

# SPOKANE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

## Nomination Form

City/County Historic Landmarks Commission  
Sixth Floor - City Hall  
Spokane, Washington 99201-3333

Type all entries---complete applicable sections

### 1. Name

historic The Kemp & Hebert Building  
and/or common Liberty Furniture Store

### 2. Location

street & number 404 West Main Avenue  
city/town Spokane vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_  
state Washington county Spokane

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<u>district</u>	<u>public</u>	<u>occupied</u>	<u>agriculture</u> <u>museum</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>building(s)</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>private</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>unoccupied</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>commercial</u> <u>park</u>
<u>structure</u>	<u>both</u>	<u>work in progress</u>	<u>educational</u> <u>private residence</u>
<u>site</u>			<u>entertainment</u> <u>religious</u>
<u>object</u>	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<u>government</u> <u>scientific</u>
	<u>in process</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>yes:restricted</u>	<u>industrial</u> <u>transportation</u>
	<u>being considered</u>	<u>yes:unrestricted</u>	<u>military</u> <u>other:</u>
		<u>no</u>	

### 4. Owner of Property

name Shannon Ahern and Chris O'Harra  
street & number 313 W. Riverside  
city,town Spokane vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state WA 99201

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse,registry of deeds,etc Spokane County Courthouse  
street & number 1116 West Broadway  
city,town Spokane state WA 99201

### 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Landmarks Survey, City of Spokane  
date 1979 \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ local  
depository for survey records Spokane City-County Historic Pres. Office 100-2  
city,town City Hall, W. 808 Spokane Falls Blvd. state WA 99201

## 7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good <input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Rising four stories in height, the Kemp & Hebert building dominates the intersection of Main Avenue and Washington Street in Spokane's Central Business District. Completed in 1908, the Kemp & Hebert occupies a double lot in what was once considered Spokane's commercial core, and claims a long tradition of retail sales use. Of reinforced concrete construction, the Kemp & Hebert is faced with a pale red pressed brick. Quality materials and skillful workmanship are evident on this structure that exhibits elements of both Neo-Classical design and the Chicago School Style. Fenestration is entirely symmetrical, with window spandrels separated by piers that rise from the second level to the projecting cornice. The street level consists of five store-front bays that have seen minimal alteration over time. The second and fourth bays contain the main entrances. The east elevation duplicates the primary facade but is longer with six bays, and has only one entry. Although display glass has been replaced, and louvered panels have been substituted for cut-glass transoms, general configuration and entryways are unchanged. Above street level, original wood-frame sash windows have been covered with louvered panels but are intact. On the west, a solid brick wall has been exposed by removal of an adjacent building. On the north, the brick-faced alley wall, with evenly spaced window openings, is original. In good condition, the building was fully occupied until 1987, and leased for limited use until recently.

Located on a double lot on the northwest corner of the intersection, the Kemp & Hebert has a south or primary elevation that is 118 feet wide. Finished in an identical manner, the east elevation is 150 feet long, ending at the alley that separates it from the Caputo, a 1907 four-story brick building. In an area of street-level parking lots and low-rise buildings, the Kemp-Hebert has views that extend to Riverfront Park and the Opera House.

Five bays of equal size comprise the primary facade's storefront spaces and consist of large plate glass windows over low brick bulkheads, separated by narrow, terra cotta-faced piers. Larger columns, with similar panels of glazed terra cotta, anchor the corners. Transom spaces have been covered with louvered panels. Early photographs indicate the transoms consisted of small glass squares, similar to the prism glass that was a popular transom style for several downtown buildings in this era.

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Above the louvered panels, a continuous horizontal band of brick in stretcher bond marks the beginning of the second floor. The band contains a string course and, at end bays, corbels support second-floor lintels. From the second through the fourth floors fenestration is symmetrical, consisting of ten identical rectangular window openings at each level. The central portion of the facade, six windows wide, is stepped-back, with piers rising to flat arches above fourth floor windows. On the protruding side bays, two windows at each level are framed by piers with vertical brickwork that consists of both honeycomb and header masonry designs. On these windows, fourth floor arches are segmental. All fourth floor windows have prominent brick keystones. The remainder of the windows have plain brick surrounds and slender stone sills. Wood frame one-over-one sash windows have all been covered with louvered panels.

The classical cornice consists of a brick frieze, with alternate bricks indented, and a projecting corona supported by a series of box modillions. Consoles also support the corona at end bays. Above the cornice, a parapet with plain coping conceals a flat roof.

The indented entryways at street level have a series of plate glass entry doors framed with wood, and topped with plain glass transoms. Above the transoms is a frieze of classical foliate design. The wood is finished in a dark stain. Metal hardware and kick plates are plain. Above each entry, a contemporary awning covers a projecting canopy with exposed beams. The canopies have decorative support brackets of scrolled wrought iron. A wrought-iron fire escape descends the center of the facade.

The longer east elevation on Washington Street is similar to the primary facade, but with additional windows, a sixth bay at street level, and a single entry area that sits behind the street level's center column. Window surrounds and brickwork are identical to the front. Addition of louvered panels over transoms and windows is also repeated on this elevation.

The west elevation consists of a wall of plain red brick laid in common bond. Once concealed behind an abutting building, the wall contains one of downtown Spokane's most distinctive examples of commercial wall art. A reminder of the store's Liberty Furniture tenancy, it includes renderings of the Statue of Liberty, Liberty Bell, and the "Spirit of '76".

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The north elevation, of red brick laid in common bond, is plain to the parapet except for window and door openings. The west two-thirds of the wall has a series of evenly-spaced narrow windows on each level and a slightly lower parapet. The wood sash windows are of wireglass and are finished with segmental arch tops and stone lugsills. The plainer east third of the elevation has two small segmental arch windows at each level and a service door opening to the alley. A second fire escape is located near the wall's center.

The interior has seen few alterations. Mostly open, each floor has evenly spaced square columns supporting upper floors. The first floor's high ceiling is exposed, resembling its appearance in historic photographs. A large central staircase accesses a mezzanine that runs the length of the north wall. Egg and dart moldings, scrolled brackets at ceiling coves, and Corinthian columns decorate the mezzanine. The staircase, with double wings above the mezzanine, is painted to the second level. On upper levels, the staircase is separated from showroom areas by an east-west wall. Leading away from the stairway at the third floor are solid maple doors with carved palm motif and metal grill kick plates. An original chandelier hangs over the staircase to the fourth floor. Two vintage drinking fountains of enameled cast iron are wall fixtures in the fourth floor stairway area. A walk-in safe, with its original door surround and painted door, is located on the main floor in the office area under the mezzanine.

On the fourth floor, a large square skylight is located south of the stairway wall. Coved ceiling moldings, plain classical columns, and balustrades frame the space below. At one time a central atrium opened the skylight to the first floor.

100-5

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance-Check and justify below		
--prehistoric	--archeology-prehistoric	--economics	--military
--1400-1499	--archeology-historic	--education	--music
--1500-1599	--agriculture	--engineering	--philosophy
--1600-1699	X--architecture	--exploration/settlement	--politics/government
--1700-1799	--art	--industry	--religion
--1800-1899	X--commerce	--invention	--science
X--1900-	--communications	--landscape architecture	--sculpture
	--community planning	--law	--social/humanitarian
	--conservation	--literature	--theater
			--transportation
			--other(specify)

Specific dates 1908-1940

Builder/Architect Alfred Jones

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

### Statement of Significance

The Kemp & Hebert building, the primary retail store for one of the northwest's most successful dry goods establishments, is significant for its association with the commercial development of Spokane and the Inland Northwest. Representative of the quality of commercial and public buildings being erected in Spokane's early 1900's building boom, the Kemp & Hebert, designed by architect Alfred Jones, is also architecturally important. This nearly intact structure, while not dramatic, is stylistically pleasing and exhibits excellent workmanship and consideration for detail. This building is also worthy of recognition for its association with pioneer Spokane businessmen Charles J. Kemp and Henry H. Hebert.

From a small scale, two-man Spokane haberdashery, the Kemp & Hebert corporation grew to include one of the largest retail and wholesale dry goods companies in the Northwest. Charles Kemp and Henry Hebert opened their business in 1892 in the 25 foot front storeroom of the Green Block on Riverside Avenue (just east of today's Old National Bank). Their stock, limited to men's clothing and accessories, was purchased from a bankrupt Cheney enterprise. In 1895, they added two employees, and later leased an adjacent storeroom, expanding their stock to include general dry goods.

