⁶Sweet Springs Herald, December 3, 1915.

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prominence. Despite the railroad and resort, and despite major improvements to the commercial center, Sweet Springs remained a relatively small town, never living up to the expectations of those who promoted it most aggressively. Smith himself apparently became disillusioned with the town's prospects, selling most of his property and moving away, ultimately to California.¹⁷

Sweet Springs lacked an employer large enough to significantly impact its population until 1922, when the International Shoe Company converted Smith's former ice plant into a shoe factory. International provided employment for approximately 300 workers for several years and was "largely responsible for bringing Sweet Springs out of the decline which it suffered in the early 1900s." The Missouri Pacific helped keep Sweet Springs viable, but ultimately the line through Sweet Springs was eliminated. The passenger depot closed in 1970. The last train ran from Myrick just west of Lexington to Sweet Springs on August 27, 1983. The International Shoe Company built a new factory before leaving Sweet Springs several years ago and that building was subsequently acquired by Rival Manufacturing, the current tenant.¹⁸

Architecture: Architecturally, the Sweet Springs Historic District is a locally significant collection of late 19th and early 20th century commercial buildings. Various buildings and the overall setting are evocative of early railroad-related development, of continued growth as the town flourished as a resort community, and of early 20th century renewal. The oldest buildings were constructed in the 1870s and repaired as necessary after sustaining tornado damage in 1882. The Queen Anne style predominates, with a few buildings sporting their original storefronts which in some cases include ornate stamped metal cornices, cast iron posts and generally original storefronts. There are excellent examples of early 20th century buildings incorporating new construction techniques in their facades and displaying a classical sense of order. There are two banks, one with a Classical Revival facade and the other with a corner entrance. Noncontributing buildings are historic but have modern facades.

Most properties were dated using Sanborn insurance maps and construction reports in the local newspaper, the Brownsville/Sweet Springs Herald. Sanborn maps for Brownsville (renamed Sweet Springs in 1887) are available for the years 1883, 1888, 1900, 1909, 1914 and 1929. Except for a 20-year gap from 1884 through 1904, copies of the Herald exist back to August 20, 1874. In 1992, members of the local Brown County Historical Association compiled and published the History of Sweet Springs 1818 to 1992, an excellent source containing references to several buildings within the Sweet Springs Historic District.

Brick buildings began appearing in Brownsville in the 1870s, and brick is by far the most common building material in the commercial center today. Many contractors apparently were involved in construction of the district buildings. Crews employed by the local lumber yard (George Washington Smith Lumber Company/Sweet Springs Lumber Company/Logan Moore Lumber Company) undoubtedly participated in the construction of many Sweet Springs buildings. Building contractors advertising in the Brownsville Herald in the 1870s included John DeLong (who described himself as an architect as well as a builder), the Matthew Brothers and Anderson. In the 1880s, active contractors included W. P. Shaw, J. Z. Wells &

¹⁷Sweet Springs Herald, January 11, 1918.

¹⁸History of Sweet Springs 1818 to 1992, *op cit.*, p. 39.

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Son, Lee Mathews, Matthews & Gordon, and Hibbs and Merrill. In 1887, J. W. Smith was an architect and contractor who apparently specialized in resort cottages. In 1896, J. F. Anderson and F. M. Boswell advertised as contractors in the Saline County Atlas. In the early 1900s, builders included John W. Ferguson, Louis Mueller (who is believed to have designed the Bank of Sweet Springs at 214-216 Lexington Avenue), A. E. Smith, L. Miller, and McNeil. In 1905, a brick contractor from Marshall (possibly Pace) is believed to have constructed one or more buildings in the downtown area.¹⁹ In 1911, J. M. Rose & Bros. were brick contractors on the

Colonnade Hotel and possibly other Smith buildings such as those for the Smith Stores Company.²⁰ But for the most part, it is impossible to say which specific buildings were erected by these and other contractors.

The building which formerly housed the Sweet Springs City Hall at 310 South Miller Street is at the south end of an excellent High Victorian ensemble. Built in 1891, this two-story building is an impressive example of Queen Anne architecture applied to a commercial building. Small, well-preserved one-story buildings with fine Queen Anne storefronts are adjacent to the city hall at 306 and 308 South Miller Street. These three buildings and an adjacent one-story building at 304 South Miller Street feature stamped metal cornices. Completing the ensemble on the north is a circa 1905, two-story bank building with well-articulated brickwork, sandstone trim and a corner entrance.

Earlier Queen Anne examples--two-story buildings with decorative brickwork cornices, cast iron posts and enhancement of second floor windows but without ornate stamped metal cornices and upper level sheathing--are found at 201, 203, 210 and 212 Lexington Avenue. These are fragile buildings with integrity from their early period when they housed shoe stores and hat shops, restaurants and drug stores, halls and a hotel. These buildings, all constructed during the city's primary growth period in the 1870s-80s, were repaired or reconstructed within a few months of sustaining various degrees of tornado damage in 1882. Other buildings from this period (and from the early 20th century) retain integrity but lack sufficient detailing to be associated with a formal style.

Within the historic district, 20th century architecture is best exemplified by buildings at 214-216 Lexington Avenue and 313 to 325 South Miller Street. The old Bank of Sweet Springs, 214-216 Lexington Avenue, is the district's only Classical Revival building. In 1919, the present "double-wide" facade was constructed from two buildings when the bank, which previously occupied only the west half, expanded into both buildings. Limestone panels with a swag design, dentilated bands and octagonal wood columns are among elements reflecting this building's classic influences.

The most striking of extant 20th century buildings were constructed in 1911 at 313-325 South Miller Street. Here three free-standing two-story buildings were designed to help Sweet Springs recover from the economic doldrums that persisted following the simultaneous loss of the Sweet Springs Health Resort

¹⁹Sweet Springs Herald, October 13, 1905.

²⁰Sweet Springs Herald, November 24, 1911.

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and Marmaduke Military Academy 15 years earlier. Known as the Smith Stores Company, this complex is significant as an early version of a shopping strip

mall at Sweet Springs. While everything was not "under one roof," these buildings are connected in such a way that their individuality is not readily apparent, except from the rear alley. They share a colonnaded front of a continuous, classical design and a continuous covered walk, providing increased shelter from the elements while providing the various stores with a common identify. Limestone is used for trim including a coping layer, a dentilated band, capitals and bases, and lugsills. A horizontal effect is enhanced by bands of window openings, beltcourses and the row of piers.

These brick and cement business buildings were to be "modern and up to date in every particular, lighted, heated, watered and sewered according to the best and most approved plans." Considering that at the time of construction the population of Sweet Springs was only 1,122, the location of this shopping group is particularly unlikely. But as with the classic shopping arcade, it was the site and not the architecture that determined success or failure.²¹ In Sweet Springs, hopes were high but the site clearly failed to live up to the promise of its architecture.

Describing the new buildings enthusiastically if somewhat imprecisely, the Sweet Springs Herald said the block "would be (a credit) to any city in the state." The Herald also said:

They have pressed brick fronts trimmed in Warrensburg stone, and the arcade running the entire length of the front on Miller Street, is supported by fourteen square columns made of terra cotta brick capped with white stone. Large plate glass fronts in both stories of each of the buildings will give abundant light to the interior, and the arcade and columns will give an imposing effect to the buildings. They will be lighted and heated by plants of their own and will be supplied with water throughout from a 519-foot well in the rear end of the lots, giving the buildings the best possible fire protection. There are three separate buildings with driveways between. The one on the north is being built by T. C. Andrew and is two stories high, 60x90 feet and will be finished and equipped to accommodate his immense stock of merchandise which he will remove from his present quarters on Lexington Avenue. C. K. Smith, the prime mover in this enterprise, is building the center building. It is 60x100 and the lower floor will contain two rooms, one of which will be occupied by F. H. Tisdale with his stock of drugs, druggists' sundries and wall paper. The other room of Mr. Smith's building will be occupied by Ed Reavis as a grocery store.....The second floor will be used as an opera hall. The entire dimensions...will be finished with a hard-wood polished floor and will not contain a post or pillar as the roof will be built self-supporting.....A large circular stage is to be permanently built in one end. H. Renken, the furniture dealer, is the owner and builder of the south building. The entire interior of this one is in one room and will have double balconies running on both sides and in the rear, making it a model place to show off his mammoth

²¹MacKeith, Margaret. The History and Conservation of Shopping Arcades. London and New York: Mansell Publishing Limited, 1986, p. 153.

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stock of furniture which he will remove from Main Street. This building is uniform in size and structural appearance with the one adjoining.²²

Overall, the buildings in the Sweet Springs Historic District represent a significant period in the city's history. They attest to its early importance not only as a mercantile center serving a diverse agricultural region, but as the supporting community to a health resort that, for a time, became a rendezvous point for many of Missouri's political and social leaders. The shopping mall was part of an inspired attempt to revitalize the town's economy. Although the attempt failed, some remarkable buildings were produced. Despite intrusive segments on the north side of Lexington and the west side of South Miller, the Sweet Springs Historic District still resonates with ambience.

The following building summaries are based largely on information from fire insurance maps prepared by the Sanborn Map Company of Chicago. Sanborn maps are available for Brownsville for 1883, and for Sweet Springs (Brownsville renamed) for the years 1888, 1900, 1909, 1914 and 1929. Newspaper research and local historians provided much additional information. When known, an early historic name or function is given for the property, following the street address.

Building-specific history:

North side of Lexington Avenue:

201 Lexington Avenue. (Bellamy's Shoe Store/Olympic Hall) Constructed in circa 1881, this corner building originally housed B. T. Bellamy's Shoe Store on the main floor. The Olympic Hall, which provided a forum for plays, musical presentations, oratories and other cultural activities and entertainments, was upstairs in this and the adjacent west building. The second floor was rebuilt in much the same form after being demolished by a tornado on April 18, 1882.²³ The Olympic Hall continued for some 30 years as a public hall, then became a Masonic meeting hall. Beginning in the early 1900s, the first floor was used by a printing establishment. Through most of the 1930s (and earlier), the Sweet Springs Herald was operated in this building by E. T. Hodges. Hy White became editor in 1939. Frank and Hazel Farmer became editors in 1948. Later this building was used as an office for Kaneer Plumbing. Present use: Lumber company storage. Contributing. (See photos #1-3, 5-6)

203 Lexington Avenue. (Harris Sisters Millinery/Olympic Hall) When this building was constructed in circa 1881, a millinery store operated by the Harris sisters was on the main floor and the Olympic Hall--a public hall used for various cultural entertainments for three decades--was on the second floor of this and the neighboring building. This building was reconstructed after a tornado removed the upper floor in 1882, with a dry goods store replacing the millinery. By 1888, a grocery store was in this building. By the turn of the century, a drug store was at this location, probably F. H. Tisdale's. By 1915 or so, a Masonic lodge was using upstairs as a meeting hall. A restaurant was here in the 1930s and 1940s, operated by

²²Sweet Springs Herald, February 2, 1911.

²³Sweet Springs Herald, November 9, 18, 1881.

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various owners beginning with Jim Forbes. Later, the Roxbury Press was here before moving into another building. Present use: Lumber company storage. Contributing (See photos #1-6)

205 Lexington Avenue. (Furniture Store/Printing Shop) This circa 1870s building was rebuilt after sustaining tornado damage in 1882. A furniture store and a printing establishment, with a doctor's office upstairs, were at this address in 1883. By 1900, a boots and shoes store occupied the first floor. The 1909 Sanborn map indicates a general store at this location and in the adjacent west building. By 1914, a lodge meeting hall was upstairs. It became the Star Theater, a movie house, in the 1920s. In the 1950s, a sandwich shop occupied the west half and a barber shop was in the east half. Present use: Lumber company storage. Contributing. (See photos #1-2, 5-6)

207 Lexington Avenue. (Groceries/Agricultural Implements) The 1883 Sanborn map indicates a store selling groceries and agricultural implements at this location where the original circa 1870s building was apparently rebuilt after being damaged by a tornado in 1882. By 1888, a barber shop was in the east half and a jewelry store in the west, with a doctor's office and club room upstairs. In 1900, the barber shop continued but the east portion was temporarily vacant. By 1909, a general store was here and in the adjacent west building. Frizzell's Furniture & Undertaking occupied the building by 1914. Joint usage as a furniture store and undertaking establishment continued, operated in the 1930s through the early 1950s by R. C. Carter, and later by Ed Moseley. Present use: Apartments. Noncontributing. (See photos #1-2, 5-6)

209 Lexington Avenue. (Sweet Springs Post Office) Originally an undetermined type of store, this circa 1915 building served as the Sweet Springs Post Office for several years beginning in 1937. A two-story building was at this location in 1909, and that building also served as a post office. Hopkins Jewelry occupied this building in the 1920s and early 1930s, before it became the post office. Present use: Storage. Noncontributing. (See photos #1-2)

213 Lexington Avenue. (Sweet Springs Post Office) This building was constructed in 1912 to serve as the Sweet Springs Post Office. It was so used into the 1930s. By the mid-1930s, and into the 1940s, H. R. McDaniel operated a restaurant and liquor store at this location. The liquor store was continued by Ed Wolet in the 1950s, then by John Hagan until 1978. Present use: Lumber company storage. Contributing. (See photos #1-2)

217 Lexington Avenue. (McEntire & Son Jewelry/Post Office) T. B. McEntire is believed to have been the builder of this circa 1885 building. McEntire is said to have established his jewelry business in Sweet Springs in 1869.²⁴ At the time of the 1888 Sanborn map, the post office was a joint tenant. It was still a jewelry store in 1914, but by the late 1920s it had become a grocery store operated by R. B. Edwards and William Carmack. In 1919, the Bank of Sweet Springs used these facilities while its building across the street at 214-216 Lexington Avenue was being renovated. Later a frozen food locker was in this building, operated by Ed Marsh and then by Fred Pitts. Present use: Lumber company storage. Contributing. (See photos #1-2)

²⁴Sweet Springs Herald, undated clipping.

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South side of Lexington Avenue:

200 Lexington Avenue. (J. T. Wilson Dry Goods Co.) J. T. Wilson operated a dry goods store in the original circa 1870s building at this location, which was destroyed by a tornado in 1882. Wilson rebuilt and the building remained a dry goods store into the 1930s, last operated by William Carmack. In 1883, a masonic hall was upstairs. Later in the 1880s, the upstairs was used for sleeping rooms and storage. A grocery store was here in the 1940s. Beginning in the 1950s, a juke box and pinball machine business was operated in this building by Ed Wolet, through the 1970s. Present use: Storage. Contributing. (See photos #5-7, 13-14)

202 Lexington Avenue. (Kelley's Drug Store) C. M. Kelley is believed to have operated a drug store in the original circa 1870s building at this location. In 1882, Kelley was injured and two customers were killed when a tornado demolished the building. Kelley rebuilt and it remained a drug store, with storage upstairs, in 1888 and 1900. In August 1908, Kelley drowned himself in the Blackwater River. At some point, the facades appear to have undergone a 20th century remodeling. In the 1920s, Jones' Drug Store was here. It remained a drug store into the 1930s, then became the local Kansas City Power & Light Company office. Later, Harold Berry and Glen Smith operated a dry goods and clothing store in this building until the early 1980s. Present use: Sweet Springs Flea Market. Noncontributing. (See photos #5-7, 13-14)

210-212 Lexington Avenue. (City Hotel) From the 1870s into the 1920s, this building served as a hotel. The City Hotel was here originally, followed by the White Swan Hotel after 1910. Well-situated for accommodating visitors arriving by train at the nearby depot, the hotel extended into an adjacent building on the east which has been razed. In 1882, the building was repaired after sustaining tornado damage estimated at \$8,000. The hotel was closed and the building was temporarily vacant in 1900, but by 1909 the hotel had reopened with a dining room and sample room in the west building. The hotel was remodeled in 1910, and leased to T. H. Reineke who renamed it the White Swan Hotel.²⁵ Undetermined stores occupied both halves but the upstairs continued to function as a hotel in 1916, according to that year's Sanborn map. The "White Swan" name was apparently short-lived, as it was again being called the City Hotel by 1919.²⁶ By 1929, the stores remained but the hotel apparently had gone out of business. After prohibition was repealed in 1933, "Pot" Lear operated a beer and sandwich counter in the east part. From the 1950s through 1970s, Lester Scrivner operated a shoe repair shop in the east half. The west half was an appliances and plumbing store operated by Felix Scott in the 1950s. Howard Lear operated a barber shop here in the 1970s. Present use: Lumber company storage. Contributing. (See photos #5-6, 8-10, 12-13)

214-216 Lexington Avenue. (Bank of Sweet Springs) Originally two circa 1870s buildings, the present double building was constructed by the Bank of Sweet Springs, which already occupied the west half, in 1919. The bank is depicted in the west building on the 1883 Sanborn map, when it was the Brownsville Savings Bank. A grocery store was on the ground floor of the east building and the upstairs was part of

²⁵Sweet Springs Herald, January 28, 1910.

²⁶Sweet Springs Herald, February 14, 1919.

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the adjacent City Hotel. Both buildings sustained tornado damage in 1882. Damage to the bank building was estimated at \$800. The east half was a billiards parlor in 1888, was vacant in 1900, and housed a barber shop by 1909. The present Classical Revival facade was constructed for the bank expansion. The architect apparently was Louis Mueller of Wellington, Kansas.²⁷ The contractor was the St. Louis Bank Equipment & Fixture Co.²⁸ The Brownsville Banking and Savings Association, the Bank of Sweet Springs' predecessor, was organized in 1865. In the 1930s, the Bank of Sweet Springs became a casualty of the Depression. Rufus and Leona Edwards operated a grocery store in this building from the 1930s into the 1950s. Today the building is a masonic hall owned by Barbee Lodge 217 AF&AM. Contributing. (See photos #8, 11-12, 15)

North side of West Marshall Avenue:

211 West Marshall Avenue. (Kitchen/City Hotel) This circa 1880 building functioned for many years as the kitchen for the City Hotel, behind which it stands. Sanborn maps indicate that it was used as a hotel kitchen in 1888, 1900 and 1914, and it was probably so-used into the 1920s. By 1929, a tin shop occupied the west half and furniture was stored in the east portion. Later, an animal hospital was in this building and it was later converted into apartments. Present use: Vacant following a fire. Noncontributing. (See photos #15-16)

West side of South Miller Street:

300 South Miller Street. (White Swan Hotel/Chemical Bank) Upon its completion in circa 1905, this building briefly housed the White Swan Hotel and Cafe operated by T. H. Reineke. While it was under construction, the local press referred to it as the C. K. Smith Building. The Chemical Bank purchased the building in 1910, and it remains the Chemical Bank today. The Chemical Bank dates to 1884 or earlier, when it was in a building on the east side of Miller Street opposite the present building. The 1888 and 1900 Sanborn maps indicate that this corner lot was vacant prior to construction of the hotel, although other brick buildings had been constructed southward from the open space. Although first used as the White Swan Hotel, this building "was built for a bank with all the conveniences for conducting that business except a vault."²⁹ Contributing. (See photos #16-19)

302 South Miller Street. (Store) This site was a vacant lot in 1888, but a one-story building with a partition had been constructed by the time of the 1900 Sanborn map. The north portion was a notions store and the south portion was a millinery shop in 1900. The entire building was a grocery store in 1909 and 1914. An unspecified store was here in 1929. In 1968, the present modern-looking building was constructed as an addition to the Chemical Bank. Noncontributing. (See photos #18-19)

²⁷Sweet Springs Herald, February 10, 1911.

²⁸Sweet Springs Herald, February 14, 1919.

²⁹Sweet Springs Herald, January 28, 1910.

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304 South Miller Street. (Grocery store) This circa 1890s building was a grocery store at the time of the 1900 Sanborn map. By 1909, it was a clothing and dry goods store which it remained in 1914. The 1929 Sanborn map depicts it as an unspecified type of store. In 1968, front and rear walls were removed and this building was converted into a drive-through for the adjacent Chemical Bank. Noncontributing. (See photos #19-21)

306 South Miller Street. (Harness store) A harness store occupied this circa 1890s building in 1900, 1909 and 1914, Sanborn maps indicate. The site was vacant in 1888. By 1929, it had become Falk's Drug Store, and it has had various other uses. In 1955, Fisher's Variety Store was in this building. A pool hall was here in 1958. Since 1988, this building has served as the Fashion Fabric and Bridal Shop. Contributing. (See photos #20-23)

308 South Miller Street. (Grocery store) This building housed a grocery store in 1900, a millinery shop in 1909, and an undefined type of store in 1929, Sanborn maps indicate. It was vacant in 1914. In the early 1920s, "The Bakery," established on Main Street by German immigrants Karl Joseph and Alice Steinmetz, was moved to this location where it remained until 1936. McKeage's Barber Shop was in this building in 1956, followed by Nichols Plumbing & Heating from 1975-95. Present use: Heating and air conditioning shop. Contributing. (See photos #20-23)

310 South Miller Street. (Sweet Springs City Hall) The second floor of this 1891 building originally housed the city government of Sweet Springs. A hardware store used the first floor in 1900, according to the Sanborn map, but a millinery shop, possibly Ferguson's, had replaced the hardware store by 1909. It remained a millinery shop with city offices upstairs in 1914. By 1929, the city hall was on Main Street and this building was an undetermined type of store. In 1943 or earlier, it became Miller's Tavern. Today it is known as the Brick Street Bar & Grill. Contributing. (See photos #20, 22-23)

East side of South Miller Street:

301 South Miller Street. (Millinery shop) The 1888 Sanborn map indicates a millinery shop at this corner location, with a private school upstairs. The northwest corner was truncated from the time of this building's estimated construction in circa 1885 through, at least, 1914, Sanborn maps indicate. In 1900, this building was a Salvation Army mission; in 1909, a general store was here with the local telephone exchange upstairs; and in 1914, the first floor was vacant although the telephone exchange remained upstairs. Wylie Brothers' Grocery Store opened here by 1919. By 1929, the corner was no longer truncated and Sanborn indicates the presence of an unspecified type of store. Much later, it became Whitsett Drugs. Doctor's offices have been upstairs. Present use: Vacant store. Contributing. (See photos #17, 24-26)

303 South Miller Street. (Chemical Bank) The Chemical Bank was in this building from the early 1880s until it moved to the west side of South Miller Street in 1910. In January 1911, T. H. Reineke opened a restaurant here and lived upstairs with his family.³⁰ The 1914 Sanborn map depicts a confectionery and restaurant at this location. The 1929 Sanborn indicates a store. By 1960, this building was a Western

³⁰Sweet Springs Herald, January 13, 1911.

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Auto dealership. Later, Whitsett Drugs expanded into this building from the adjacent building at 301 South Miller Street. Present use: Vacant store. Contributing. (See photos #24-26)

305 South Miller Street. (Tailor shop) A tailor shop was an early or original business in this circa 1890s building, Sanborn maps for 1900, 1909 and 1914 indicate. The site was a vacant lot in 1888. The 1929 Sanborn map depicts a store at this location. A pool hall which opened here in about 1955 remained for several years. In 1983, it became a dentist's office which it remains today. Contributing. (See photos #24, 26)

307 South Miller Street. (Wolet Cleaners) The original use of this circa 1915 building was not determined but in 1926, it was a dry cleaning shop operated by Ed Wolet. Construction of this and other circa 1915 buildings on the east side of Miller Street was stimulated or financed by the development efforts of Charles K. Smith and others who constructed a shopping complex there in 1911. The site was a vacant lot at the time of the 1900, 1909 and 1914 Sanborn maps. The 1929 Sanborn map depicts a store at this location. In 1959, Mueller's Jewelry Shop was here. Present use: Knight's Bookkeeping Service. Contributing. (See photos #24, 26)

309 South Miller Street. (Store) This circa 1915 building was a store at the time of the 1929 Sanborn map. The site was a vacant lot at the time of the 1888-1914 Sanborn maps. In 1958, _____ Cranks operated a sweet shop in this building. In 1967, the Holland Cafe with a sweet shop was here. In 1978, it became Nichols' Cafe and Mini-Mall. Present use: Elmwood Mercantile. Contributing. (See photos #24, 26)

311 South Miller Street. (Store) This small, circa 1915 building was an unspecified type of store at the time of the 1929 Sanborn map. A photo gallery was in a frame building at this approximate location at the time of the 1888 Sanborn map, and the building remained in 1900. The site was a vacant lot at the time of the 1909 and 1914 Sanborn maps. The Wiggle Inn was here in 1956, Bev's Restaurant was in this building in 1968, and Dittmer's Bar opened here in 1976. Gene's Barber Shop, the present tenant, arrived in 1989. Contributing. (See photos #24, 26-27)

313 South Miller Street. (Store) This building was constructed in circa 1915 adjacent to the northern end of the Smith Stores Company shopping complex. The 1929 Sanborn map depicts it as a store. A small, vacant shop was at this approximate location at the time of the 1888 Sanborn map but the site was vacant in 1900, 1909 and 1914. A barber shop was here in 1955, and since 1978 it has been Connie's Corner Salon. Contributing. (See photos #24, 26-27)

313a-315a South Miller Street. (Andrew's Dry Goods) The builder and first tenant of this 1911 building was T. C. Andrew, who relocated his dry goods business from a Lexington Avenue store. This is the northernmost of three simultaneously constructed, free-standing buildings, all joined in the front by a continuous colonnaded facade giving the appearance of one large horizontal building. Charles K. Smith, credited with being the prime mover in the enterprise, envisioned a modern-looking complex that would attract many new shoppers to downtown Sweet Springs. This and the other two buildings are identified as the Smith Stores Co. on the 1914 Sanborn map. The 1929 Sanborn map depicts a store at this location. Prior to construction of the present building, the site contained a one-story dwelling, 1888, 1900 and 1909

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Sanborn maps indicate.³¹ Present use: B & N Brickstreet Flea Market. Contributing. (See photos #24-25, 27-28, 30-32)

317-319 South Miller Street. (Tisdale's Drug Store) When constructed in 1911, this building housed F. H. Tisdale's Drug Store (in the north half) and Ed Reavis' Grocery Store (in the south half), and a hall was upstairs. Builder Charles K. Smith sought to revitalize Sweet Springs with this and other early 20th century developments. The 1914 Sanborn map identifies this building and the adjacent north and south buildings as part of the Smith Stores Co. By 1918, Smith had disengaged himself from most of his local investments but a drug store remained in the north half and another type of store, perhaps still a grocery store, occupied the south half at the time of the 1929 Sanborn map. In 1888, three small buildings (including the mayor's office) occupied this approximate location. The site was vacant in 1900 and 1909, Sanborn maps indicate.³² Present use: Servistar (north); McKeage Hardware (south). Contributing. (See photos #24-25, 27-32)

321 South Miller Street. (Store/C. K. Smith's Office) This small, circa 1915 building was constructed in what had been an alley between the middle and south buildings of the Smith Stores Company, constructed in 1911. The upper level--a continuation of the colonnaded front across the alley--reportedly contained an office used by Charles K. Smith. Present use: Silhouette Family Hair Care. Contributing. (See photos #24, 26-27, 29-30)

323-325 South Miller Street. (Renken's Furniture Company) In 1911, Herman Renken erected this building and moved his stock of furniture here from his old store on Main Street. This was the southernmost of three simultaneously constructed buildings, linked by a colonnaded front, comprising what was originally known as the Smith Stores Company, an early local version of a shopping mall. This side had been vacant in 1888, 1900 and 1909, Sanborn maps indicate. The 1929 Sanborn map depicts an unspecified type of store in this building.³³ Present use: Daniel's Dollar Den. Contributing. (See photos #24-25, 27-28, 30-32)

West side of Spring Street:

300 Spring Street. (Sweet Springs Produce Co.) Constructed in 1910 by the Sweet Springs Produce Co., this building was erected on the site of a livery stable that burned in 1909. Sanborn maps for 1914 and 1929 indicate that it was used as a produce house during that period. This building is associated with Sweet Springs' history as a mercantile center serving a dispersed agricultural community.³⁴ Present use: Automotive customizing and detailing. Contributing. (See photos #33-34, 38)

³¹Sweet Springs Herald, February 3, 1911.

³²Sweet Springs Herald, July 21, 1911.

³³Sweet Springs Herald, September 1, 1911.

³⁴Sweet Springs Herald, April 29, 1910.

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East side of Spring Street:

310 Spring Street. (Sweet Springs Creamery Co.) This circa 1915 building was Sweet Springs' second creamery, the first having been constructed by George Washington Smith, who came to Sweet Springs from Pennsylvania. Smith and his son John J. Smith are said to have established several creameries in and around Saline County. This creamery is also believed to have been a project of the Smith family.³⁵ In 1926, the creamery made 287,000 pounds of butter from cream purchased from area farmers.³⁶ Present use: Storage. Contributing. (See photos #35-36, 38)

316 Spring Street. (Tub storage building) This building was probably constructed in circa 1920 or at any rate within a few years of the nearby Sweet Springs Creamery with which it is associated. Sanborn maps indicate that the site was a vacant lot through 1914, while the 1929 map indicates that it provided "tub storage," presumably for the butter tubs which were shipped to Chicago for further distribution.³⁷ Present use: Storage. Contributing. (See photo #37)

³⁵History of Sweet Springs 1818 to 1992, op cit., p. 25.

³⁶Sweet Springs Herald, April 2, 1926.

³⁷Ibid.

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UTM References:

E. Zone	Easting	Northing	F. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	463880	4312660	15	463840	4312670
G. Zone	Easting	Northing	H. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	463840	4312670	15	463750	4312735
I. Zone	Easting	Northing	J. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	463735	4312760	15	463700	4312760
K. Zone	Easting	Northing	L. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	463700	4312790	15	463750	4312790

Verbal Boundary Description

The Sweet Springs Historic District is defined by the heavy broken line on the accompanying map entitled "Sweet Springs Historic District" (scale 1"=80').

