

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

DRAFT

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

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

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Lowertown Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
other names/site number N/A

## 2. Location

street & number See continuation sheet 2:1 ☐ not for publication N/A  
city, town St. Paul ☐ vicinity N/A  
state Minnesota code MN county Ramsey code 123 zip code 55101

## 3. Classification

## Ownership of Property

☒ private  
☒ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

## Category of Property

☐ building(s)  
☒ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

## Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>8</u>	<u>      </u> buildings
<u>      </u>	<u>4</u> sites
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> objects
<u>8</u>	<u>4</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously  
listed in the National Register 1

## 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Signature of certifying official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

## 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet.

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

☐ determined not eligible for the  
National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Lowertown Historic District (Boundary Increase)

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## LOCATION

The Lowertown Historic District (Boundary Increase) is a 7 acre parcel roughly bounded by East 10th Street on the north, East 7th Street on the south, Jackson Street on the west, and Wacouta Street on east.

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/

manufacturing facility

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

VACANT/NOT IN USE

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Commercial Style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Cast Iron

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See Continuation Sheets

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## DESCRIPTION

The expanded area of the Lowertown Historic District is a 7 acre parcel located immediately north of the existing Lowertown Historic District. The expansion adjoins the original district along East 7th Street at the intersection with Sibley Street and includes an additional eight contributing buildings and four non-contributing vacant parcels of land. Located in an area known as the North Quadrant, the district is roughly bounded by East 10th Street on the north, East 7th Street on the south, Jackson Street on the west, and Wacouta Street on the east.

Listed on the National Register in 1983, the original district includes a collection of late 19th and early 20th century commercial buildings developed for warehousing, wholesaling, and manufacturing operations. The buildings were constructed in a variety of designs ranging from the Queen Anne to the early 20th century Commercial Styles. The eight buildings in the proposed expansion were constructed during the same period of significance and are typically large, utilitarian buildings, three to six stories tall, which were designed to accommodate similar commercial functions. Architecturally, the buildings feature styles commonly found in the existing district, although, the Commercial Style dominates the area. However, unlike the existing district, the buildings in the proposed expansion are nearly exclusively designed utilizing the latest technology in reinforced concrete construction.

The expansion of the Lowertown Historic District also includes four vacant parcels of land. Although these open spaces are considered non-contributing, their presence does not impact the historic integrity of the district. The North Quadrant had never been as solidly built as was typical of the area south of 7th Street, and there never had been a complete transition from a fashionable residential area into a commercial district. Open space existed historically on portions of these parcels, and the buildings which had been removed were generally small frame structures associated with the residential area, rather than the commercial activities documented in the nomination. In addition, the nominated

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buildings were the only large scale structures built within the boundaries of the proposed expansion.

For purposes of the nomination, the building descriptions are arranged numerically by street address, beginning with the sites and structures located on East 8th and 9th Streets, followed by the sites and structures located on Temperance and Sibley Streets. All resources are considered contributing unless otherwise noted.

1. Historic Name: Walsh Building

Date: 1888

Common Name: Walsh Building

Architect: E. P. Bassford

Address: 189 East 8th Street

Contractor: Mark Costello

Recently listed on the National Register as an individual property in May, 1989, the Walsh Building is an ornate three story building constructed in red pressed brick with stretcher bond. The first floor of the south facing principal facade consists of a central entry leading to the upper stories which is flanked by a store front with recessed entrances on either side. The entire first floor is enframed by cast iron beams and columns with decorative details. The southeast corner of the building features a fluted column with a composite capital.

The second floor of the main facade is organized into three bays containing rectangular double hung sash. The outer bays consist of round arched window openings arranged in groups of three, while the central bay contains a single window opening capped by a pediment. The tympana include a galvanized iron panel in a foliate pattern. The third story fenestration is arranged in a similar fashion with the windows in the outer bays capped by flat stone lintels.

The first story of the east facade contains an additional storefront while the window openings on the upper stories are arranged in pairs within seven bays and feature detailing similar to the principal facade. The building is completed by a pressed metal cornice with modillions and a decorative brick parapet with the word "Walsh" appearing in cast metal on

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both facades. A finial constructed with stone and pressed metal is incorporated into the southeast corner.

According to the nomination, (Larson, Paul, Walsh Building National Register Nomination), "The Walsh Building is architecturally significant both as an outstanding example of an important but now rare building type in St. Paul and as a premier specimen of the work of one of St. Paul's most important early architects, Edward P. Bassford." Representing one of the most ornate small commercial blocks in the city, the Walsh Building was constructed as rental property for Colonel Vincent D. Walsh of West Feliciana, Louisiana. The building originally housed retail stores and apartments.

Edward Bassford designed the Griggs and Foster's Farwell, Ozmun and Kirk Building in the existing Lowertown Historic District in 1894, and the Merchants National Bank, an individual National Register property near the district.

2. Historic Name: Nicols, Dean and Gregg Building Date: 1906  
Common Name: Warehouse Architect: Louis Lockwood  
Address: 205 East 8th Street Contractor: Grant Construction

The Nicols, Dean and Gregg Building is a five story reinforced concrete structure with brick curtainwalls designed in the Classical Revival style. The 150' x 180' building is constructed on a raised basement with rusticated stone laid random ashlar. Massive stone lintels are placed over the basement window openings. The first story consists of a twelve bay facade with an off-center recessed entry enframed by stylized stone voussoirs. The entry contains a panel with the words "Nicols, Dean and Gregg, Established 1855" incised in stone. Four bays are positioned to the left of the entry and feature large double hung sash which allow natural light into the office area. The remaining seven bays to the right of the entrance feature paired one over one light double hung sash.

A belt course separates the first floor from the upper stories which are divided into ten bays by pilaster columns. The window openings within

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each bay are organized as single vertical elements containing paired double hung sash. The building is capped by a decorative metal cornice with dentils and modillions. Steel supports which once held the name "Nicols, Dean and Gregg" are still positioned on the roof.

A one story brick warehouse with a corrugated metal roof extends along the entire rear facade of the building. The warehouse also includes a driveway and shipping platform. The building retains total design integrity.

Built at a cost of \$120,000, the building required 1,900,000 bricks, 500 tons of steel bars, 125,000 cubic feet of concrete, 26,836 sacks of cement, 3,689 wagon loads of sand, and 129,015 man hours. When this early example of reinforced concrete construction was completed, the architect and contractor are said to have stated that the building "is the strongest in the world." The architect was Louis Lockwood, who designed the Weyerhaeuser-Denkman Building in the existing Lowertown Historic District.

The firm of Nicols, Dean and Gregg began in 1855 when John Nicols and Peter Berkey purchased the Sligo and Tyrone Iron Store from the Marshall Brothers, one of whom was William R. Marshall, the former Governor of Minnesota. Located on Wabasha Street, the wholesale company carried a full line of heavy hardware including iron, nails, steel, woodstock, and wagon supplies for farmers, blacksmiths, and loggers. Berkey later left the firm and William B. Dean became a partner. In 1862, the firm relocated to Third and Kellogg under the name of Nicols and Dean.

Sales increased seven times from \$23,000 to \$170,000 in the ten year period from 1861 to 1871 when rapid land settlement was taking place. In 1872, Jesse Gregg joined the firm and in 1873 the business relocated to Third and Sibley. By 1881 sales had increased to \$500,000 and the company moved to a five story building at Fifth and Sibley (now razed). In 1887, Nicols, Dean and Gregg opened a heavy hardware business in Minneapolis, known as the Minneapolis Iron Store. Although the enterprise was a separate company, the same stockholders owned both corporations. Combined sales reach \$900,000 in 1891. Three buildings were eventually

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constructed for the Minneapolis Iron Store, all located in the Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District.

In October, 1905 ground was broken for the Nicols, Dean and Gregg Building at 205 East 8th Street. The company still carried hardware, wagon, and carriage stock, but in 1909 the first line of automotive accessories for dealers and garages was introduced. Sales doubled by 1911 and during the 1920s the company expanded its automotive line throughout Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

In 1943, Nicols, Dean and Gregg moved from their 8th Street location to a building at 177 West 5th Street in the center of the business district. In 1954, the company consolidated with the Minneapolis Iron Store to form one operating unit known as the General Trading Company and a large warehouse facility was built at 475 North Prior Avenue in the Midway district of St. Paul. Still in business today, and now known as Car Quest, the company deals strictly in automotive parts and operates a distribution center in Lakeville, Minnesota.

Nicols, Dean and Gregg is considered the oldest heavy hardware dealer in St. Paul and one of the oldest firms still in operation in the state. The company supplied James J. Hill with hardware for decades and became one of the largest firms of its kind in the region. Several of the principals of Nicols, Dean and Gregg were business and political leaders, such as William B Dean, who served as a State Senator from Ramsey County and initiated the legislation which led to the construction of the State Capitol.

