

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**HISTORIC Jenkins Music Company Building  
J.W. Jenkins' Sons Music Company Building

AND/OR COMMON

Jenkins Music Company Building

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

1217-1223 Walnut Street

CITY, TOWN

Kansas City

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

#5 Hon Richard Bolling

STATE

Missouri 64106

CODE

COUNTY

Jackson

CODE

95

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER UNOCCUPIED

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Norlin Music Inc. c/o Ed Dolson

STREET &amp; NUMBER

1004 Baltimore Avenue, Rm. 1001

CITY, TOWN

Kansas City

VICINITY OF

STATE

Missouri 64105

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the Assessor, City Hall - 2nd Floor

STREET &amp; NUMBER

414 E. 12th Street

CITY, TOWN

Kansas City

STATE

Missouri 64106

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

1. Kansas City, Missouri Downtown Plan

DATE

1971

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☒ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDSLand Clearance for Redevelopment Authority of Kansas City,  
Missouri Argyle Building, Rm. 318, 306 East 12th St

CITY, TOWN

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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JENKINS MUSIC COMPANY BUILDING

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 6

PAGE 1

2. Kansas City, Missouri Downtown Plan: Historic Building Preservation Analysis  
1973 local  
Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority of Kansas City, Missouri  
318 Argyle Building  
306 East 12th Street  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106
3. Preliminary Inventory of Architecture and Historic Sites of Kansas City, Missouri  
1974 local  
Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri  
City Hall - 26th Floor, E.  
414 E. 12th Street  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106
4. Kansas City: A Place in Time  
1977 local  
Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri  
City Hall - 26th Floor, E.  
414 E. 12th Street  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106
5. Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri, Survey  
1978 local  
Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri  
City Hall - 26th Floor, E.  
414 E. 12th Street  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT  
☐ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Jenkins Music Company Building, 1217-1223 Walnut Street, is located in the Central Business District of Kansas City, Missouri. The building was constructed in two phases. A six-story building, built in 1911-12, was enlarged in 1931-1932 with an eight-story, south unit. As part of the enlargement, two additional stories were added atop the 1911-1912 unit.<sup>1</sup> The building, constructed on level grade, faces west onto Walnut Street. Modernistic in style, the building is an amalgam of Late Gothic Revival and Art Deco design elements. The most ornate area of the building's exterior is the west facade, with embellishments and eighth story step-backs creating a strong vertical and rectilinear effect.

### EXTERIOR

#### Overall Dimensions

The building measures 99' (north-south) by 115' (east-west). The total square frontage of interior space measures approximately 102,900 square feet.

#### Construction Materials

The Jenkins Music Company Building, constructed in a steel and reinforced concrete frame, has red brick side and rear walls with exposed concrete framing. On the west facade, a basecourse of black basalt is visually surmounted by black-colored, terra cotta which surfaces the ground and mezzanine stories. From the second through the eighth stories, the west facade is surfaced with buff brick veneers. Buff colored terra cotta is used for embellishments, quoining, jambs and window lintels, lugsills, stringcoursing and coping. Wood is used for window frames and muntins. Aluminum serves as storefront window frames and door frames along the west facade ground story.

#### Entrances

The west facade also contains two recessed main entrances, flanked by storefront windows. The east facade contains two recessed loading docks with service entrances.

### INTERIORS

Access into the interior was unobtainable.

### ALTERATION

There are no visible alterations to the building with the exception of several sealed storefront windows. The building is well maintained and is in excellent condition.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

JENKINS MUSIC COMPANY BUILDING

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

PRESENT STATUS

The Jenkins Music Company Building has been specifically included in a three phase redevelopment project for the Central Business District.<sup>2</sup> The Jenkins Building is presently unoccupied, and is under no immediate threat of demolition.