Boundary Justification

The Sweet Springs Historic District includes the best concentration of commercial buildings in the central business district. Most of these buildings were constructed of brick during the growth years following Sweet Springs' emergence as a railroad town with an adjacent health resort, from the 1870s through the 1890s, and in the early 20th century during an attempted revival of the downtown area. Most of the city's oldest identified commercial buildings are encompassed, and the district's architectural range is representative of the entire commercial center. While a few of the buildings have somewhat modern facades and are perhaps minimally contributing, such as two buildings which have been combined at the southeast corner of Marshall and South Miller Streets, all are nonetheless historic and retain their original shapes and proportions. The boundaries are fairly straightforward and obvious, following property lines and bisecting the centers of streets and alleys. There is a somewhat awkward jog around a former produce building at the southwest corner of Spring and Marshall Streets, but the combination of this building with two other nearby "mill" buildings contributes to an understanding of the city's historic importance to area farmers. Although a few buildings south of the district (on Main Street) would be contributing, boundaries would be awkward and the percentage of noncontributing buildings would be considerably higher if they were included.

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The following information is the same for all photographs, except as noted:

Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri

Photographer: Roger Maserang

Negative Location: Missouri Cultural Resource Inventory
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

- #1: 201-217 Lexington Avenue (R to L)
March 1995
- #2: 217-201 Lexington Avenue (L to R)
August 1994
- #3: 203 and 201 Lexington Avenue
August 1994
- #4: Detail of iron post, 203 Lexington Avenue
March 1997
- #5: Lexington Avenue looking west from South Miller Street
March 1997
- #6: Lexington Avenue looking west from South Miller Street
Photographer unknown, Circa 1900
- #7: 200 and 202 Lexington Avenue
March 1997
- #8: 210-216 Lexington Avenue
December 1996
- #9: 210-214 Lexington Avenue
October 1994
- #10: Detail, 210 Lexington Avenue
October 1994
- #11: 214-216 Lexington Avenue
March 1997
- #12: 216-200 Lexington Avenue; 301 South Miller (R to L)
December 1996

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- #13: 200-208 Lexington Avenue (L to R)
Photographer unknown, Circa 1900
- #14: 202 and 200 Marshall Street
September 1994
- #15: Rear views of 216-212 Lexington; 211 Marshall (L to R)
December 1996
- #16: Marshall Street looking east from Spring Street
December 1996
- #17: Marshall Street looking west
March 1997
- #18: 300 South Miller Street
September 1994
- #19: 300-304 South Miller Street (R to L)
Photographer unknown, Circa 1905
- #20: 304-310 South Miller Street (R to L)
March 1997
- #21: 308 and 306 South Miller Street
March 1997
- #22: 310-306 South Miller Street (L to R)
August 1994
- #23: 310-306 South Miller Street (L to R)
Photographer unknown, Circa 1920
- #24: 301-325 South Miller Street (L to R)
December 1996
- #25: South Miller Street looking south from Lexington Avenue
Photographer unknown, Circa 1920s
- #26: 301-313 South Miller Street (L to R)
December 1996
- #27: 311-325 South Miller Street (L to R)
March 1995

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#28: 313-3__ South Miller Street (L to R)
Photographer unknown, Circa 1912

#29: 317-321 South Miller Street (L to R)
March 1995

#30: 325-301 South Miller Street (R to L)
December 1996

#31: Looking south along colonnade on South Miller Street
March 1995

#32: Rear view of 325-313 South Miller Street (L to R)
March 1995

#33: 300 Spring Street
March 1997

#34: 300 Spring Street
Photographer unknown, Circa 1915

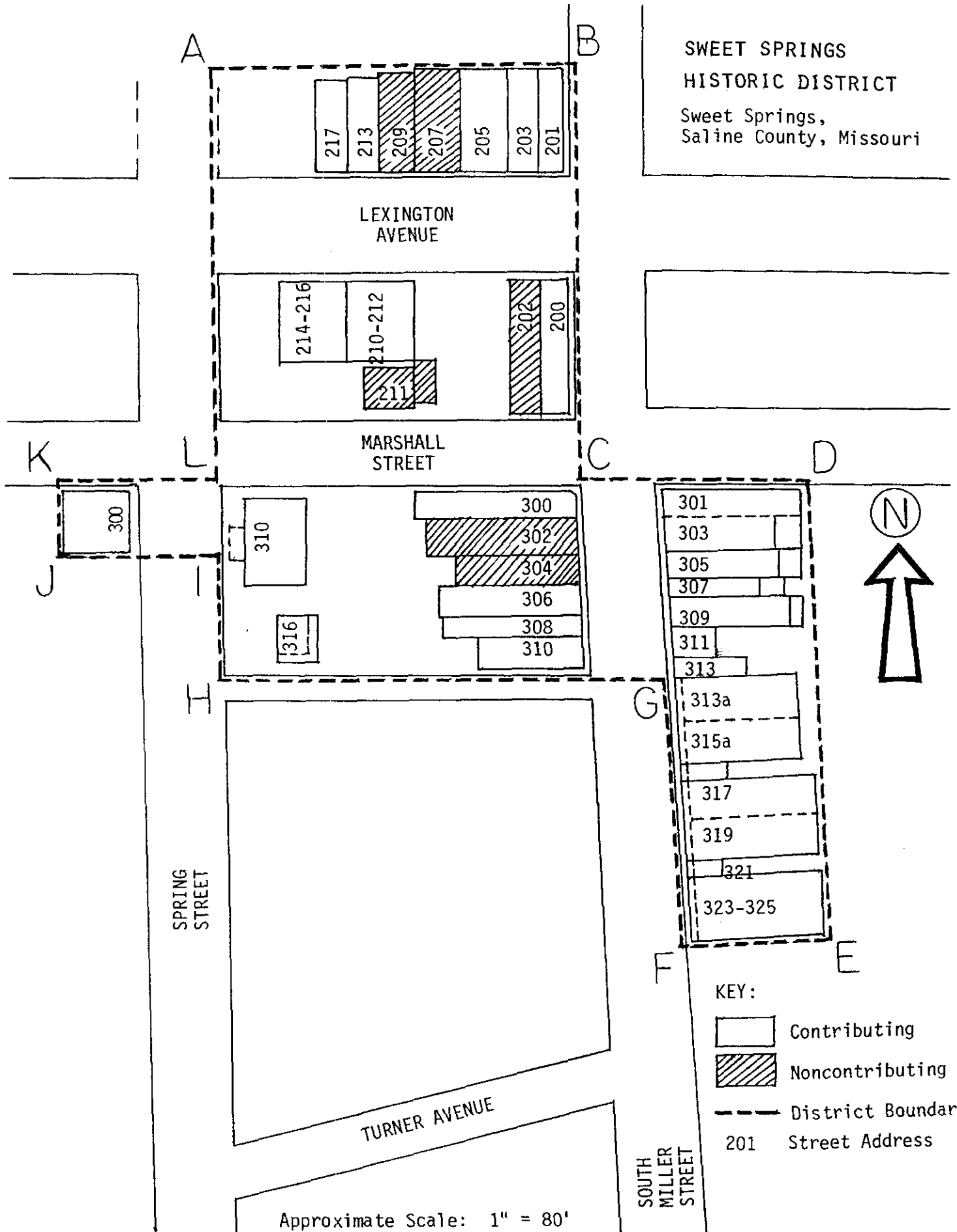
#35: 310 Spring Street
September 1994

#36: 310 Spring Street
Photographer unknown, Circa 1915

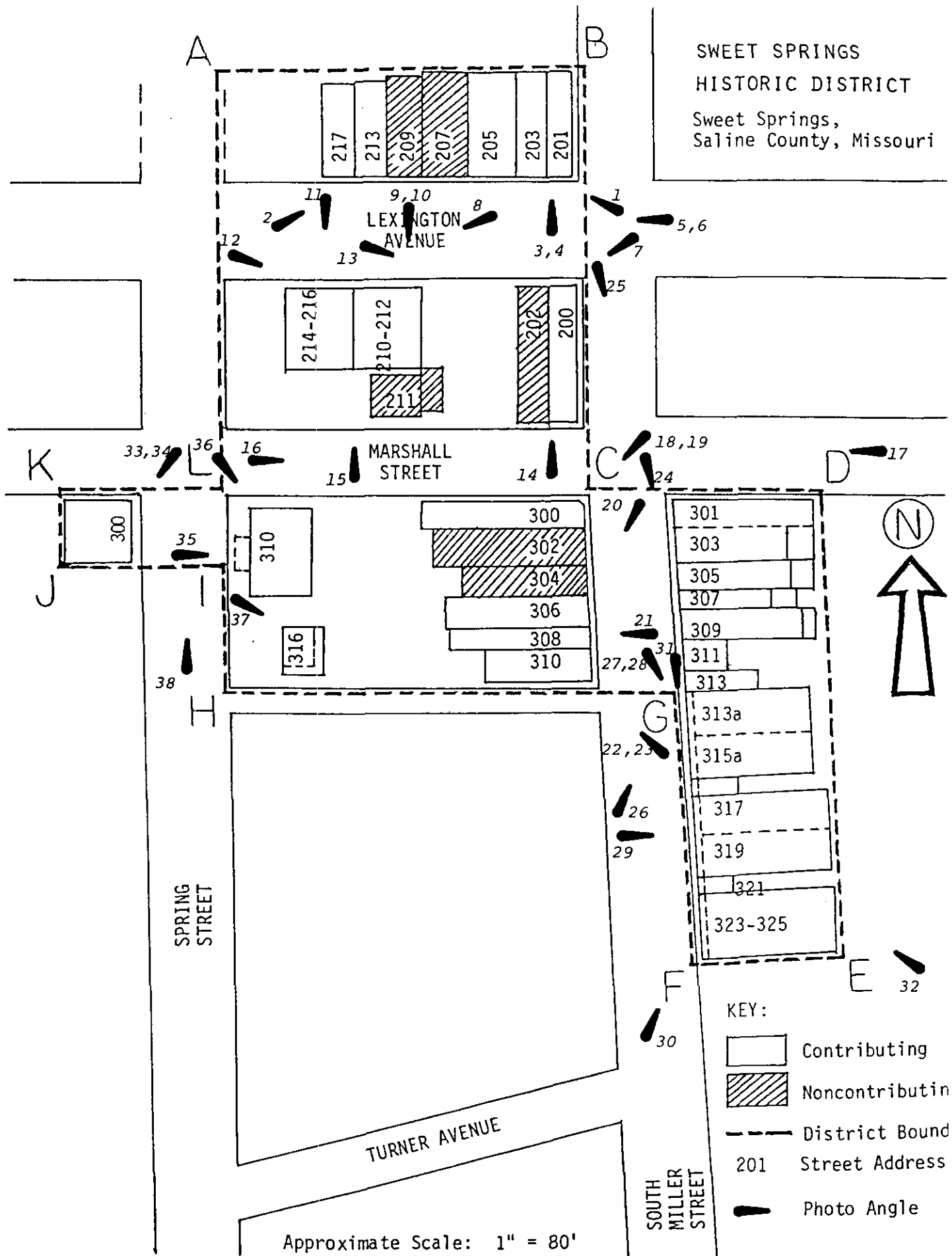
#37: 316 Spring Street
September 1994

#38: 300 block of Spring Street looking north
March 1997

SWEET SPRINGS
HISTORIC DISTRICT
Sweet Springs,
Saline County, Missouri

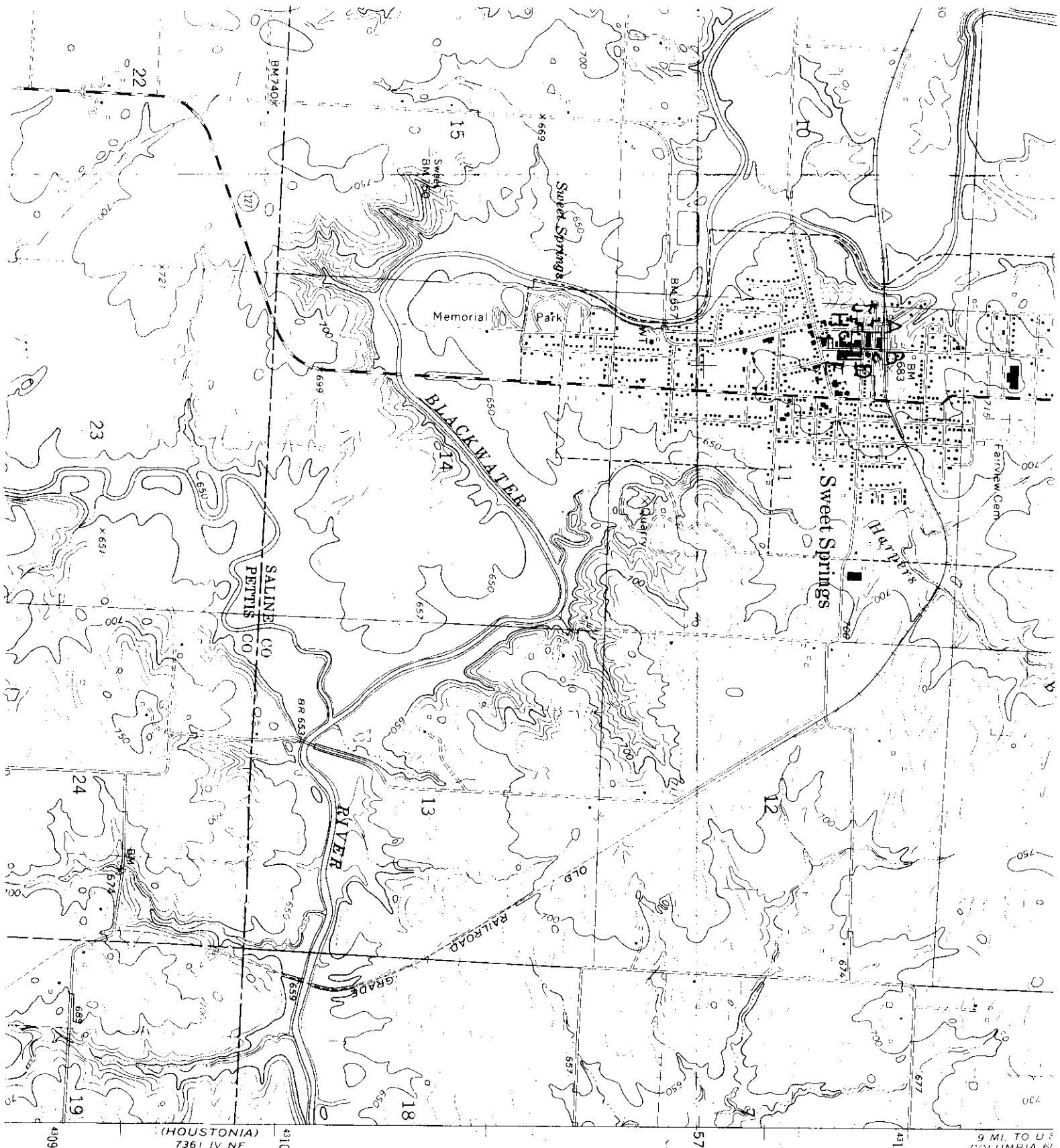


SWEET SPRINGS
HISTORIC DISTRICT
Sweet Springs,
Saline County, Missouri



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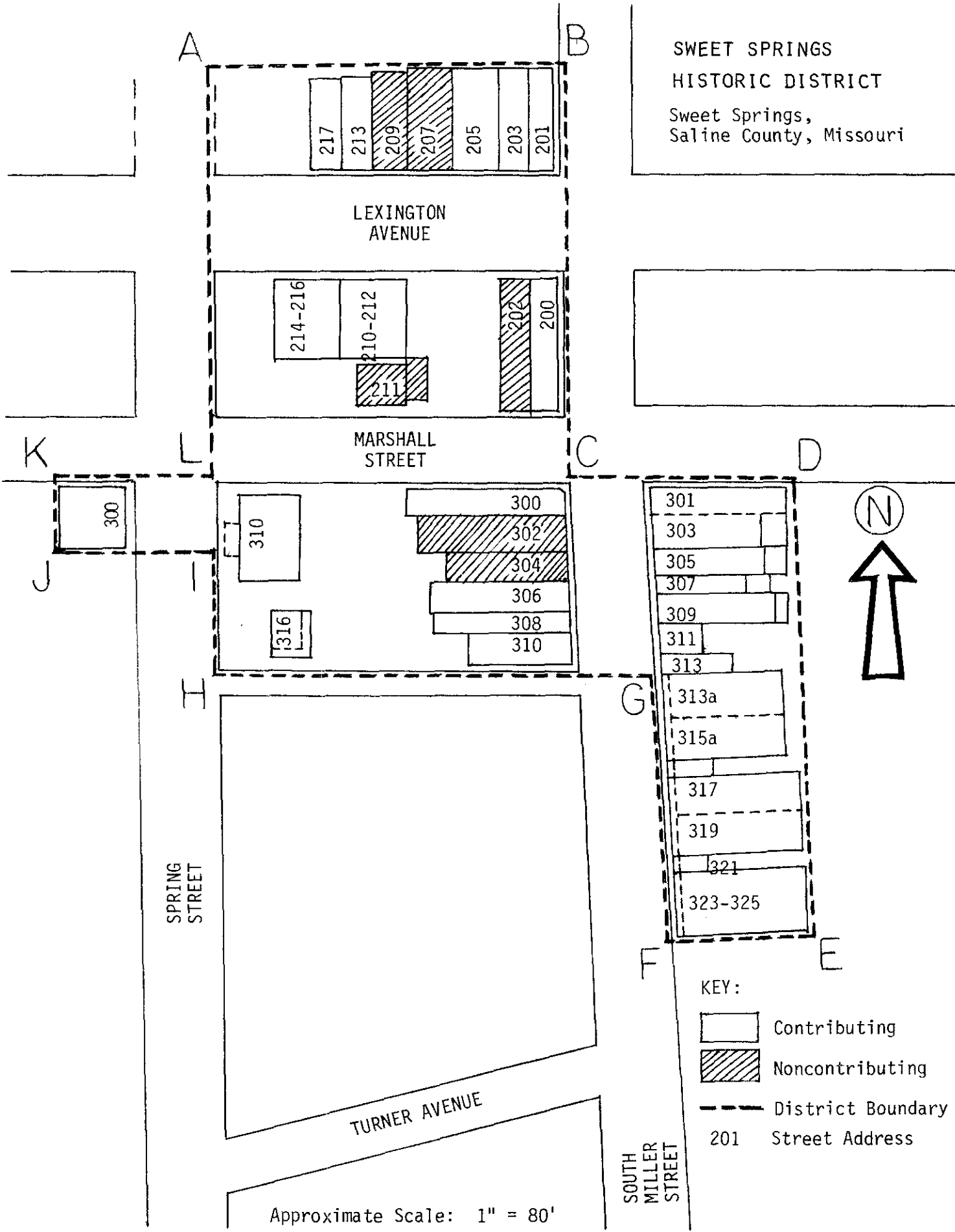
- KEY:
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 - District Bound
 - 201 Street Address
 - Photo Angle



SWEET SPRINGS HISTORIC DISTRICT, SALINE COUNTY, MO

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| A. 15/463750/4312895 | E. 15/463880/4312660 | J. 15/463700/4312760 |
| B. 15/463830/4312895 | F. 15/463840/4312670 | K. 15/463700/4312790 |
| C. 15/463830/4312780 | G. 15/463840/4312735 | L. 15/463750/4312790 |
| D. 15/463880/4312780 | H. 15/463750/4312735 | |
| | I. 15/463735/4312760 | |

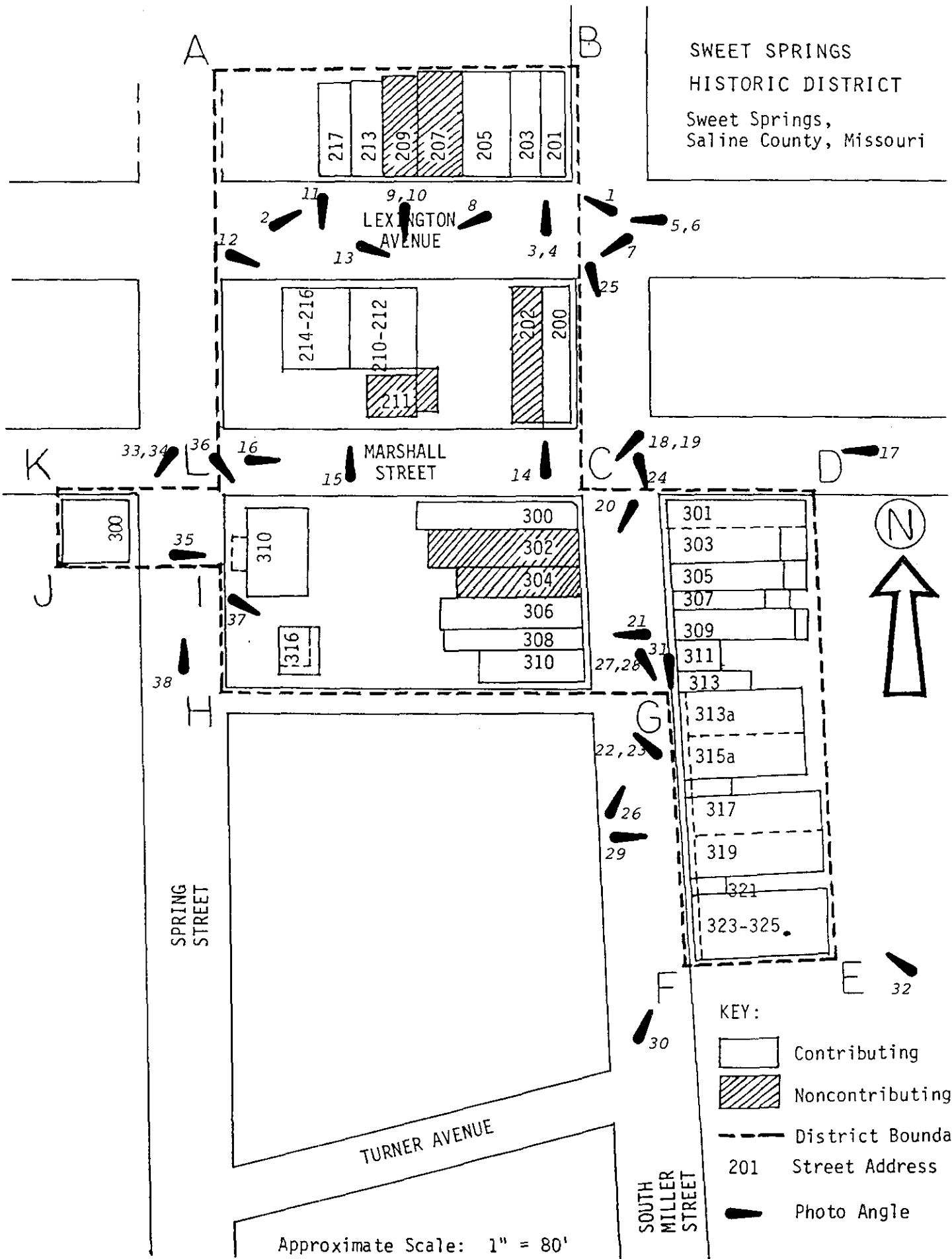
SWEET SPRINGS
HISTORIC DISTRICT
Sweet Springs,
Saline County, Missouri



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 - 201 Street Address

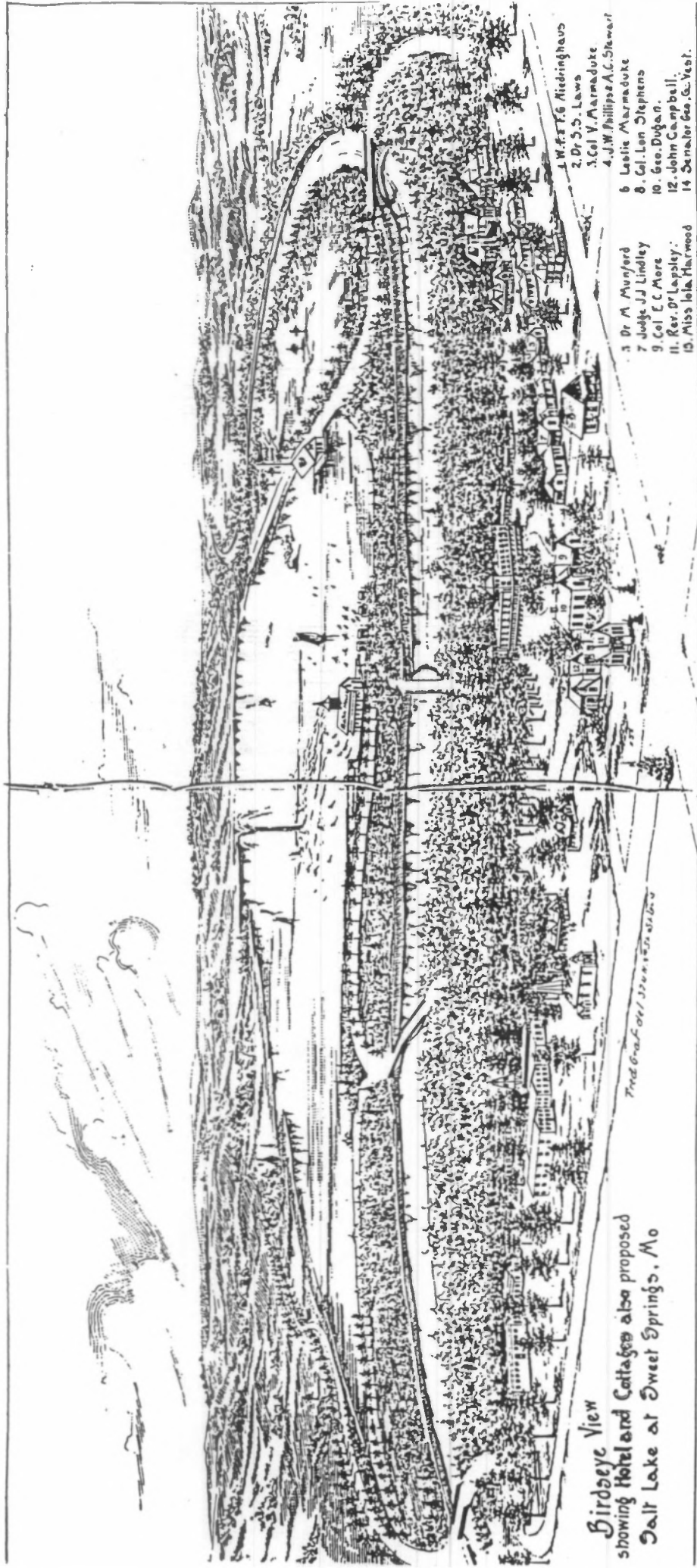
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SWEET SPRINGS
HISTORIC DISTRICT
Sweet Springs,
Saline County, Missouri



- KEY:
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 - 201 Street Address
 - Photo Angle

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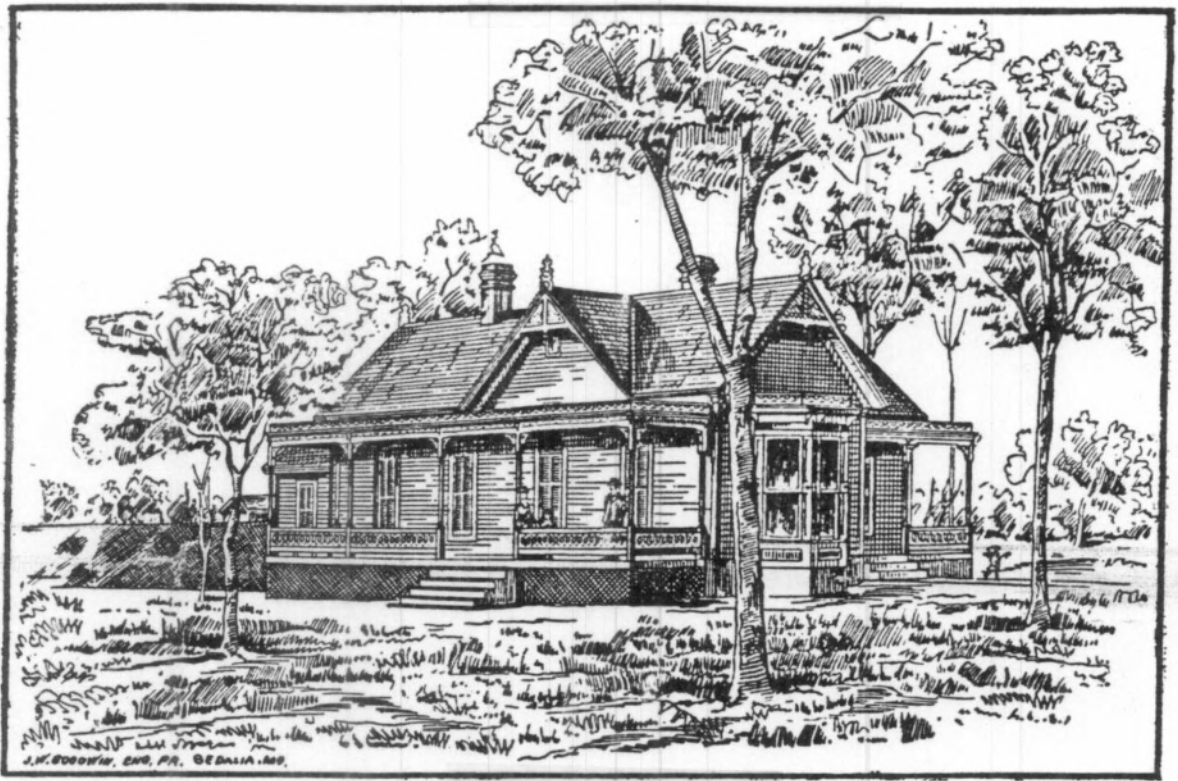
Birdseye View
 showing Hotel and Cottages also proposed
 Salt Lake at Sweet Springs, Mo