In 1908, they formed the Kemp & Hebert Corporation in conjunction with the opening of their new four-story building on the northwest corner of Main and Washington. The site they chose was just one block north of downtown Spokane's "million-dollar corner", the high-traffic corner of Riverside and Washington, then anticipated to be the business core of Spokane. August Paulsen erected his eleven story office building one block to the west, and Levi and May Hutton chose land one block south for their building.

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When Frank Culbertson failed in his effort to acquire retail space in the same area, Culbertson's moved to Main and Wall near Kemp & Hebert's two other major retail competitors, the Crescent, and the Palace, pulling the retail core west. Operating their business on a cash only basis, Charles Kemp and Henry Hebert built on their solid reputation, and, despite the end of Spokane's great 1900 to 1910 growth spurt, continued to enlarge.

The 1920's saw the firm expand its interests both in Spokane and throughout central Washington. In 1925, the Kemp & Hebert corporation purchased the R. J. Hurd and Company clothing store at 503 West Riverside. In early 1928, they purchased the Columbia Department Store in Wenatchee, and reopened it in Wenatchee's new Hotel Columbia. Later that year, they bought out the Emporium Dry Goods store in Yakima, converting it to a "Kemp & Hebert's", and then completed a similar business transaction in Walla Walla. The expansion coincided with the construction of Kemp & Hebert's new warehouse on Trent east of Division, marking the entry of the firm into the wholesale sales business. Four stories tall, and constructed of brick and concrete, it was designed by renowned architect G. A. Pehrson and cost over \$75,000. In 1930, Kemp and Hebert acquired control of Spokane's eminent Palace department store, founded in 1890 by Weil and Sawyer. The Palace operated in the six-story, 1907 building that is occupied by Nordstroms today.

Kemp & Hebert weathered the depression years, shedding assets such as the Hurd store, sold in 1933. A 1935 newspaper article lists it among Spokane's "business institutions" along with the Davenport Hotel, Crescent, Dodson's, John W. Graham's, Jensen-Byrd, and Arthur Jones & Company. Kemp & Hebert remained open at its Main Avenue location until 1940. A year later, its surviving founder, seventy-five year old Henry Hebert, died. The corporation continued to operate under the direction of president and general manager of the Palace, Robert C. Nelson. In 1951, the Palace stock was sold to Allied Stores corporation, then owners of Washington State's Bon Marche stores.

The commercial evolution of Spokane and its retail sales business coincided with the architectural development of the City. Spokane's first great building boom, following the fire of 1889, ended with the Panic of 1893. By 1900, the Inland Empire had recovered and new fortunes were made in investments based on mining and railroad expansion, as well as real estate speculation. Immigration fueled growth and the decade from 1900 to 1910 saw Spokane's census explode from 36,848 to over 100,000.

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The accumulation of wealth and financial stability fostered construction of some of Spokane's architectural masterpieces during this boom era. Early in the century, some of the City's most impressive buildings began to rise west of downtown on Riverside Avenue. They included the early Masonic Temple, Our Lady of Lourdes, the Carnegie Library, San Marcos Apartments, and Western Union Life building (later the Catholic Chancery). In the downtown core, equally impressive commercial structures appeared. In 1908, along with the completion of the Kemp & Hebert, the Paulsen building and the Federal building were finished.

So impressive was Spokane's architectural blossoming, an entire issue of The Western Architect was devoted to Spokane in the fall of 1908. Featured were commercial buildings, public buildings, and numerous private residences. The array included such diverse examples as Kirtland Cutter's Chalet and Louis Davenport's Fifth Avenue hillside estate with its series of miniature waterfalls, to Albert Held's Holley Mason on South Howard Street.

Within the next few years, Daniel Burnham's design for the Old National Bank took form, and the Davenport Hotel opened its doors to instant success. Spokane's architecture reflected the best in design, workmanship, and materials. Incorporating the latest building technologies and structural engineering advances, Spokane's business establishments were intended to endure over time. The Kemp & Hebert building, with its solid concrete frame and its fine brickwork and terra cotta trim covering a full half of the structure's surface, is a testimonial to the investment Spokane businessmen were willing to make in their buildings.

The Kemp & Hebert building was designed by Spokane architect Alfred Jones. Born in 1872, he was the son of a successful Chicago brick manufacturer. He trained for his profession with the Chicago architectural firm of W. W. Boyington and Company. Jones came to Spokane in 1899, working for Held and Permain as a draftsman, and after 1901, exclusively for Held. After a brief partnership with Isaac J. Galbraith, he opened his own firm in 1904. Other partners included Alonzo J. Grover and J. T. Levesque, who took over the firm when Jones retired to Arizona in 1911. His legacy includes the Smith Funeral Home, the Kempis and Espanola Apartments, and Sumner Avenue homes in today's Marycliff-Cliff Park Historic District.

Charles J. Kemp and Henry H. Hebert both arrived in Spokane in the late 1880's. Kemp worked briefly as a sales clerk

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for the Louis Budde dry goods store before joining with Henry Hebert to open their own store on Riverside Avenue. As the business grew, Charles Kemp saw investment opportunities and owned apartment buildings on Spokane's South Hill. His own residence, an eleven room Tudor home on Sumner, was also designed by Alfred Jones. He served the Kemp & Hebert Corporation as its President. After his death, Henry Hebert continued to operate the business. Born in Beaverton, Illinois, Hebert grew up in Kansas, and came to Spokane in 1889. A respected businessman, his circle of close friends included some of Spokane's most respected figures. With his death in 1940, the business continued to operate through the Corporation. His second wife, Marie, died in 1970. The Hebert home was also on Sumner, at West 538.

The Kemp & Hebert Building was unoccupied for four years, from 1940 to 1944, until brothers Abe and Meyer Levitch purchased it and moved their Liberty Furniture Store to the site. A Spokane business dating from 1917, the Liberty Furniture Company operated a retail business from the building until the mid-1980's. Under the management of the original owners' heirs, David and Harry Levitch, the business opened a Shadle Center branch in 1961. The business was dissolved with the closure of the downtown store in 1986.

10c-9



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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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See continuation sheet:

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of nominated property less than 1/2 (120' x 150')

Verbal boundary description and justification

RES & ADD TO SPOKANE FALLS E58.11' OF LT 9 & ALL LT 10 BLK 9

INC S1/2 OF VAC ALLEY LYG N OF & ADJ

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state

county

state

county

---

## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Sally Reynolds

organization Consulting Services

date 6/28/93

street & number 7015 East 44th Ave

telephone (509) 448-0311

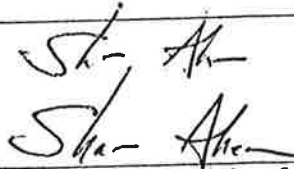
city/town Spokane

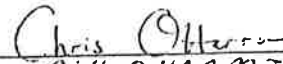
state WA 99223

10c-10

## 12. Signature of Owner(s)

SIGNATURE GUARANTEED  
MEDALLION GUARANTEED  
WASHINGTON TRUST BANK  
  
AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE  
D 0 1 2 9 7 2 6  
SPRINGFIELD TRANSFER AGENTS MEDALLION PROGRAM™

  
WDL# AHCN 3P 492 QW 11/93

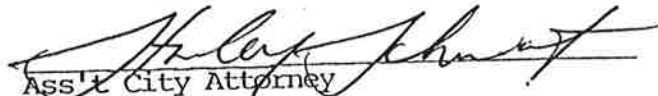
  
WDL# CHARACTEELS 6/97

### For Office Use Only:

Date Received: July 1, 1993  
Date Heard: July 21, 1993  
Commission Decision: Approved  
Council/~~Panel~~ Action: Approved  
Date: November 1, 1993

Attest:   
City Clerk

Approved as to Form:

  
Ass't City Attorney

We hereby certify that this property has been listed on the Spokane Register of Historic Places:

  
MAYOR, City of Spokane

or

CHAIR, Spokane County Commissioners

  
CHAIR, Spokane City/County Historic Landmarks Commission

  
City/County Historic Preservation Officer

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### Bibliography

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Eastern Washington State Historical Society. Photograph  
Collection and Vertical Files.  
Pioneer Title Company. Tract Books.  
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1888-1925.  
Spokesman Review. Selected articles, 1907-1987.  
Spokane County Assessor's Records.  
Spokane Daily Chronicle. Selected Articles, 1907-1986.  
Spokane Public Library, Northwest Room. Vertical Files.