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>"Building Banishes Heat", Kansas City [Missouri] Star, March 6, 1932, sec. D, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Johnson, Brickell, et. al. (comp.), Historic Building Preservation Analysis, Kansas City, Missouri, Downtown Plan (Kansas City, Missouri: Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority of Kansas City, Missouri, 1973), p. 31.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		Prominent Owners	

---

SPECIFIC DATES    1911-1912                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT    Smith, Rea & Lovitt (1911-1912)  
                          Enlarged: 1931-1932                      Charles A. Smith (1931-1932)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Jenkins Music Company Building in Kansas City, Missouri, is a significant example of unaltered, Modernistic style commercial architecture, combining Late Gothic Revival and Art Deco decorative elements.<sup>1</sup> The building was constructed in two phases: 1911-1912 and 1931-1932. It is a major commercial design by the notable, locally based architectural firm, Smith, Rea & Lovitt, especially the firm's senior partner, Charles A. Smith.<sup>2</sup> The building was built to serve as the general offices, retail headquarters and the wholesale division of the prominent musical instrument and music publishing firm, the Jenkins Music Company.<sup>3</sup>

### HISTORICAL DATA

The Jenkins Music Company has been a musical institution in Kansas City since its founding in 1878 by John Wesley Jenkins, Sr.<sup>4</sup> During the 1880's Jenkins brought in his son, John Wesley, Jr. to form the J.W. Jenkins and Son Music Company. Apparently following the death of Jenkins, Sr., in approximately 1890, J.W. Jenkins, Jr., with his brothers, Frederick B. and Clifford W., formed the J.W. Jenkins' Sons Music Company.<sup>5</sup> During the decade of the 1890's, the Jenkins Company became one of the largest manufacturers of guitars and mandolins in the world and one of the most distinguished publishers of sheet music in the nation.<sup>6</sup> By 1931, the firm reorganized and became the Jenkins Music Company.<sup>7</sup>

Following three successive moves, the firm completed in 1912, a six-story fireproof building at 1217 Walnut Street, designed by Smith, Rea & Lovitt and built by Harvey Stiver.<sup>8</sup> In 1932, the enlargement of the 1912 unit was completed from plans by Charles A. Smith and the construction was executed by A. J. Rector Construction Company.<sup>9</sup> The newly expanded building boasted of an intricate ventilation and air condition system, plus several interior features that enhanced the business aspects of the music company. Each floor was utilized for the merchandising of musical instruments and supplies. One unusual feature of the building was a small space on the fifth floor devoted to a remote control broadcasting studio. The eighth floor contained Steinway Hall, an auditorium and recital hall, which had a seating capacity for approximately 240 people.<sup>10</sup>

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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JENKINS MUSIC COMPANY BUILDING

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

In 1947, the Jenkins Music Company sponsored the first summer conference of new music, which brought several hundred of the nation's leading music teachers, composers, and performers to the event. The participants of the Jenkins Conferences, held in the building, discussed musical composition, materials, instruction and new trends in music. The conference was held for eight successive years.<sup>11</sup>

At its height, during the 1950's, the Jenkins Music Company employed nearly 700 persons and operated throughout Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas under the management of the Jenkins family.<sup>12</sup> By August 1971, due to financial difficulties caused by strong competition, the Jenkins Company filed for bankruptcy. In July, 1973, David Richardson, founder of Rich Music Inc., acquired the Jenkins Company, later closing a majority of the former Jenkins Music Stores in the city and the surrounding area. These included the company's main downtown building, which is now unoccupied.<sup>13</sup>

Architects

The firm of Smith, Rea & Lovitt has been a major contributor to the creation of some of Kansas City's important buildings, since their formation in 1910. The firm consisted of Charles A. Smith, Frank S. Rea, and Walter U. Lovitt, Jr.<sup>14</sup> As senior partner of the firm, Smith distinguished himself as an architect of national repute. Following Smith's arrival in Kansas City in 1893, he became a junior partner with William F. Hackney, architect for the School District of Kansas City. Smith acquired the position as School Board Architect, following Hackney's death in 1898. For nearly forty years as School Board Architect until his retirement in 1936, Smith designed all of the school buildings in the city, whose innovations, particularly in ventilation and sanitation, were adopted by other school systems throughout the country.<sup>15</sup>

In approximately 1902, Smith was joined by architect Frank S. Rea and later joined, in about 1910, by architect Walter U. Lovitt, Jr. During the ten years of the firm's existence, Smith, Rea & Lovitt designed such notable Kansas City buildings as: the Rialto Building, the Ridge Arcade, the Ivanhoe Temple, the Isis Theater/Wirthnam Building, the Firestone Building and the Rothenberg & Schloss Company Building. All of these structures still survive.<sup>16</sup>