Trsd. Geo. H. 1891 37x15.50. 1891

- 1. W. F. T. G. Niedringhaus
- 2. Dr. S. S. Laws
- 3. Col. V. Marmaduke
- 4. J. W. Phillips A. C. Stewart
- 5. Dr. A. Munford
- 6. Lucie Marmaduke
- 7. Judge J. J. Lindley
- 8. Col. Len Stephens
- 9. Col. C. C. More
- 10. Geo. Dugan
- 11. Rev. Dr. Lapsley
- 12. John Campbell
- 13. Miss Iola Harwood
- 14. Senator Geo. W. Vest

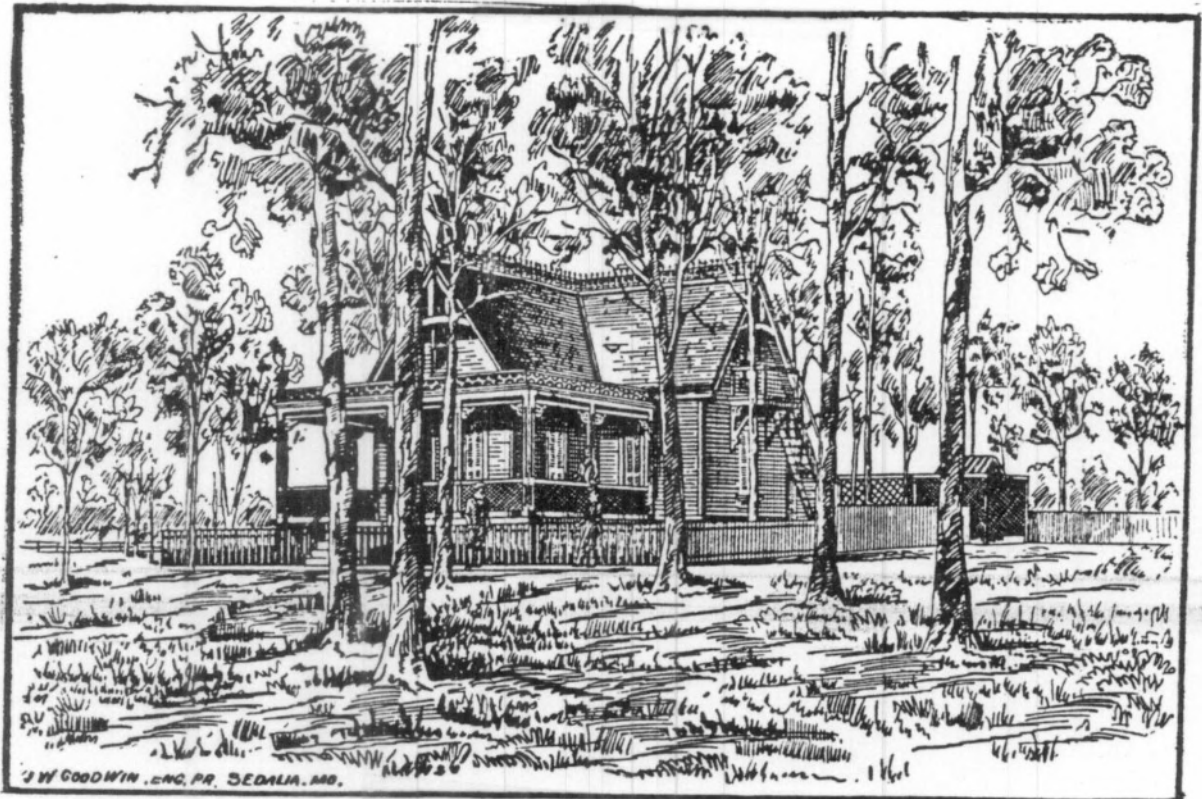
Source: Circa 1890 promotional brochure

Source: Promotional Brochure, circa 1887

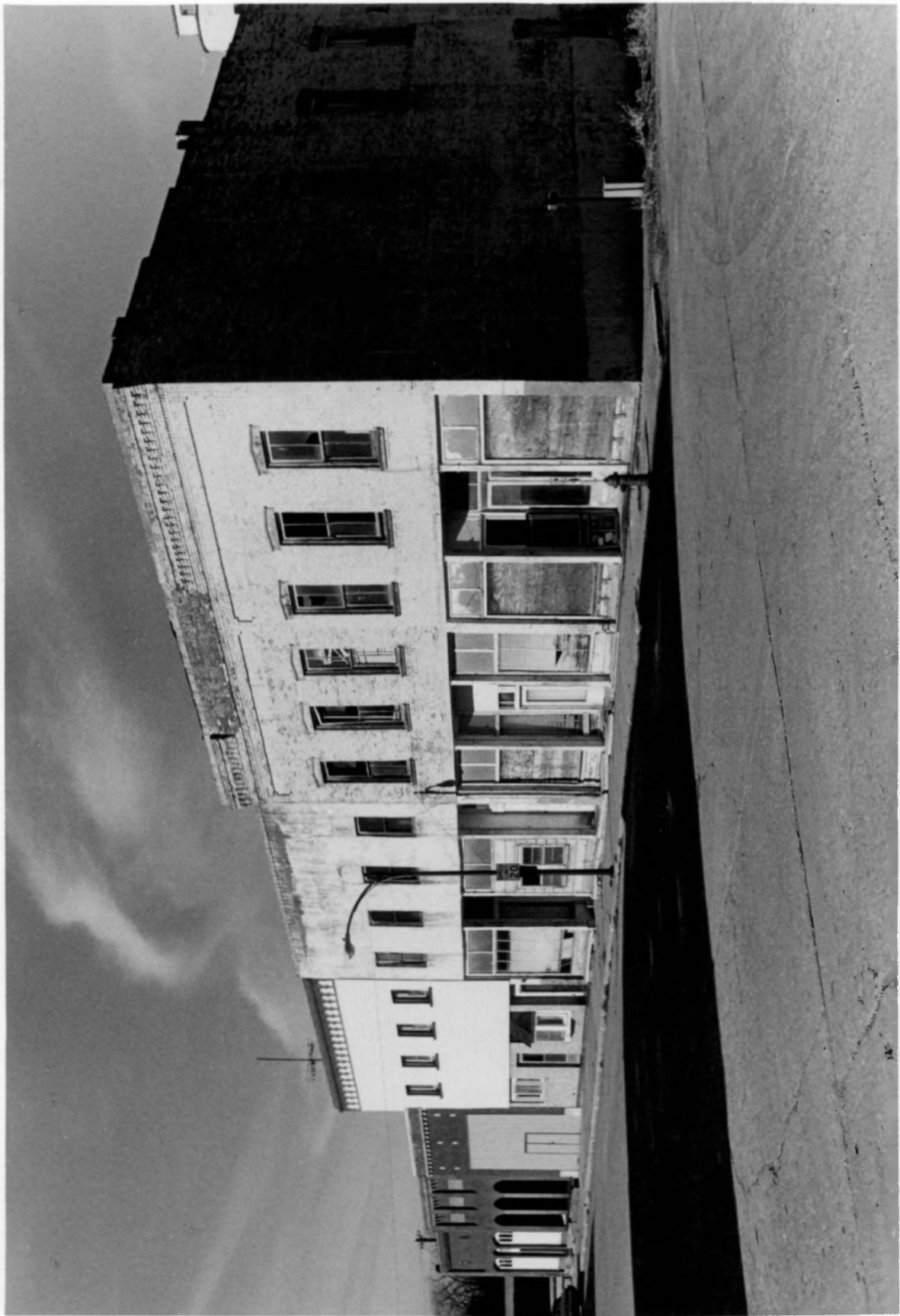


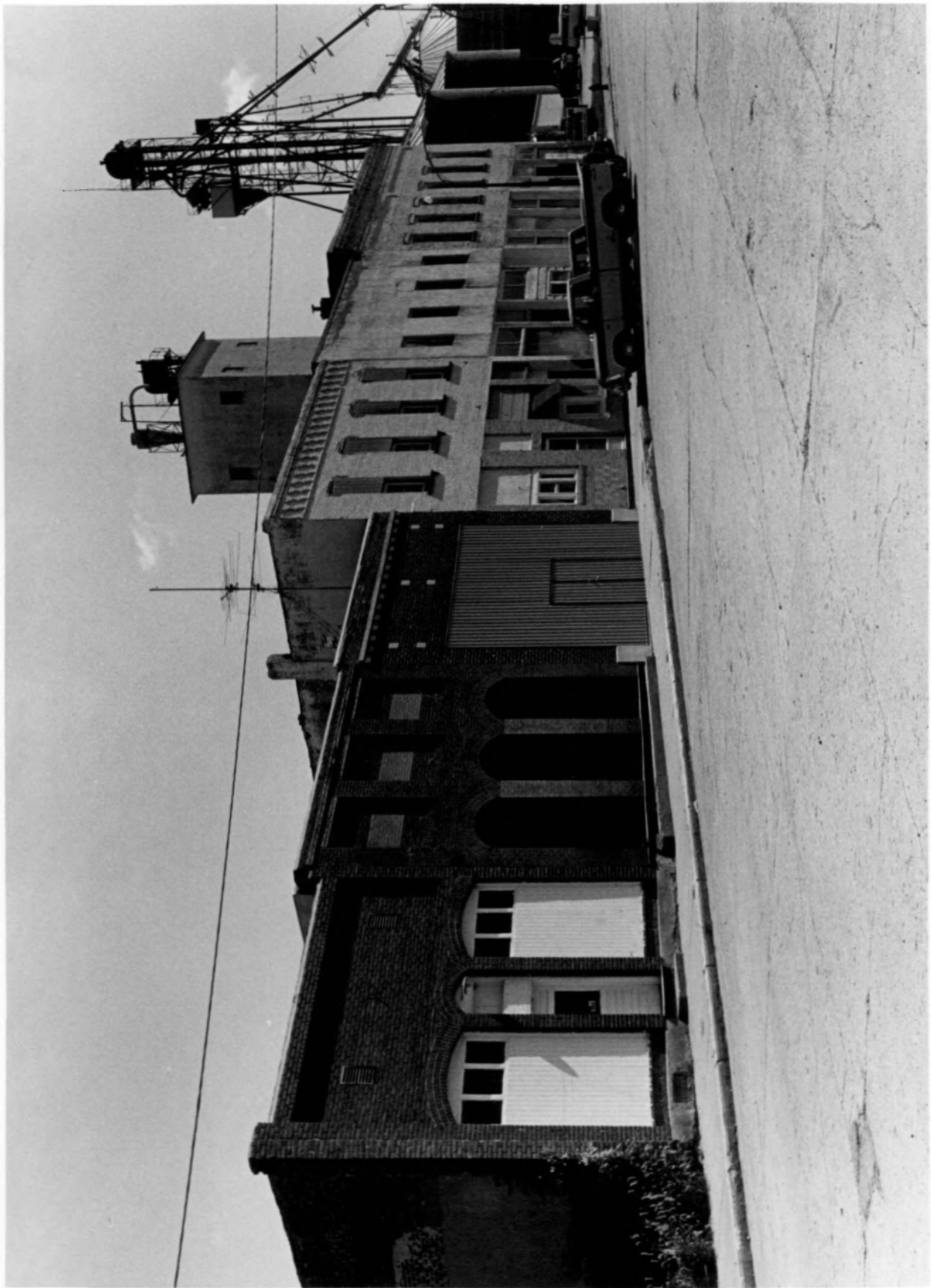
(Private Cottage,) Colonel Vincent Marmaduke, St. Louis, Mo.

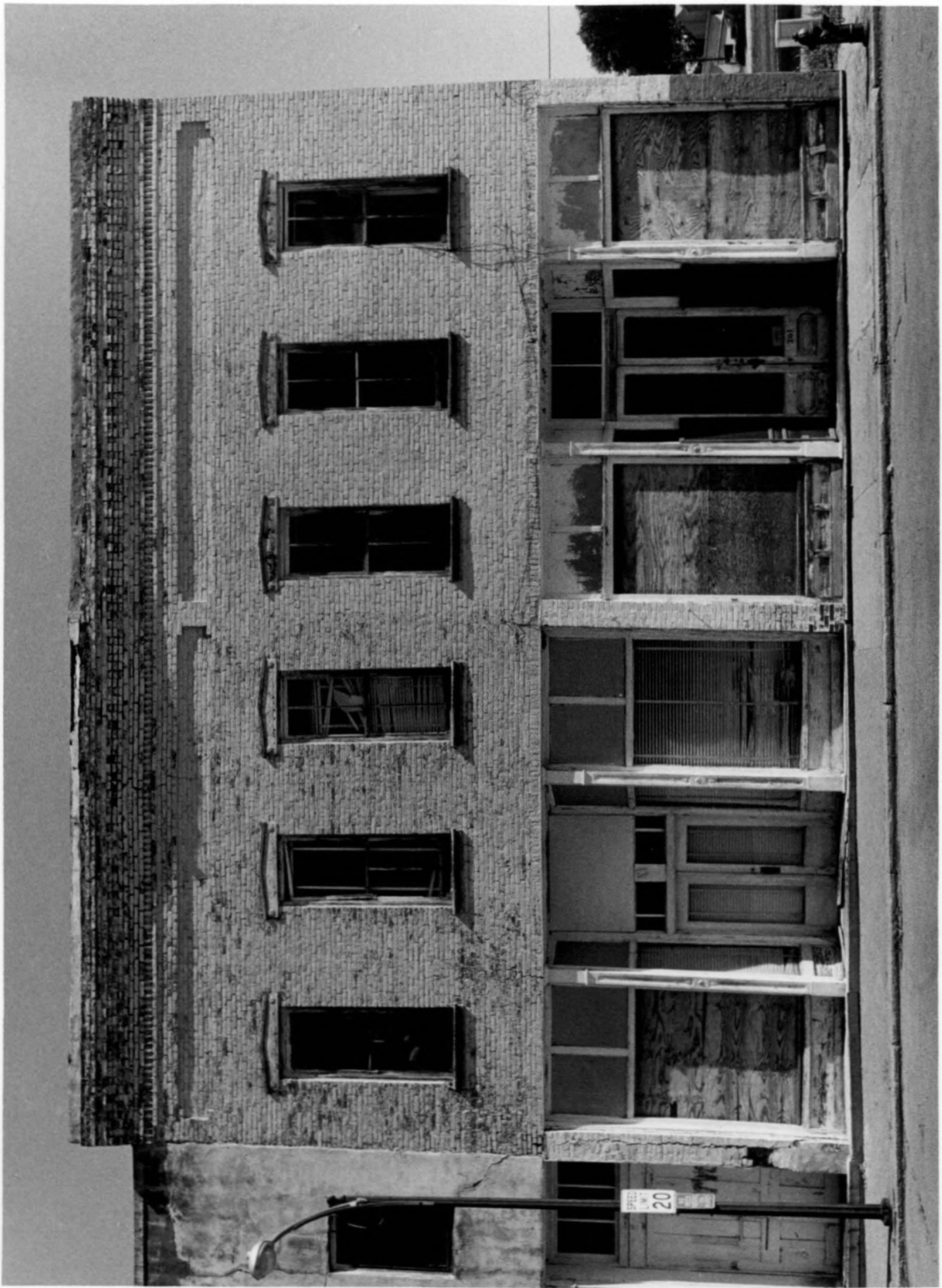
Typical Cottages at Sweet Springs Resort



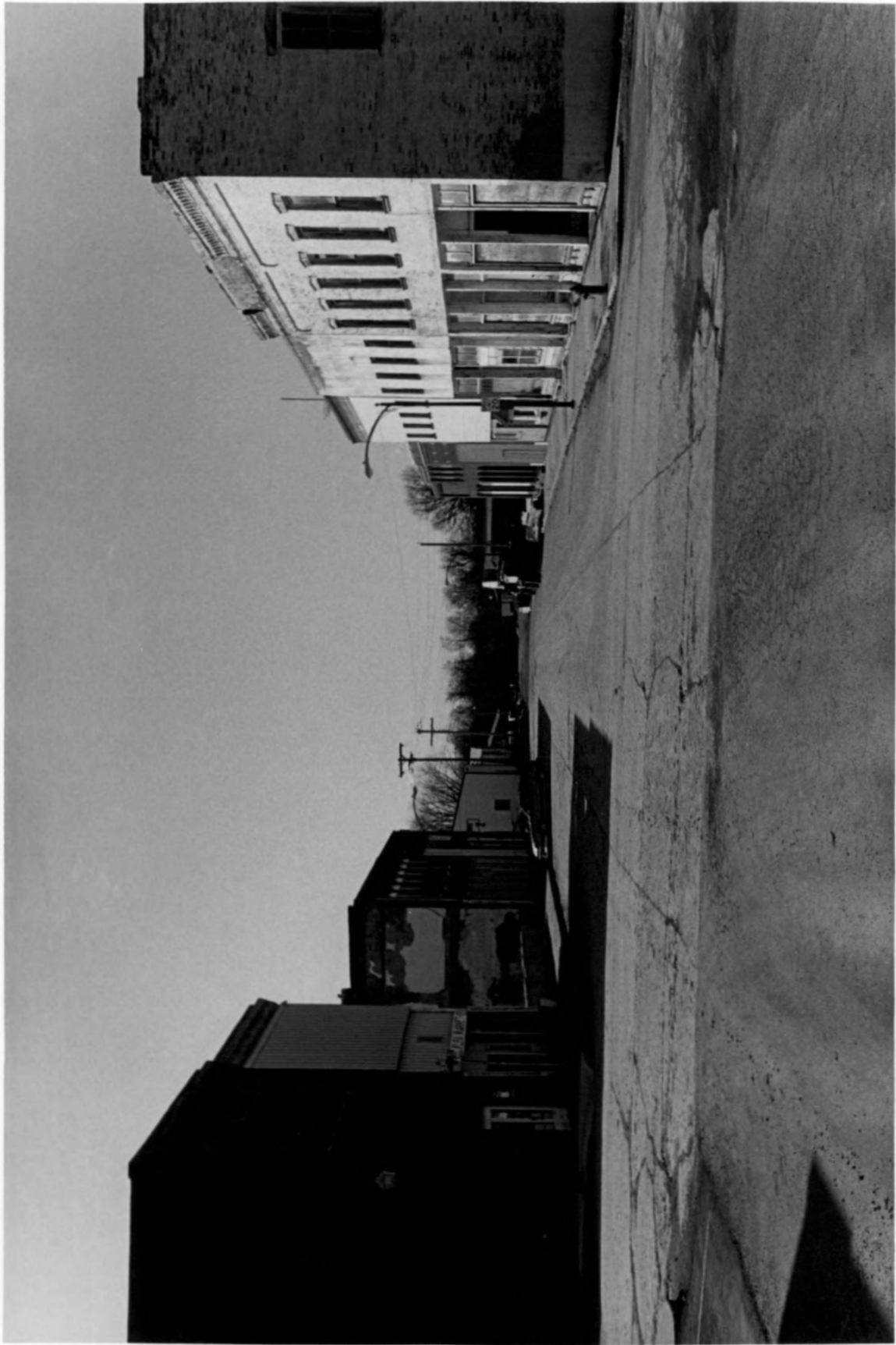
(Private Cottage.) Mr. John Campbell, Kansas City, Mo.