3. Historic Name: H.M. Smyth Printing Printing Co. Date: 1914  
Common Name: Farm Credit Services Architect: Buechner & Orth  
Address: 178 East 9th Street Contractor: Butler Brothers

The H.M. Smyth Printing Company building is a two story reinforced concrete structure with brick curtain walls designed in the Commercial Style. The building is constructed on a raised basement which is



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separated from the upper floors by a stone belt course. Both principal facades are divided into even bays by pilaster columns which feature capitals with a diamond and cross motif. Each bay includes three over one light sash arranged in groups of three. An arched opening over the 9th Street entrance is capped by a stone pediment. Decorative details include a raised brick design in the spandrel panels between the first and second floors and a pedimented parapet. All window openings have been boarded over.

The building was designed by the firm of Buechner and Orth, a prolific St. Paul partnership which designed nearly 20 courthouses in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. The firm designed both commercial and residential buildings, and a large numbers of theaters.

Henry M. Smyth was born in New York, but by 1883 he had moved to St. Paul and was employed by the Charles E. Mayo Company, a wholesale hardware firm. In 1877 he started a printing business in partnership with Elijah B. Mitchell at 29 East 3rd Street. As early as 1878, Mitchell sold his interest in the company to Smyth and the business continued as the H.M. Smyth Printing Company.

After several additional moves, the company located to 35-37 East 3rd Street in 1895. The company remained there until 1914 when this present building was constructed. Upon completion of the building, company advertising featured a photograph of the building with the statement that "this entire building is owned and occupied exclusively by the H.M. Smyth Printing Company." The H.M. Smyth Printing Company was a large local firm involved in general printing, lithography, and map publishing. The company published the St. Paul Atlas, the Kirk Pocket Map of St. Paul, and the Curtice Street Guide Map of St. Paul.

The company remained at this location until 1959 when a new building was constructed in the Midway area of St. Paul. The H.M. Smyth Printing Company is still in business today.

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4. Common Name: Vacant Parcel  
Address: 194-210 East 9th Street

This vacant space is a 180' x 150' parcel of land. The site is considered non-contributing.

5. Common Name: Vacant Parcel  
Address: 211 East 9th Street

This vacant space is a 102' x 150' parcel of land. The site is considered non-contributing.

6. Historic Name: McGill-Warner Company Date: 1909  
Common Name: City of St. Paul Employment and Training Center  
Address: 215 East 9th Street  
Architect: Ellerbe and MacLeod Contractor: Butler Brothers

The McGill-Warner Company building is a four story reinforced concrete structure with brick curtainwalls designed in the Commercial Style. Built on a raised basement, the 142' x 94' building was constructed at an estimated cost of \$100,000. Window openings organize the first story into even bays with entrances located on both 9th and Sibley Streets. Each bay contains double hung sash arranged in groups of three. The upper stories are separated from the first floor by a corbelled belt course and are organized into bays by pilasters columns. Each bay contains three over three light double hung sash arranged in groups of three. The building was originally completed with a flat slab cornice and also included a loading dock with a metal canopy along the Sibley Street facade.

In 1920 the cornice was removed and a fifth story addition identical to the original construction was completed. A parapet with recessed panels placed above each bay was also added. In the 1950s, the McGill-Warner Company expanded its operation into the O'Donnell Shoe Company building located immediately to the north. The buildings are separated by a small

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alley called Lyons Court and connecting passageways were constructed to link the structures between the upper floors. The loading ramp was recently rebuilt to accommodate handicapped access and the metal entrance canopy along Sibley Street was also removed. A loading dock which extends from the east facade was added in the modern era.

The building was designed by Franklin Ellerbe and James MacLeod who had formed a brief association in 1909. The firm occupied offices in the nearby Endicott Building. At the time of Ellerbe's death in 1921, he was a nationally known designer of hospitals and clinic buildings who had designed the majority of the buildings associated with the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. The Ellerbe Company is still in operation today and has become one of the nation's leading architectural firms.

The McGill-Warner Company was established in 1887 when Charles H. McGill, son of Governor Andrew McGill, and Wescott W. Price formed a printing firm. The business was known as the Price-McGill Company and was located at 354 Sibley Street in the building in the existing Lowertown Historic District. Robert H. Merriam, son of ex-Governor Merriam, had also joined the firm, but by 1894, McGill had acquired the interest of both Price and Merriam. In 1894 the firm was reorganized as the McGill Printing Company with A.R. McGill serving as President and Charles H. McGill as Vice President. The company had been steadily expanding and moved to 8th and Cedar Streets where they leased a three story brick building (now razed) built by the Boston and Northwestern Real Estate Company. The Company was involved in general printing, lithography, and publishing and advertised that it was "The Most Complete Printing Plant in the West." On June 16, 1897 the company was again reorganized as the McGill-Warner Company and the following officers were elected: Ellsworth C. Warner, President; A.R. McGill, Vice President; Eli S. Warner, Secretary and Treasurer; and Charles H. McGill, General Manager.

The firm remained at 8th and Cedar until 1910 when this building on 9th and Sibley was completed. Offices were located on the first floor, the bindery and printing presses were on the upper stories, and paper was stored in the basement.

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The McGill-Warner Company also acquired the Pioneer Press printing plant, which was a part of the Pioneer Press Company. This printing firm dates back to 1848 and is reported to be the oldest printing company in the state. The name of this subsidiary was changed to the Pioneer Printing Company, although the business was ultimately consolidated with McGill-Warner.

In addition to his position as Vice President of the McGill-Warner Company, C.H. McGill was also President of the McGill Lithograph Co., the McGill Colortype Co., and the Farnham Printing and the Stationery Co. McGill was eventually name President of the O'Donnell Shoe Company which was located in two buildings adjacent to the McGill-Warner building on 9th and Sibley.

The McGill-Warner Company was one of the largest printing businesses in the region and it is reported to be the oldest company in continuous operation in the state as a result of the acquisition of the Pioneer Press printing plant. The company was the first in the state to install monotype equipment, which eliminated tedious hand set type, and the first to operate a lithography department. In 1959 the company built a new facility in the Midway area of St. Paul where it remains in operation today under the name of McGill-Jensen Inc.

7. Historic Name: F.G. Leslie Paper Company Date: 1916  
Common Name: Ideal Security Whse Architect: Hartford & Hausler  
Address: 236 East 9th Street Contractor: Lauer Brothers

The F.G. Leslie Paper Company building is a six story reinforced concrete structure designed in the Commercial Style. The 82' x 100' building features brick curtain walls and was built at a cost of \$66,400. The north facing principal facade along 9th Street is divided into five bays by pilaster columns with decorative capitals with banded brickwork and a cross motif. Window openings in the outer bays are organized in group of three, while the windows in the central bays are arranged in groups of four. Each window opening on the second floor includes a transom. The

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Wacouta Street facade is divided into six bays while the remaining south and west facades expose the building's reinforced concrete structural system. The entrance features a stone surround with a stylized pediment. A corbelled cornice completes the building. A concrete block addition and loading docks have been added along the south facade in the modern era.

The F.G. Leslie Paper Company building was designed by the firm of Hartford and Hausler which practiced from 1914-1916. The firm designed a number of craftsman residences and small commercial buildings. Charles Hausler served as the first City Architect for St. Paul from 1914-1922.

Frederick G. Leslie was born in Ireland in 1872 and immigrated to the United States with his family at the age of four. He worked for Webb Publishing and at the wholesale paper house of Wright, Barrett, and Stillwell. He was later employed by his elder brother, John Leslie, who had opened a wholesale paper firm in Minneapolis in 1894. In 1902 Frederick Leslie opened his own wholesale paper business in St. Paul at 132 East 3rd Street. The company moved to larger facilities at 5th and Minnesota Street and later moved to 6th and Wacouta, within the existing Lowertown Historic District. After several additional moves, the company constructed this large building on East 9th Street. Considered a major wholesale company in St. Paul, the firm sold printers stock, writing and wrapping paper, bags, twine, paper towels, as well as building paper, asphalt roofing, shingles, paints, and varnishes.

Leslie had taken H.L. Donahower into partnership and the firm became known as the Leslie-Donahower Paper Company. In 1923 Donahower sold his interest to Leslie and the company continued as the F.G. Leslie Paper Co. When Frederick Leslie died in 1936, the company merged with his brother's firm, the John Leslie Paper Company. The operation continued at the 9th Street address until 1939 when the firm relocated to the Finch, Van Slyck, and McConville Building in the Lowertown Historic District. The company was one of the largest paper dealers in the region with facilities in Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Great Falls, Montana. The John

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Leslie Paper Company continues in operation to this day with headquarters in Minneapolis. The company has remained a major paper wholesaler serving the central third of the United States.

8. Common Name: Vacant Parcel  
Address: 467-473 Temperance

This vacant space is a 140' x 102" parcel of land. The site is considered non-contributing.