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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JENKINS MUSIC COMPANY BUILDING

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

The firm of Smith, Rea & Lovitt dissolved in 1920. Afterwards Charles A. Smith practiced alone, outliving Rea and Lovitt. Smith died in Kansas City in 1948.<sup>17</sup>

The survey of Missouri sites is based on the selection of sites as they relate to theme studies in "Missouri: State Historic Preservation Plan". The Jenkins Music Company Building is, therefore, being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as an example of the themes of "Architecture", "Economics", "Fine Arts and Humanities" and "Technology".

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Marcus Whiffen, American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles (Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1969), pp. 173, 235.

<sup>2</sup>Service Permit #18486, dated October 17, 1911, Water Department 5th Floor - City Hall, 414 East 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; "Building Banishes Heat", Kansas City [Missouri] Star, March 6, 1932, sec. D, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Star, March 6, 1932, sec. D, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Biographical Data of Kansas Citians (Indianapolis, Indiana: Citizens Historical Society, 1939) pp. 230-231.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., Hoye's City Directory of Kansas City, Mo. (Kansas City, Missouri: Hoye Directory Company, 1889) p. 526; Hoye's City Directory of Kansas City, Mo. (Kansas City, Missouri: Hoye Directory Company, 1891), p. 340.

<sup>6</sup>"In All Countries", Kansas City [Missouri] Journal, December 13, 1898, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup>Polk's Kansas City Missouri City Directory (Kansas City, Missouri: Gate City Directory Company, 1931), p. 349.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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JENKINS MUSIC COMPANY BUILDING

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 3

<sup>8</sup>"A Skyscraper South of Twelfth", Kansas City [Missouri] Star, September 24, 1911, Sec. A, p. 7.

<sup>9</sup>Building Permit #15653, dated June 9, 1931, Building Permit Office, 18th Floor - City Hall, 414 East 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; Star, March 6, 1932, Sec. D, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup>Star, March 6, 1932, Sec. D, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup>"New Music to Topic", Kansas City [Missouri] Star, July 17, 1955, p. 2; "Delve Into New Music", Kansas City [Missouri] Star, July 20, 1951, Sec. D, p. 15.

<sup>12</sup>"New Owner of Jenkins Music Company to the Rescue", Kansas City [Missouri] Star, August 18, 1973, Sec. F, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Pen & Sunlight Sketches of Kansas City Missouri (Kansas City, Missouri: American Illustration Company, [n.d.], p. 119.

<sup>15</sup>The Kansas City Press Club (comp.), Men of Affairs in Greater Kansas City, 1912 (Kansas City, Missouri: [n.p.], 1912), p. 224.

<sup>16</sup>Pen & Sunlight Sketches of Kansas City [n.d.], p. 119; Walter P. Tracy (comp.) Kansas City and Its One Hundred Foremost Men (Kansas City, Missouri: Walter P. Tracy [n.d.], pp. 198-199.

<sup>17</sup>"Charles A. Smith Dies" Kansas City [Missouri] Times, January 12, 1948, p. 9.



## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. "A Skyscraper South of Twelfth". Kansas City /Missouri/ Star, September 24, 1911, sec. A, p. 7.
2. Biographical Data of Kansas Citians. Indianapolis, Indiana: Citizens Historical Society, 1939.

cont'd

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one (1) acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Kansas City, Mo.-Kans.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 363240 4328780

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

E         

G         

B         

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D         

F         

H         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LOTS 41 and 42 BLK 3 McGEE'S ADD

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

1. Edward J. Mischczuk, Chief Research Historian

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri

March 5, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

City Hall - 26th Floor E., 414 E. 12th Street

(816) 274-2555

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Kansas City

Missouri 64106

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Director, Department of Natural Resources  
and State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

August 1, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST: KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 1