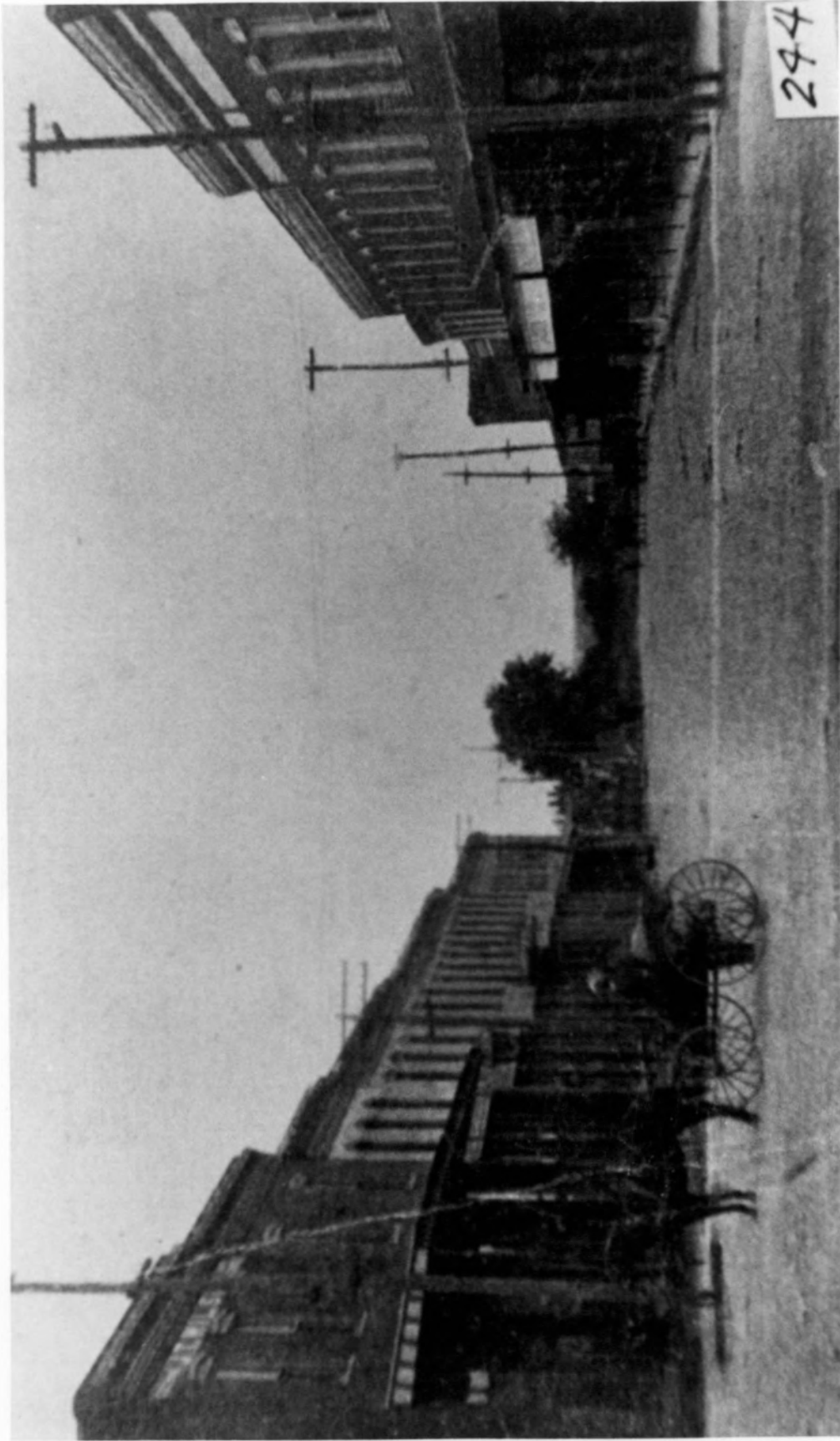




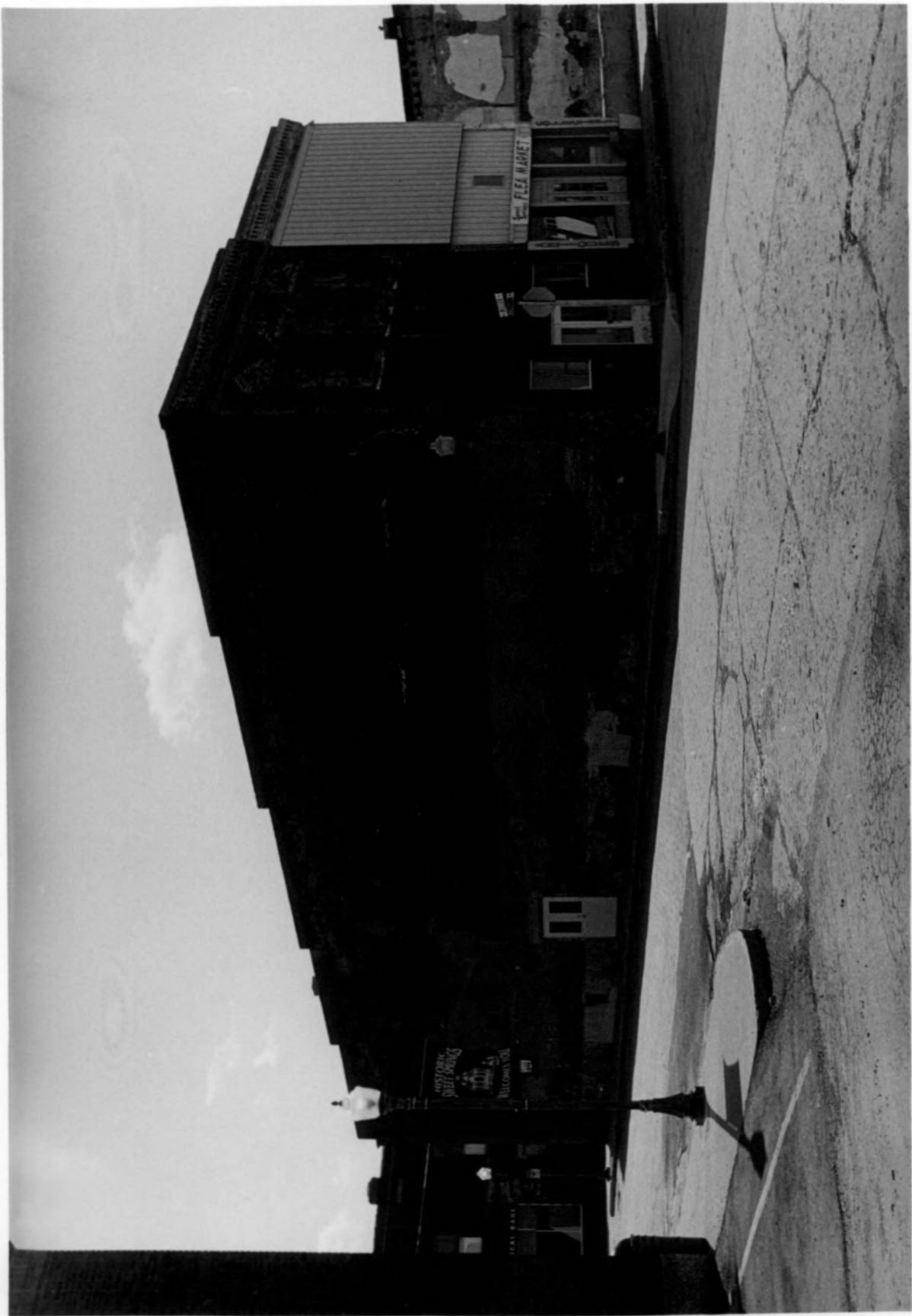








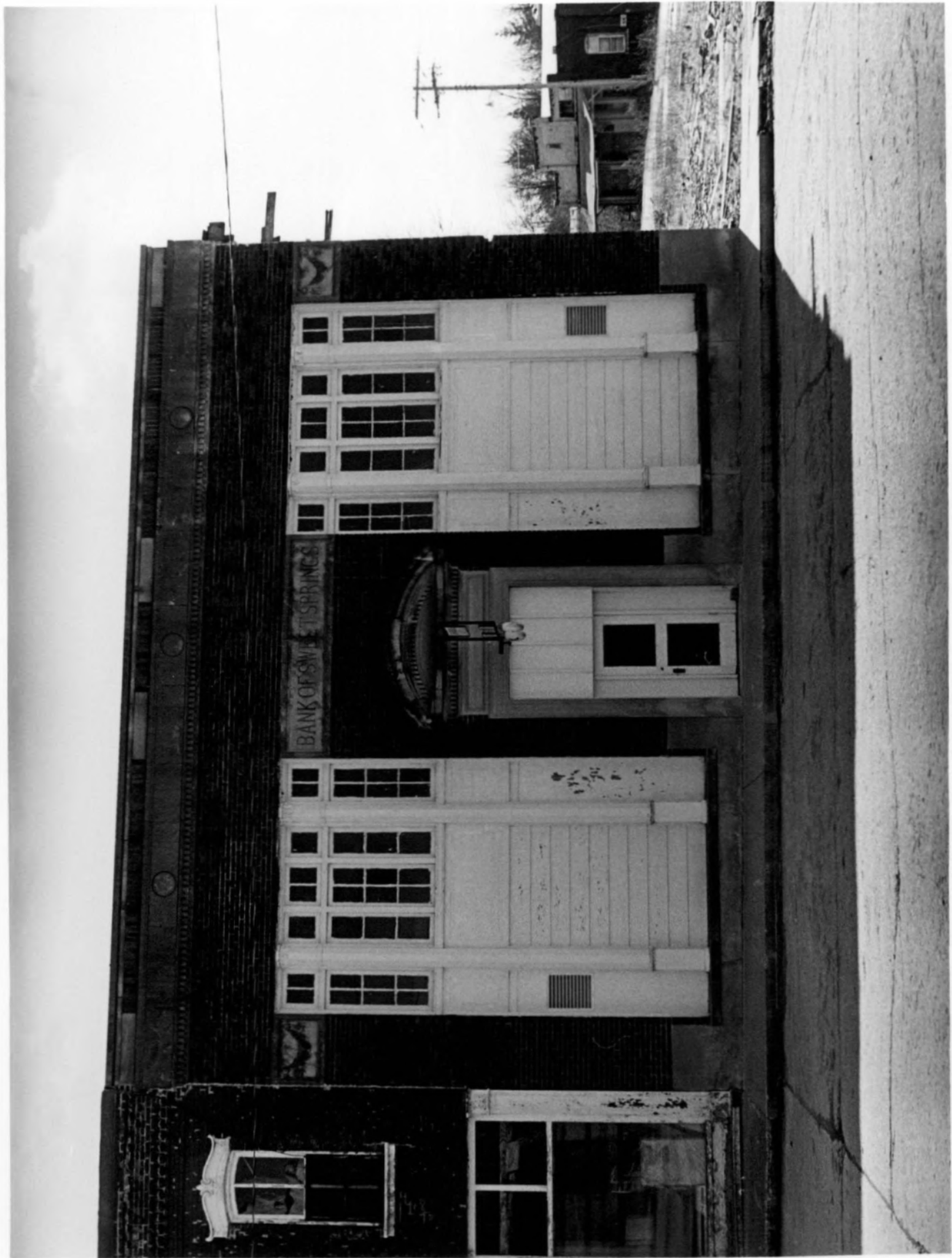
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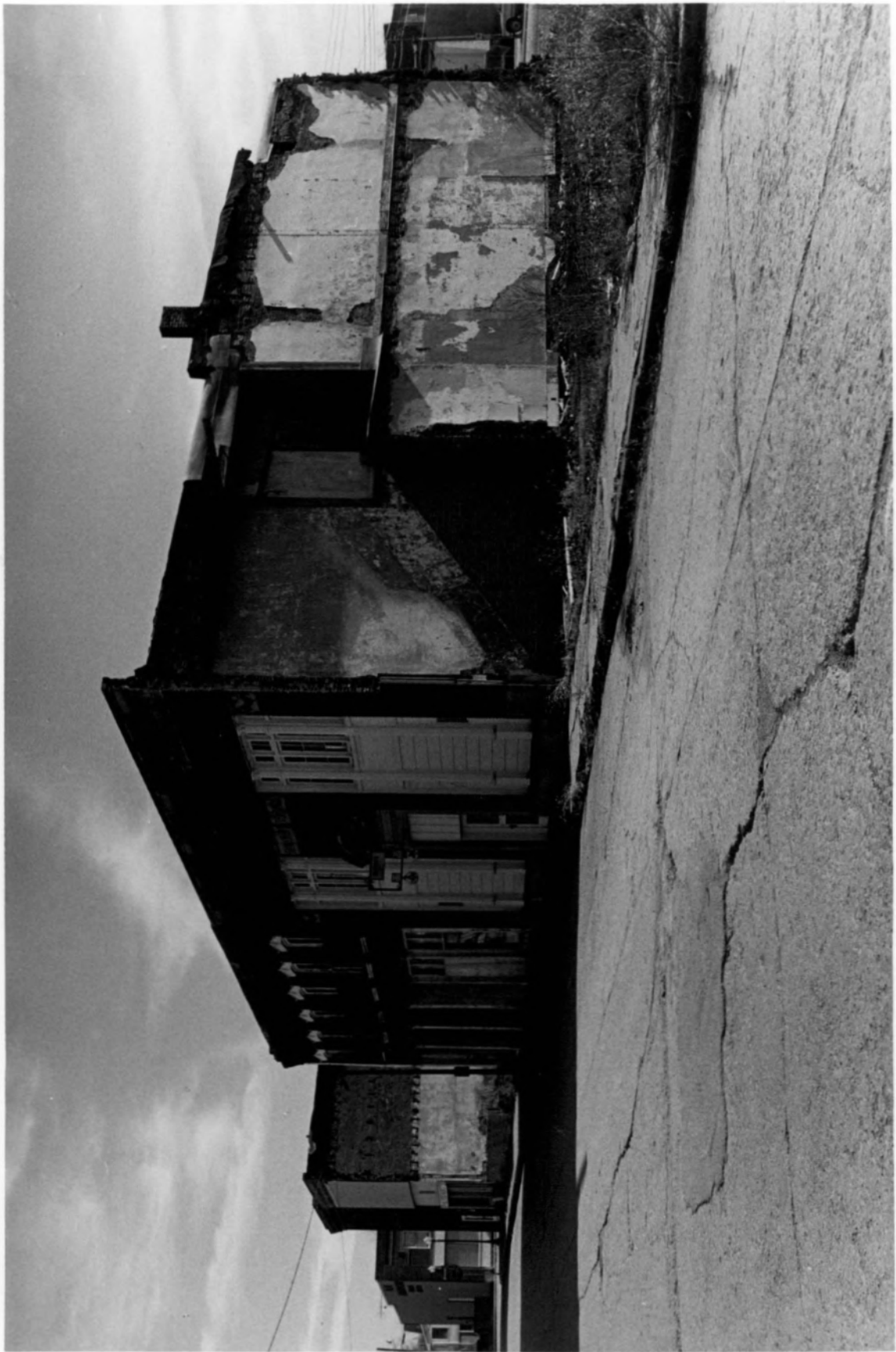