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The Kemp & Hebert Building  
Spokane County, WA

Photographs, black/white

Photographer: Sally R. Reynolds

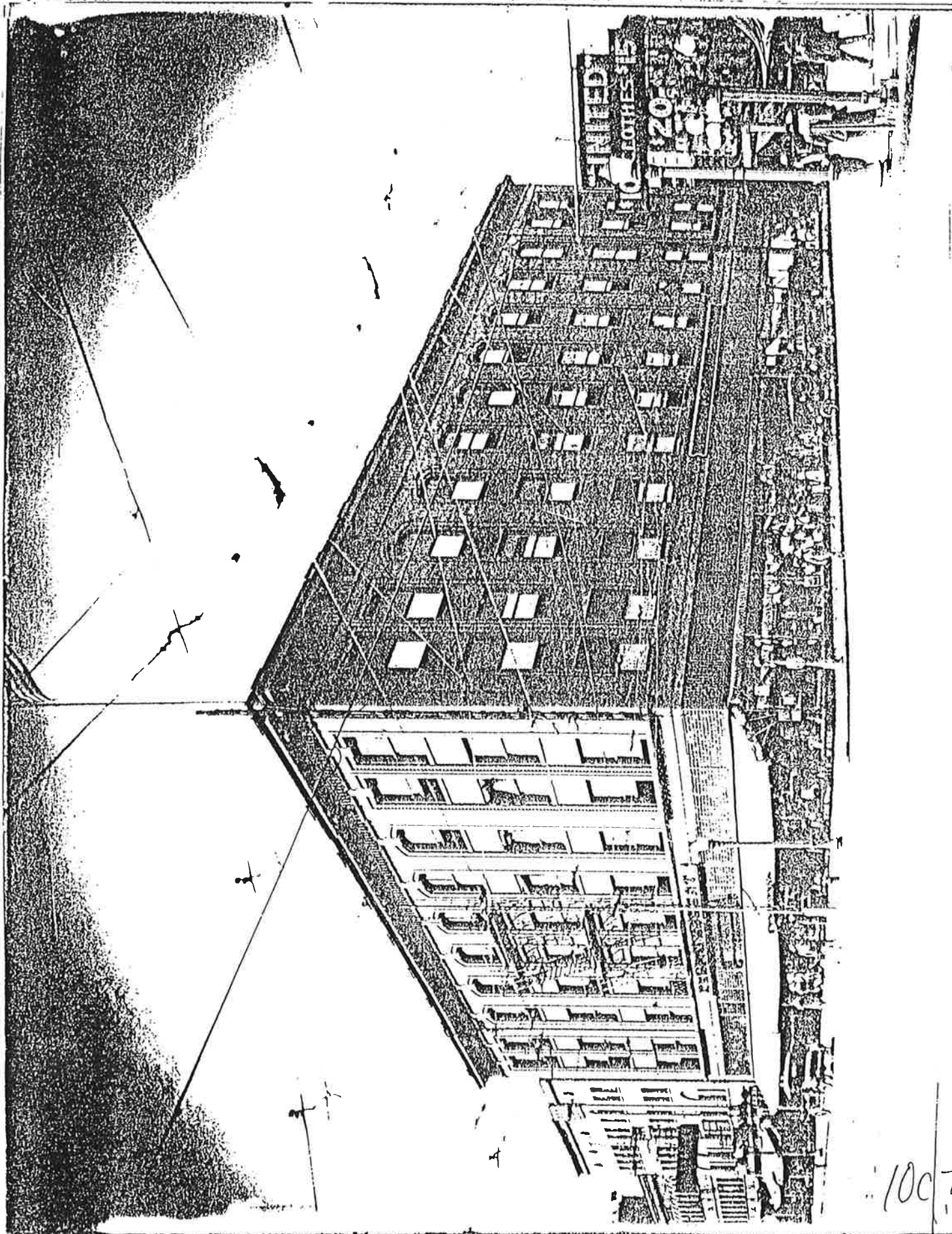
Date of Photos: June 1993

Original negatives: Spokane City/County Historic  
Preservation Office

Photograph and #

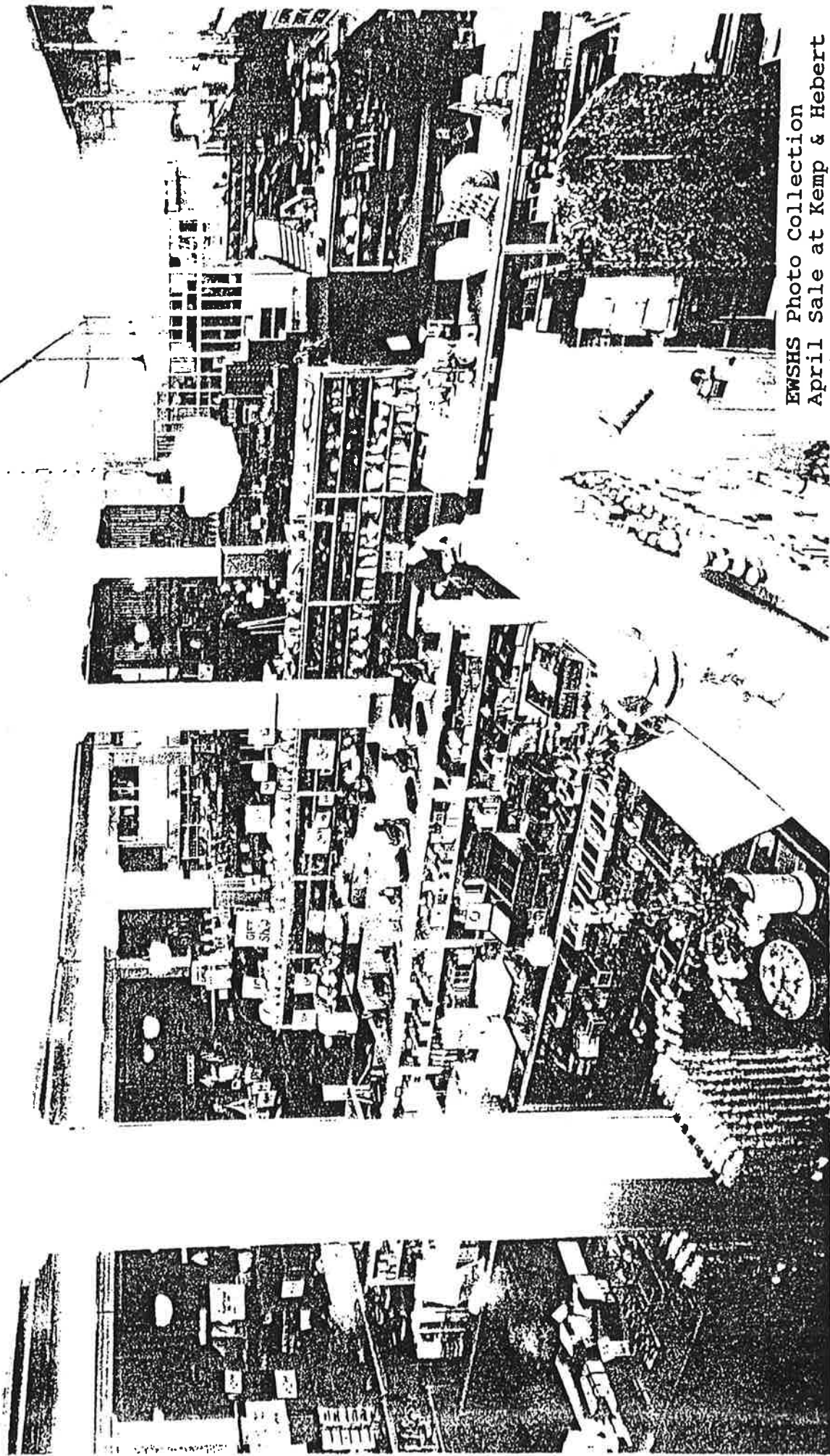
- 1 South (primary) and east elevations, looking northwest
- 2 East elevation, looking west
- 3 North and west elevations, looking southeast
- 4 Main Avenue streetscape, looking east
- 5 Main Avenue streetscape, looking west
- 6 Washington Street streetscape, looking north
- 7 South elevation, southeast entry, looking northwest
- 8 South elevation, southeast entry, frieze detail
- 9 East elevation, entry, looking northwest
- 10 South elevation, corbelling below second floor lintels
- 11 South elevation brickwork, modillions and consoles
- 12 Basement, looking south southwest
- 13 First floor showroom, looking south
- 14 Second floor, looking northeast
- 15 Staircase to mezzanine, looking northeast
- 16 Mezzanine detail, pillar and console
- 17 Fourth floor at lightwell, looking east
- 18 Carved doors leading from third floor stair landing
- 19 Fourth floor, chandelier, drinking fountain beyond
- 20 Staircase from third to fourth floor
- 21 First floor safe