3. "Building Banishes Heat". Kansas City [Missouri] Star, March 6, 1932, sec. D, p. 1.
4. "Charles A. Smith Dies". Kansas City [Missouri] Times, January 12, 19  , p. 9.
5. "Delve Into New Music". Kansas City [Missouri] Star, July 21, 1951, sec. D, p. 15.
6. Hoye's City Directory of Kansas City, Mo. Kansas City, Missouri: Hoye Directory Company, 1889.
7. Hoye's City Directory of Kansas City, Mo. Kansas City, Missouri: Hoye Directory Company, 1891.
8. "In All Countries", Kansas City [Missouri] Journal, December 13, 1898, p. 6.
9. Johnson, Brickell et.al. (comp.) Historic Building Preservation Analysis, Kansas City, Missouri Downtown Plan. Kansas City, Missouri: Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority of Kansas City, Missouri, 1973.
10. Kansas City, Missouri. Building Permit Office - City Hall. Building Permit #15653, dated June 9, 1931.
11. Kansas City, Missouri. Water Department - City Hall. Service Permit #18486, dated October 17, 1911.
12. "New Music To Topic". Kansas City [Missouri] Star, July 17, 1955, p.2
13. "New Owner of Jenkins Music Company to the Rescue". Kansas City [Missouri] Star, August 18, 1973, sec. F, p. 7.
14. Pen & Sunlight Sketches of Kansas City, Missouri. Kansas City, Missouri: American Illustration Company (n.d.)
15. Polk's Kansas City Missouri Directory. Kansas City, Missouri: Gate City Directory Company, 1931.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

16. The Kansas City Press Club (comp.). Men of Affairs in Greater Kansas City, Missouri. Kansas City, Missouri. (n.p.) 1912.
17. Tracy, Walter P. (comp.). Kansas City and Its One Hundred Foremost Men. Kansas City, Missouri: Walter P. Tracy (n.d.).
18. Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles. Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1969.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**



JENKINS MUSIC COMPANY BUILDING

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 11 PAGE 1

2. James M. Denny, Section Chief, Nominations-Survey (State Contact Person)  
Department of Historic Preservation  
P. O. Box 176 (314) 751-4096  
Jefferson City Missouri 65102

**Photo Log:**

Name of Property: **Jenkins Music Company Building**

City or Vicinity: **Kansas City**

County: **Jackson County** State: **MO**

Photographer: **Sherry Piland**

Date

Photographed: **Mar. 1978**

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

1 of 10. SW corner, view looking NE. View shows W façade on the left and the S façade on the right.

2 of 10. NW corner, view looking SE. View shows portions of the N façade on the left and the W façade on the right.

3 of 10. Detail of W façade, view looking SE.

4 of 10. Detail of S façade, view looking N.

5 of 10. E façade, view looking SW.

6 of 10. NE corner, view looking SW. View shows E façade on the left and the N façade on the right.

7 of 10. W façade, detail of spandrels between second and third stories.

8 of 10. W façade, detail of spandrels between fifth and sixth stories.

9 of 10. W façade, detail of parapet.

10 of 10. W façade, detail of parapet.



JENKINS

JENKINS

ART  
MUR  
DANCE  
2nd F

MILL END  
DRAPERY SHOP  
CURTAINES  
SLIP COVERS  
UPHOLSTERY

AL  
AU  
PAR

ALLRIGHT  
WIDE PAIR

MUSIC

JENKINS

PIANOS  
ORGANS  
STEREO  
RADIO  
RECORDS  
BAND  
Instruments

TV  
SHEET  
MUSIC

ALLRIGHT  
AUTO PARK

JENKINS

AND'S  
RIDERS  
SHIRTS-SHOES  
OUTDOOR CLOTHING

MILL END  
DRAPERY SHOP  
SHIRTS-PAJAMAS  
SLIP COVERS  
LUMBERY

ALLRIGHT  
AUTO PARK



KINNS

KINNS MUSIC COMPANY

MILL  
DRAPE  
DRAP  
SLIP C  
UPHOL

FOR INFORMATION  
KINNS  
MUSIC COMPANY  
1000  
1000



JENKINS MUSIC CO.

ARTHUR  
MURRAY  
DANCE STUDIO  
2<sup>nd</sup> FLOOR Since 1915

NATIONAL

JENKINS MUSIC CO.