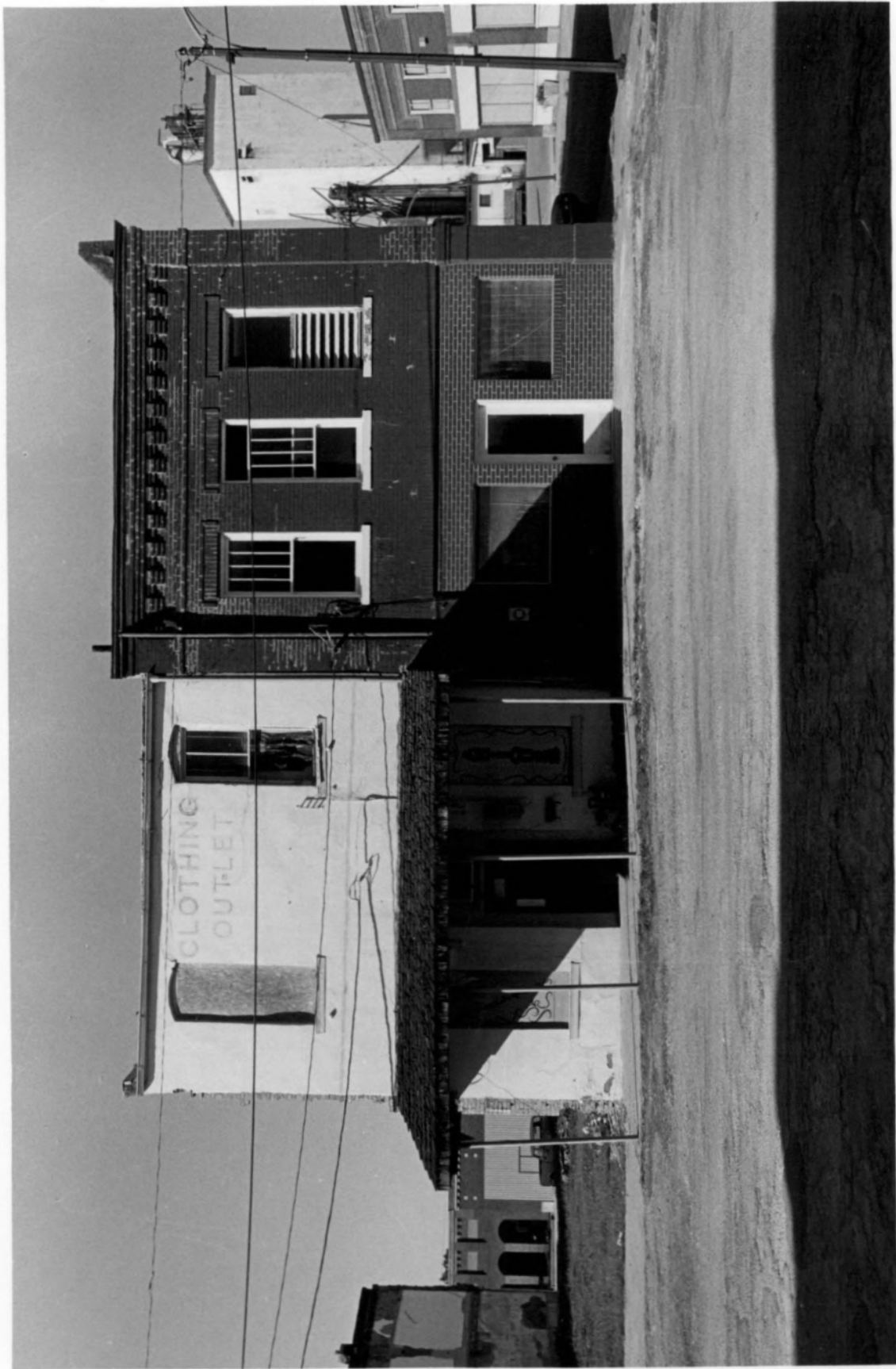


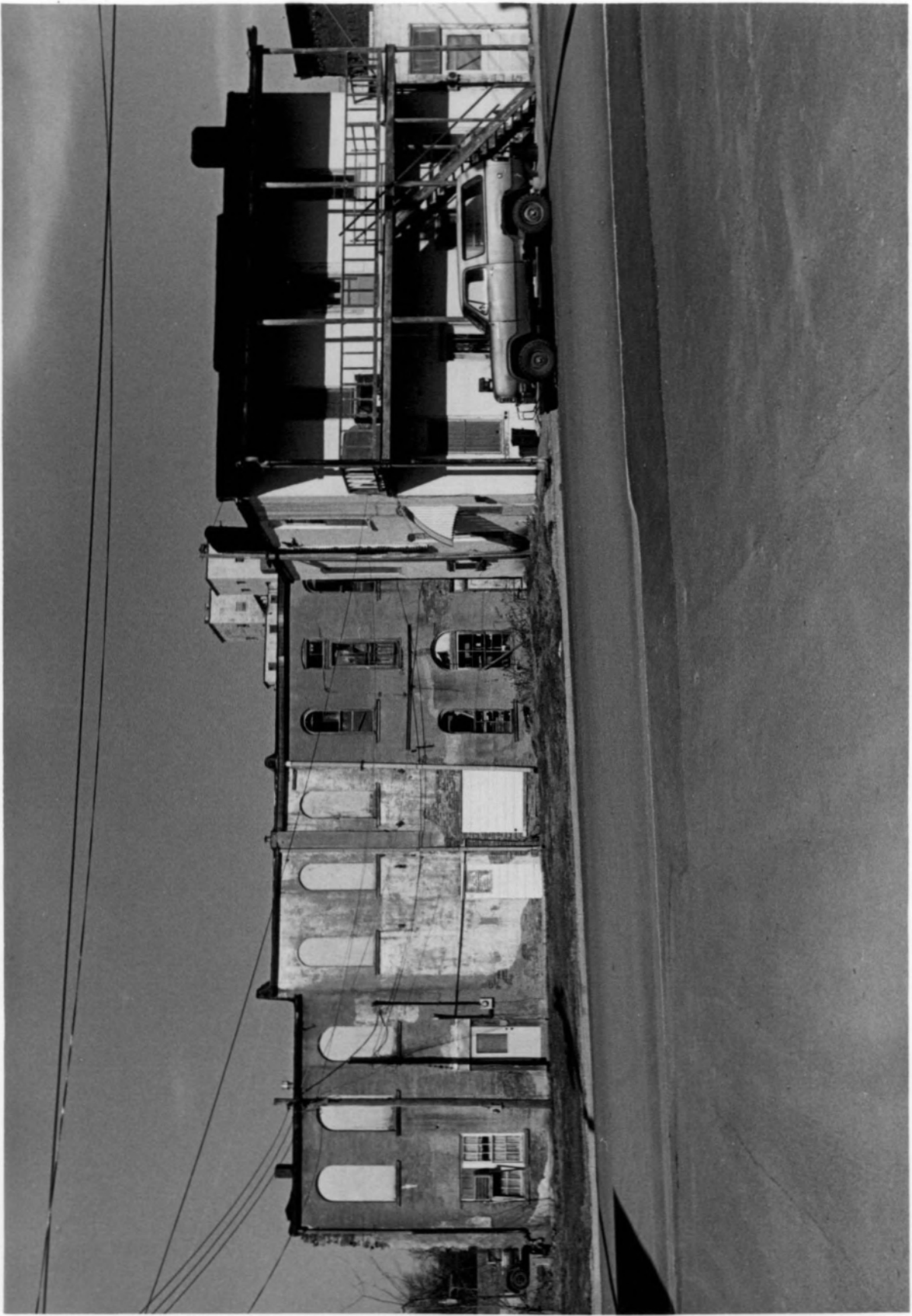






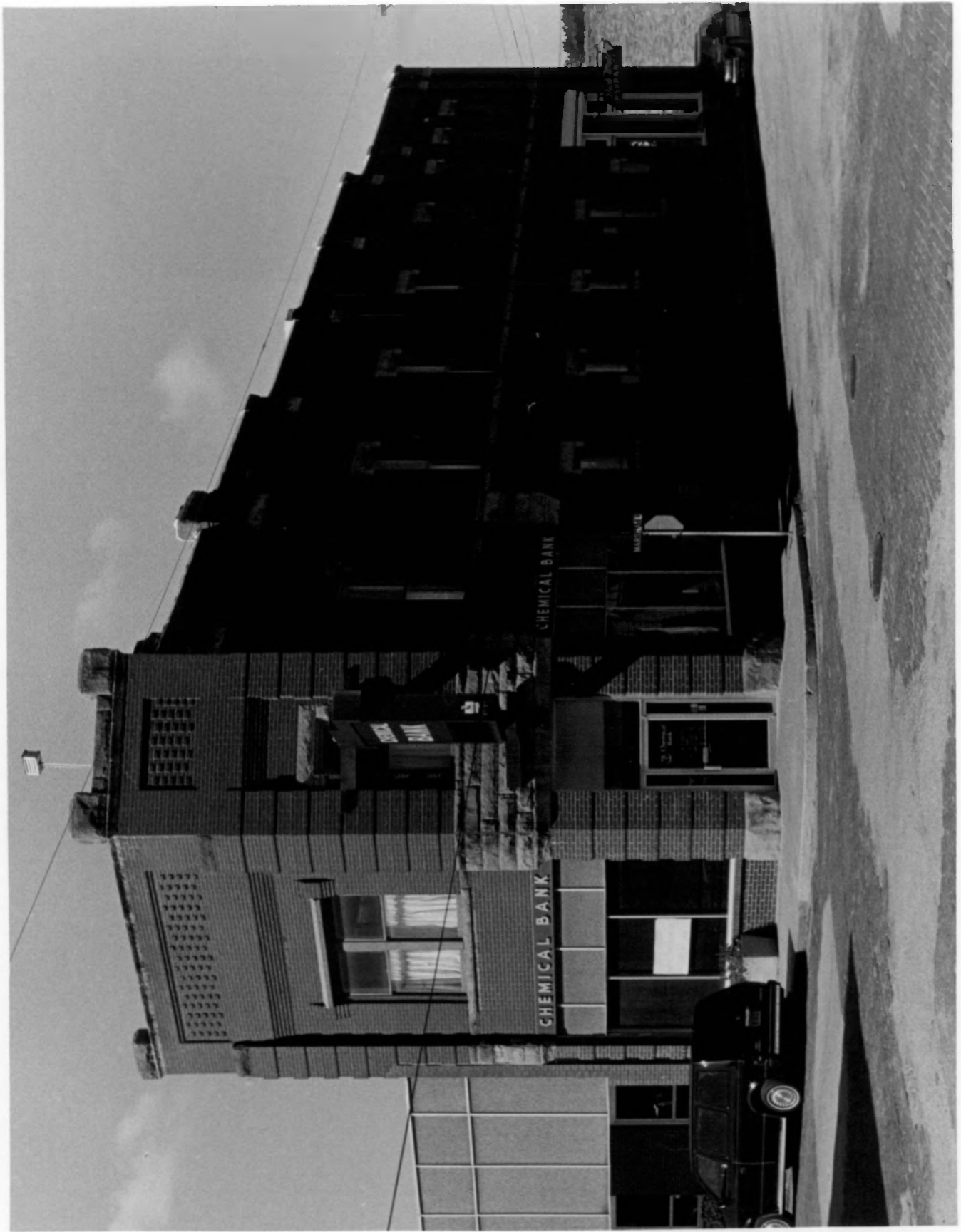


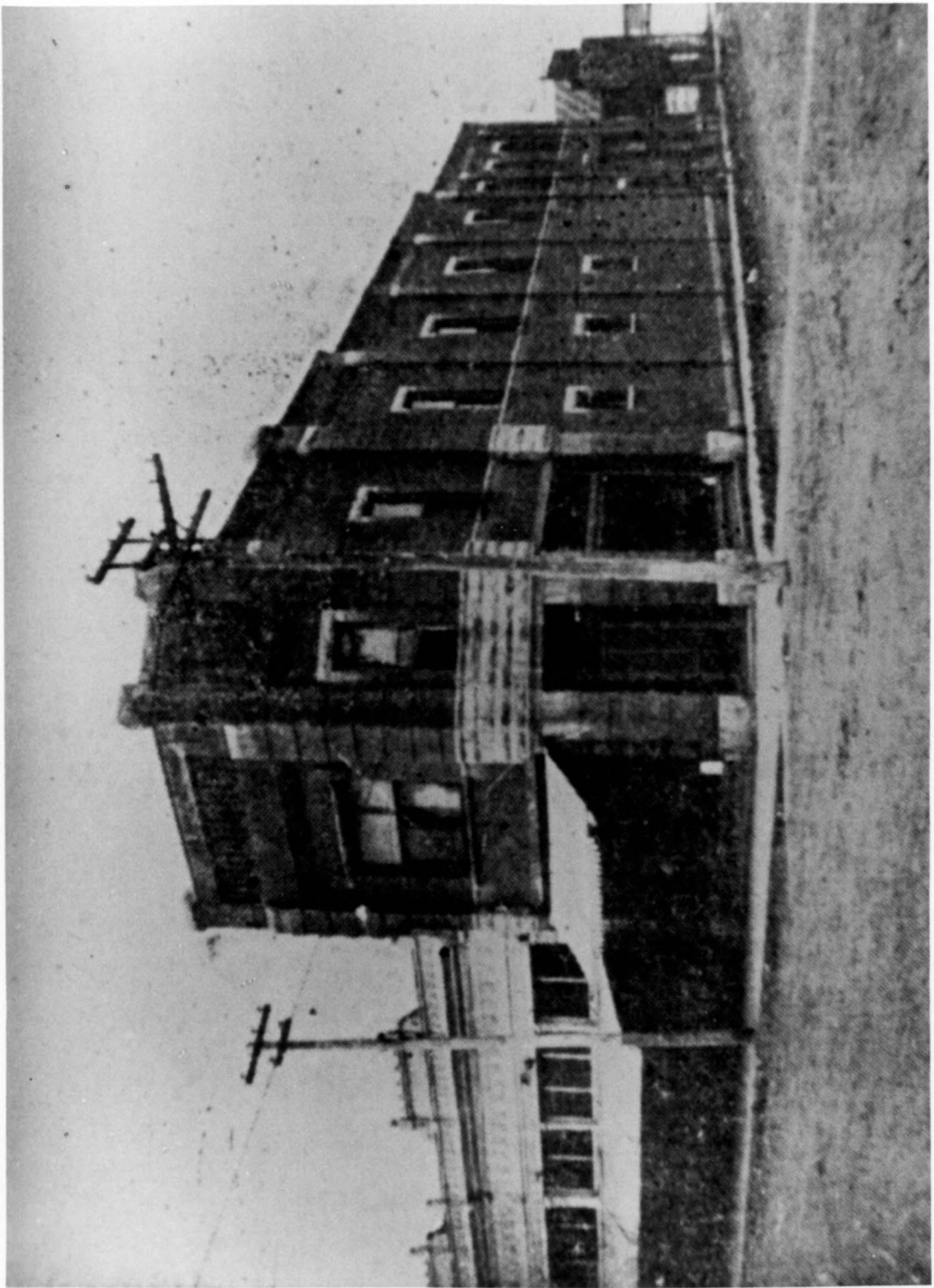






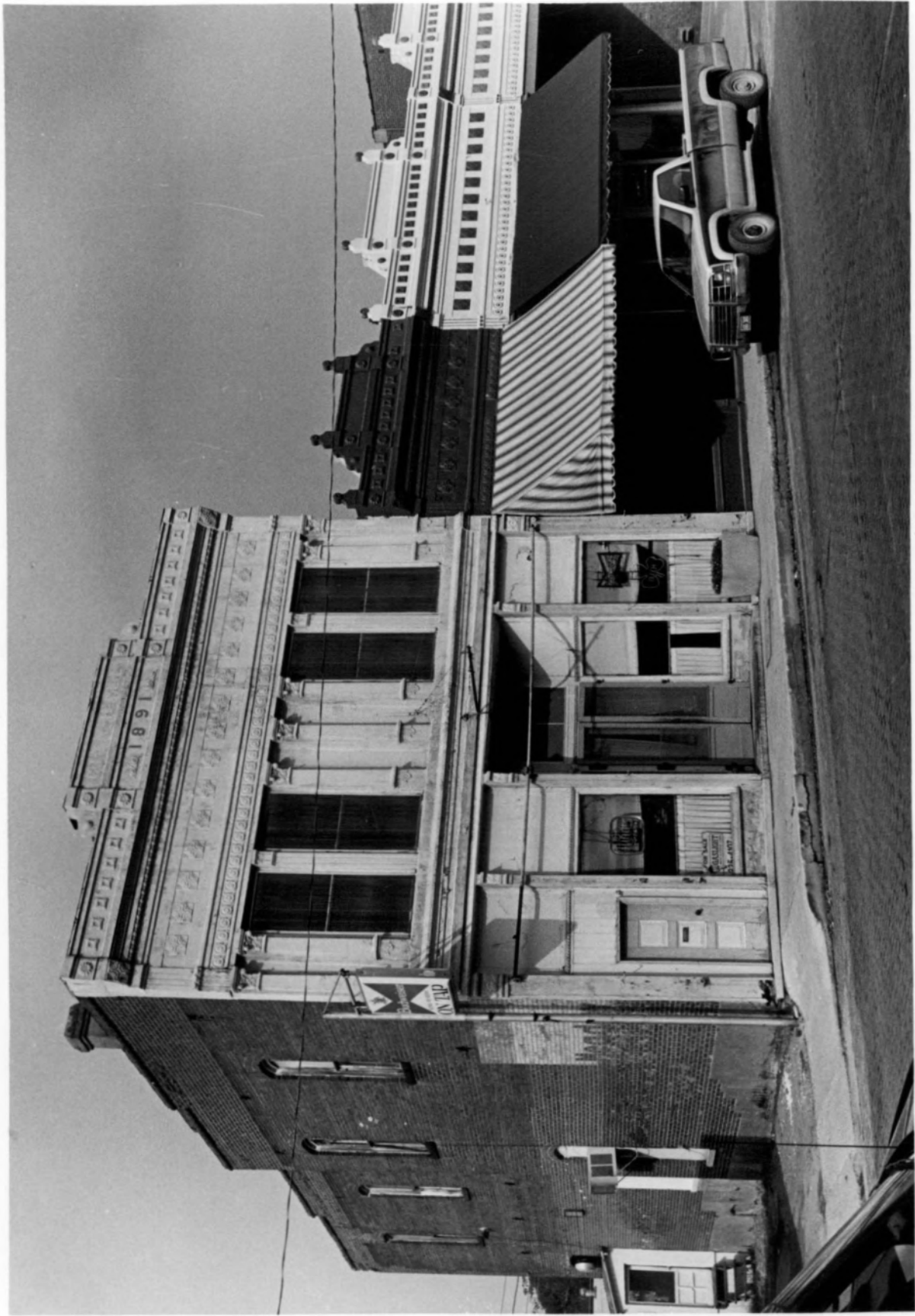


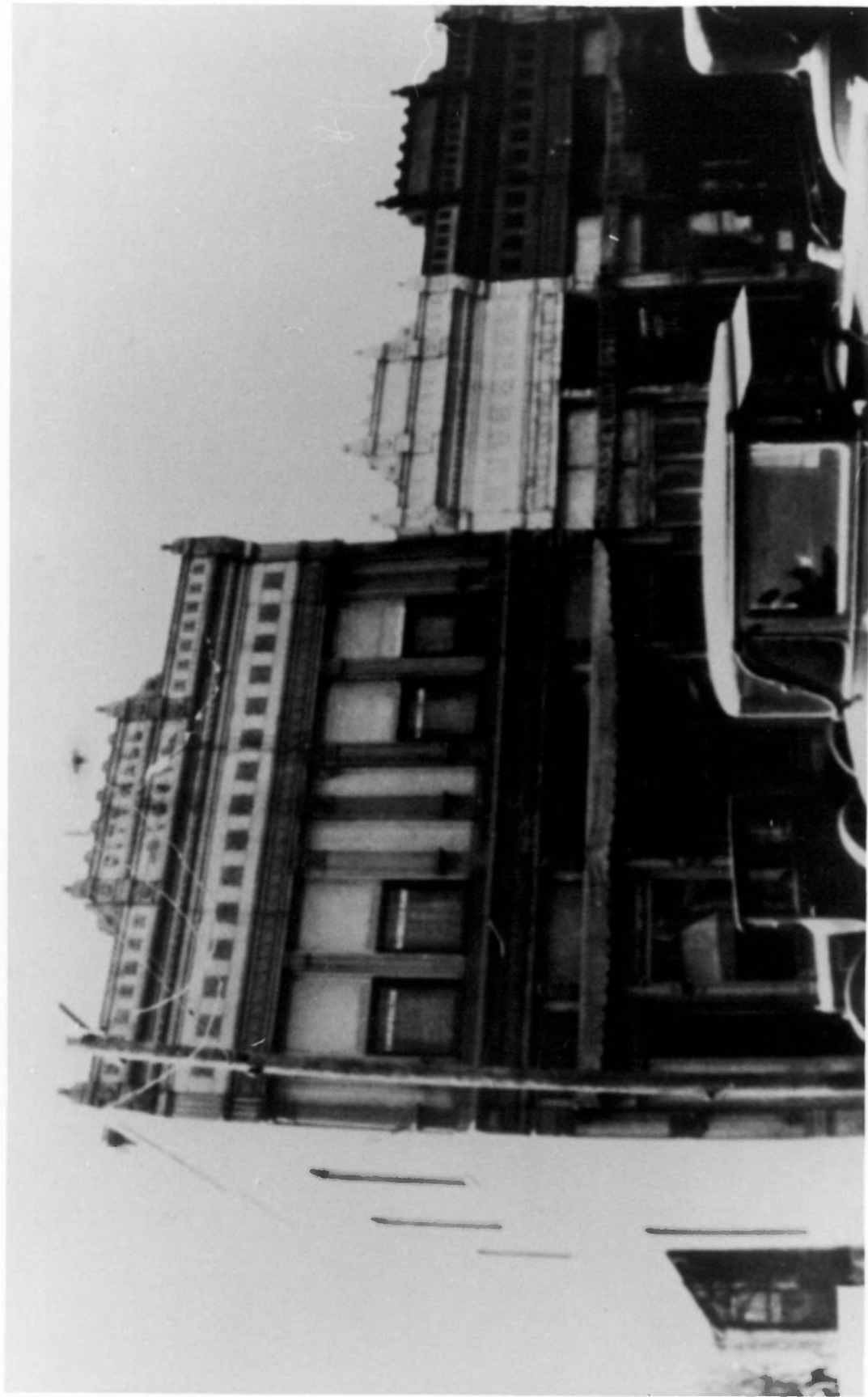






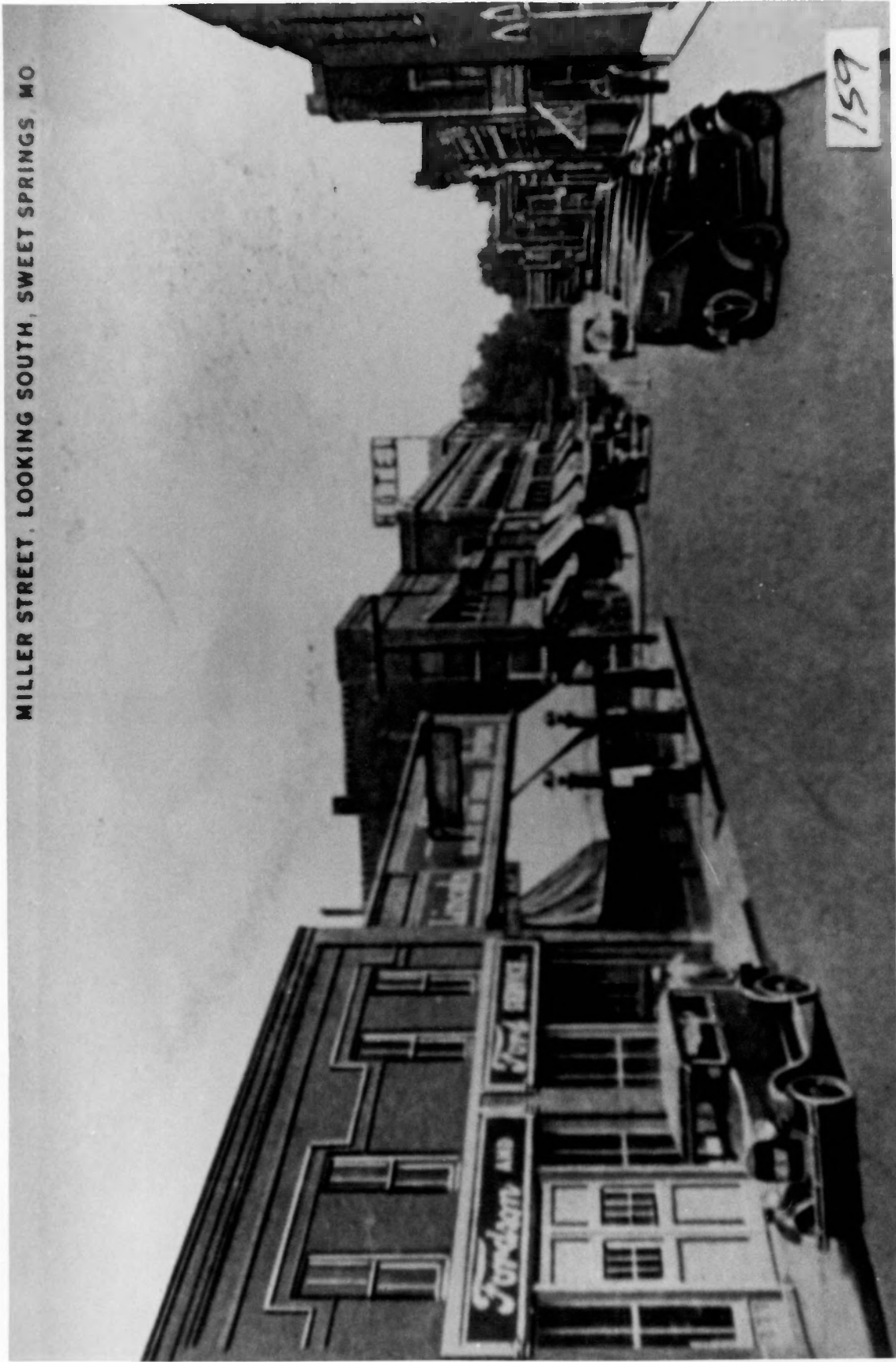


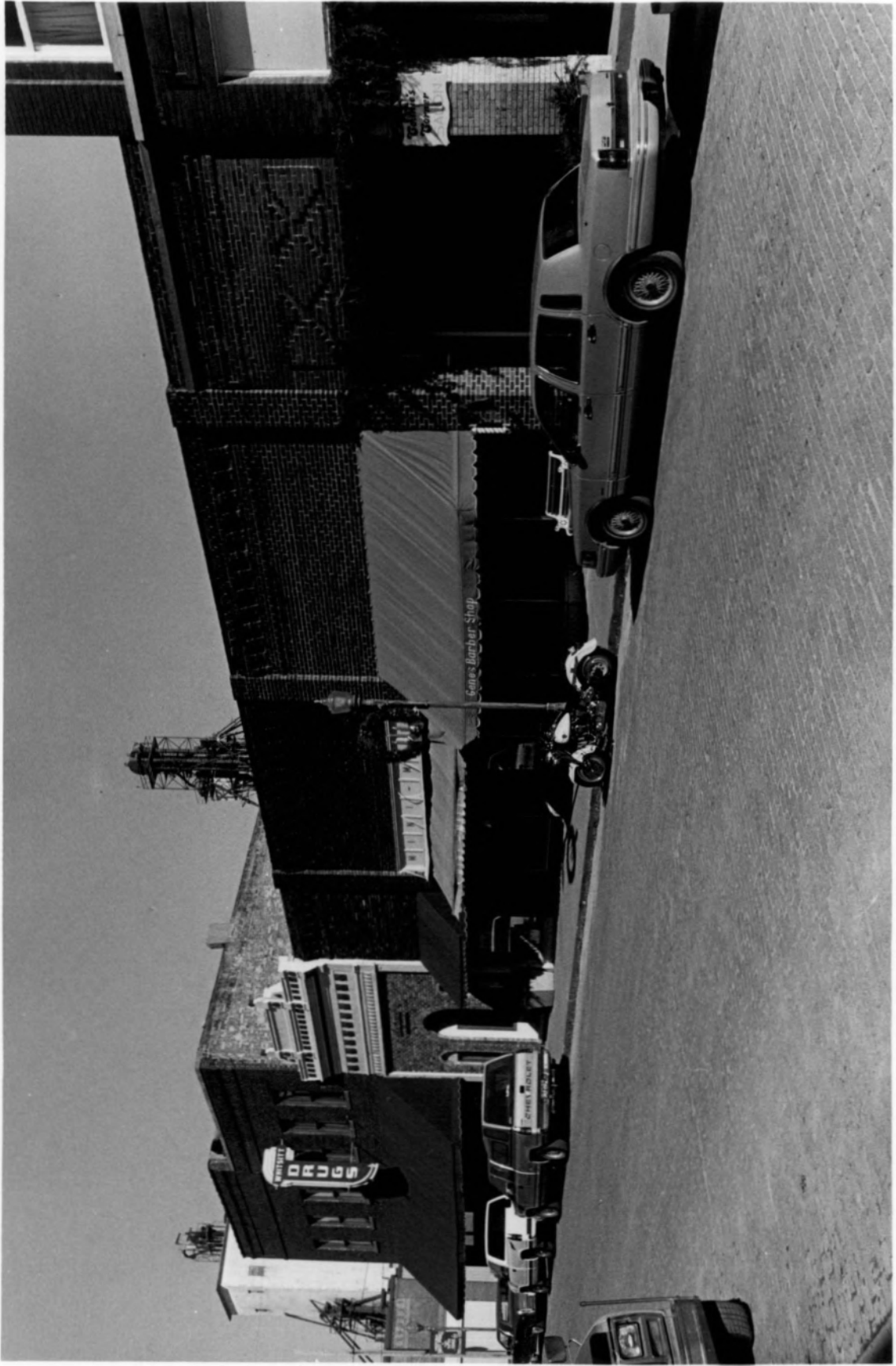






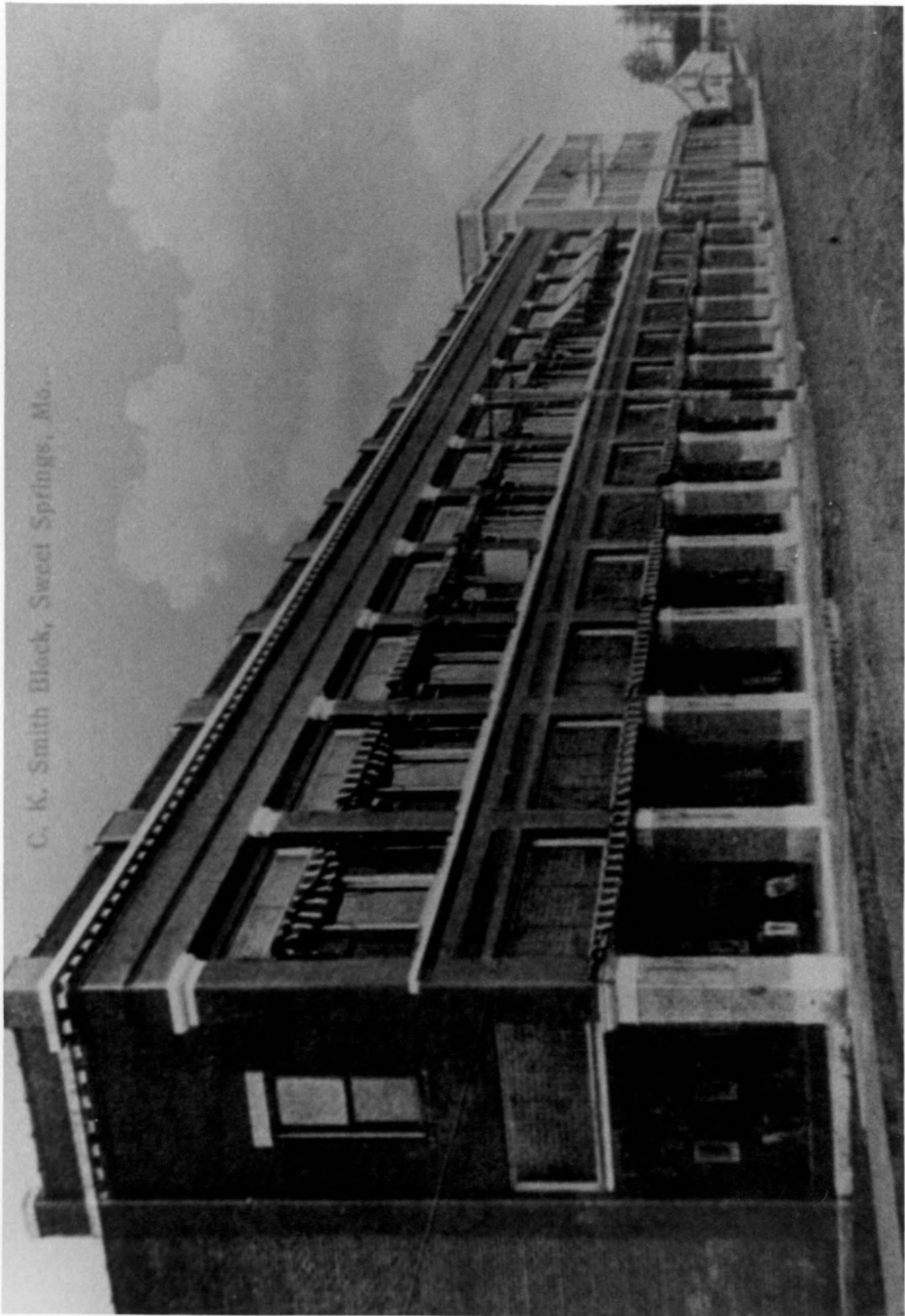
MILLER STREET, LOOKING SOUTH, SWEET SPRINGS, MO.



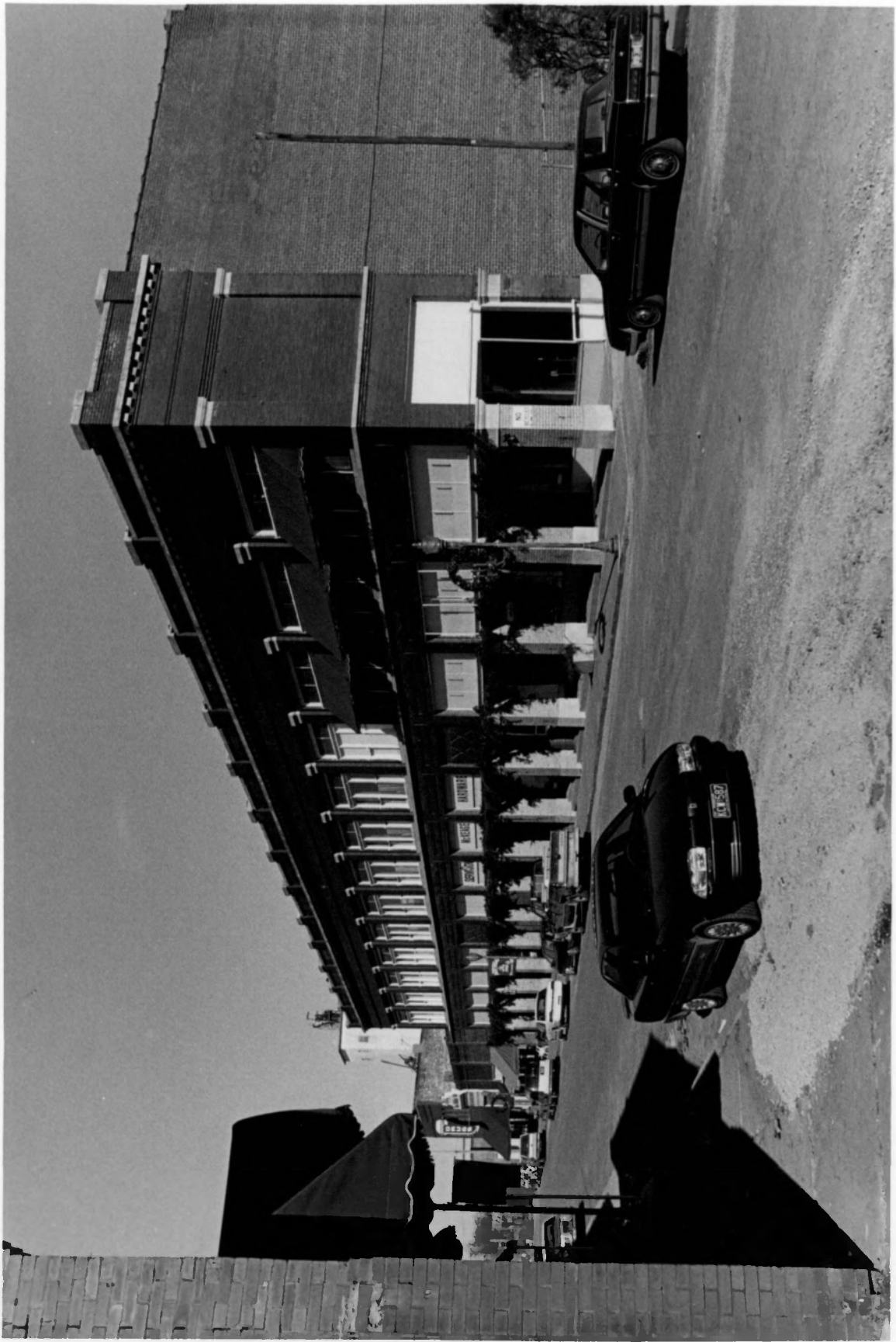




C. K. Smith Block, Sweet Springs, Mo.

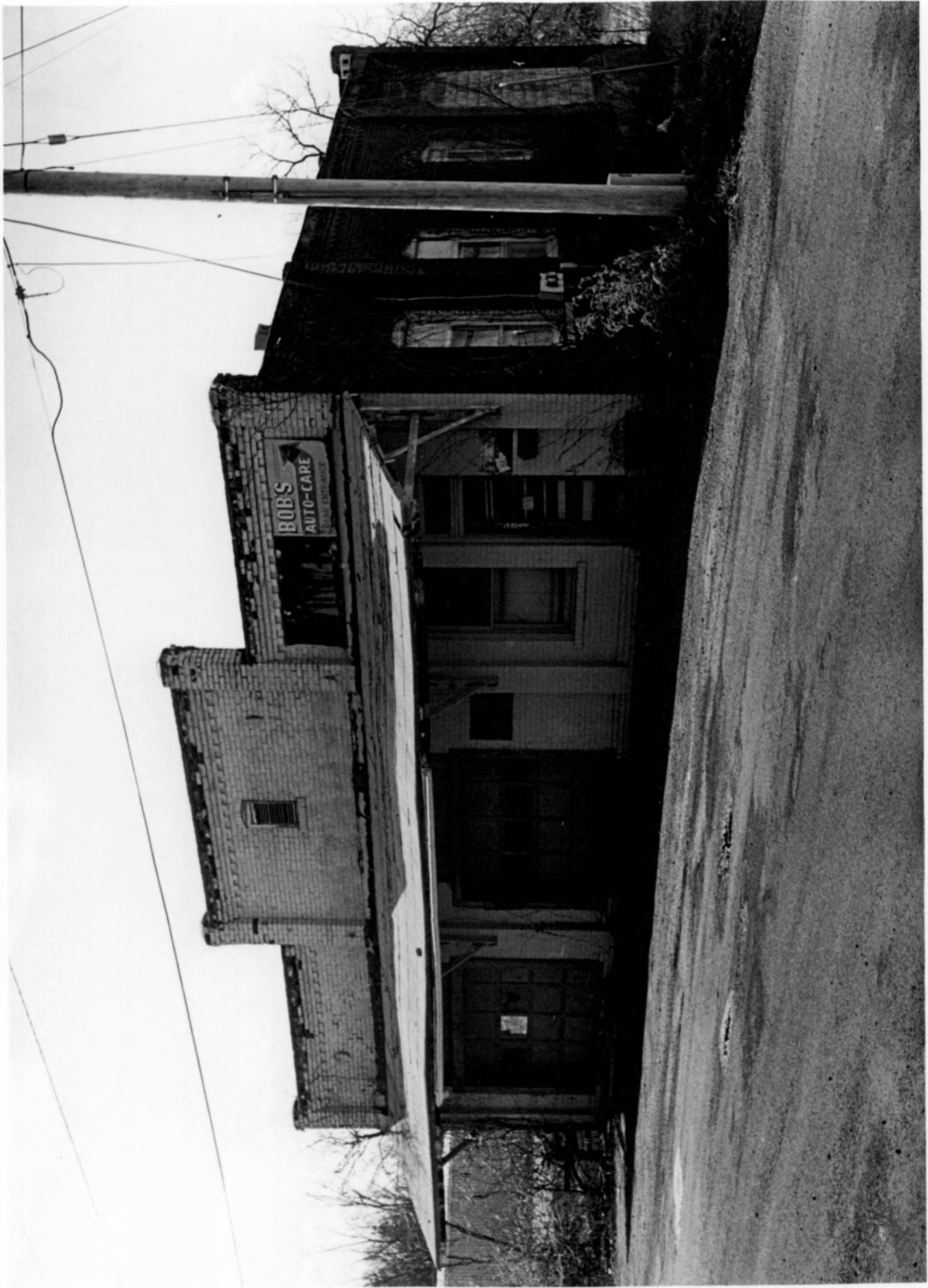


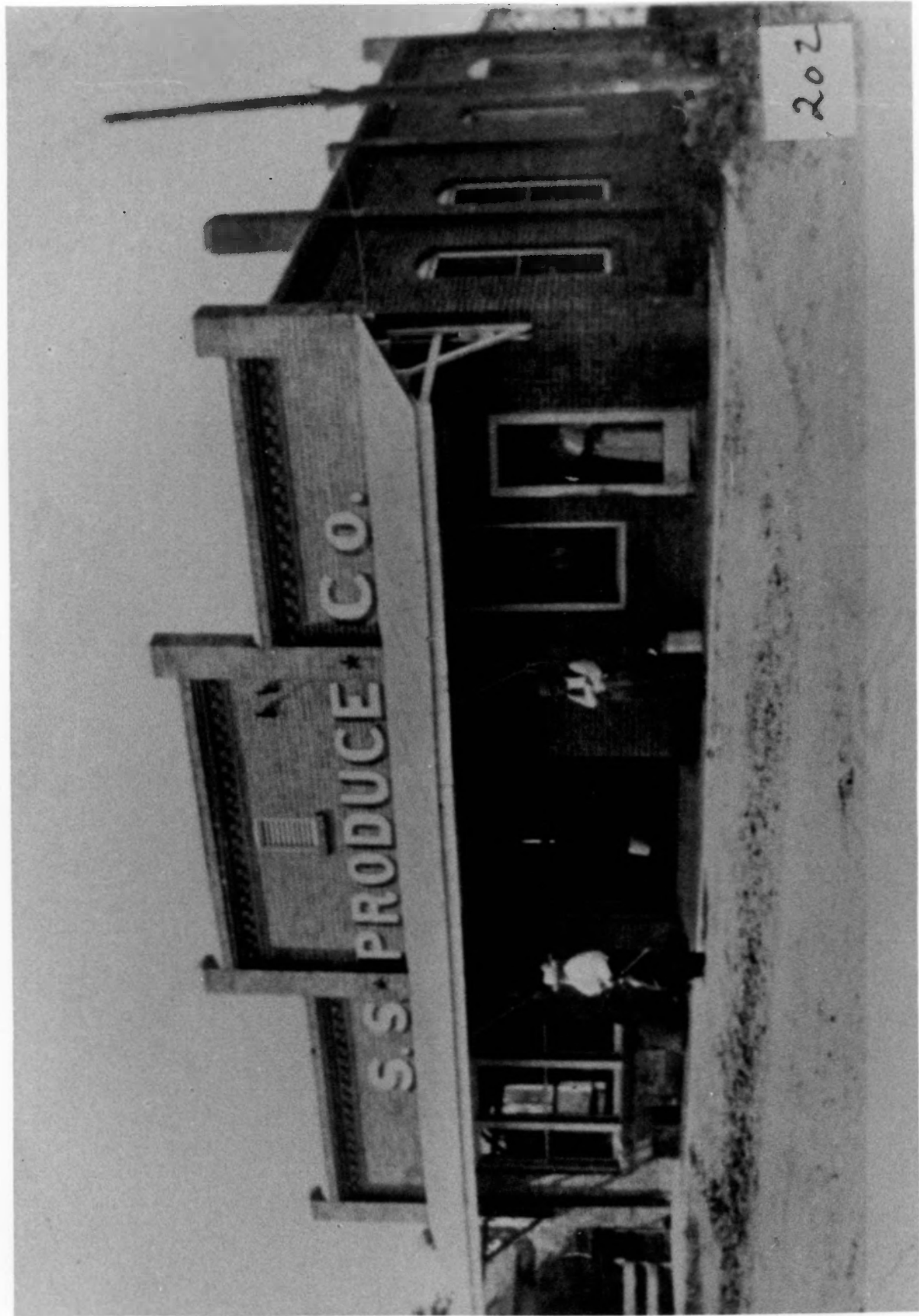


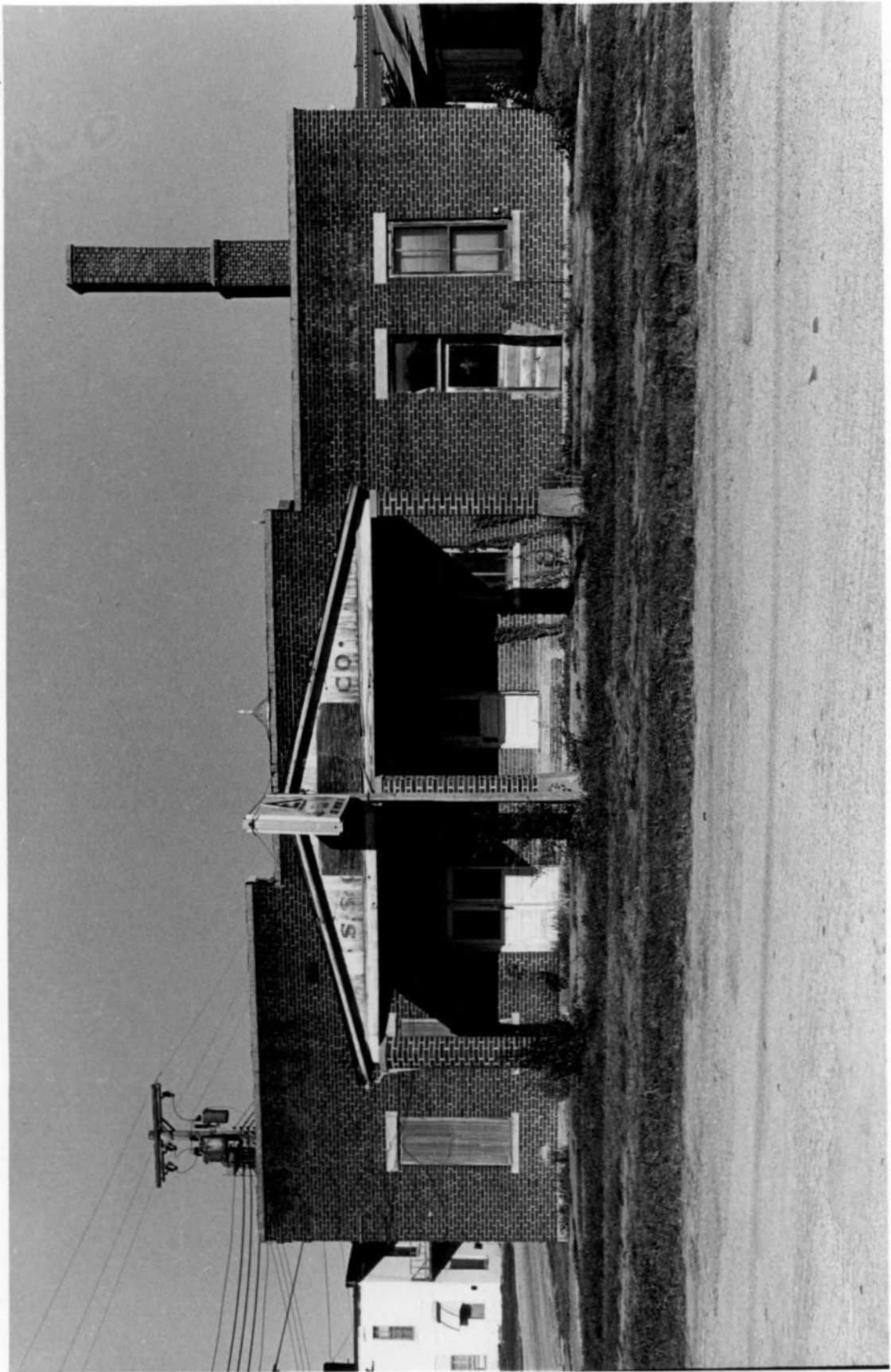


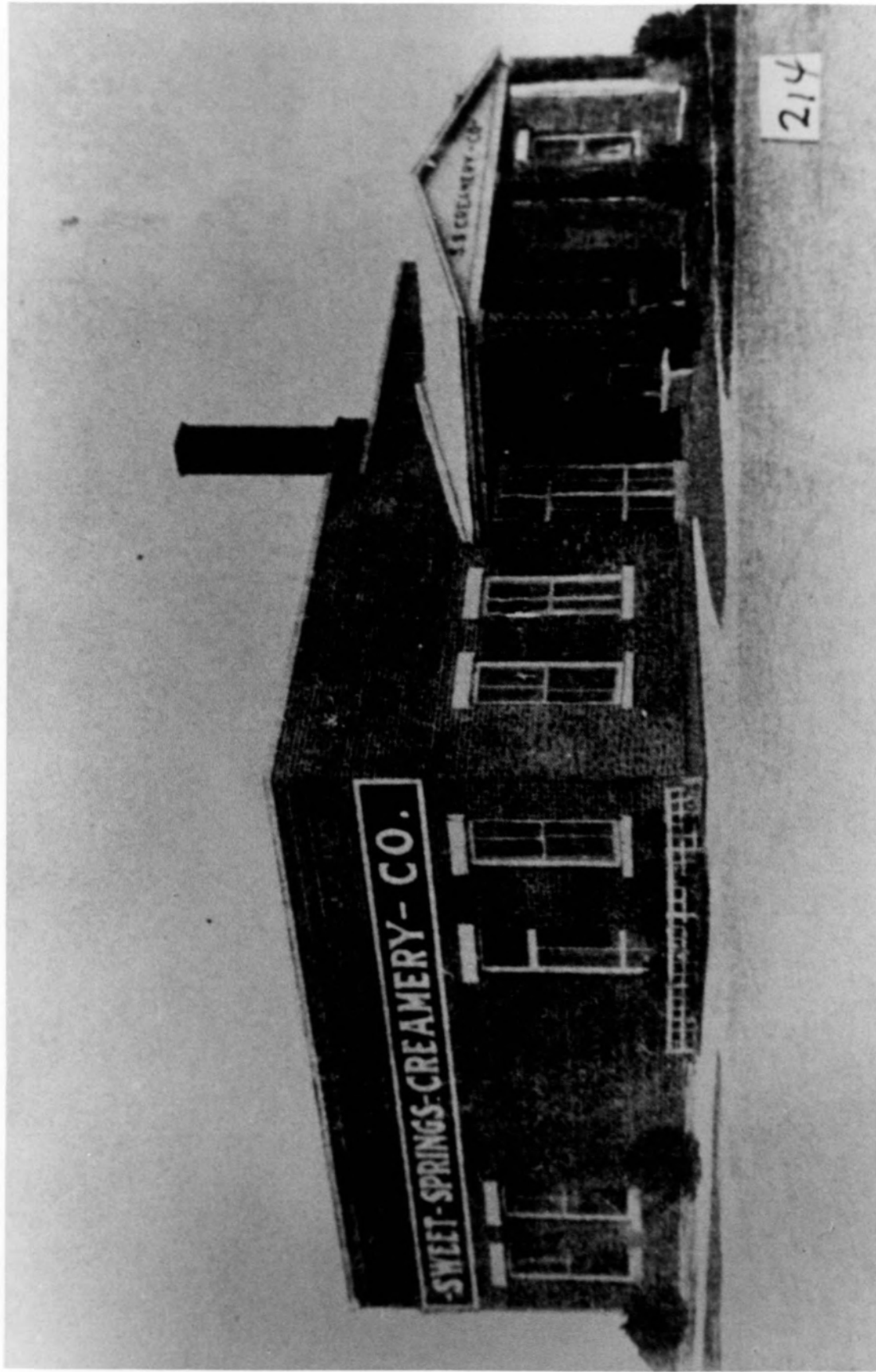










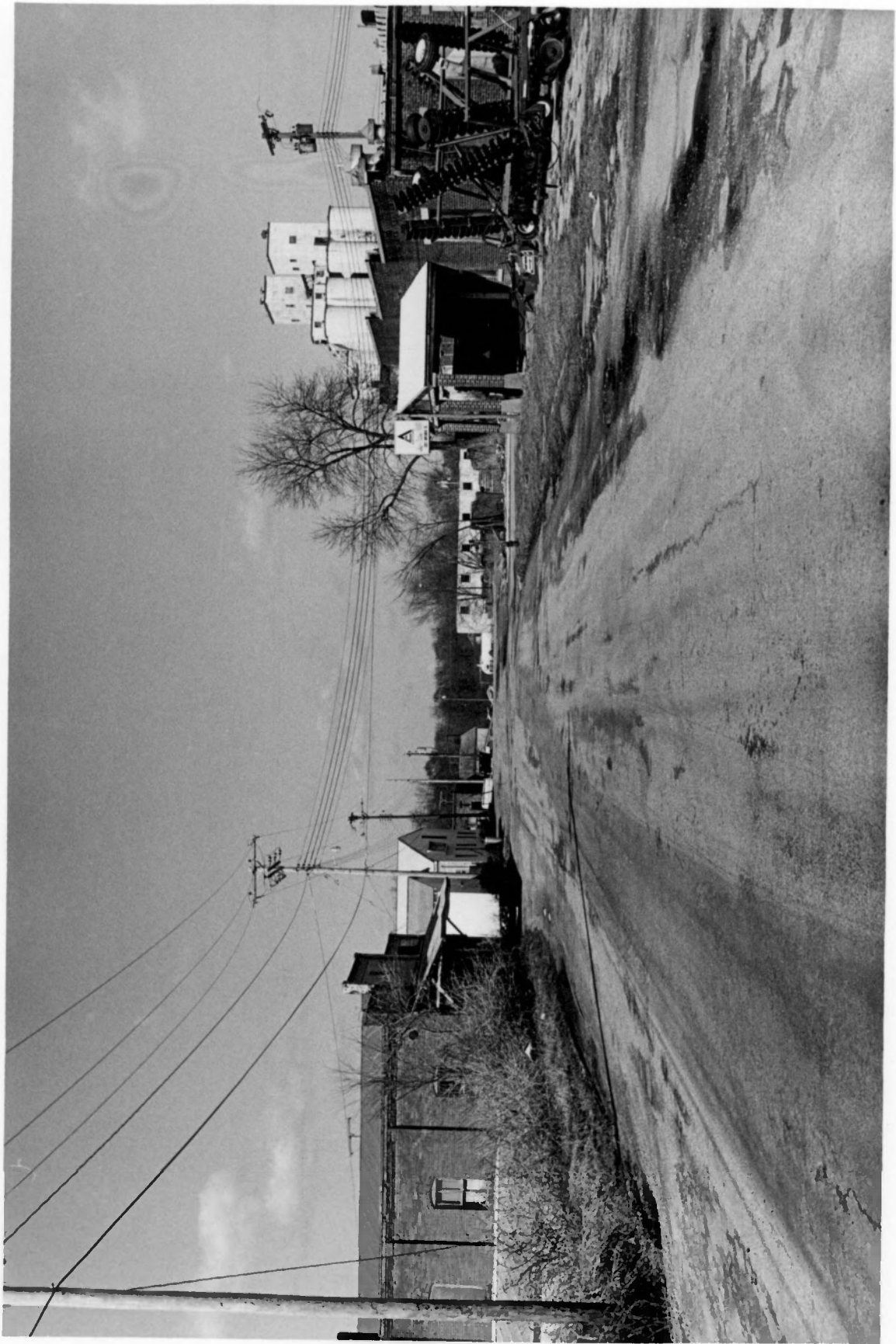


SWEET-SPRINGS-CREAMERY-CO.