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EWSHS Photo Collection  
Northwest corner of Main and  
Washington intersection. 1918

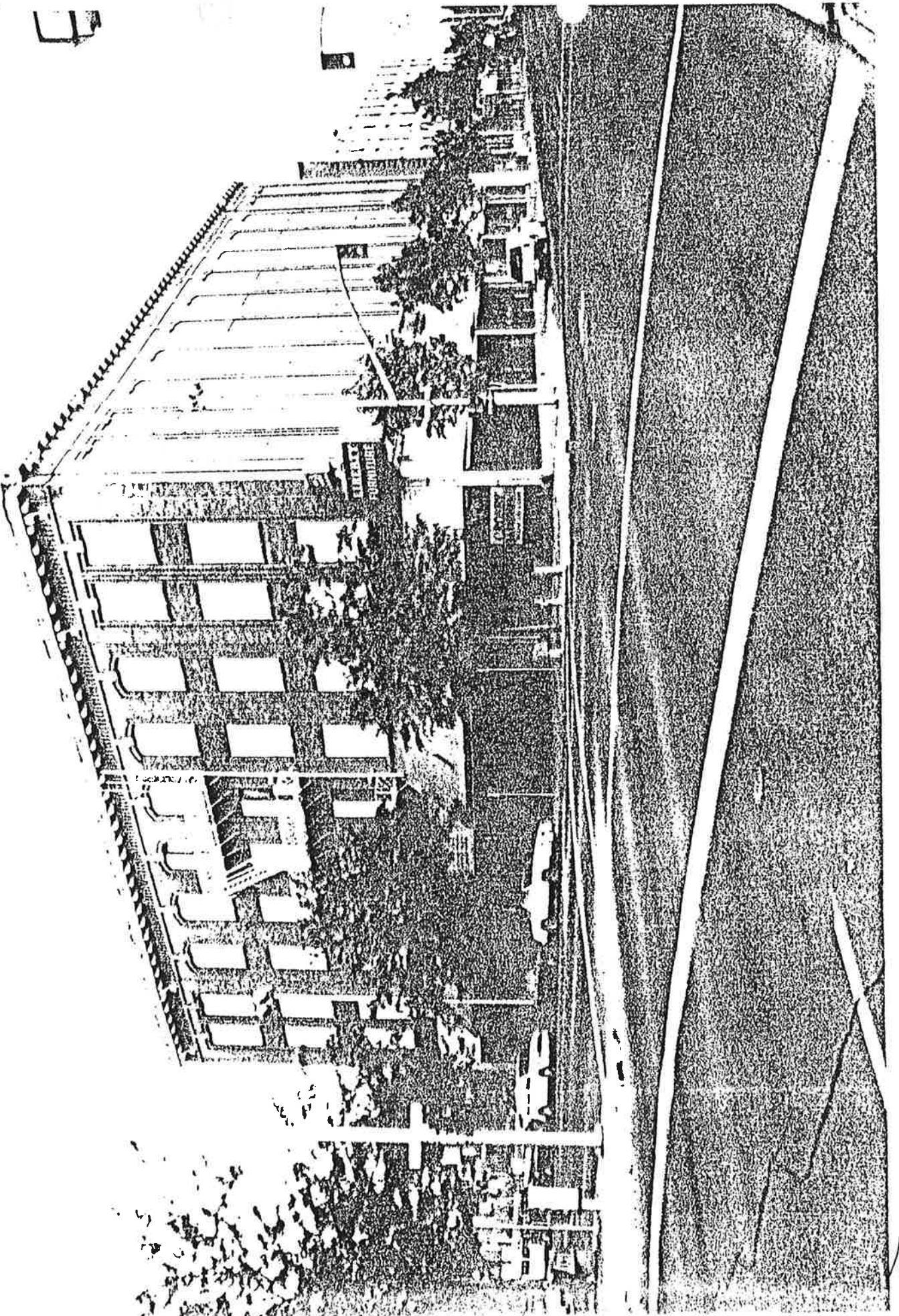
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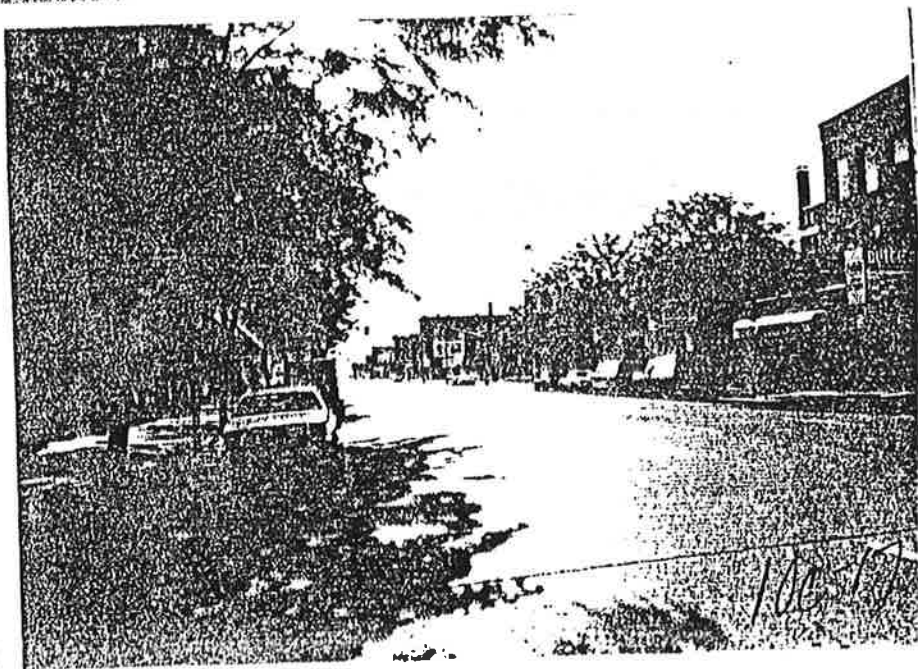