9. Historic Name: City Motor Supply Co. Date: 1923  
Common Name: Metro Square Parking/Old Volks Home  
Address: 440 Sibley Street Architect: W.W. Nippolt  
Contractor: C.W. Lindquist Engineer: Andrew P. Hustad

The City Motor Supply Company building is a three story, L-shaped, structure with overall dimensions of 146' x 152'. Built at a cost of \$80,000, the Commercial Style building features a reinforced concrete structural system with brick curtain walls and a series of large industrial sash spaced at regular intervals along the facades. A section of the building along the east facade contains a ramp leading to the upper stories. The position of the ramp is represented by the arrangement of the staggered window openings. A fourth story was constructed in 1951 although the addition remains nearly identical to the original construction. A portion of the first floor facade along Sibley Street is obscured by metal sheathing.

Representing an early example of a large scale parking facility, the original building permit includes a city council resolution granting permission for the construction, maintenance, and operation of the public garage. The resolution also contains instructions for the Commissioner of Parks, Playgrounds, and Public Buildings to issue the building permit.

When the building opened in 1923, it offered storage space for 210 cars, Goodyear tires, and Mobil oils. A vulcanizing division was located on the

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first floor and a repair shop was on the second. By 1925 the facility was also offering a car wash and the "Hertz Drivurself System: with 6 Cylinder Deluxe Cars for Hire at Reasonable Rates." Beginning in the 1940s the building served as a car dealership for over 20 years. In more recent times, the building has returned to its original function as a parking and service garage.

The City Motor Supply Company building was designed by architect Walter W. Nippolt for the Hamm Realty Company, the original property owner. Nippolt was an in-house architect for the Hamm Company, the parent company of Hamm Realty. However, the original building permit indicates that the "concrete (was) designed by Hustad of Minneapolis, a specialist in this work." Still in operation to this day, the Hustad Company was formed by Andrew P. Hustad in 1920 and the firm was involved in the design of reinforced concrete and steel structures. Grain elevators were considered a specialty. Prior to the establishment of the firm, Andrew P. Hustad was employed as Principal Assistant Engineer by C.A.P. Turner, the nationally known engineering consultant who revolutionized the use of reinforced concrete

10. Common Name: Vacant Parcel  
Address: 501 Sibley

This vacant space is a 35' x 102' parcel of land. The site is considered non-contributing.

11. Historic Name: <u>O'Donnell Shoe Company</u>	Date: 1910
Common Name: United Electric Corporation	Architect: Unknown
Address: 512 Sibley Street	Contractor: Butler Brothers

Constructed on a raised basement, the O'Donnell Shoe Company building is a five story reinforced concrete structure with brick curtain walls designed in the Commercial Style. The west facing Sibley Street facade is organized into nine bays, with each outer bay containing paired three over three double hung sash. The remaining bays are defined by pilaster

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columns with window openings arranged in groups of three. The window openings of the central bays of the first through fourth floors are capped by concrete lintels. The three bay 10th Street facade is also organized with paired windows in the outer bays and three-part fenestration in the central bay. The brickwork on the entire 10th Street facade is constructed in Flemish bond, which also frames the Sibley Street facade by utilizing the same brickwork in the outer bays and above the fifth story window openings. A Classical Revival Style cornice with modillions completes the buildings

A tunnel was constructed to connect this building with a second structure for the O'Donnell Shoe Company located on the opposite side of Sibley Street. Although the architect for the original building is unknown, it is possible that it was designed by an in-house architect from the Butler Brothers Company since they designed the later building. The history of the O'Donnell Shoe Company is described in conjunction with this second building.

The structure remained empty for several years after the O'Donnell Company vacated the building in 1936. It was later utilized for office space from 1941 to 1944 by the National Youth Administration, a work program of the Depression Era. During the 1950s, the adjacent McGill-Warner Company expanded their facility into the building and connected the structures between the upper floors with a small passageway.

The entrance has been modified, several windows have been infilled, and new brickwork has been installed on the northwest corner of the first floor.

12. Historic Name: O'Donnell Shoe Company

Date: 1914

Common Name: Market Square

Architect: Butler Brothers

Address: 509 Sibley Street

Contractor: Butler Brothers

Nearly identical to the company's original facility located directly across Sibley Street, the O'Donnell Shoe Company building is a brick and reinforced structure designed in the Commercial Style. The original



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building permit indicates the use of the patented Turner reinforced concrete system, which featured flat slab construction supported by mushroom columns. Built on a raised basement, the Sibley Street facade is divided into nine bays with each outer bay containing paired three over three double hung sash. The remaining bays are defined by pilaster columns with window openings which are arranged in groups of three. Window openings on the second through fifth floors are capped by concrete lintels. The three bay 10th Street facade is also organized with paired windows in the outer bays and three-part fenestration in the central bay. Brickwork executed in a polychromatic Flemish bond decorates the piers between the first story windows and forms a decorative band between the first and second floors. The Sibley Street entrance is capped by a pediment. The two O'Donnell Company buildings are nearly twin structures except the later building is six, rather than five, stories.

The building's original cornice has been removed and an additional entrance has been constructed on 10th Street. A one story concrete block addition, which extends along the west facade, was built in the modern era

The O'Donnell Shoe Company traces its beginnings to Conrad Gotzian and Company, a shoe manufacturer located in a building in the existing Lowertown Historic District. William O'Donnell was a bookkeeper for the Gotzian and Company and was later named manager of the Minnesota Shoe Company, a subsidiary of the Gotzian company. O'Donnell resigned in 1909 to form his own company, which was first located at 237 East 6th Street. In 1911 the O'Donnell Shoe Company moved to a new building at 510 Sibley Street. In 1914 the company moved to a nearly identical building across the street at 509 Sibley, and the Freeman Shoe Company occupied the original structure. Although the Freeman Company was a separate entity, it share a number of officers with the O'Donnell Company. For example, George J. Freeman was President of the Freeman Company and also a Vice-President of the O'Donnell Company. Charles Patterson served as Treasurer for both firms. George J. Freeman, who had served as the Superintendent of the Minnesota Shoe Company, was the son of George W. Freeman, the President of Conrad Gotzian and Company since Conrad Gotzian's death in 1877.

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After George J. Freeman died in 1919, the O'Donnell Company occupied both buildings, with the Women's Department located at 510 Sibley and the Men's Department at 509 Sibley. The O'Donnell Shoe Corporation Club and Benefit Association was also located at the 509 Sibley address.

The complex relationship between the local shoe manufacturers continued until nearly every business had merged or consolidated with the O'Donnell Company. By 1928 the O'Donnell Shoe Corporation was the largest shoe manufacturer and wholesaler in St. Paul. In 1929, the offices and showroom of the O'Donnell Corporation were moved into the Gotzian Building while the factory remained on Sibley Street. Another facility was also maintained in the Thompson Building (now razed) at 476 Rosabel.

In 1935 the O'Donnell Corporation moved its entire operation to Humboldt, Tennessee, although a branch office was retained on Rosabel until 1943. The company grew into national prominence and when William O'Donnell died in 1939, Charles McGill, of the McGill-Warner Company, was named President.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:  
☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally

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

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1870-1929

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Bassford, E.P.

Lockwood, Louis

Various

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

See Continuation Sheets

☒ See continuation sheet

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

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

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

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 7 acres

UTM References

A 

1	5	4	9	2	8	9	0	4	9	7	7	4	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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B 

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Zone Easting Northing

D 

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☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the Lowertown Historic District (Boundary Increase) is shown as the solid line on the accompanying map entitled "Lowertown Historic District." It is drawn to a scale of 1" = 100'.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the highest concentrated area of commercial structures which are associated both historically and architecturally with the original historic district, and that maintain historic integrity.

☐ See continuation sheet

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rolf T. Anderson

organization N/A date July 1989

street & number 3632 Park Avenue South telephone 612-824-7807

city or town Minneapolis state Minnesota zip code 55407

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Lowertown Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Section number 8 Page 1

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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to the 1983 National Register nomination for the Lowertown Historic District, Lowertown is significant "as the city's warehouse and wholesaling district which was built up during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when St. Paul was a major distribution and jobbing center for the Upper Midwest. Lowertown is architecturally significant for its remarkably intact concentration of commercial buildings designed by the city's most prominent architects in styles ranging from the Italianate style of the early 1880s to the Beaux Arts of the early twentieth century." The buildings in the expanded district are associated both historically and architecturally with the contexts established in the original nomination. Although a reconnaissance level survey of the North Quadrant had been completed in 1983, it was not until 1989 that an intensive level survey clearly documented the historic relationship with the original district.

Historically, similar commercial functions were taking place in the North Quadrant, and, in addition, the majority of the businesses in the expanded district trace their beginnings to the existing historic district. The McGill-Warner Company, F.G. Leslie Paper Company, and the O'Donnell Shoe Company were all associated with buildings in the current district, while Nicols, Dean and Gregg had been located in four different buildings south of 7th Street, including a building (now razed) on the western edge of the district. The H.M. Smyth Printing Company had also occupied a building just west of Lowertown.