SWEET-SPRINGS-CO.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Railroad Growth and Development in Sweet Springs, 1870-1899
Sweet Springs as a Popular Spa in Western Missouri, 1877-1896
Twentieth Century Redevelopment in Sweet Springs, 1900-1930

C. Form Prepared by

name/title Roger Maserang/Historic Preservation Coordinator

organization Pioneer Trails Regional Council

street & number 122 Hout Street

telephone 816/747-2294

city or town Warrensburg

state Missouri

zip code 64093

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)


Signature and title of certifying official Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO

20 October 1997
Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper

Date

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Sweet Springs as a Popular Spa in Western Missouri, 1877-1896	E 5-E 9
Twentieth Century Redevelopment in Sweet Springs, 1900-1930	E 9-E 12
F. Associated Property Types	F 1-F 25
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Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

Introduction

The Multiple Property Documentation Form (cover document) titled "Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri," is designed to facilitate the nomination of eligible commercial and residential properties constructed in Sweet Springs from circa 1870 through 1930. No properties associated with the community's pioneer years (prior to circa 1870) have been identified. The three historic contexts developed for this multiple property listing are appropriate for the majority of architecturally significant Sweet Springs properties, but future amendments may develop other contexts or themes to facilitate the nomination of additional property types. The following historic contexts and associated property types (note that some property types are associated with more than one context) have been developed for this listing:

Context: Railroad Growth and Development in Sweet Springs, 1870-1899

Property Type: Early Commercial Buildings

Property Type: Victorian Period Residences

Property Type: Vernacular Residences (Victorian Period)

Context: Sweet Springs as a Popular Spa in Western Missouri, 1877-1896

Property Type: Resort Cottages

Property Type: Early Commercial Buildings

Property Type: Victorian Period Residences

Subtype: Vernacular Residences (Victorian Period)

Context: Twentieth Century Redevelopment in Sweet Springs, 1900-1930

Property Type: Late Commercial Buildings

Property Type: Modern and Eclectic Residences

Historical Background

Sweet Springs, located in Saline County in west central Missouri, is the third largest city in Saline County. Platted as Brownsville in 1838 and renamed Sweet Springs in 1887, Sweet Springs is the only city in Salt Pond Township. Davis Creek and the Blackwater River are west and south of portions of Sweet Springs. The city is bounded by Interstate 70 on the north and is bisected from north to south by Missouri Highway 127 (Locust Street). Marshall, the county seat, is approximately 16 miles to the northeast. Sweet Springs is approximately 50 miles east of Kansas City.

Petitions for statehood were being circulated, but Missouri was still a territory with a large Indian population when the first settlers arrived in the vicinity of what became Sweet Springs. Traveling mainly by flatboat, the slave-owning family of Edward Reavis arrived at Boonville from Barren County, Kentucky,

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Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

in circa 1818, three years before Missouri was admitted as the twenty-fourth state. The Reavis family of six, plus seven slaves, continued inland from newly platted Boonville, settling at Westbrook Ford (apparently two or three miles south of present day Sweet Springs) on the Blackwater River. The Indian wars were over but pioneers like Reavis, some say, must have traded with local Indians. Other very early settlers in the general area of Sweet Springs included the Prigmore, Mayse, Montgomery and Owens families and John McAllister, soon to discover four springs where a small resort community bearing his name (McAllister Springs) eventually would be established east and slightly to the south of Sweet Springs. Most of these pioneers were from Kentucky and other areas of the Upland South.¹

In 1834 or 1835, Asa B. Pennington purchased 40 acres south of what became Main Street in Sweet Springs, started a blacksmith shop and established grist and saw mills on Davis Creek. Pennington, described by the 1881 county history as an "old bachelor" from Kentucky, is said to have named this pre-Brownsville/Sweet Springs hamlet Clayville. The path between Pennington's grist mill and blacksmith shop reputedly evolved into today's Main Street. In 1836 and 1837, John Berry and James Fitzpatrick arrived and entered land north and east of Pennington's tract. Fitzpatrick, a Kentuckian, is said to have opened the town's first dry goods store on "Main Street."²

Stephen G. Wentworth, a New Englander, is generally credited with platting the original town of Brownsville. In 1838, Wentworth—who later moved to Lexington where he founded Wentworth Military Academy—bought Pennington's land and laid out 14 lots along Main Street between Davis Creek and what is now West Street. The platted area included land owned by William Brown (Wentworth's uncle), after whom the town reputedly was named, and George W. Hill. When Brownsville was platted, Salt Pond Township was twice as large as today and still very sparsely populated, with fewer than 40 eligible voters. Two years later, in 1840, the Brownsville post office was established.³

Lifestyles were modified and privations were endured, but the Civil War was relatively nondestructive in Saline County. Arrow Rock and slaveholding families in the eastern part of the county probably suffered the most due to their Southern sympathies.⁴ But, with the exception of Marshall, where Shelby's Confederates fought their way out of a Union "dragnet" in October 1863, no major engagements were fought in the county, and Brownsville and most of the county's other settlements were basically spared from the main violences of war.⁵ As in the rest of Missouri, however, the threat of unorganized partisan or guerrilla forces was always present. Federal troops were stationed at Brownsville during part of the war, and it can be assumed that resentment was high since many inhabitants of the area were ex-Southerners. But despite the Southern orientation, "many of the people of (Salt Pond) township were opposed to secession, opposed to the Confederacy, and warmly attached to the old Federal Union."⁶ But people with warm attachments of this nature were likely targets for bushwhackers, who were active and often ruthless in Saline County. In what must have been one of the worst atrocities, thirty-five Brownsville area Germans who were sympathetic to the Union were shot or burned to death in their homes by bushwhackers on October 6, 1864.⁷

When Brownsville was incorporated on May 3, 1870, the population of Salt Pond Township, of which Brownsville was the only town, was 2,895.

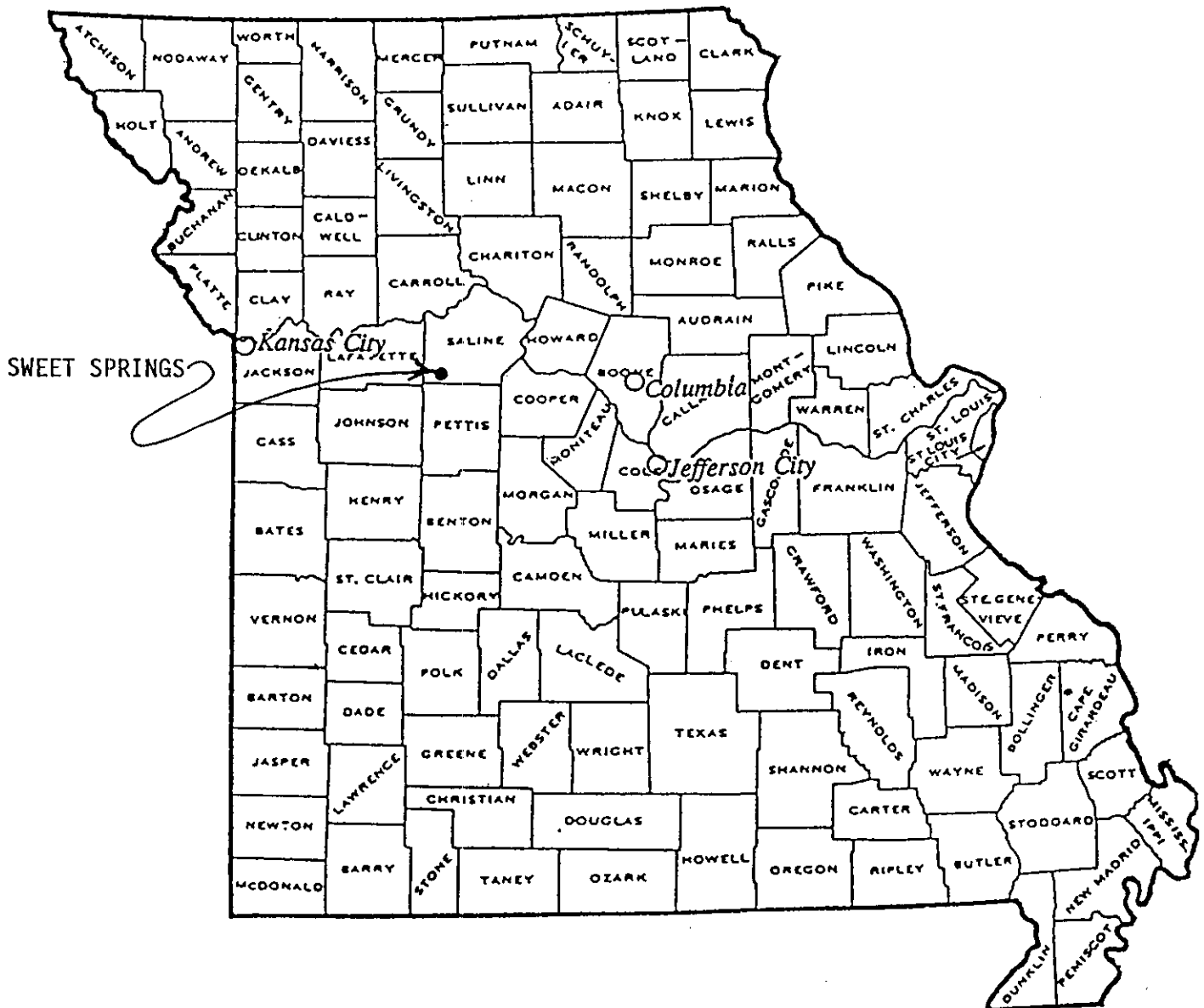
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Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

AREA MAP



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Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

Historic Context: Railroad Growth and Development in Sweet Springs, 1870-1899

Brownsville had been growing, although very slowly, for several years before a railroad arrived and reshaped the community, essentially transforming it from a small agricultural village with limited prospects into a viable trade center and, simultaneously, fostering the development of local mineral springs into a popular health spa.

Unless an area town was situated on the Missouri River or served by a railroad, its potential for growth and development as a mercantile center was extremely limited. On the eve of the Civil War, the population of Brownsville was only a few hundred and the town faced an uncertain future despite being the largest community in southwestern Saline County.⁸ Local access to a railroad had been anticipated since the 1850s but the Pacific Railroad's route across Missouri was not even through Saline County much less Brownsville, and the Blackwater River which meanders around the south portion of town was inadequate for commerce. When the Pacific Railroad was completed in 1865, Brownsville area farmers began driving cattle and hauling grain to LaMonte, in Pettis County. Eleven miles to the south, LaMonte was the nearest shipping point on the new railroad.⁹

After the Civil War, a proposal was revived for a branch line connecting Lexington with the main line of the Pacific Railroad Company less than 50 miles away at Sedalia. Construction of the Lexington & St. Louis Railroad began in 1869, with only a slight northward jog needed for the line to go through Brownsville. The first segment between Brownsville and Sedalia began operating in December 1871. The next segment passed through the northern edge of Brownsville, continued across Salt Pond Township and was completed to Lexington in 1872. In 1878, the Lexington & St. Louis Railroad was leased to the Missouri Pacific Railway, which had taken over the foreclosed Pacific Railroad, and two years later the railroads consolidated with the line becoming known as the Lexington Branch of the Missouri Pacific. Promoters of Brownsville happily proclaimed rail connections with all points north, south, east and west.¹⁰

As expected, the railroad's impact was considerable. Brownsville became an agricultural shipping center, with stockyards, grain storage warehouses, a mill, an elevator and other agriculture-oriented facilities developed along the right-of-way. Hemp had been an important Saline County crop prior to the Civil War, and in 1872 it comprised approximately a third of the agricultural produce shipped from Brownsville⁸ by rail. But corn was the primary local crop and in 1875, a bumper year, 1,955 railroad carloads were shipped from Brownsville during a five-month period.¹¹ Hemp production soon faded but livestock production and the production of such staples as corn, wheat, oats and potatoes continued as important crops in the southwestern Saline County area served by Brownsville.¹²

The railroad also was responsible for an immediate reshaping of the commercial center. Several merchants shifted their businesses northward, from Main Street, toward the right-of-way along Lexington Avenue, a distance of about two blocks. The passenger depot was parallel to the south side of the tracks at Spring Street (formerly Bridge Street), approximately 100 feet north of Lexington Avenue.¹³ Miller Street was subsequently developed from Lexington Avenue southward to Main, and this is the configuration that persists today.¹⁴

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Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

In 1874, Campbell's Gazetteer of Missouri listed Brownsville as "an important shipping point" by virtue of its location on the Lexington branch of the Pacific Railroad. With a population estimated (probably overestimated) at 1,000, it contained two banks, 40 stores, two mills, three churches, and "good schools." Springs "remarkable for their medicinal values" were nearby and attracting visitors, and a company had been formed to develop the springs into an attraction that, it was hoped, would rival other, much better-known spas.¹⁵ Early businesses provided groceries and meats, dry goods and clothing, agricultural implements and hardware, furniture, drugs and jewelry, and there were hotels and sleeping rooms, banks, restaurants, lodge halls, millineries, offices, carpenter and harness shops, blacksmiths, barber shops, a billiard parlor and probably a saloon or two.¹⁶

The arrival of the railroad greatly facilitated Brownsville's development as a health resort. Most visitors arrived and departed by train, and mineral water itself became an important export item. Beginning in 1872, two-gallon containers of mineral water were shipped "in every direction, to every express office within 500 miles." The bottles could be returned to Brownsville for refilling and a clientele developed. The exportation of mineral water is said to have been started by James Henry, the first station agent, although a bottling works apparently was constructed at the sweet spring at about this time by the Missouri Mineral Water Co. Brownsville's fullest development as a health resort was still a few years away, but shipment of mineral water during this period "commenced (its) favorable notoriety."¹⁷

The railroad "brought Brownsville and the Sweet Spring into the busy world. The one sprung up into a thriving modern town, the other became a universal favorite of health and pleasure seekers."¹⁸ Eventually four passenger trains were scheduled daily, two in each direction.

Several railroad-generated buildings are extant on Lexington Avenue, just south of where the Lexington Branch right-of-way crossed the city at a slight angle from east to west. These are fragile, two-story brick buildings with early Queen Anne styling, generally with decorative brickwork cornices, cast iron posts and enhancement of second floor windows. Some buildings which were rebuilt after sustaining tornado damage in 1882 are among those extant today. With the development of Miller Street during the High Victorian period, Queen Anne buildings with ornate stamped metal cornices as well as cast iron posts were constructed.

Residences erected during this period ranged from modest vernacular buildings in various forms, often with Victorian or more specifically Queen Anne elements and occasionally with light to moderate Italianate styling, to larger, more complex dwellings reflecting these and other styles. Among the vernacular dwellings were a few central passage, single pile plans with Greek Revival-influenced entrances. Resort cottages made of wood and bedecked with Queen Anne elements also were constructed during this period, mainly on former parkland south of the original town which has since been added to the city. Resort cottages usually were of one story.

Brownsville was growing slowly before the railroad arrived, but the railroad introduced a period of more rapid growth. In 1887, with high hopes of continued growth in connection with the local health spa, the city changed its name to Sweet Springs. Although Sweet Springs' carrying capacity turned out to be

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Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

much less than anticipated by the business community, a population level sufficient to at least maintain viability despite the ultimate loss of the railroad seems to have been reached, and many buildings constructed during the years of railroad prosperity are extant.

Historic Context: Sweet Springs as a Popular Spa in Western Missouri, 1877-1896

"When the dog star rages and the drone of the mosquito makes night hideous the dusty citizen begins to long for change, and the question comes, "Where shall we go this summer?"

So began a promotional brochure of the Missouri Pacific Railway, circa 1882. The brochure suggested that an excellent choice for Missourians seeking a summer retreat would be the "Sweet Springs" at Brownsville where "all the charms of scenery, healthful air and country pastimes (are combined) with all the gayeties and pleasures of the city."

Railroads sought to capitalize on the health reform movement, which appealed to Missourians and other Americans during the late nineteenth century, by carrying passengers to and from spas such as the one at Brownsville/Sweet Springs from the 1870s until 1896. On summer weekends during peak years in the 1880s, the Missouri Pacific ran special trains to Brownsville from Kansas City and St. Louis. As might be inferred from its name, Saline County had numerous mineral springs and salt licks. To a lesser degree, area springs also were developed for the resort trade at nearby McAllister Springs and, in Johnson County, at Pertle Springs and Electric Springs in Warrensburg. Missouri's principal spa, at Excelsior Springs in Clay County, is a functioning resort today.

The health reform movement was fueled, and the establishment of health resorts at natural springs was fostered, by the belief that many diseases could be cured or prevented by a proper regimen of diet, exercise and relaxation. At the spas, various mineral waters with highly-touted medicinal virtues were available for drinking and bathing and the guests could exercise or entertain themselves while breathing "country air" and relaxing away from the stresses of everyday life.

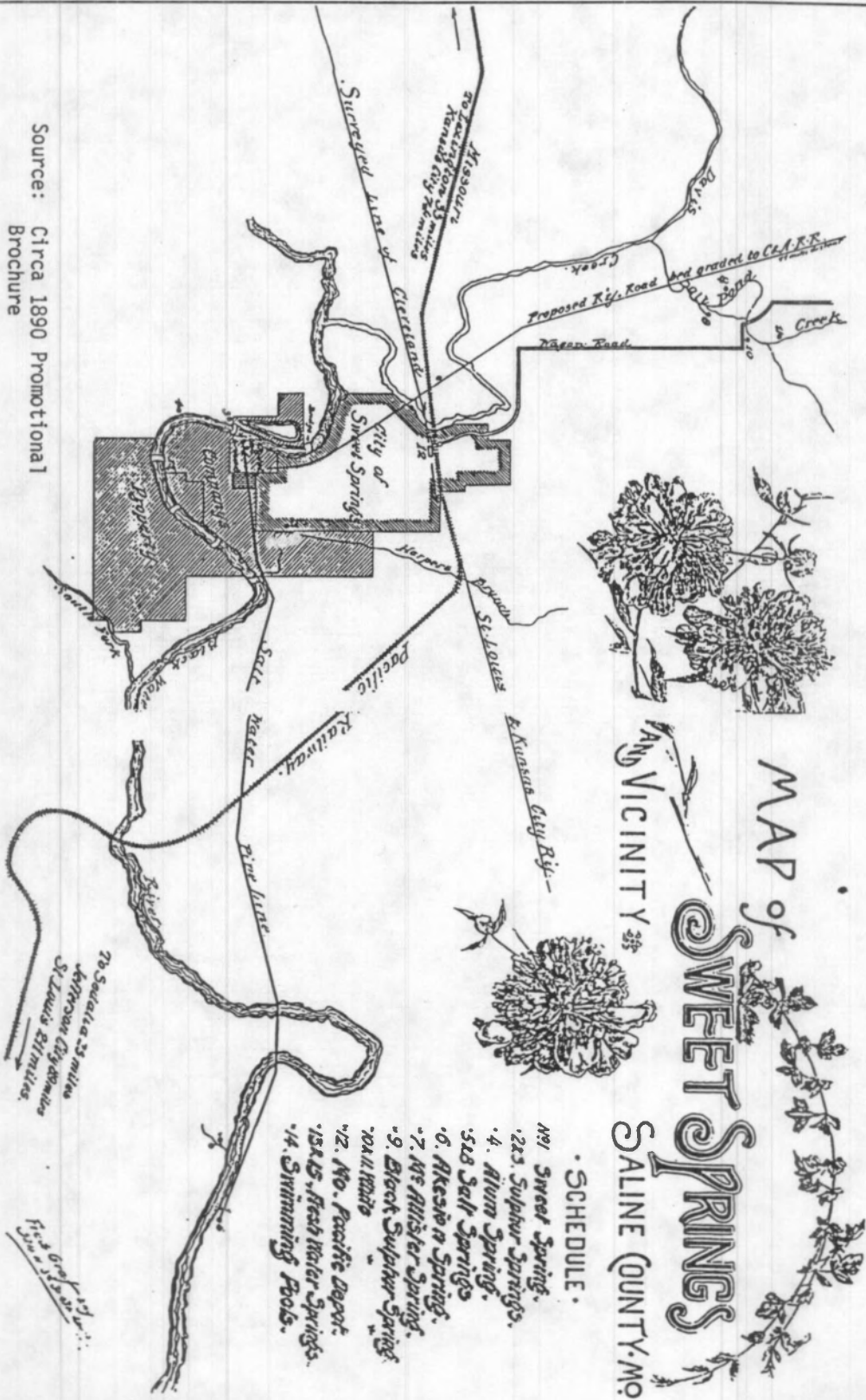
Since mineral water varied from spring to spring, it was carefully analyzed and specific curative properties were ascribed according to the elements present. The main spring at Brownsville, containing high percentages of sodium, magnesium and calcium chloride along with potassium, iron, lime and other ingredients, was "noted for curing Dyspepsia, Sick Stomach, Kidney and Bladder Diseases, including Diabetes and Bright's Disease; also Diarrhoea of Children and Cholera Infantum (and) Nervous Prostration, Hysteria, Paralysis, and Diseases of Women." Other nearby springs had "great power in diseases of the Liver and Skin...Constipation and Biliousness."¹⁹ Compared to local sulphur and salt water springs, the main spring water was considered sweet and hence the name of the spring, followed by the renaming of Brownsville in 1887.

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Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO



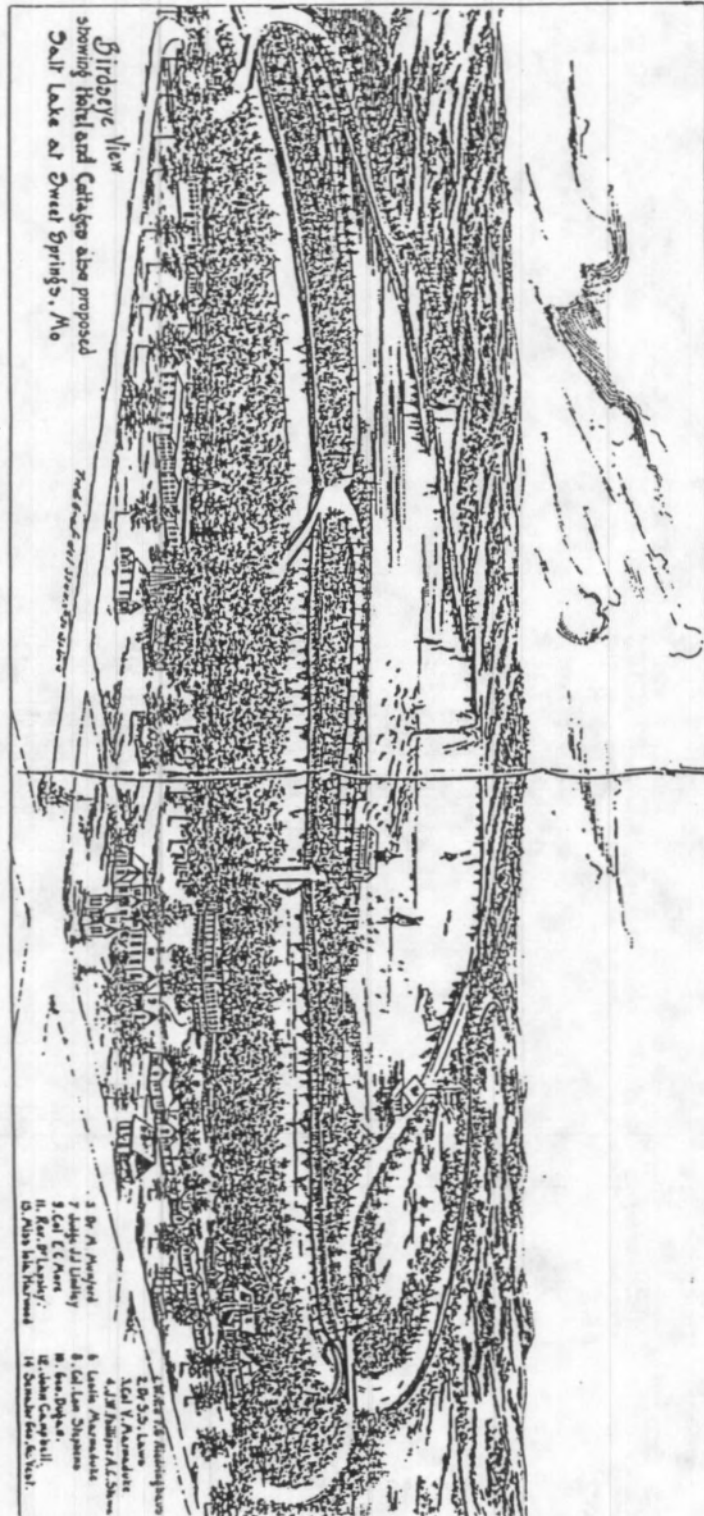
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Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

Source: Circa 1890 promotional brochure



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Early visitors came to partake of the purportedly healing waters, and then the resort developers (who published brochures of their own, seeking investors as well as customers) perceived a much larger market if the existing facilities could be expanded to include greater opportunities for recreation and entertainment. The first resort development company was organized in August 1874, in St. Louis. Soon the Sweet Springs Company, driven largely by Darwin and Leslie Marmaduke, brothers of governor-to-be John S. Marmaduke, purchased 30 acres including the original "sweet spring" from Dr. John Yantis.²⁰ By 1877, a hotel with accommodations for 400 guests, a pagoda, bathhouse, bowling alley, billiards hall, livery stable and other recreational facilities to attract a broader spectrum of visitors were under construction or proposed by the Sweet Springs Company. Water for the bathhouse came from an artesian well at nearby McAllister Springs, through a two-mile system of cedar pipes. The new resort formally opened on Sunday, June 19, 1881.²¹

In 1875, an article important in the resort's early development was published in a St. Louis magazine, Ware's Valley Monthly: A Journal of Western Thought and Life. Author J. M. Pelot, M.D., a Brownsville physician and surgeon, extolled the virtues of the spring water in fine prose complete with a classic testimonial about a seemingly miraculous cure. Pelot told how the original facilities had been outgrown and described the formation of a joint stock company with such a group of prominent, solid investors that "success is assured and fraud is out of the question."²²

Accounts of how the "curative" powers of Sweet Springs water came to be discovered focus on the Yantis family. In 1841 Eliza Ann Yantis (Mrs. John L. Yantis) of Howard County, suffering from what had been diagnosed as tuberculosis in an advanced stage, reportedly regained her health after spending a few days sipping from a spring that she discovered while riding her pony. "In three days," wrote Pelot, "she discovered, to her great surprise, that she had a good appetite, to which she had for years been a stranger, and day by day felt the joy of returning health. Her cough disappeared, perfect digestion dismissed the ever-present stomach from her mind, hypochondria gave place to bouyant spirits, the rose returned to her cheeks, and her health was perfectly and absolutely restored."²³ Whether fact, fiction or something in between, Pelot's elixir tale presumably had a significant impact on development of the spa. The spring found by Mrs. Yantis became the main "sweet spring."