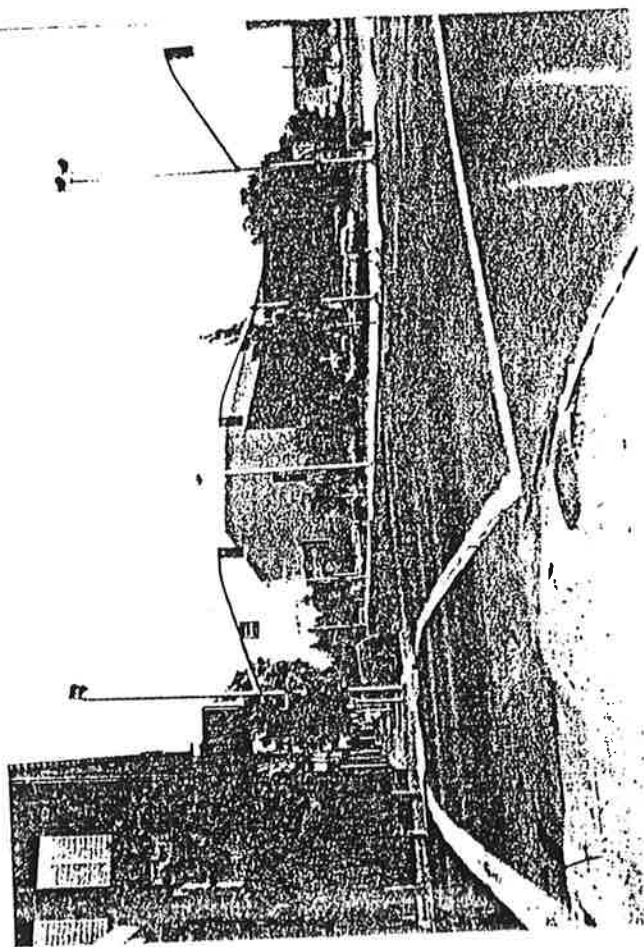
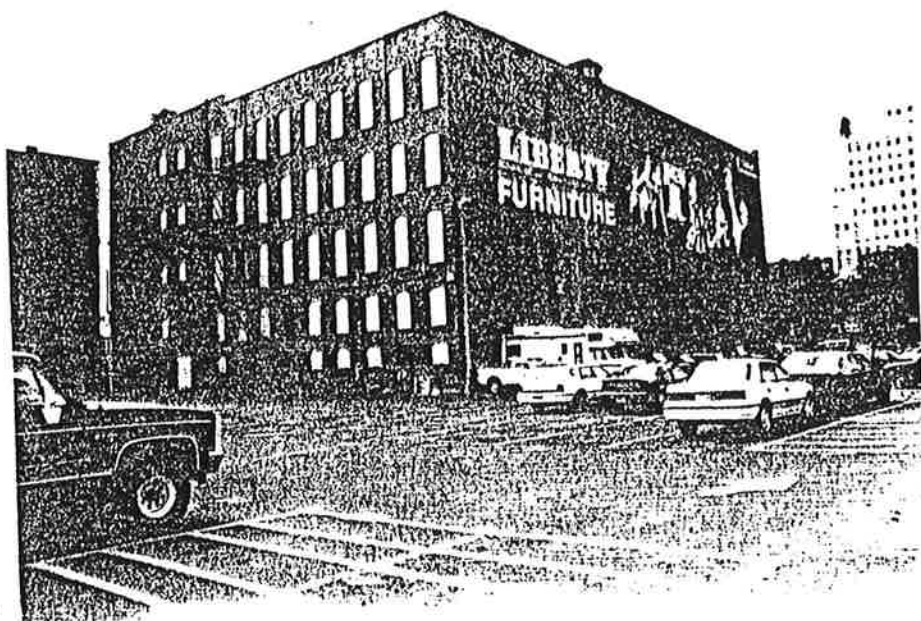
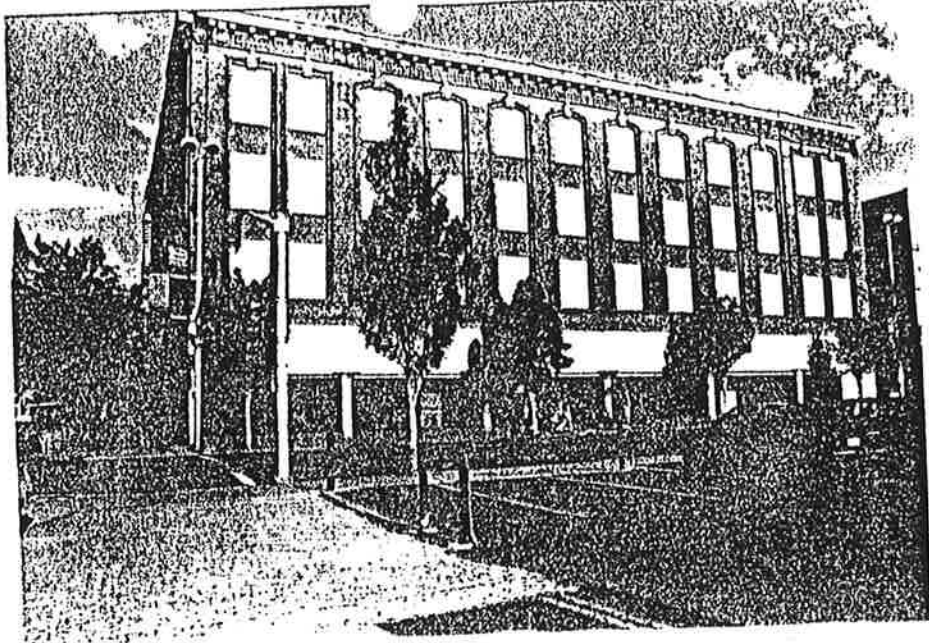
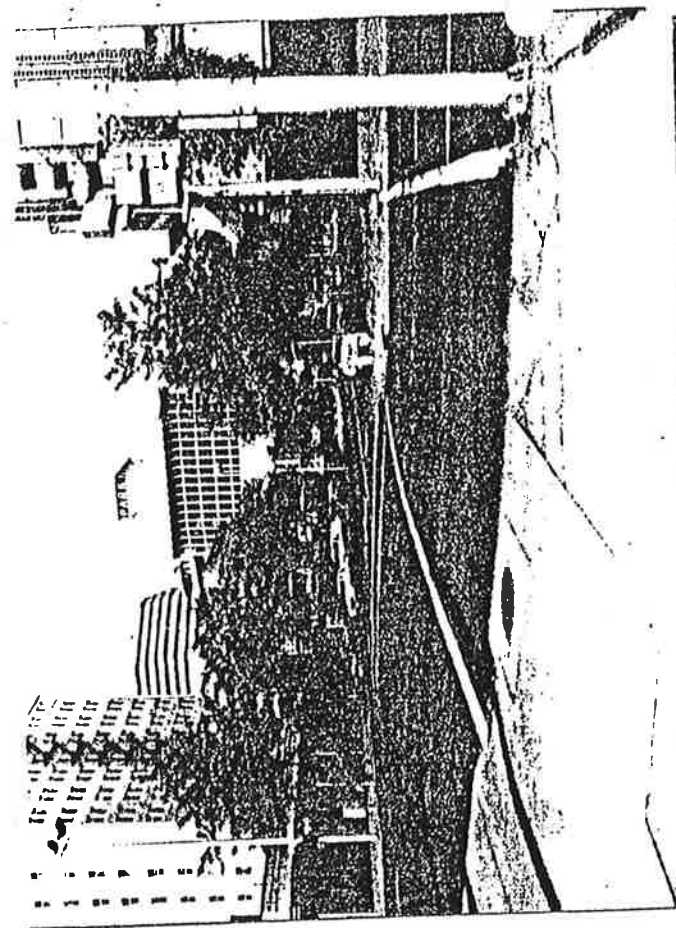
EWSHS Photo Collection  
April Sale at Kemp & Hebert  
Dept. Store, ca. 1926.