Architecturally, the buildings in the expanded district were designed by the city's leading architects and engineers in styles such as the Classical Revival and Commercial Styles which are well represented in the original district. Structurally, the expanded district is also able to represent newly developed reinforced concrete technology. The Nicols, Dean and Gregg Company building is an early example of reinforced concrete

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Lowertown Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Section number 8 Page 2

construction using a post and beam structural system. The architect, Louis Lockwood, had just designed the Lindeke-Warner Building in Lowertown and the bid by the Butler Brothers Company for the reinforced concrete structural system was \$10,000 less than the bid for conventional mill construction. By 1909 when the McGill-Warner Company building was constructed, reinforced concrete construction had advanced to the flat slab technique with mushroom columns patented by nationally known Minneapolis engineer C.A.P. Turner. Turner was a forerunner in the development of reinforced concrete and eventually patented over 30 processes for various forms of reinforcement and types of centering for reinforced concrete construction. In 1898 he used the slab system supported by girders spanning columns, but concluded that he could delete the beams through the use of a flat slab system supported on mushroom columns. By 1913 the process had been used in over 1,000 buildings throughout the world. The process reduced unusable space as well as construction time and materials. Turner initiated one of the most efficient forms of construction in reinforced concrete and won enduring acclaim from the engineering community. The structural systems for the McGill-Warner, Leslie Paper, and the O'Donnell Shoe Company buildings all appear identical with flat slab construction supported by mushroom columns, although only the permit for one of the O'Donnell buildings specifically documents the use of the Turner process. In addition, the McGill-Warner, O'Donnell Shoe Company, and H.M. Smyth Printing Company buildings were all constructed by the Butler Brothers Company. In 1923 the structural system for the City Motor Company's parking garage was designed by Andrew Hustad who had once served as Turner's assistant engineer.

In addition to architectural and historical connections, the businesses in the North Quadrant also shared civic associations with the original district. For example, the Board of Directors for the St. Paul Outdoor Sports Carnival Association of 1916 included Lee and Eli Warner from the McGill-Warner Company, Charles Patterson from O'Donnell Shoe Company, F.G. Leslie from F.G. Leslie Paper Company, and Jesse Gregg from Nicols, Dean and Gregg, as well as a number of representatives from businesses in the original district.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Lowertown Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Section number 8 Page 3

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The buildings in the expanded district date from 1888 to 1923 although the majority were constructed from 1909 to 1916 when Lowertown was experiencing its final period of growth. The expansion of the historic district completes the history of Lowertown through its ability to represent the migration of various business into the North Quadrant as they expanded and developed larger facilities in an area where vacant land was available. Four businesses, including Nicols, Dean and Gregg, McGill-Warner, H.M. Smyth Printing, and Leslie Paper, remain in operation to this day, and continue to trace the pattern of St. Paul's commercial evolution by their eventual movement from Lowertown to newly created industrial centers located apart from the central business district.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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
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☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

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

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

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 7 acres

UTM References

A 

1	1	5
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4	9	2	8	9	0
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4	9	7	7	4	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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B 

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Zone Easting Northing

D 

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☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the Lowertown Historic District (Boundary Increase) is shown as the solid line on the accompanying map entitled "Lowertown Historic District." It is drawn to a scale of 1" = 100'.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the highest concentrated area of commercial structures which are associated both historically and architecturally with the original historic district, and that maintain historic integrity.

☐ See continuation sheet

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rolf T. Anderson

organization N/A date July 1989

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city or town Minneapolis state Minnesota zip code 55407



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Lowertown Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Section number 9 Page 1