Two years later, in 1848, with his wife's health again failing and Yantis himself "succumbing to nervous attacks," Yantis purchased the land surrounding the spring for \$10 an acre. He operated a school for boys at the site for a few years before ultimately selling the springs and most of the acreage to the Marmadukes for development as a resort.²⁴

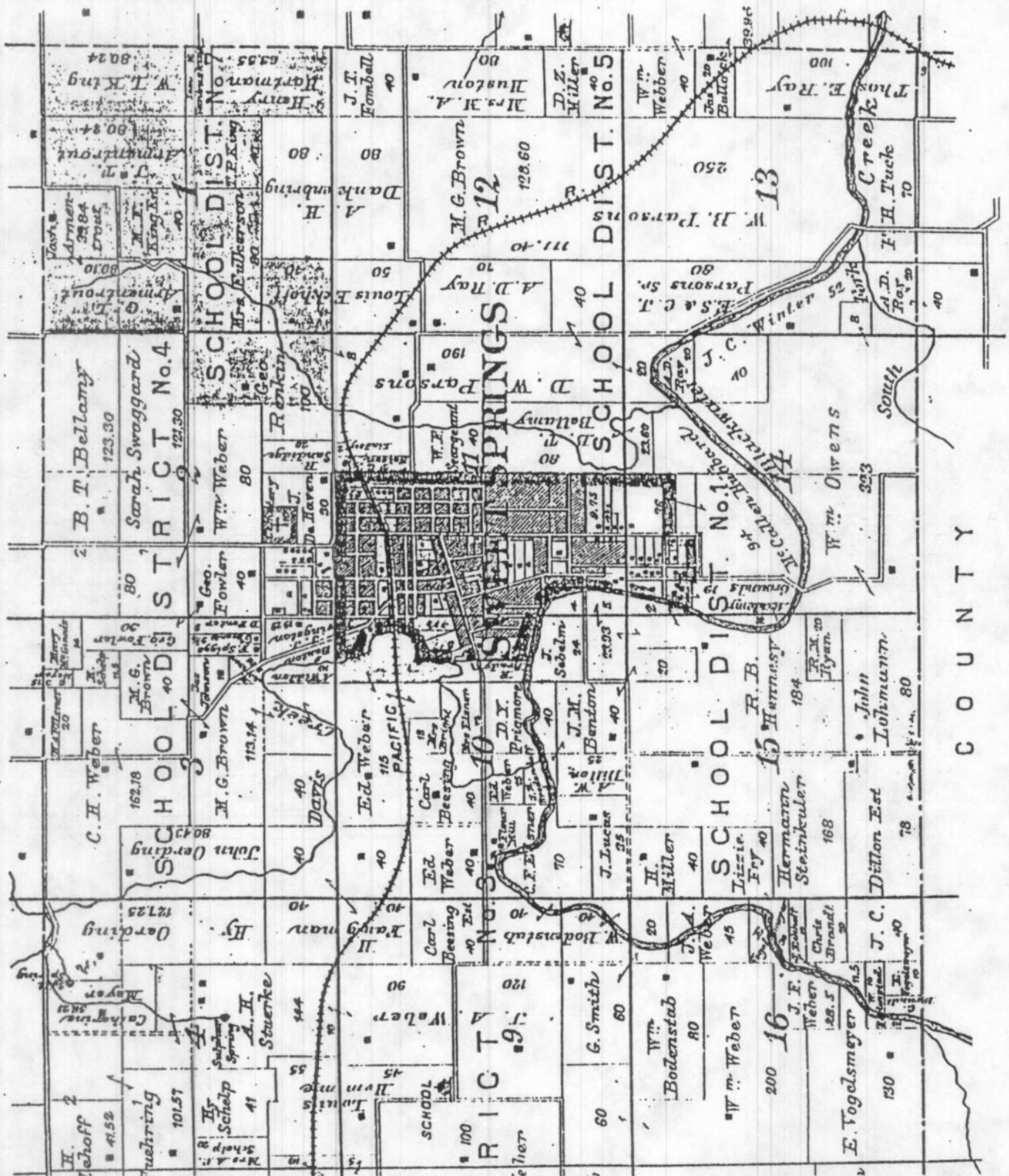
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Sweet Springs and Vicinity, Circa 1896
SOURCE: 1896 Saline County Atlas



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When the new Sweet Springs Health Resort opened in 1881, the Brownsville Herald published the names of more than 50 purchasers of lots on the project grounds. Most of the buyers were St. Louisans who planned to erect summer cottages.²⁵ Other guests stayed in the city hotels and boarding houses as well as at the resort hotel, which is depicted in at least one historic drawing as a grand, three-story building with a double-deck porch around two elevations and four-story corner towers with steep tapering roofs. The resort reportedly attracted some 6,000 visitors in 1881. More than a million gallons of mineral water "although unadvertised" were reportedly shipped by rail that year.²⁶

Resort guests could avail themselves of "bowling alleys, billiard rooms, a shooting gallery, a livery stable where excellent horses can be obtained for either riding or driving, lawn tennis and croquet grounds, a bicycle and roller skating rink, rowing and fishing on the picturesque Black River (sic), and dancing to content the most ardent devotee." In addition to medicinal baths, there was swimming: "The pools for gentlemen and ladies are separated, but during each day one hour will be set apart, when they may bathe together, as at the sea shore." Lawns were illuminated with gas so the games could continue after dark, musicians imported from St. Louis played on the hotel porch and there was dancing.²⁷

In 1886, the Winner Investment Company of Kansas City acquired 700 acres on both sides of the Blackwater River and embarked on a grandiose plan for additional development of the resort. A dam was proposed across the river below the springs to create a water recreation area that would be equipped with steamboats and yachts. A boulevard 100 feet wide and four miles long was proposed along the Blackwater River. The extent of the actual Winner developments is unclear but in 1887, Brownsville renamed itself Sweet Springs. No resort buildings are extant, and copies of the local newspaper which would have shed light on the Winner developments apparently have not survived for the period between late 1884 and early 1904.²⁸

The resort years were golden in the sense that some of Missouri's most socially and politically prominent citizens visited the spa, built summer cottages and frequented the business establishments. Prosperity could not be sustained, but for several years Brownsville/Sweet Springs merchants benefited immensely from their location in a popular resort town with a railroad: "Each train brought guests. The railroad station bustled with activity. The hack service did a thriving business transporting people from the station to the resort three quarters of a mile away. Business in the town flourished because of the resort."²⁹

Resort promoters touted the local springs as the equal of other, much better known springs, calling it such things as "White Sulphur Springs of the West." This was hyperbole but for awhile in the late nineteenth century, Sweet Springs was a very special place. Many socially and politically prominent citizens from St. Louis, Kansas City, Jefferson City and other areas of Missouri visited the resort and sampled the attractions, and it was basically this group that built the summer cottages. "It was a resort for many well-known Missourians in those days, the play place for those socially and politically prominent in the State's affairs. Much political history was made in the little group of cottages and at the Sweet Springs Hotel.....It was a favorite meeting place between St. Louis and Kansas City."³⁰

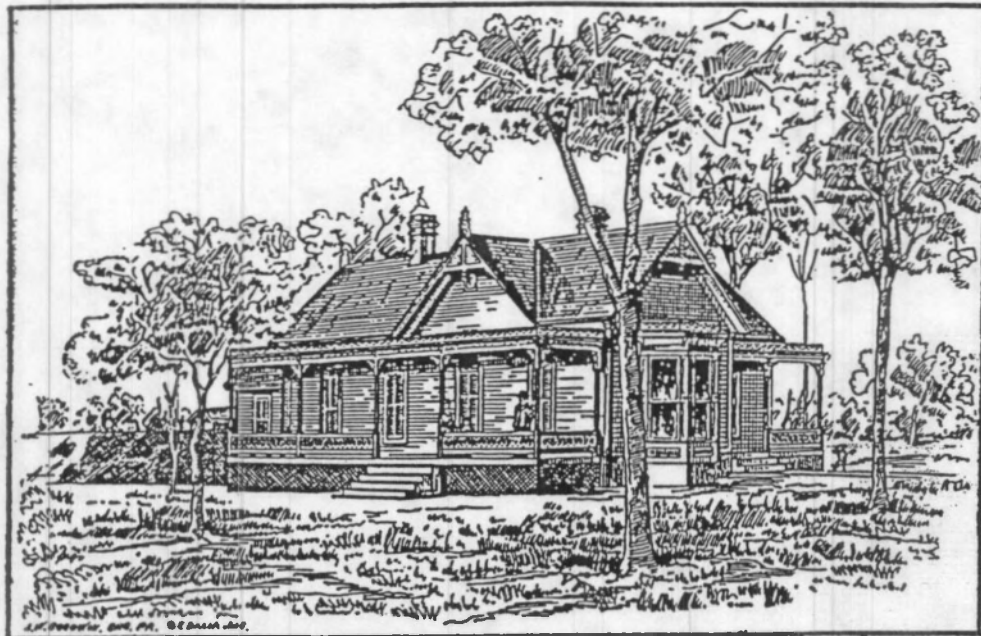
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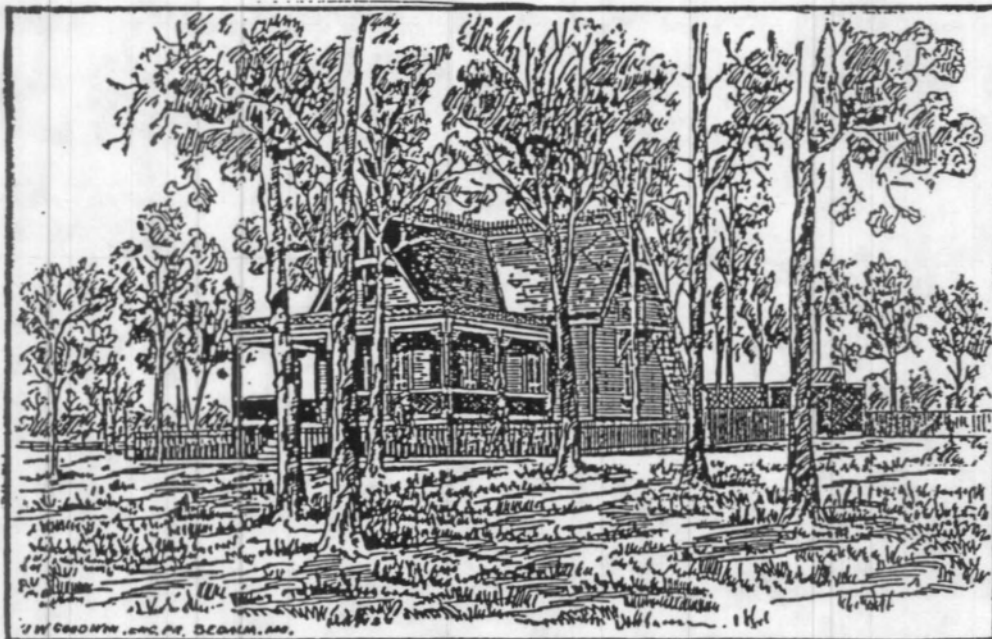
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Source: Promotional Brochure, circa 1887



(Private Cottage,) Colonel Vincent Marmaduke, St. Louis, Mo.

Typical Cottages at Sweet Springs Resort



(Private Cottage.) Mr. John Campbell, Kansas City, Mo.

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The resort's social register included Governors John S. Marmaduke and Thomas T. Crittenden, as well as future governor Lon V. Stevens. Governor Marmaduke had a cottage "where practically the whole of his political campaign was fought. Governor Crittenden...spent much time at Sweet Springs and won many of his political scalps there." After his election and until his death in office in 1887, Governor Marmaduke made the resort his summer retreat. Other notables who owned cottages there included Senators George G. Vest and Francis M. Cockrell, Dr. S. S. Laws of the University of Missouri, F. G. and William F. Niedringhaus of St. Louis, Judge J. W. Henry and Col. J. B. Price of Jefferson City, Judge W. T. Wood of Kansas City, Judge W. C. Jones and Judge S. T. Glover of St. Louis, Dr. G. M. B. Maugh, Dr. T. F. Prewitt, Dr. R. McCausland and Dr. C. T. Widney of St. Louis, Bishop Bowman of St. Louis, Dr. Morrison Munford of the Kansas City Times, Walton H. Holmes of Kansas City, and many others. Senator Vest continued spending summers in his Sweet Springs cottage until his death in 1904.³¹

Summer cottages obviously were associated with the health resort, and commercial buildings on Lexington Avenue obviously were constructed to take advantage of the railroad. Many other buildings which were constructed in the city during this period were associated with the general development of Brownsville/Sweet Springs, with resort development as well as the railroad as factors. But without specific information about builders or other circumstances of construction, it is difficult or impossible to link many buildings erected during this period with one influence more than another.

Somewhat ironically, considering the thousands of resort visitors who walked the streets of the city each year, Sweet Springs lost population during what seemingly was its most prosperous decade, 1880-90. By the 1890s, the resort itself was in decline. Interest in country spas had dwindled and other area spas were siphoning off some of the already limited trade. Under new ownership in September 1891, however, the resort facilities were given a dual role as a military academy in a brilliant attempt to maintain viability. Marmaduke Military Academy, named after Governor John S. Marmaduke, was said to be patterned after West Point. After improvements including the installation of water facilities on every floor, steam heating, gas and electricity for lighting, the resort hotel became the barracks for approximately 70 cadets. During the resort season when the cadets went home for summer vacation, the hotel was opened to guests as usual. While this arrangement might have continued indefinitely, it ended abruptly on March 1, 1896, when the barracks/hotel was destroyed by fire.³²

When the facilities were not rebuilt, Sweet Springs' loss became Lexington's gain. The academy's military training equipment was sold to Wentworth Military Academy at Lexington, which meanwhile gained full recognition by the Army and prospered.³³

Loss of the military academy/resort hotel scarcely affected the established residents who built cottages and returned to them each summer for an interlude of relative solitude. But several cottages apparently were sold and moved into the city when they were offered for sale at bargain prices, following the fire, and the business community suffered from the loss of scores of weekenders and summer resort visitors, along with the cadets. Possible restoration of the resort was discussed but apparently nothing transpired until several years later, and the resort never truly reopened.

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Historic Context: Twentieth Century Redevelopment in Sweet Springs, 1900-1930

Although the losses were not dramatic, the population of Sweet Springs was going down rather than up at the turn of the century. The downward trend became apparent when the census enumerator counted only 1,137 residents in 1890, a loss of almost four per cent since 1880. The population fell another five per cent in 1900, to 1,080, before rebounding slightly to 1,122 in 1910. With prospects for Sweet Springs' future growth seemingly limited unless something unforeseen happened, a small group of local entrepreneurs headed by Charles K. Smith sought to turn things around.

Smith, a son of local lumber dealer George Washington Smith, had left home in the early 1900s to manage shoe factories in St. Louis and Milwaukee. Upon returning to Sweet Springs, he reportedly declared that he would "put Sweet Springs on the map, or go broke."³⁴ Smith's business partners apparently included his brother George and other members of the Smith family as well as such established Sweet Springs merchants as Herman Renken and T. C. Andrew, real estate dealer John H. McGuire and others.

Probably recalling a not too distant past when downtown Sweet Springs bustled with activity, Smith and his associates believed the town could be revitalized by attracting new shoppers and luring former shoppers back. Their solution was to construct new, shopper-friendly stores in the commercial center and to encourage facelifts of existing buildings. The distinctly Twentieth century buildings which were constructed along the east side of South Miller Street, incorporating new construction techniques, significantly changed the look of downtown Sweet Springs. The Smith Stores Co., consisting of three adjacent, individual two-story buildings which share a colonnaded front, is particularly impressive considering that the town's population was under 1,200 when it was constructed in 1911. Initially, the Herald simply referred to it as "the new Smith-Renken-Andrew buildings."³⁵ But Smith was "the prime mover in this enterprise."³⁶

With this early version of a shopping center and other buildings under construction, the Sweet Springs Herald proclaimed the venture an important step toward "weathering the evils of fossilism and inactivity." Said the Herald:

Sweet Springs has a territory of 400 square miles from which she draws the great majority of the trade, and there is no reason why she should not get all of it. With her five rural routes radiating in every direction and with few competing points in that territory, and with the additional drawing capacity made more effective by the present and prospective attractions to the buying public, Sweet Springs has but to make renewed efforts by fair dealing.....(to) confidently expect a material growth in trade and business of all kinds in the future."³⁷

Probably many cities with stagnating populations expected to grow during this period, but few approached the problem as directly as did Sweet Springs. In addition to the colonnaded shopping complex, ground also was broken in 1911 for a luxury hotel which was described as "another evidence of the enterprising spirit that C. K. Smith and his coterie of business associates possess, and that they are willing to invest their money in the city and believe in doing things that will build up the town as well as securing for

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themselves profitable investments." The attractive new hotel would be "one of the best trade drawers a town can possess."³⁸ Other Smith investments included a new bank and an ice plant. Some existing downtown buildings apparently were modernized with new storefronts during this period.

Meanwhile, although overgrown and scarcely used, the former health resort still tantalized. Smith apparently did not become significantly involved in plans for its revitalization, but in 1909 a group of investors headed by Kansas City alderman Baylis Steele formed a company with the intention of restoring the spa to its former glory. A new resort hotel was planned. Other proposed attractions included a lake fed by water from an artesian well ("The Gusher") which had been drilled near the resort a couple of years earlier by oil prospectors. The "first annual" Chautauqua was staged on the resort grounds that summer, from July 23 through August 1, with Wisconsin Senator Robert M. LaFollette, the Royal Hungarian Orchestra, Carrie Nation and Mascot the Educated Horse among the impressive roster of attractions.

The restoration proposal was well-received, and the Kansas City Times wondered why the resort had ever fallen into disuse: "It has never been quite clear just why Sweet Springs was allowed to languish, unless the decline may be attributed to the destruction of the big hotel. In undertaking the revival of the place at this time, the promoters have an especial advantage in being able to work along practically original lines."³⁹ How much restoration actually occurred is unknown, but the resort hotel was not rebuilt and the Chautauqua did not come back. Today the area around the spring (no longer flowing) is parkland although a modern version of a pagoda and markers have been installed to remind visitors of what once had been.

In redefining the shopping strip on South Miller Street, Smith and his associates clearly did more than anyone to pull Sweet Springs out of its doldrums. But Smith's enterprises plus the somewhat-restored resort and other developments failed to achieve the desired results. Smith's well-advertised colonnaded shopping complex opened on schedule but his new luxury hotel did not, probably because he knew or feared that it would be severely under used. By the time the hotel finally opened after World War One, Smith was no longer the owner.

Ultimately, Sweet Springs' service area probably was insufficiently populated to support the developments. While Sweet Springs undoubtedly attracted shoppers from such regional communities as Alma, Houstonia, Hughesville, Blackburn, Mount Leonard, Aullville and LaMonte, larger cities such as Marshall, Warrensburg and Sedalia had become readily accessible to shoppers newly liberated by the automobile. Even Smith eventually became content to leave to others the continued development of his hometown. He began disposing of his commercial real estate and, by January 1918, owned only the ice plant and some property on the west side of South Miller Street which he hoped to trade, the Herald reported.

Smith traded his still-unopened Colonnade Hotel to S. H. Covington for a farm near Glasgow. He is said to have left town "minus \$100,000 and his enthusiasm."⁴⁰ (In 1937, after some 18 years of operation, the Colonnade was destroyed by fire.)⁴¹

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Smith's abdication must have discouraged other potential risk-takers. Despite the lifting of wartime restrictions, little construction occurred in the commercial center during the 1920s and the resort was largely a memory. In September 1919, the heart of the old resort grounds--overgrown with weeds since the attempted revival a decade earlier--was sold at a trustee's auction. Little of the resort's historic fabric remained except for an empty building used briefly in the late 1890s as a sanitarium (the Mayfield Sanitarium), and a dance hall/auditorium. The buyer was W. E. Vanarsdall but whatever his plans for the property, the resort was not reactivated. The city eventually acquired the tract which it retains today.⁴² Meanwhile, the Gusher's sulphur-rich water created a small lake which served as a swimming pool for several years. Today a handful of former cottages are the only extant resort properties.

Residences, like commercial construction in Sweet Springs during the early Twentieth century, reflected newly popular forms. Bungalows with Craftsman styling became popular in Sweet Springs during this period, and this form was applied to the large, relatively expensive homes constructed by the cream of Sweet Springs society as well as to simpler worker housing. Prairie and Colonial Revival styles also were popular locally, particular on variations of the American Four Square. These were relatively modern houses equipped from the start with indoor plumbing, electricity and some form of central heating system.

The 1920 census again reported a population count, 1,177, that was disappointing and puzzling. Despite a decade which included significant new construction and an addition, the census showed a gain of only 55 people. The Herald described the slight increase as "quite disappointing as a new addition has been taken in and many new homes have been built in the last 10 years...the city has lost no business but gained several and many of the older concerns...have enlarged during the last decade."⁴³ Growth occurred in Gilliam, Malta Bend, Marshall, Nelson and Slater, along with Sweet Springs, but overall Saline County lost population between 1910-20. Population losses occurred in the old river towns of Arrow Rock and Miami, both lacking railroads, and in Blackburn even though Blackburn was on a supposedly life-giving railroad.

Actually, the population of Brownsville/Sweet Springs has been remarkably stable over the past 110 years or so. The highest official population was 1,716, recorded in 1970. Sanborn map estimates of 1,700 for November 1883 and 2,000 for September 1888 are surely exaggerated, but it would be interesting to know what the transient population was during a summer weekend in the early 1880s. The second highest official population was 1,694, reached in 1980. The city's first census (of Brownsville, prior to its renaming as Sweet Springs) was in 1880, when the population was 1,182. Estimates for 1870 range from 600 to 1,000. The population in other census years was: 1890, 1,137; 1900, 1,080; 1910, 1,122; 1920, 1,177; 1930, 1,641; 1940, 1,413; 1950, 1,439; 1960, 1,452; and 1990, 1,595.

Sweet Springs lacked an employer large enough to significantly impact its population until 1922, when the International Shoe Company converted Smith's ice plant into a shoe factory. This development furnished employment for 300 and was "largely responsible for bringing Sweet Springs out of the decline which it suffered in the early 1900s." International Shoe departed from Sweet Springs several years ago but left behind an almost-new factory building which was subsequently acquired by Rival Manufacturing, the current tenant.⁴⁴ Rival, however, has announced a major layoff effective in January 1997.

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Various plans for reopening the resort or otherwise developing the property were periodically aired. The lake created by the artesian well or "Gusher" remained a favorite of bathers who enjoyed it for recreation as well as for its reported medicinal qualities until accumulated sand and silt choked off the flow. A circa 1920s photograph of bathers has racetrack bleachers (no longer extant) in the background. In 1926, N. L. Taylor leased the property from the city with ideas of constructing an amusement park.⁴⁵ Today the site of the sweet spring is part of an attractive, well-maintained city park. Despite the misfortunes, miscalculations and various failed dreams that have denied Sweet Springs from recapturing its glory years, the population appears to have stabilized at approximately 1,600. Today Sweet Springs is a viable community with a strong interest in its past, which is still clearly reflected in its historic architecture.

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ENDNOTES

¹History of Saline County, Missouri (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Company, 1881), pp. 500-501; History of Saline County, Missouri (Marcelline, Mo.: Walsworth Publishing Co., 1967), p. 341; Pelot, J. M., "Sweet Springs," Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society, July 1955 (condensed version, originally published in a St. Louis publication titled Ware's Valley Monthly, A Journal of Western thought and Life, May 1875), p. 365.

²History of Saline County, Missouri (1881), *Ibid.*; History of Saline County, Missouri (1967), *Ibid.*; and Napton, William Barclay, Past and Present of Saline County, Missouri (Indianapolis and Chicago: B. F. Bowen & Company, 1910), pp. 375-376.

³History of Saline County, Missouri (1881), *Ibid.*; History of Saline County, Missouri (1967), *Ibid.*; and Lexington, Mo., 1822-1972, Official Commemorative Book (Higginsville, Mo.: The Higginsville Advance, 1972), pp. 33-34.

⁴At the outbreak of hostilities, the 4,876 slaves in Saline County accounted for nearly a third of the county's population of 15,699.

⁵Edwards, John N., Shelby and His Men: The War in the West. Waverly, Mo., 1993 reprint, pp. 211-225; Morrow, Lynn, "An Historic Preservation Survey in the Town of Marshall, Missouri," 1984, p. 50.

⁶History of Saline County, Missouri (1881), *op cit.*, p. 502.

⁷Sweet Springs Herald, May 3, 1907.

⁸In 1860, the population of Salt Pond Township was 796.

⁹History of Saline County, Missouri (1967), *Ibid.*

¹⁰History of Saline County, Missouri (1881), *op cit.*, pp. 502-503; History of Sweet Springs 1818 to 1992 (Sweet Springs, 1992), pp. 48-49; Campbell, R. A., Campbell's Gazetteer of Missouri (St. Louis, 1874), p. 584.

¹¹History of Saline County, Missouri (1881), *op cit.*, pp. 502-503.

¹²History of Saline County, Missouri (1967), *op cit.*, p. 12.

¹³Sanborn Map & Publishing Co., Limited (New York: 1883-1929).

¹⁴History of Saline County, Missouri (1967), *Ibid.*

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¹⁵Campbell, R. A., op cit.; Brownsville Herald, December 3, 1874. Campbell's population estimate seems too high.

¹⁶The 1883 Sanborn fire insurance map for Brownsville provides an early depiction of downtown business types.

¹⁷History of Saline County, Missouri (1881), op cit., p. 503; Sweet Springs Herald, September 10, 1953.

¹⁸Pelot, op cit., p. 368.

¹⁹"Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri" (St. Louis: Times Printing House, 1882), p. 11. (Brochure published by General Passenger Department, Missouri Pacific Railway.)

²⁰History of Saline County, Missouri (1967), op cit., p. 343.

²¹Brownsville Herald, June 24, 1881; "Saratoga of the West," unsigned "Missouriana" segment in Missouri Historical Review, October 1942.

²²Pelot, op cit., pp. 364-370.

²³Pelot, ibid.

²⁴History of Sweet Springs 1818 to 1992, op cit., pp. 2-3.

²⁵Brownsville Herald, January 21 and March 18, 1881.

²⁶Missouri Pacific Railway, "Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri" (Promotional brochure published in St. Louis, 1882).

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸"Missouriana: Saratoga of the West," Missouri Historical Review, October 1942, pp. 62-64. In addition to invaluable issues of the Brownsville/Sweet Springs newspapers and other related historic material, the State Historical Society of Missouri has in its collection several promotional brochures which are specific for the resort from the 1880s and early 1890s, as well as a brochure for 1909, the year of the Chautauqua.

²⁹History of Saline County, Missouri (1967), op cit.

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³⁰Missouri Pacific-Iron Mountain Railway, "Sweet Springs, Missouri: Health Resort, Playground and Chautauqua Center," promotional brochure published at St. Louis in 1909.

³¹Sweet Springs Herald, March 18, 1881 and May 14, 1909; History of Saline County, Missouri (1967), op cit.; Morrow, Lynn, "An Historic Preservation Survey in the Town of Marshall, Missouri," 1984, pp. 58-59; "Prospectus of the Sweet Springs Property," circa 1890 brochure; and "Sweet Springs, Missouri: Health Resort, Playground and Chautauqua Center," op cit.

³²"Missouriana: Saratoga of the West," Missouri Historical Review, op cit., pp. 64-66.

³³Lexington, Missouri, 1822-1972, Official Commemorative Book (Higginsville, Missouri: The Higginsville Advance, 1972), p. 34.

³⁴History of Sweet Springs 1818 to 1991, op cit., p. 32.

³⁵Sweet Springs Herald, November 18, 1910.

³⁶Sweet Springs Herald, February 3, 1911.

³⁷Sweet Springs Herald, January 13, 1911.

³⁸Sweet Springs Herald, April 28, 1911.

³⁹Sweet Springs Herald, April 9 and May 14, 1909; "Sweet Springs, Missouri: Health Resort, Playground and Chautauqua Center," op cit.

⁴⁰Sweet Springs Herald, January 11, 1918, and History of Sweet Springs 1818 to 1992 (op cit.), p. 32. The Colonnade ultimately opened, but not before the Herald—lamenting the lack of hotel facilities in 1919—editorialized on February 14, 1919, that although "ready and immaculately finished," it was still "only an ornament." The Herald noted that the old Commercial Hotel on Main Street had been sold and dismantled, while the City Hotel on Lexington Avenue catered only to "roomers" and served no meals. As for the Colonnade, the newspaper opined that "its very beauty and grandeur seems to deter hotel men from taking a chance on it."

⁴¹Sweet Springs Herald, December 10, 1937; History of Sweet Springs 1818 to 1992, op cit., p. 38.

⁴²Sweet Springs Herald, September 5, 1919.

⁴³Sweet Springs Herald, June 11, 1920.

⁴⁴History of Sweet Springs 1818 to 1992, op cit., p. 39.

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⁴⁵Sweet Springs Herald, June 11, 1926.

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Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, MO

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Property Type: Early Commercial Buildings

Description

Early Commercial Buildings were constructed from circa 1870 through circa 1899, a period during which Brownsville/Sweet Springs gained importance as a shipping point on the Lexington branch of the Missouri Pacific Railroad and catered to summer visitors at the local health spa. The city's earliest commercial buildings, made of wood, have not survived. By 1872 when the railroad arrived, brick was becoming the material of choice for most new buildings constructed in the commercial center. Sweet Springs continued as a railroad trade center well into the 20th century, but the health resort did not survive the 19th century.

Main Street was the primary business street before the railroad arrived and then Lexington Avenue was also developed for business purposes. By 1883, with the exception of two vacant lots, both sides of Lexington Avenue were filled with unbroken groups of primarily two-story brick buildings in the block between Spring Street and Miller Street. By 1888, the vacant lots were no longer vacant. Meanwhile construction continued on Main Street during this period and included the city's first three-story building, the Central Hotel, probably constructed soon after the arrival of the railroad. Later this building was reconstructed as the two-story building which remains today. Beginning in the 1880s, Miller Street was developed as a business street for one longish block from Marshall Avenue southward to Main. One and two-story brick buildings constructed in the 1880s and 1890s are extant in the north portion of this block, as well as on Lexington Avenue.¹

Queen Anne styling predominates on Early Commercial Buildings. Several buildings retain original storefronts which in some cases include ornate stamped metal cornices and cast iron posts. The older (pre-1890) Queen Anne buildings generally have brickwork cornices, cast iron posts and enhancement of second floor windows but without the ornate stamped metal cornices and upper level sheathing found on later, High Victorian examples. Regardless of styling, most buildings follow a traditional rectangular plan in which interior walls are shared and individual storefronts have recessed entrances. Several of these buildings have good integrity but some are extremely fragile today.