100-1

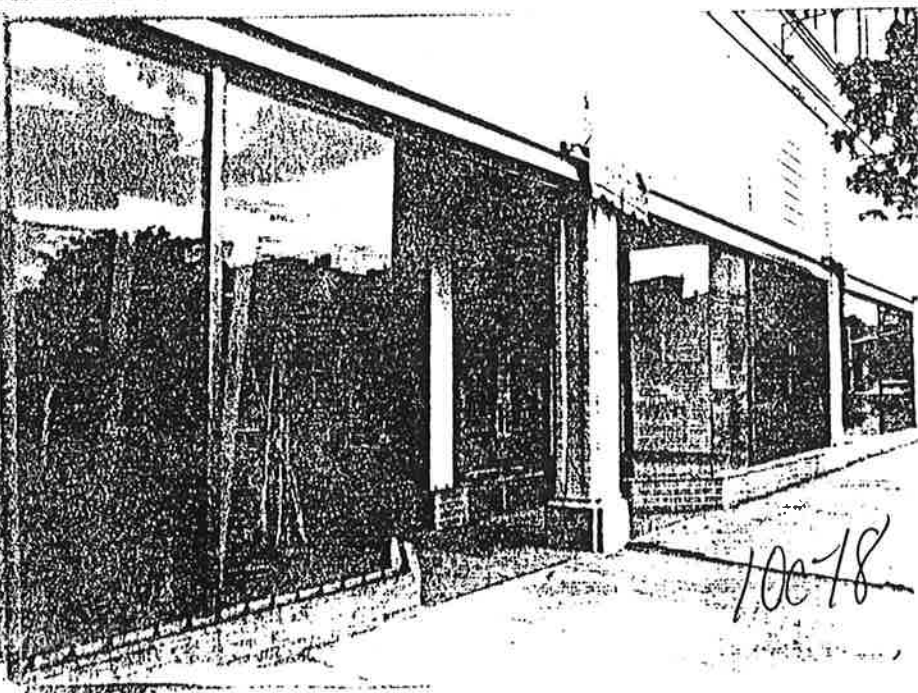
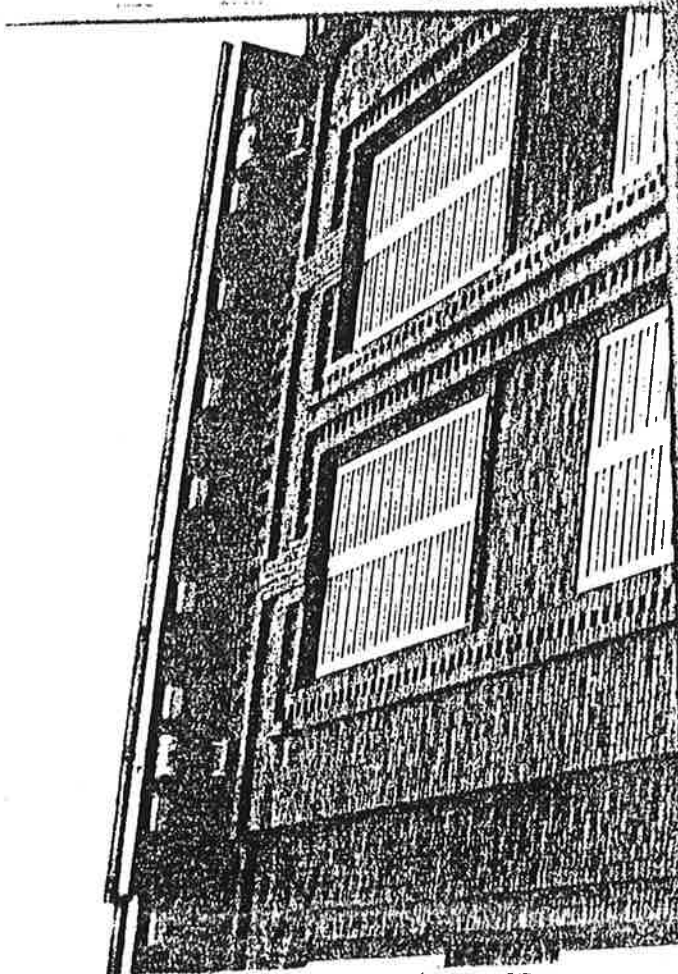
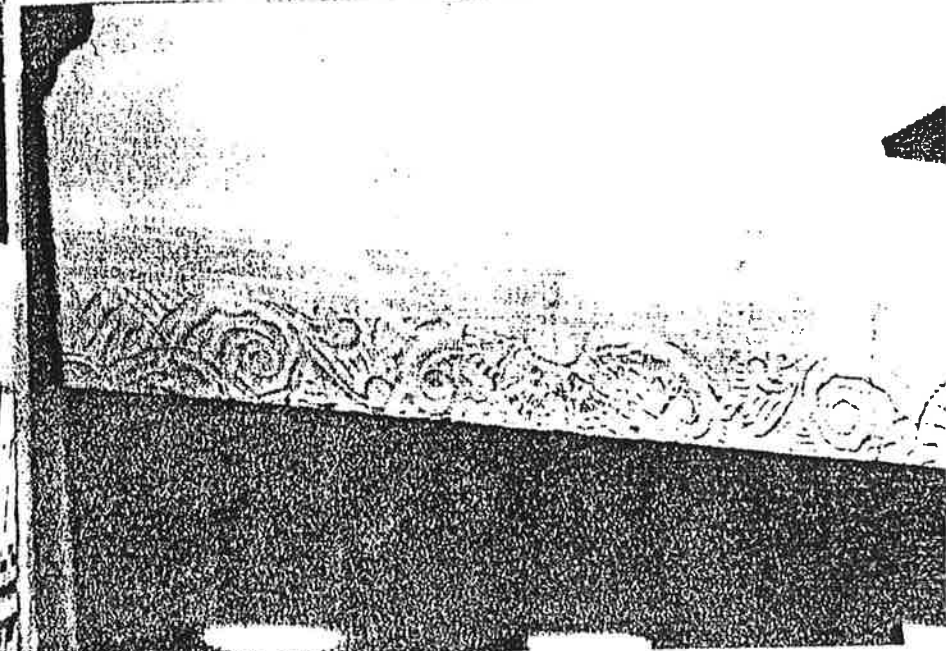
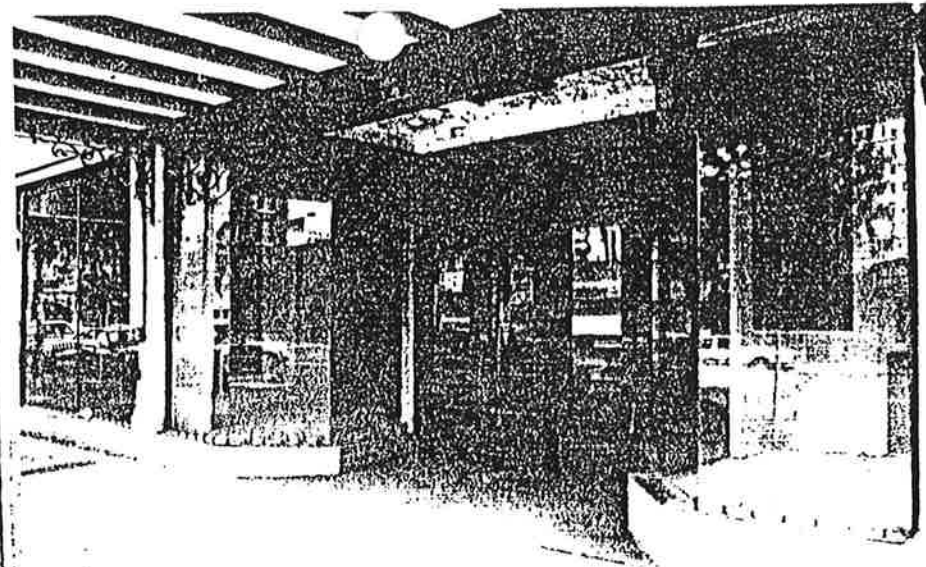
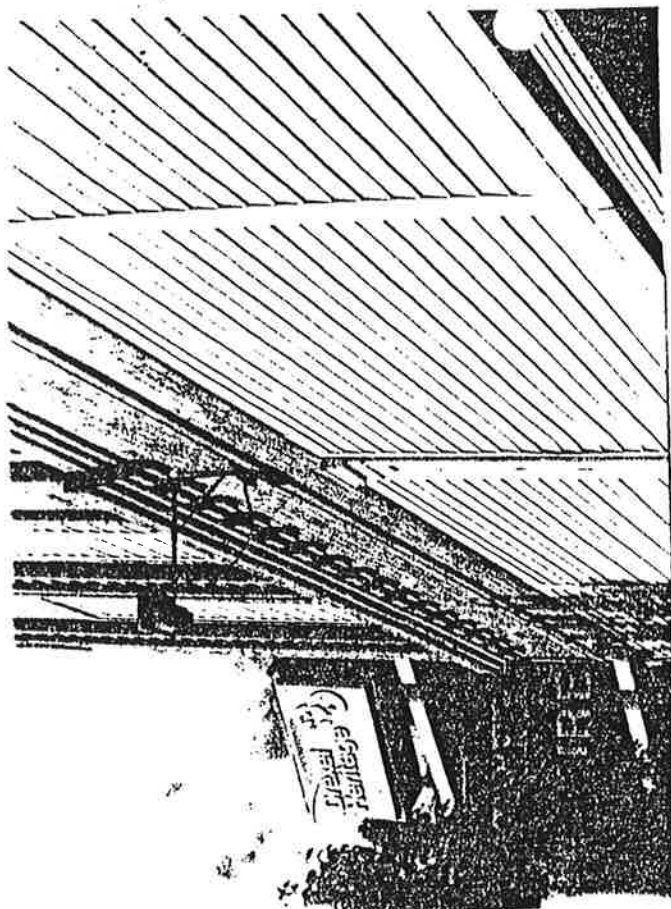