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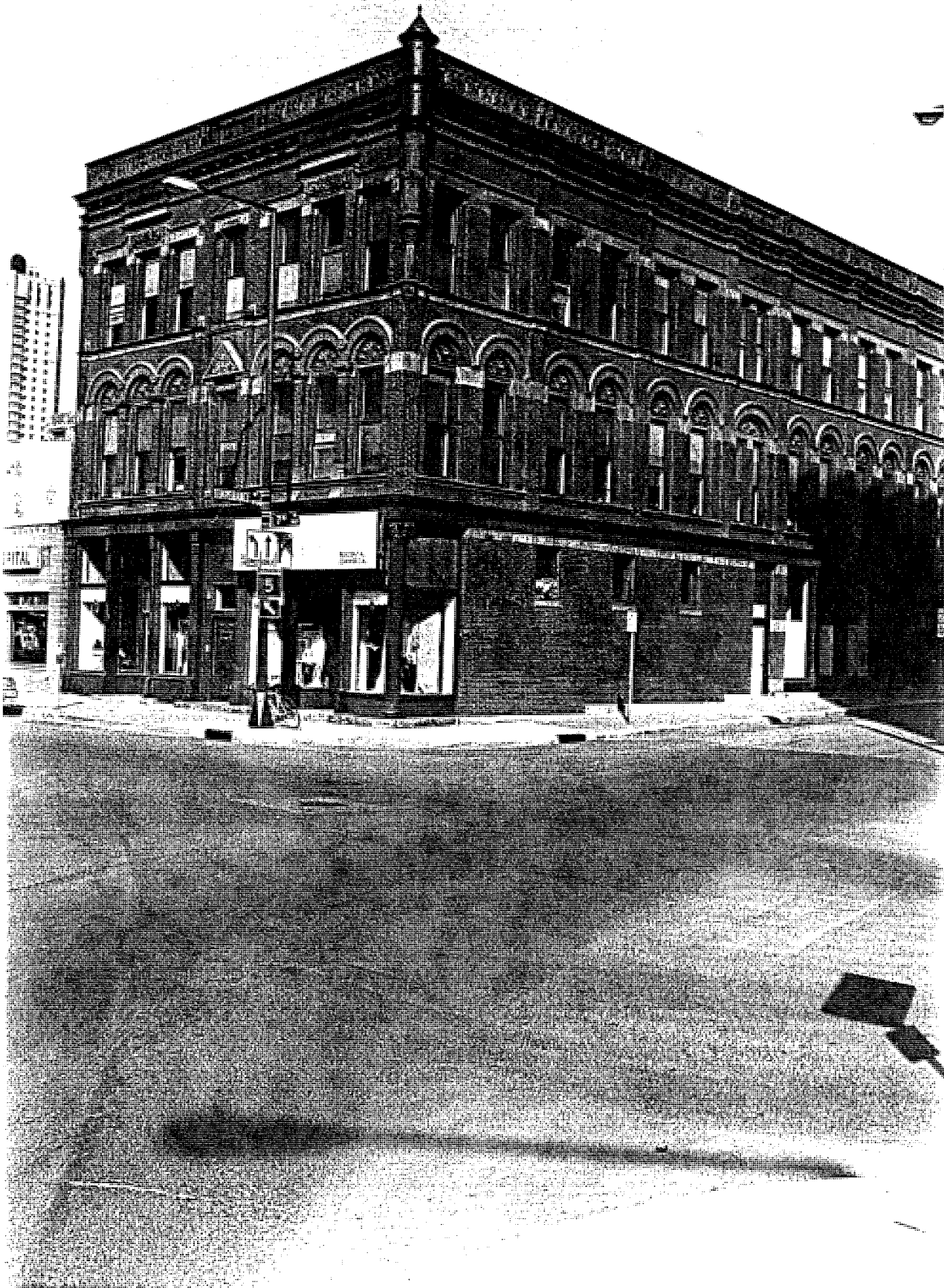
Leslie Paper Company. Private Archival Collection. Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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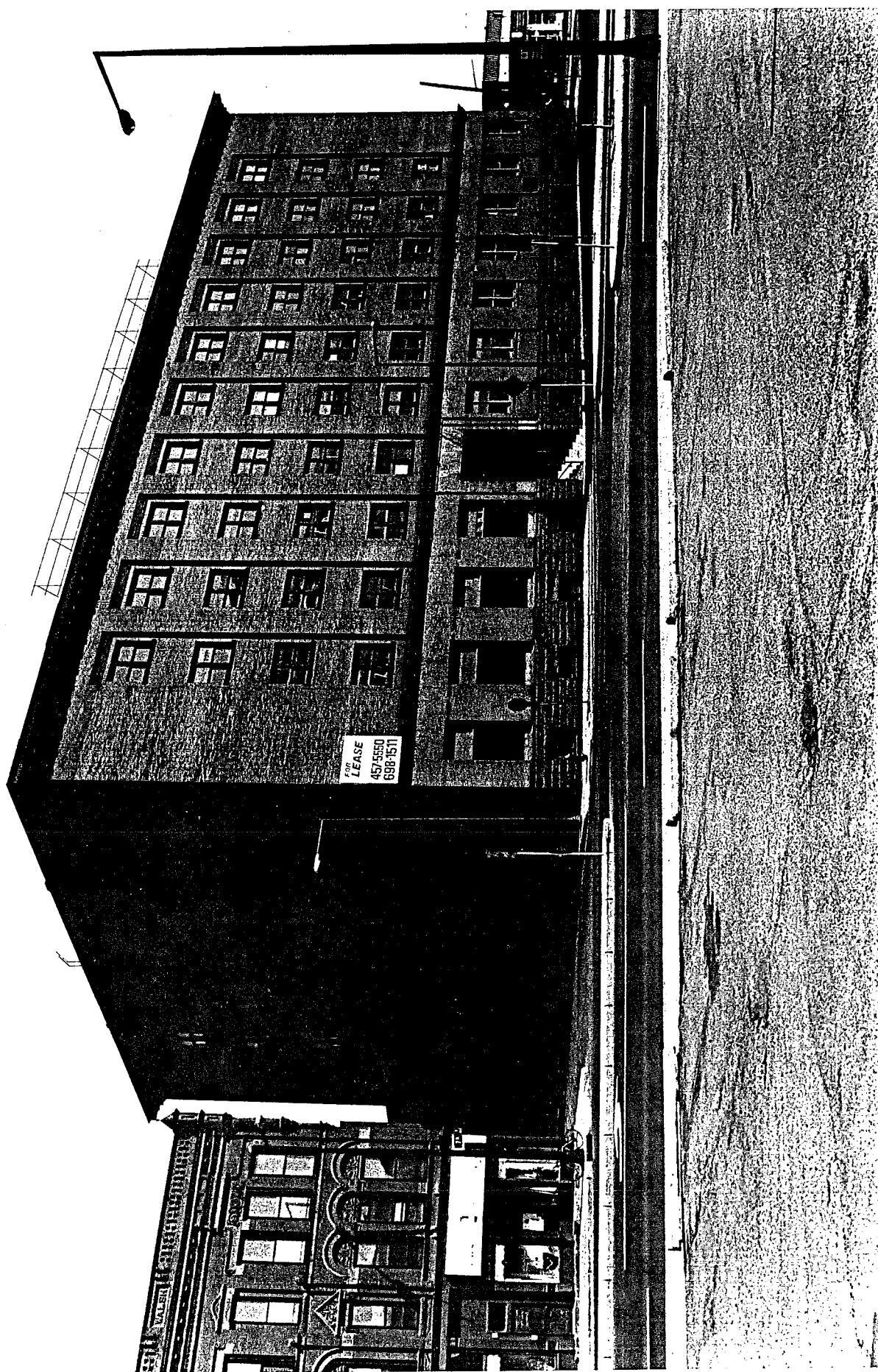
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ST. PAUL, MN, LOWERTOWN DIST. INCREASE  
WALSH BLDG. (#1)  
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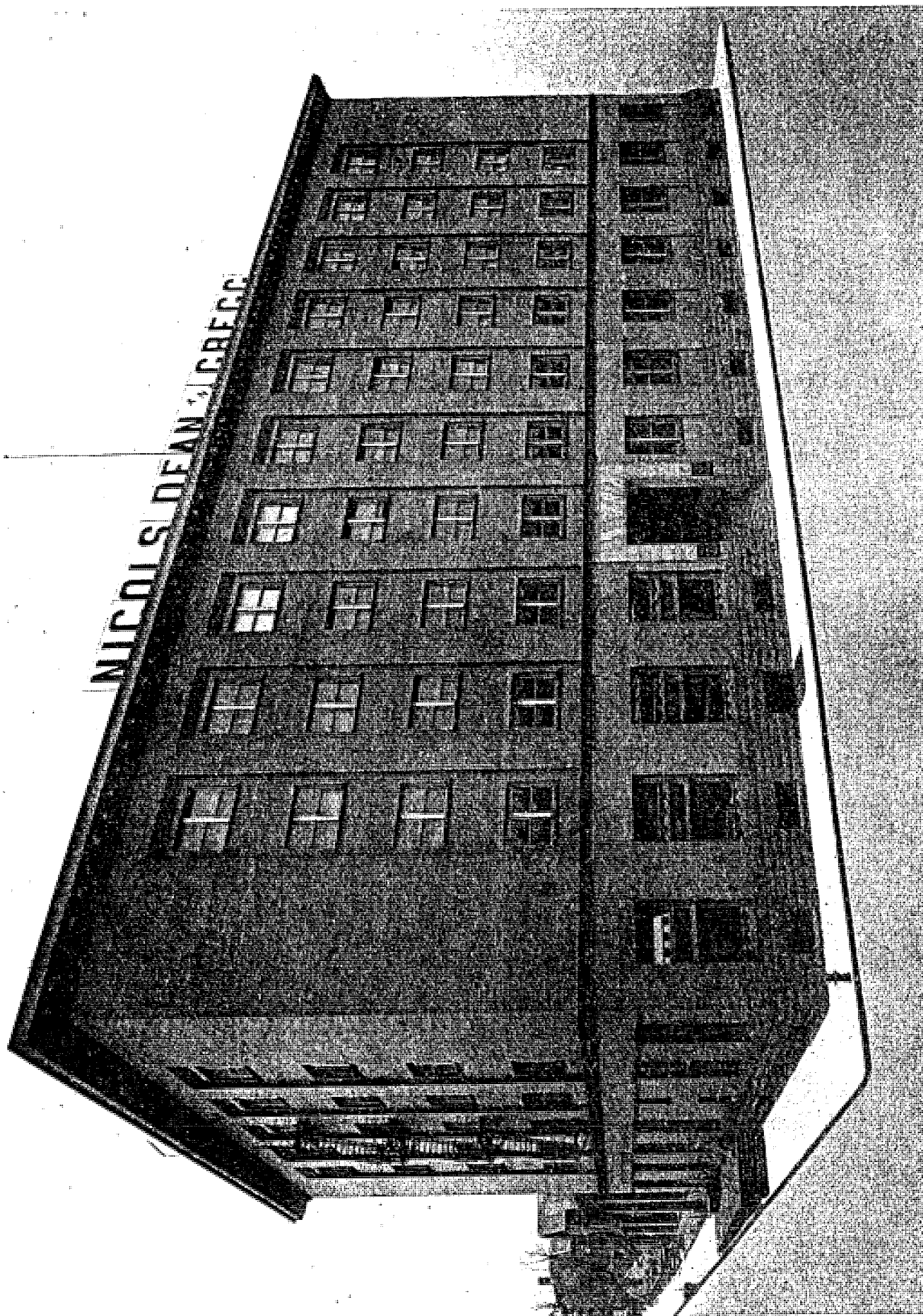
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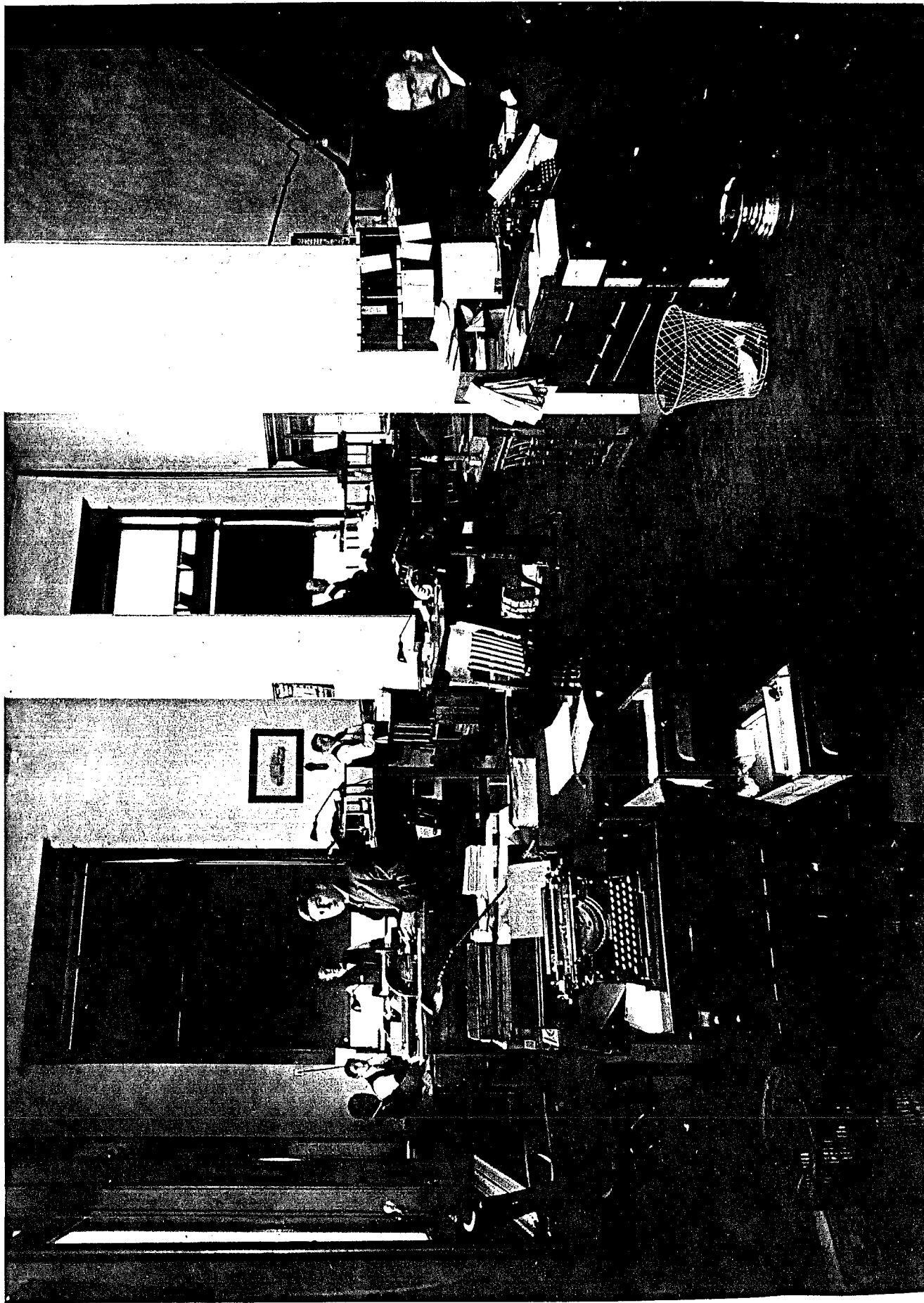