The former Sweet Springs City Hall at 310 South Miller Street is an impressive High Victorian example from the 1890s. A good example of an earlier Queen Anne building, circa 1870s, is the former City Hotel at 210-212 Lexington Avenue.

Significance

Early Commercial Buildings are significant under criteria A and C in the areas of COMMERCE and ARCHITECTURE as the only tangible links to the primary period of Sweet Springs' development as a railroad town and agricultural trade center from circa 1870 through circa 1899. No pre-1870 properties have been identified in the commercial center. Their location illustrates the impact of railroad construction as the business community shifted toward the right-of-way in the early 1870s.

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Under criterion A, the properties are significant for their association with the commercial development of Sweet Springs as it experienced early growth as an agricultural trade center and then, concurrently from about 1881-96, as the host town for a popular health resort in western Missouri. None of the extant commercial buildings is known to have been used specifically by the railroad or in conjunction with the resort, but it is unlikely that more than a few, if any, would have been constructed without the favorable economic climate they generated.

Under criterion C, several properties are significant as good examples of a type and method of construction retaining substantial amounts of their original historic materials. Reflecting the nationwide popularity of Queen Anne architecture in commercial as well as residential architecture, there are good individual examples with moderate Queen Anne styling (primarily on Lexington Avenue) and there are also good high style examples (on Miller Street). High style buildings feature original storefronts with ornate stamped metal cornices as well as cast iron posts.

Registration Requirements

To qualify for individual listing under criterion A, the property must retain sufficient stylistic and structural features to identify it with its period of significance, and must retain high levels of integrity overall. Because their numbers are few, buildings of this type generally will be contributing within a district provided that the original upper storefront is intact, regardless of additions or alterations to the lower storefront.

To be individually eligible under criterion C, the property must be an outstanding example of its type with integrity of design, materials and workmanship. The architectural features necessary to identify these properties as having been built during their period of significance must be intact. Queen Anne properties should retain their elaborate stamped metal cornices if these were originally present, as in the case of buildings constructed during the High Victorian period of the 1890s. Earlier vernacular buildings will normally lack ornate cornices and sheathing but both types should nonetheless have original storefronts with cast iron posts if these were originally present, and a majority of historic materials should be retained. Under criterion C, Early Commercial Buildings will be contributing within a district if at least their upper storefronts are intact and sufficient details remain for them to be identified with their period of significance.

Property Type: Resort Cottages

Description

Resort Cottages are summer dwellings constructed in association with the former health resort at Sweet Springs. Visitors had been coming for years for relaxation and to drink the local water, but facilities were limited until about 1881 when the original Sweet Springs resort was opened east of the Blackwater River and just beyond the south edge of Sweet Springs. Developers offered 50' x 100' lots for the erection of summer cottages on the resort grounds in the northwest corner of Section 14 of T48N R23W. Several dozen lots "fronting on spacious avenues, regularly laid out" apparently were sold and numerous cottages were constructed on them.² Most of the cottages appear to have been built on today's Columbia and Daisy Avenues plus a few short streets which today are nonexistent. Other cottages undoubtedly were constructed in the vicinity of, but independent of, the resort. Cottages were the most common type of

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resort building at Sweet Springs but, apparently, only a few are extant. No other type of resort building is extant.³

Owners were free to erect whatever type of building they wished, and consequently the resort cottages at Sweet Springs were constructed in various forms. Usually, they were small frame buildings of one story. All but two of 19 resort cottages depicted on a circa 1890 "Birdseye View" are small, one-story buildings.⁴ The other two are complex, multiple-storied Victorian buildings. Another extant cottage said to have been moved from its original location is a gabled ell building with a half story upstairs. Whether any cottages were constructed of masonry is unknown. The only known examples of this property type are frame.

Most of the cottages were vernacular buildings of various plans, with at least some degree of Queen Anne, Gothic Revival or Italianate styling. Typical plans apparently included gabled-ell, crossplan, hall and parlor with a rear wing, and gable front forms. Queen Anne styling is visible on extant buildings as delicate or turned porch supports, perhaps with lacy brackets. It also shows up in such things as bay windows, imbricated shingles, paneled window aprons and other devices to avoid a smooth-walled appearance. Gothic Revival elements include curvilinear vergeboards, finials and crossbracing. Italianate-style brackets are found on some properties.

Examples of resort cottages constructed on the original grounds in the 1880s or earlier are at 1100, 1109 and 1217 Columbia Avenue. The moved cottage, a fine Queen Anne example, is at 309 Main Street. Other resort cottages may be extant off the original grounds. If any resort cottages remain on the grounds, they have been extensively altered and are unrecognizable in their present form.

Significance

Resort cottages are significant under criteria A and C in the areas of RECREATION and ARCHITECTURE. They are the only extant properties associated with the popular spa that essentially put Sweet Springs on the map in the late 19th century. The properties are significant under criterion A in the area of RECREATION if they were built as summer residences for those who came to stay at the resort for reasons of health, hygiene and relaxation. Visitors including Governor Marmaduke and other Missouri notables drank the spring water while resting or availing themselves of various recreational pursuits in the parklike setting. Possibly, HEALTH/MEDICINE also could be an area of significance since health and hygiene were promoted by the resort operators and most guests assumed their health was being improved by drinking mineral water, taking health baths and generally relaxing in the parklike setting. The properties are significant under criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE if they are sufficiently intact, recognizable examples of cottages constructed as summer resort homes at or near the spa. Integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, setting and association should be retained.

Registration Requirements

To be individually eligible under criterion A, properties must have been constructed as summer resort cottages between the creation of the original health resort in 1877 through the termination of the primary resort era in Sweet Springs in 1896. Some extant examples of this property type can be identified on a circa 1890 artist's drawing which depicts then-existing as well as proposed resort developments. After the resort's demise, some cottages were sold and moved so that identification is difficult today. There was no

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standard floor plan or stylistic treatment although most properties had Queen Anne, Gothic Revival or Italianate references. Additional research may lead to the identification of other cottages.

Because most cottages were designed for seasonal use, they tended to be smaller than regular dwellings and over the years have been susceptible to numerous additions. Because of their scarcity, some leeway should be granted but additions/alterations should not obscure the principal elevations or major features of design.

To be individually eligible under criterion C, for architectural significance, the property should be a good and representative example with most of its stylistic elements intact. Alterations are permissible but should be minimal, with original design elements largely intact. Additions are acceptable unless they overwhelm the form and design of the original building. Since no historic district is apparent that would involve cottages, only individual eligibility should be considered.

Moved properties may be eligible under Criteria Consideration B, provided they are significant for their architectural value. The setting should be sufficiently evocative to suggest something of the building's historic past.

Property Type: Victorian Period Residences

Description

Beginning in the 1870s, Brownsville/Sweet Springs experienced a period of railroad-generated growth which was accelerated in the 1880s with the development of a popular health resort with medicinal springs, just south of the city limits. During this period, many of the more prosperous merchants and professionals erected medium to large dwellings reflecting the architectural styles of the period as well as their own financial success. These architect-designed houses, perhaps selected from a plan book, usually were representative of the Victorian styles such as Queen Anne, Stick and Shingle. Italianate, Second Empire and Gothic Revival styles also were represented. Generally these properties were constructed near the commercial center on Marshall, Locust, Highland, Main, Bridge and other streets to the east and south. They were not of course limited to these streets.

Examples of the Victorian Period Residences property type include the B. T. Bellamy House at 200 Highland Street (Queen Anne, circa 1885); the John J. McGuire House at 103 East Marshall Street (Queen Anne, circa 1895); and the R. E. Smith House at 204 East Marshall Street (Italianate, circa 1890).

Subtype: Vernacular Residences (Victorian Period)

Description

In general, Vernacular Residences of this period have simpler floor plans and less ornamentation and were occupied by families with somewhat less or considerably less income than the city's movers and shakers. These properties were solid and well-constructed, but their form was clearly folk or vernacular and they cost less to build than Victorian Period Residences. These properties could be as large as Victorian Period Residences, but they were likely to be smaller. Vernacular affinities included the gabled

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ell, pyramidal, American Four Square, I-House, crossplan, open gable, hall and parlor, central passage single pile, and other forms.

Despite their simpler forms, Vernacular Residences (Victorian Period) often were adorned with detailing. This trim could reflect a single style, such as Queen Anne, or some combination of Queen Anne, Italianate, Gothic Revival, Greek Revival, or other styles. Without building-specific research, this property type may be indistinguishable from the Resort Cottages property type, particularly with regard to relatively small examples. However, most of these properties were constructed north of the resort grounds.

Examples of this property type are found at 515 West Main Street, 715 South Locust Street, and 100 South Mulberry Street.

Significance

Victorian Period Residences and Vernacular Residences (Victorian Period) are significant under criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE. Victorian Period Residences are indirectly associated with the city's commercial development from circa 1870 through 1899. These homes are tangible evidence of their builder's aspirations and commercial success as Sweet Springs became a railroad town and then enjoyed additional success as a popular resort community. The houses are architecturally significant if they are sufficiently good examples of the style or form in which they were constructed. Extant styles represent local interpretations of Queen Anne, Shingle, Stick and Italianate architecture as well as eclectic combinations.

Vernacular residences also are associated with the city's commercial development and are eligible under criterion C in that they represent local interpretations of national housing types.

Registration Requirements

To be individually eligible under criterion A, Victorian Period Residences should reflect the prominence of their original owners who prospered as Sweet Springs developed as a railroad/resort community during the last three decades of the 19th century. The original floor plan should be evident and appropriate stylistic features should be present. To be individually eligible for architecture under criterion C, the property should be an outstanding example of its type, displaying the appropriate characteristics of its style or form, and retaining integrity of design, materials, workmanship, setting and location. Properties should retain a majority of original materials, original rooflines and porches, and be evocative of their period of significance.

To be individually eligible under criterion A, Vernacular Residences (Victorian Period) should retain integrity of association, location, design and materials. Under criterion C, architectural significance will usually depend on how closely these properties correspond to their original form and plan, and whether original design elements are still present. High quality is required.

Property Type: Late Commercial Buildings

Description

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Few commercial buildings were constructed in Sweet Springs during the early 1900s, despite a perception that there was at least the possibility of an economic turnaround. But a revitalization effort was under way by 1911, concentrated on the east side of South Miller Street between the areas of pre-railroad and post-railroad development. Victorian shadings remained, but the major buildings constructed during this period, primarily from 1910 through 1920 or so, were designed to emphasize horizontal lines with bands of window openings, beltcourses and other devices which gave them a more modern appearance than buildings constructed locally during the Victorian era. The most impressive of these buildings, at 313-325 South Miller Street, featured a colonnaded facade.

Also during this period of revitalization, existing Sweet Springs buildings were given a 20th century facelift. Notable among these transformed Victorian buildings is the Bank of Sweet Springs, consisting of two buildings at 214-16 Lexington Avenue with a circa 1919 Classical Revival facade which extends across both fronts. Other existing buildings on Main Street were given new facades linking them architecturally with the main group of newly constructed buildings on South Miller Street.

Late Commercial Buildings are typically made of brick according to a rectangular plan and consist of one or two stories. Entrances are recessed as on most earlier buildings, but on the largest buildings the entire storefront is recessed under an overhanging upper floor.

Charles K. Smith, a native son whose family operated the local Smith Brothers Lumber Company, decided to invest heavily in Sweet Springs' future by developing several lots on the east side of South Miller Street. What Smith and some other investors had in mind was a revitalization of downtown Sweet Springs, a transformation of the business center that would enable Sweet Springs to compete for shoppers who were increasingly being lost to Sedalia, Marshall, and other larger cities. A design hallmark of buildings associated with Smith was a colonnaded facade, such as on the Smith Stores Co. Buildings at 313-325 South Miller Street. Apart from their common front, these are free-standing buildings.

Significance

Late Commercial Buildings are significant under criteria A and C in the areas of COMMERCE and ARCHITECTURE. Under criterion A, Late Commercial Buildings are associated with a vigorous rebuilding effort as Sweet Springs merchants struggled to recapture business being lost, it was felt, to other regional cities. The resort from which the city took its name was gone but not forgotten, and there were proposals for a grand reopening with added facilities. The time seemed right for fresh investment in the business center and buildings were erected that significantly changed the downtown landscape. A grouping of three freestanding buildings which share a colonnaded front of a continuous, classical design is additionally significant as an early version of a shopping center, designed to enhance the shopping experience of its customers. Under criterion C, several of these distinctly 20th century buildings are architecturally significant examples incorporating new construction techniques in their facades and displaying a classical sense of order. The Smith Stores Co., designed with a colonnaded overhang for visual appeal and more comfortable shopping in inclement weather, is particularly impressive. Other architecturally significant Late Commercial Buildings include a unique local example of Classical Revival, and other buildings are good eclectic examples with integrity.

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To be individually eligible under criterion A, Late Commercial Buildings must show a strong association with early 20th century construction or reconstruction in Sweet Springs. These buildings reflect the efforts of a few local businessmen who invested heavily in the city's future by continuing the development of South Miller Street, and of other merchants who modernized various existing buildings. The investors lost money when the buildings failed to achieve the desired results, but they were well-constructed and attractive, and a strong integrity of design and materials should be retained. To be contributing within a district, the roofline and upper storefront is all-important and should reasonably reflect its original appearance.

To be individually eligible under criterion C, Late Commercial Buildings including those refronted as part of the revitalization effort should be of exceptional architectural merit while retaining all or virtually all of their original features and historic materials. On an originally colonnaded building, presence of the colonnade with brick piers supporting the overhanging upper story is essential. Bands of stone trim and window groupings which contribute to the horizontal orientation of these buildings also should be intact. The presence of other original details which contribute to the classical order and balance of these buildings is important. Buildings built in a specific style, such as Classical Revival, should retain a sufficient number of features to clearly identify the style. Additions or subtractions are permitted in the rear of these buildings. Relatively unaltered lower storefronts are also required for individual eligibility under criterion C. Many buildings have relatively original lower storefronts but with the exception of colonnaded buildings this is not required for a building to be contributing within a historic district, provided that the upper level including the cornice and window fenestration is intact.

Property Type: Modern and Eclectic Residences

Description

After 1900 as a new generation of merchants and businessmen made Sweet Springs their home, dwellings were constructed in various styles of the early 20th century. Buildings with Craftsman, Prairie and other 20th century influences were particularly popular in Sweet Springs, as was Colonial Revival, actually a style introduced in the 19th century, and many of these buildings are extant today. These styles are present in relatively pure form as well as in eclectic mixtures, such as Craftsman/Colonial Revival. Prairie styling typically appeared on the American Four Square, a vernacular form which like the I-House was a carrier of many styles. A lingering Queen Anne influence is also reflected in a handful of houses constructed between 1900-10, and some properties are interesting Queen Anne/Craftsman mixtures. Some of these properties are probably "mail-order" houses selected from a Sears & Roebuck, Montgomery Ward or other company's catalog.

Craftsman bungalows typically feature overhanging eaves with exposed rafters and, frequently, beams and triangular knee braces. Porch supports, battered as in the purest examples or straight and resting upon massive piers, are another identifying element. Prairie Four Squares are usually square or rectangular cubelike buildings with wide, overhanging eaves and full-width front porches. Colonial Revival examples have elaborated entrances, sometimes with pediments and a portico with a concave underside, and perhaps with round classical columns. Dutch Colonial Revival models have distinctive gambrel roofs. While there are "groupings" of early 20th century houses, many are intermixed with the older vernacular forms so that district potential is unlikely.

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Good examples of Craftsman styling include the circa 1912 Herman Renken House at 406 Main Street and the circa 1920 Arthur Hagan House at 311 North Locust Street. Good American Four Square examples include a circa 1910 house at 208 Ray Street, with Prairie and Colonial Revival styling, and the circa 1905 Thomas Reavis House at 301 South Locust Street, with Prairie styling. The circa 1920 F. H. Tisdale House at 502 South Locust Street has Colonial Revival styling. Examples of possible mail order houses are at 605 Bridge Street, 113 Main Street and 506 Main Street.

Significance

Modern and Eclectic Residences are significant under criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE. As life styles changed, so did American tastes in architecture and these properties, constructed from circa 1900 through the 1920s, are representative of 20th century trends in housing. Craftsman and Prairie styles were newly developed and Colonial Revival was being reinterpreted. Compared with most Victorian architecture, there was generally less ornamentation for the sake of ornamentation. Spatial arrangements tended to be different, typically involving fewer but larger rooms. In Sweet Springs, Craftsman architecture was an especially popular 20th century style. A wide and interesting assortment of Craftsman and other residential examples is extant in Sweet Springs, sometimes in eclectic combinations. Builders included the more prosperous merchants and other professionals, who sometimes had a house going up at the same time as a new building in the commercial center. The better examples display fine craftsmanship.

Registration Requirements

Properties will be individually eligible under criterion C if they are sufficiently good examples of one of the styles associated with the Modern and Eclectic Residences property type. Integrity of association, location, design, materials and workmanship should be retained. Especially in the case of Craftsman, there are many good examples so that only superior properties with minimal alterations should be considered for individual nominations.

Endnotes

¹The layout of Brownsville's commercial center in 1883 is depicted on that year's Sanborn fire insurance map. Later development during this period may be traced on Sanborn maps for 1888 and 1900.

²Brownsville Herald, January 21 and March 18, 1881.

³Long gone are the hotel, sanitarium, pagoda, ballroom, bathhouses, bottling works, etc. However, a stable believed to have been part of the military academy complex (and possibly the resort prior to that) apparently was dismantled and reassembled at a location on the east side of Locust Street.

⁴The drawing, signed by Fred Graf of St. Louis, is contained in a circa 1890 brochure titled "Prospectus of the Sweet Springs Property in Saline County, Missouri" (St. Louis: Buxton-Skinner, Printers).

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Geographical Data

The project area consists of the city of Sweet Springs, population 1,595, located near the southwest corner of Saline County in west central Missouri. Portions of Sweet Springs are bounded on the west and south by Davis Creek and the Blackwater River. The city is bounded by Interstate 70 on the north and is bisected from north to south by Missouri Highway 127 (Locust Street). Marshall, the county seat of Saline County, is approximately 16 miles to the northeast. Sweet Springs is approximately 50 road miles east of Kansas City.

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Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

The MPS titled "Historic and Architectural Resources of Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri" was preceded by an architectural survey of incorporated Saline County communities conducted by Show-Me Regional Planning Commission under the auspices of the Missouri Historic Preservation Program in 1994-95. The project was primarily financed by a matching Historic Preservation Fund grant.

Although 10 incorporated towns were surveyed, the focus was on Sweet Springs where considerable local interest had been expressed in a historic district in the commercial center. The entire city was surveyed in order to determine the range and quality of extant architectural resources, a draft nomination was prepared for a possible downtown district, and survey forms were completed for 102 Sweet Springs properties. Several of the downtown buildings appeared to be individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Various residential properties also appeared to be individually eligible for listing.

District potential in the commercial center was confirmed by the Missouri Historic Preservation Program staff, which reviewed streetscapes and other photographs as well as a site map in conjunction with the draft nomination. Boundaries for the potential district were adjusted after the review.

Sweet Springs officials and the local Brown County Historical Association received copies of the draft nomination to facilitate preparation of a National Register nomination for submission to the National Park Service.

When Sweet Springs indicated that it wanted Show-Me Regional Planning Commission to complete the National Register work, Show-Me applied for another matching grant which was awarded in 1996. Although the grant was awarded, several individual nominations proposed for residential properties, cottages and nearby commercial buildings in Sweet Springs were removed from the project. If these properties are subsequently nominated, the MPS cover document can be referenced.

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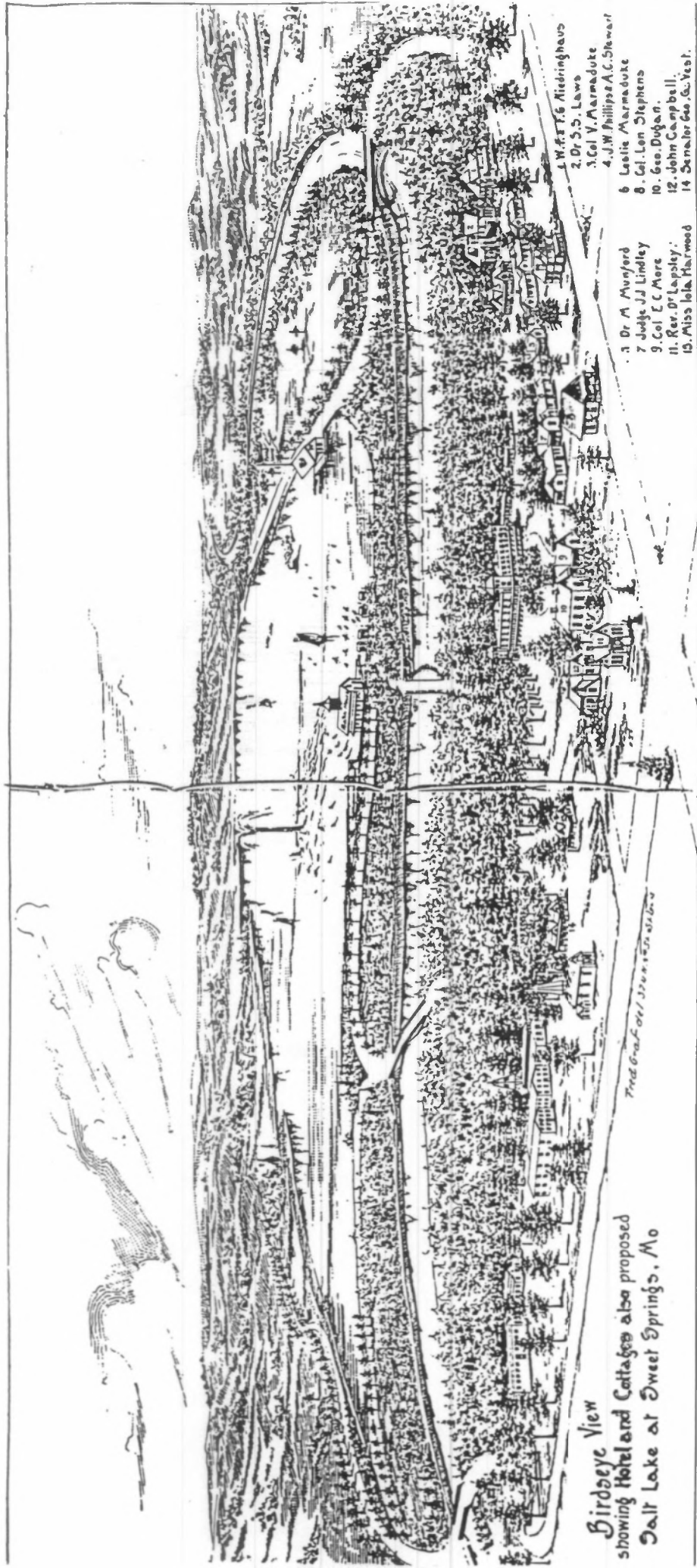
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Birdseye View

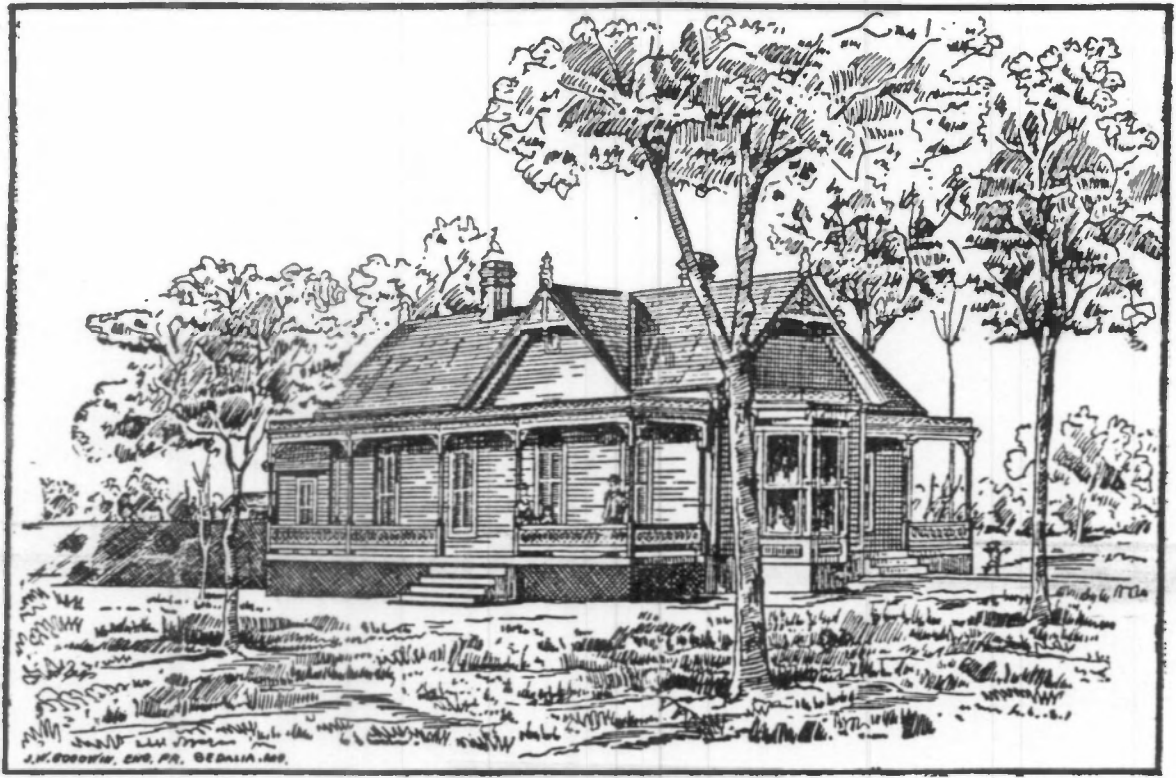
showing Hotel and Cottages also proposed
Salt Lake at Sweet Springs, Mo

The Great Salt Lake

- 1. Dr. A. Munford
- 2. Dr. S. S. Laws
- 3. Col. V. Marmaduke
- 4. J. W. Phillips A. C. Stewart
- 5. Dr. A. Munford
- 6. Lucie Marmaduke
- 7. Judge J. J. Lindley
- 8. Col. Len Stephens
- 9. Col. C. C. More
- 10. Geo. Duhan
- 11. Rev. Dr. Lapsley
- 12. John Campbell
- 13. Miss Iola Harwood
- 14. Senator Geo. W. Vest

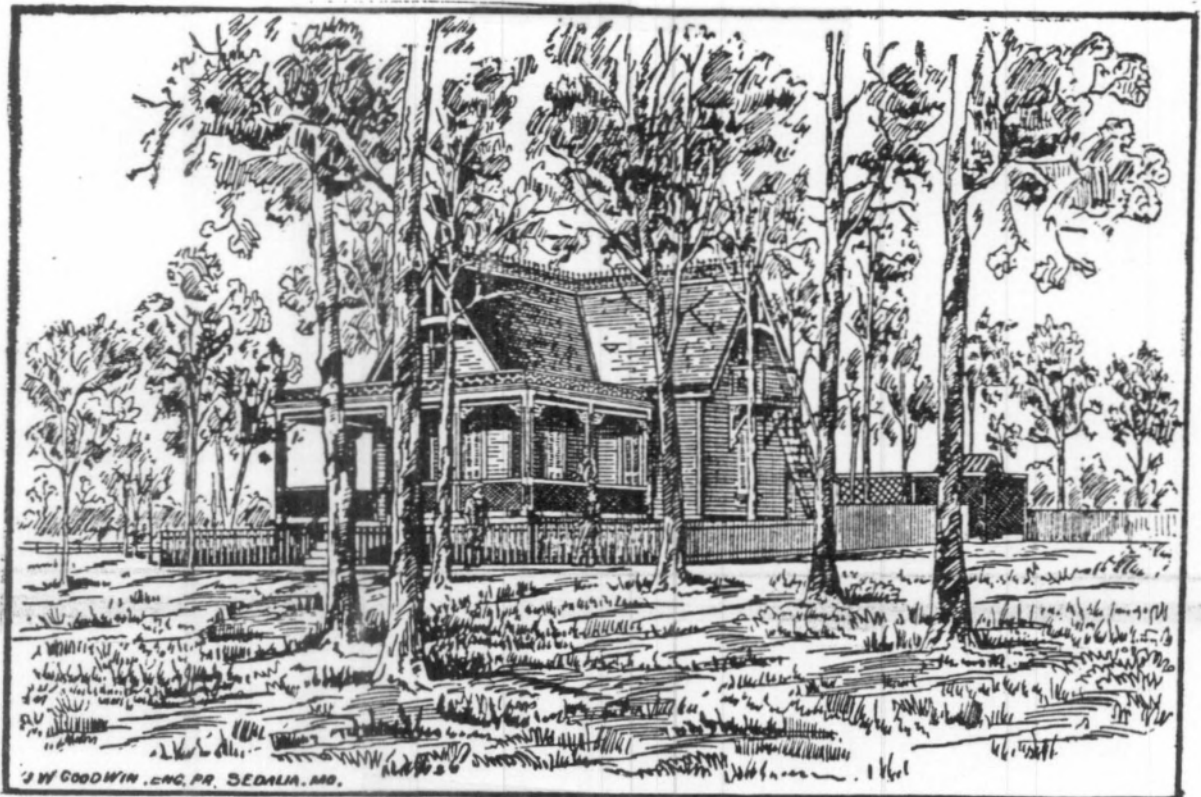
Source: Circa 1890 promotional brochure

Source: Promotional Brochure, circa 1887



(Private Cottage,) Colonel Vincent Marmaduke, St. Louis, Mo.

Typical Cottages at Sweet Springs Resort



(Private Cottage.) Mr. John Campbell, Kansas City, Mo.