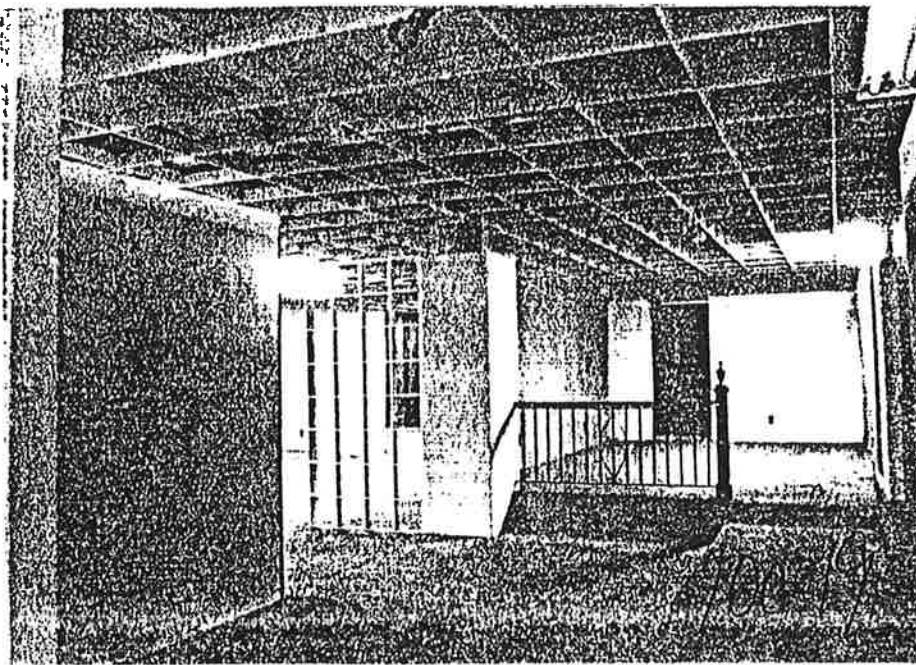
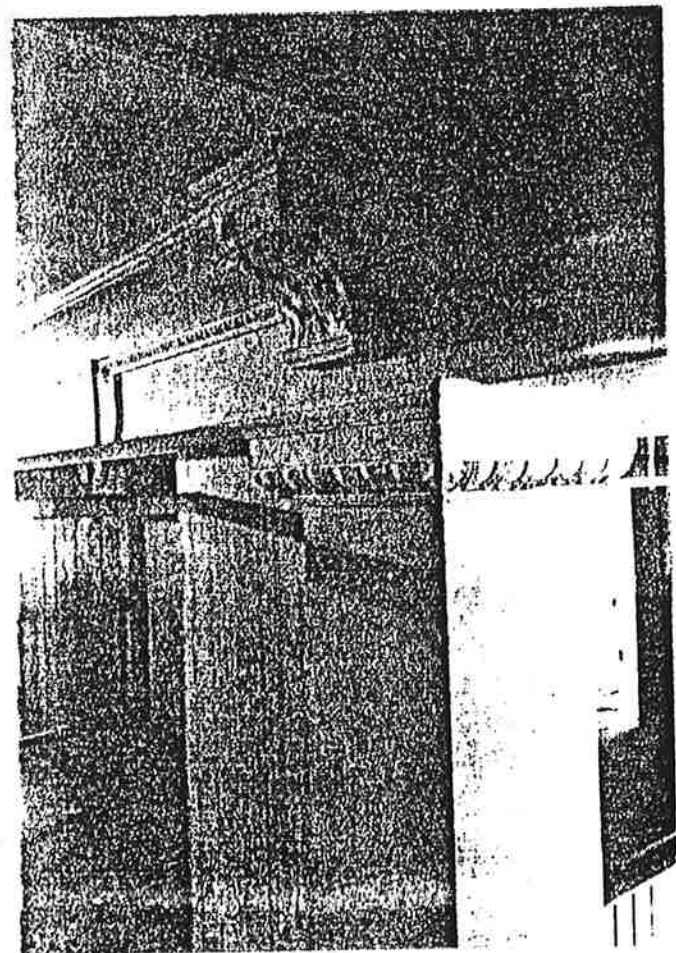
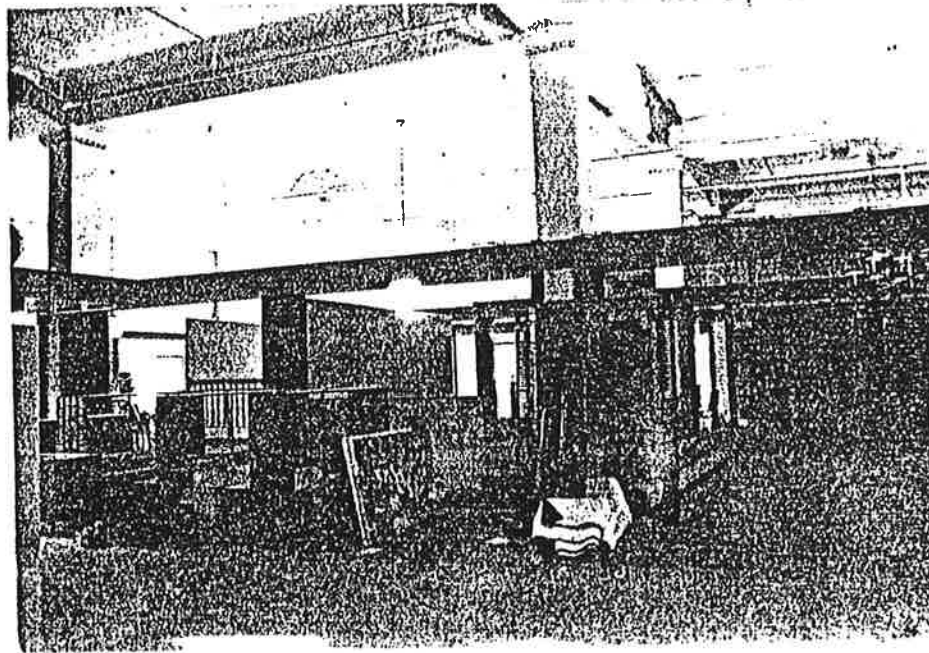
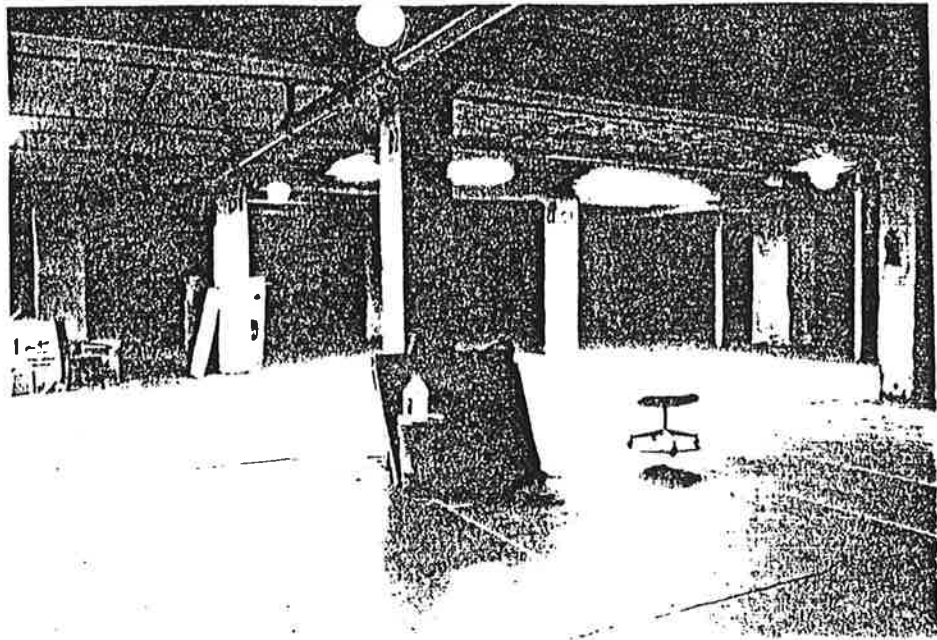
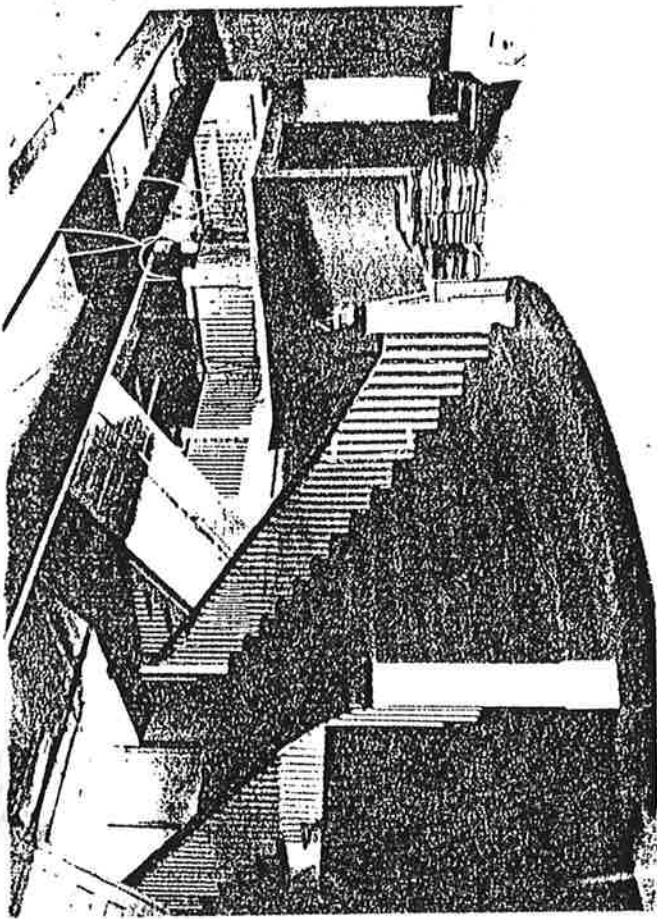