RAMSEY CO., ST. PAUL, MN, LOWERTOWN DIST. INCREASE  
NICOLS, DEAN & GREGG BLDG. (#2)  
PHOTO I.D. 010200 #18

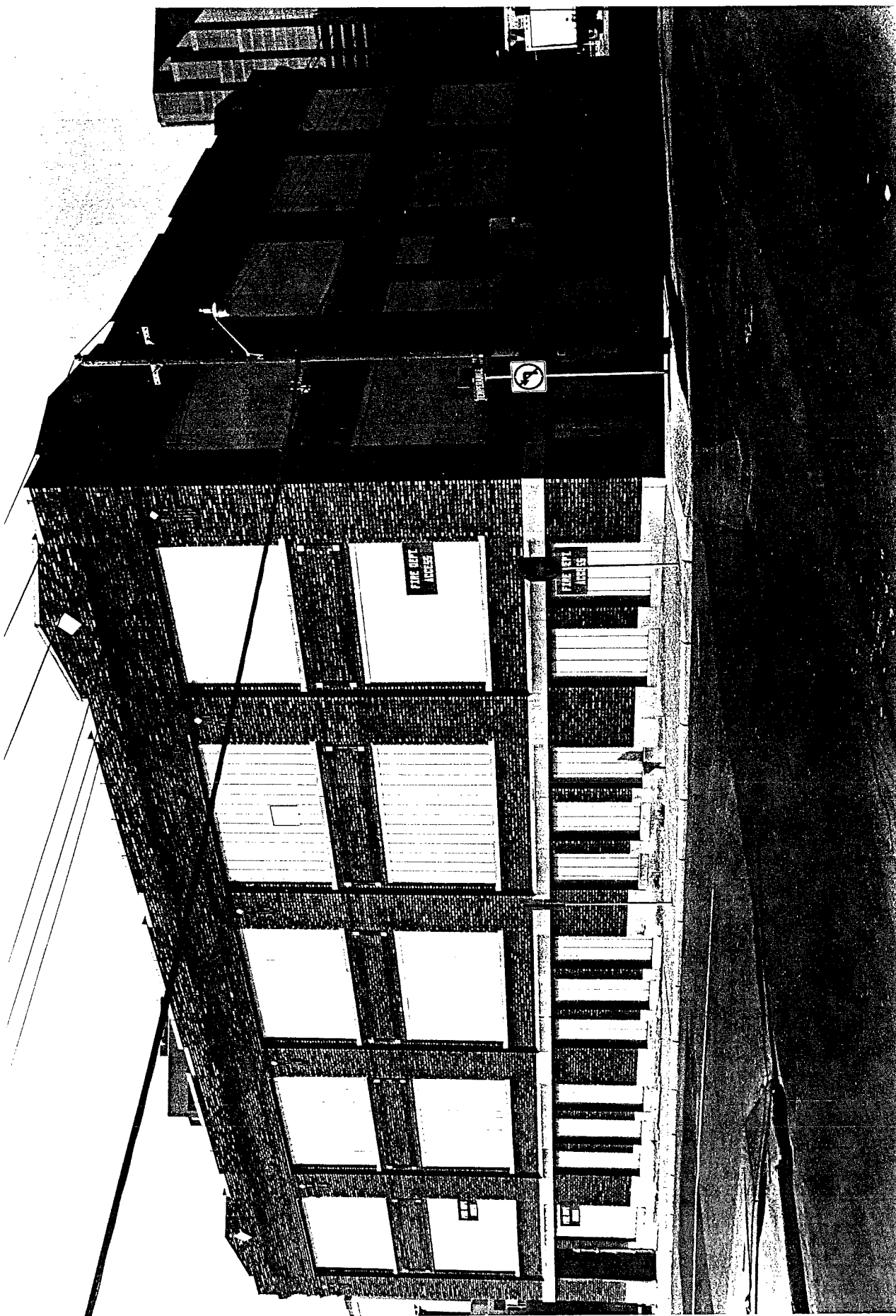




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NICOLS, DEAN & GREGG BLDG. (#2)  
PHOTO I.D. MHS, REF LIBRARY



RAMSEY CO., ST. PAUL, MN. LOWER TOWN DIST, INCREASE  
NICOLS, DEAN & GREGG BLDG. (#2)  
PHOTO I.D. MHS, REF LIBRARY HF3/P45

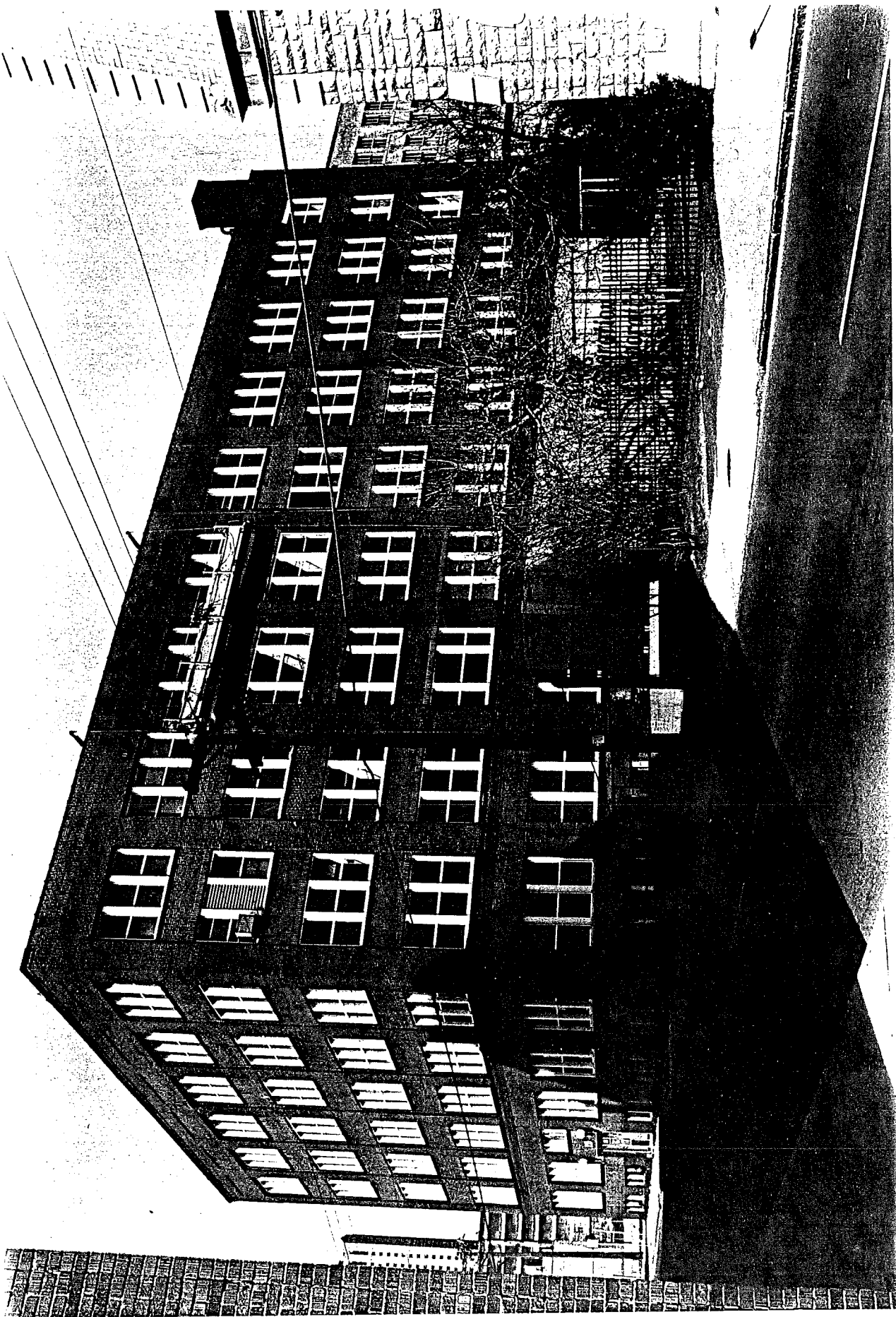


RAMSEY CO., ST. PAUL, MN. LOWERTOWN DIST. INCREASE  
H.M. SMYTH PRINTING CO., (#3)  
PHOTO I.D. 010200 #8



RAMSEY CO. ST. PAUL M.N. LOWER TOWN DIST. INCREASE  
H.M. SMYTH PRINTING CO. (#3) PHOTO I.D. MHS REF. LIB. MRZ.9/SP3.15/PZ10