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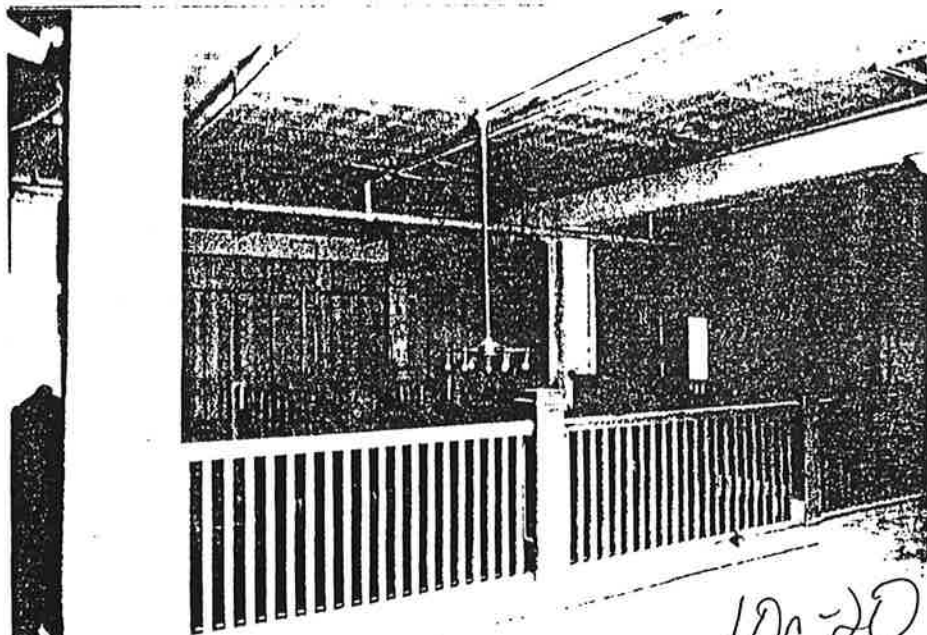
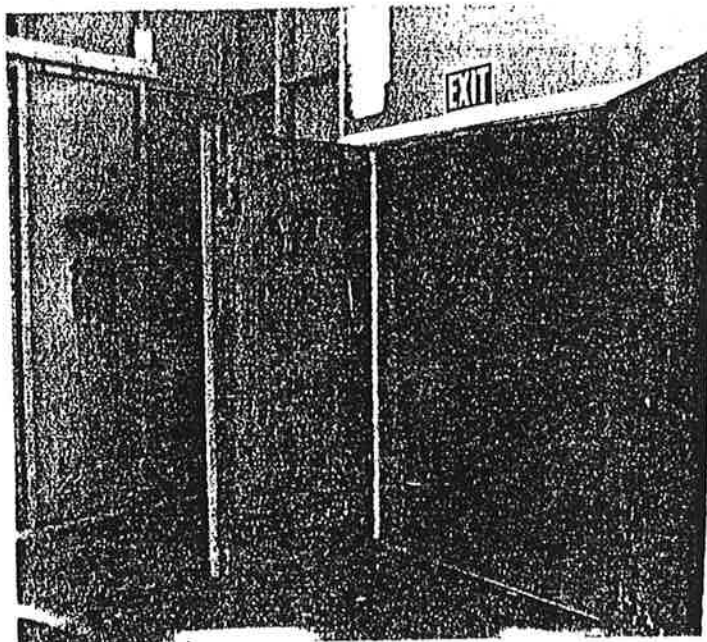
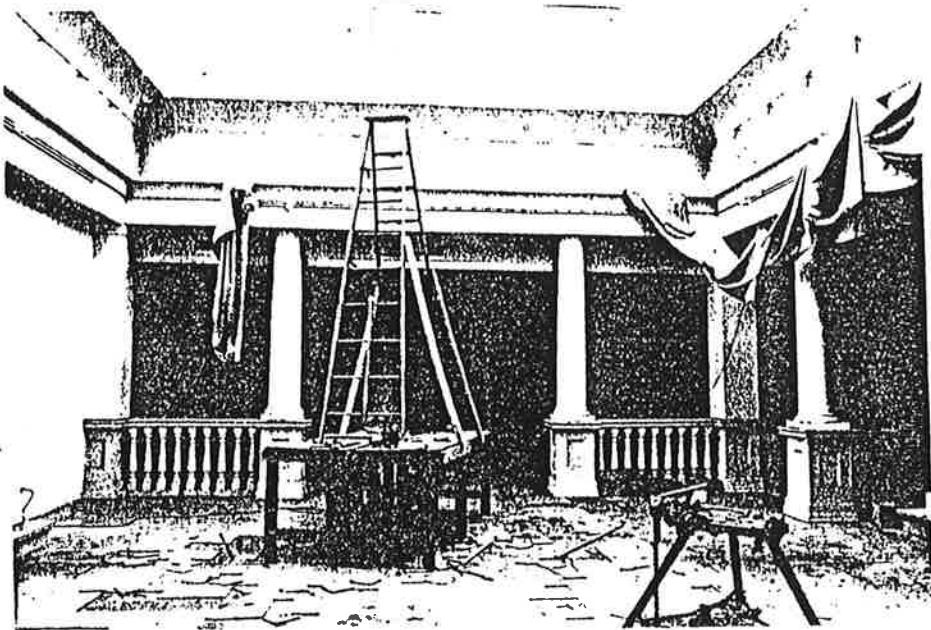
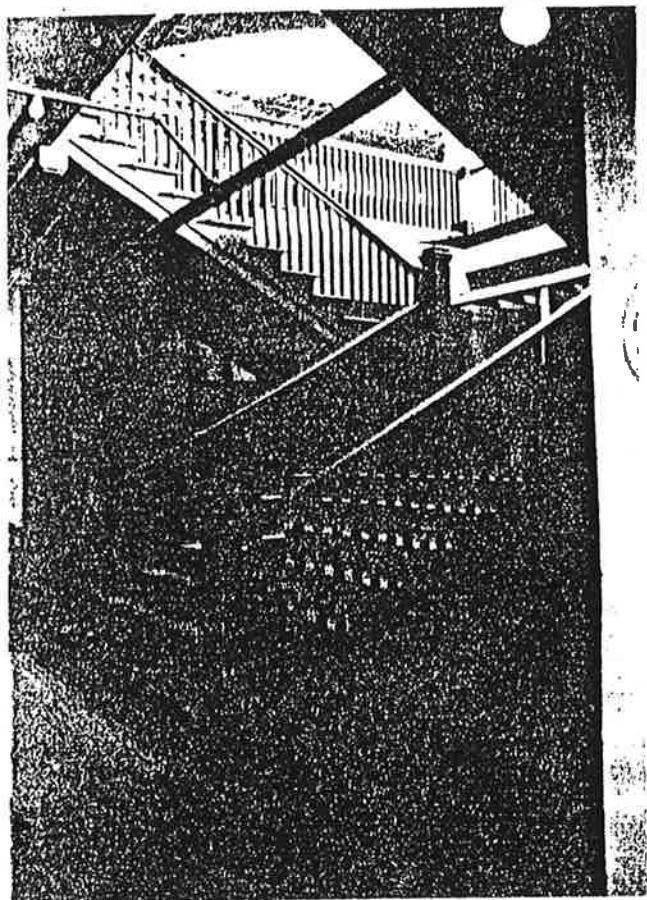












10c-20