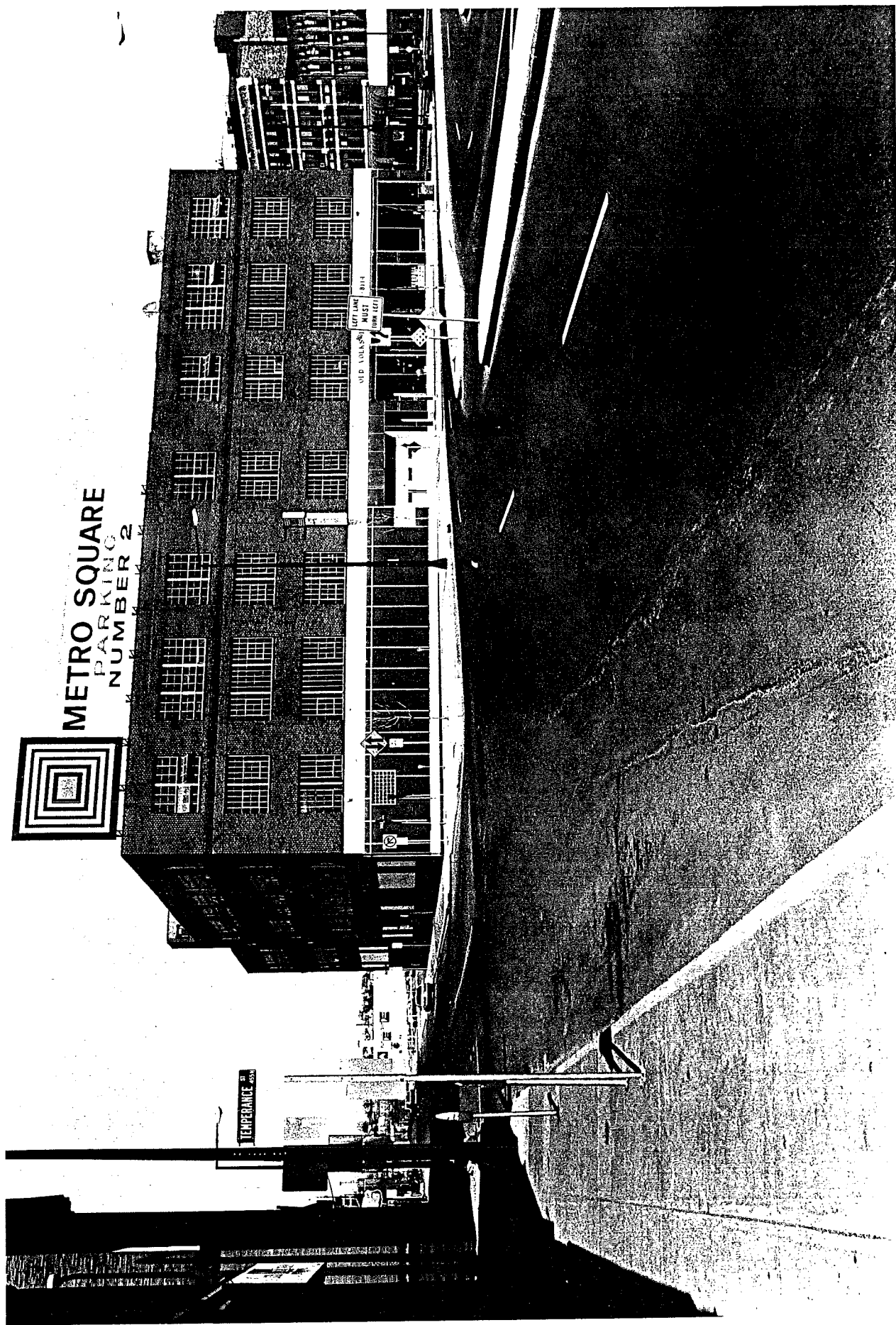
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MCGILL - WARNER CO. (#6)  
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RANSEY CO. ST. PAUL, MN. MCGILL-WARNER CO. (#16)

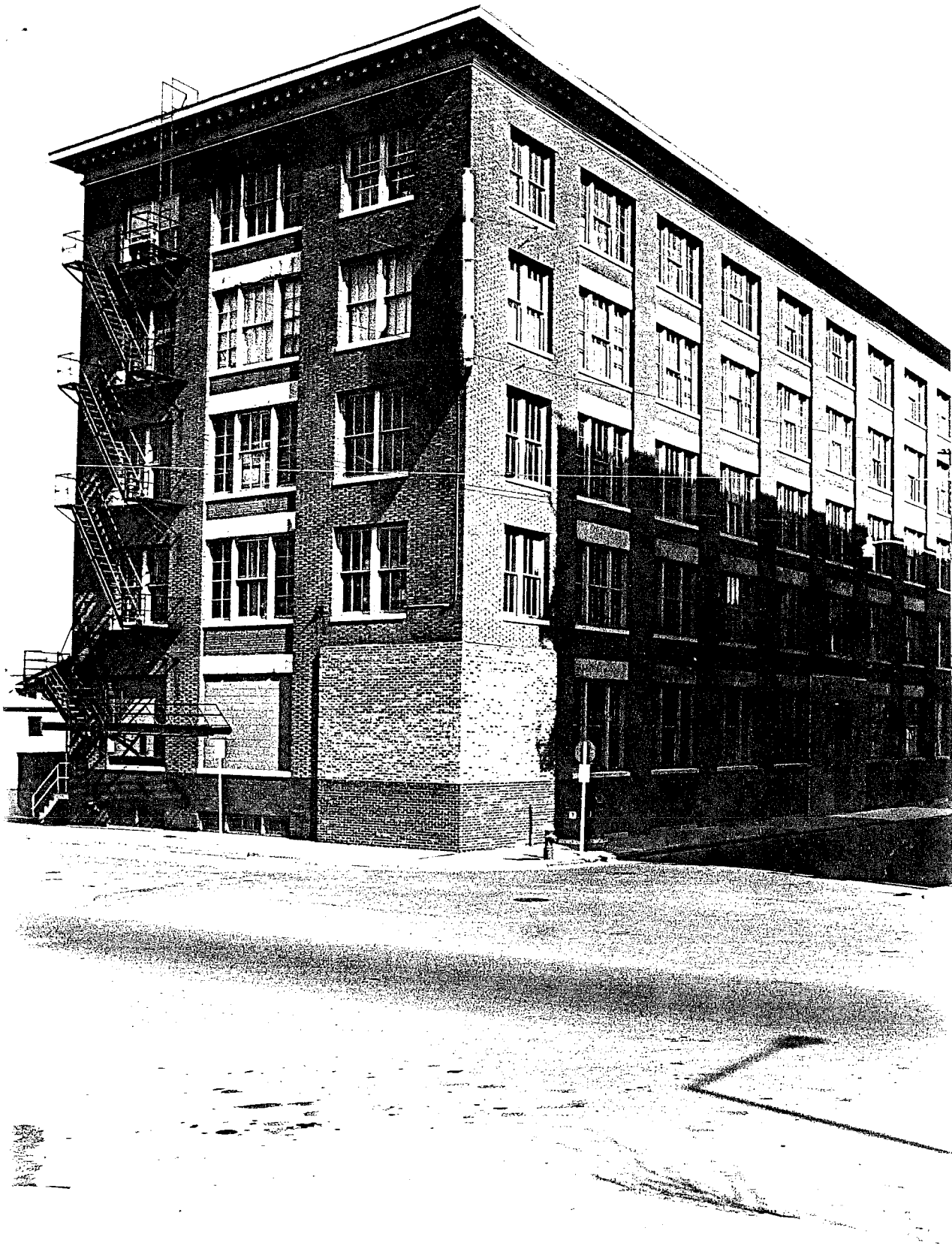


RAMSEY CO., ST. PAUL, MN LOWERTOWN DIST. INCREASE  
F.G. LESLIE PAPER CO. (#7)  
PHOTO I.D. 010201 #15



RAMSEY CO., ST. PAUL, MN. LOWER-TOWN DIST. INCREASE  
CITY MOTOR SUPPLY CO. # 9  
PHOTO I.D. 010801#10





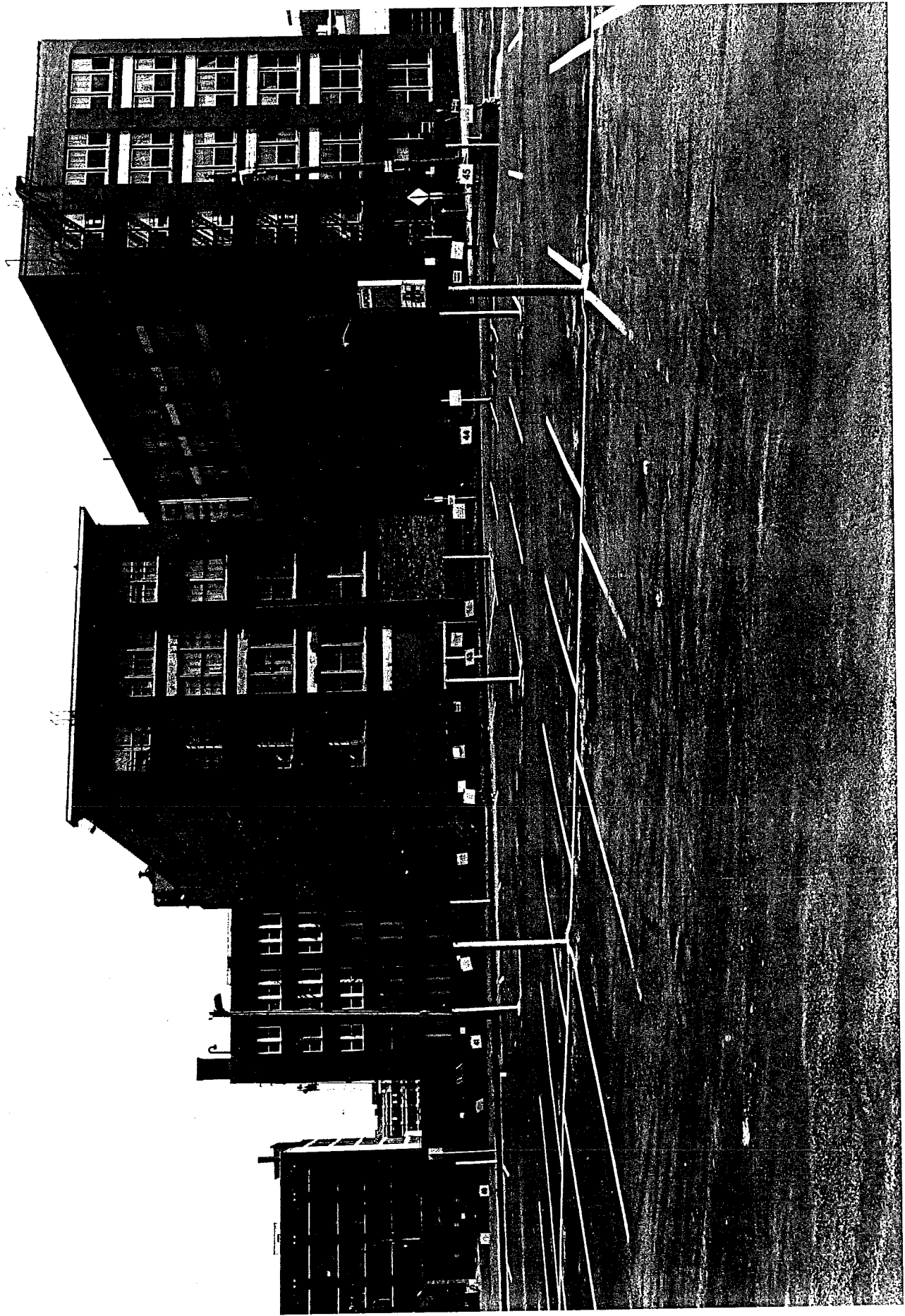
RAMSEY CO. ST. PAUL, MN LOWERTOWN DIST. INCREASE  
O'DONNELL SHOE CO (WOMEN'S DEPT) #11  
PHOTO I.D. 010201 #17



RAMSEY CO., ST. PAUL, MN  
LOWERTOWN DIST. INCREASE  
O'DONNELL SHOE CO. (MEN'S DEPT) #12  
PHOTO I.D. 010200 #10

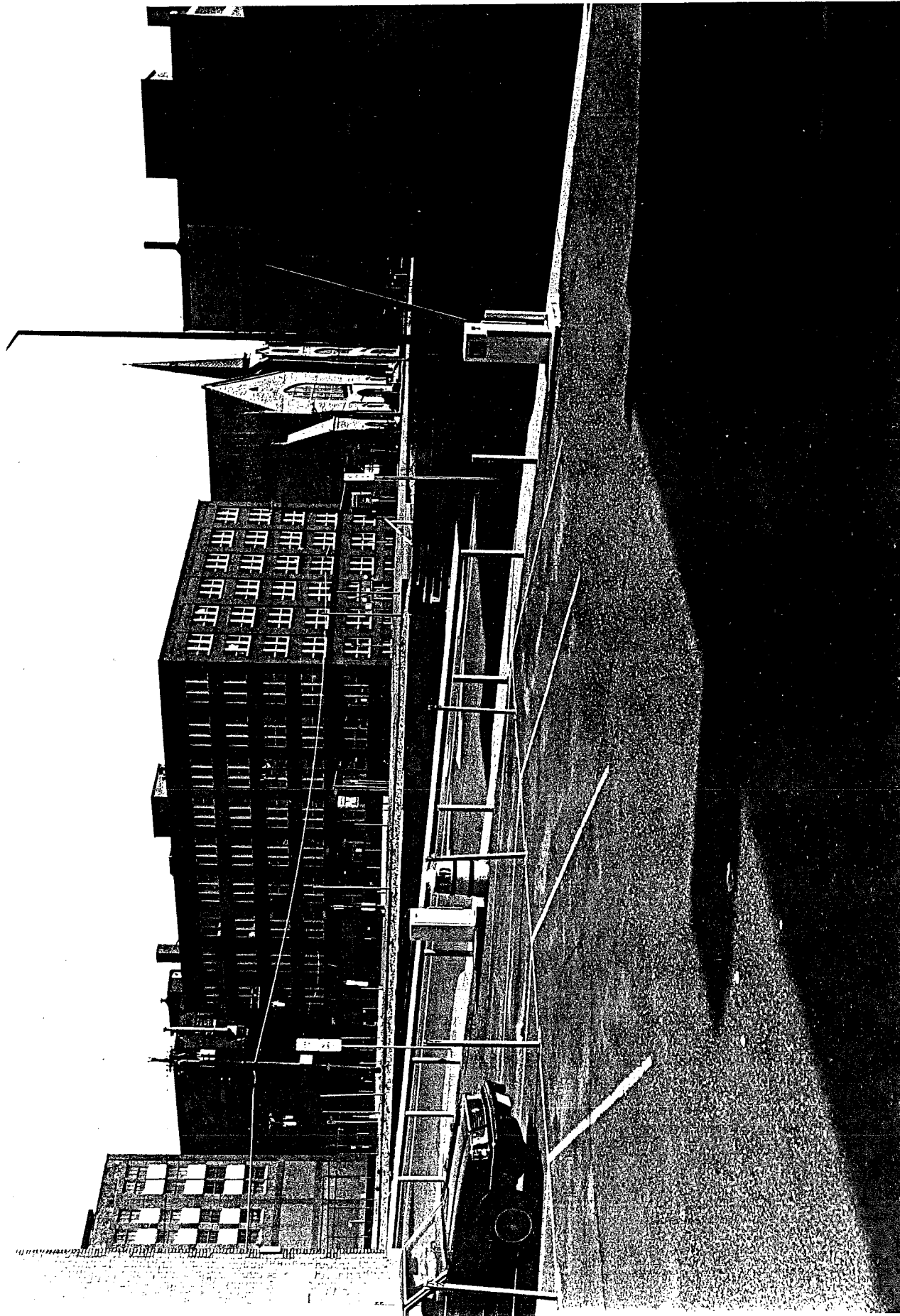


RAMSEY CO., ST. PAUL MN  
LOWERTOWN DIST INCREASE  
O'DONNELL SAGE CO., (MEN'S DEPT) #12  
PHOTO I.D. MHS, REF LIB. MR2.9/SP3.10/p.2



RAMSEY CO., ST. PAUL, MN.  
OVERVIEW, LOWERTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT (BOUNDARY INCREASE)  
L to R: # 7, 6, 11, 12  
PHOTO I.D. 010201 # 21





RAMSEY CO., ST. PAUL, MN  
OVERVIEW, LOWERTOWN HISTORIC DIST. (BOUNDARY INCREASE)  
L to R: #3, 12, 11, 6, 7, 2  
PHOTO I.D. 010201 #3