

1

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Randolph County, MO
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
89	19	buildings
	7	sites
	1	structures
		objects
89	27	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

EDUCATION/library

COMMERCE/TRADE/bank

RECREATION/CULTURE/theater

GOVERNMENT/post office

SOCIAL/meeting hall

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

EDUCATION/library

COMMERCE/TRADE/bank

RECREATION/CULTURE/theater

SOCIAL/meeting hall

LANDSCAPE/parking lot

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Neo-Classical Revival

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

ONE-PART COMMERCIAL BLOCK

TWO-PART COMMERCIAL BLOCK

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE

walls: BRICK; STONE; WOOD; TERRA COTTA

roof: ASPHALT

other: METAL

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Randolph County, MO
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

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

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c. 1880-1963

Significant Dates

c. 1880-1963

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Abt, Ludwig, architect

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Randolph County, MO
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 20

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>548264</u> Easting	<u>4363617</u> Northing	3	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>548499</u> Easting	<u>4363601</u> Northing
2	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>548360</u> Easting	<u>4363800</u> Northing	4	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>547999</u> Easting	<u>4363294</u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David L. Taylor, Principal
organization Taylor & Taylor Associates, Inc. date April, 2012
street & number 9 Walnut Street telephone 814-648-4900
city or town Brookville state PA zip code 15825
e-mail tta.david@gmail.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
 - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs.**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner:

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

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

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

Summary Paragraph

The Moberly Commercial Historic District consists of the historic central business district of the City of Moberly, which is located in Randolph County, in north-central Missouri, approximately sixty miles north of the state capitol at Jefferson City and seven miles east of the county seat at Huntsville. The district contains twenty acres and is densely developed, primarily including two- and three-story masonry buildings built side-by-side with no front- or side-lot setback. The majority of the district's buildings are Italianate in style or exhibit Italianate-derived detail including elongated window proportions and cornices of wood, metal, and corbeled brick. The Moberly Commercial Historic District is built on a grid of streets including, from north to south, portions of West Coates Street, West Reed Street, and West Rollins Street, which run east/west, and from east to west, North Clark Street, North Williams Street, North Fourth Street, North Fifth Street, and Johnson Street which run north/south. Unnamed alleys run north/south and east/west throughout the district. The district contains a total of one hundred sixteen resources, of which eighty-nine contribute to the character of the district and twenty-seven (seven vacant lots, nineteen buildings, and one structure) are noncontributing. Contributing resources are those dating from within the c. 1880-1963 period of significance of the district and retain integrity in its seven composite qualities of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Non-contributing elements date from outside the period of significance and/or have undergone significant physical alterations to the degree that they no longer convey a sense of historicity or retain integrity in the aforementioned qualities.

Narrative Description

The Moberly Commercial Historic District (Photos 1-15; Figs 1-4) consists of an approximately six square-block area in the geographic center of the City of Moberly. The district is topographically flat and contains a total of one hundred eight buildings dating from c. 1880 through 1963, primarily of load-bearing masonry construction and flat-roofed. The buildings range in height from one story to three stories; no residential buildings are in the district. As noted in the summary paragraph above, of the district's one hundred sixteen resources, eighty-nine are buildings which contribute to the character of the district and nineteen are noncontributing buildings. In addition to the buildings in the district there are seven non-contributing sites--parking lots that previously contained buildings--and one non-contributing structure, a cellular communications tower (Photo 12) associated with a telephone company building on West Coates Street. The overall appearance of the district is entirely commercial, characterized by a grid of paved streets with concrete sidewalks, with all buildings built flush with one another. Landscaping is generally confined to street trees.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

This is a densely-developed commercial district consisting of a compact concentration of historic masonry buildings, all but two of which are of brick construction (Fig. 3). Two properties (Photo 2) are finished in terra cotta. The structural system, materials, and embellishment of all properties in the district reflect both the period of construction of each individual property and the period of significance of the district as a whole (Photos 1-15). The buildings are built on foundations of stone and are capped with flat roofs, precluding the identification of the roofing materials; it may be assumed that most roof finishes are of rolled roofing, metal, or rubber membrane.

Most buildings in the district are symmetrically massed, incorporating substantial display windows on the first story. Most upper facades (Photos 4-6, 9, 13) are typically penetrated by tall and narrow window openings. Except for corner buildings and properties with adjacent parking, the buildings in this district are built flush with one another. The dimensions of building lots vary from property to property, and reflect subdivision and land assembly over the decades.

Historic *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* (Figs. 1, 2) indicate that much of this area was essentially built up by the early 1880s. A scattering of frame houses were shown on the 1888 *Sanborn* map but essentially by that time the district contained brick commercial architecture supporting a variety of businesses on the first floor including dry goods merchants, jewelry stores, billiard parlors, financial institutions, professional offices, and furniture, grocery, and feed stores. The upper floors of the buildings contained residential units as well as offices and meeting halls, along with several hotels.

The buildings in this district are nearly all of red brick construction, typically constructed of common brick laid in common bond and in some cases faced with pressed brick, including buff-colored and blond brick, in some cases laid with decorative recessed mortar joints and buttered joints. Some newer buildings are finished in wire-cut brick. Most of the district's buildings represent the one- and two-part commercial block building type.¹ Characteristic of any historic commercial area, this district's buildings incorporate storefronts on the first story, many of which have been altered from the original but typically retain their traditional window-to-wall ratio. Fenestration above the storefronts includes flat-topped, semi-circular-arched, and segmental-arched openings, some retaining their original sash and others with replacement units that typically occupy the entire original window opening (Photos 4, 8, 10-12).

¹The building typology employed herein follows the typology set forth in Richard Longstreth's *The Buildings of Main Street*, a complete citation for which appears in the Bibliography in Section 9.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

Architectural embellishment within this district varies widely. Among the more highly ornamental finishes are the Neo-Classical Revival-style terra cotta finish found on the 1919 former bank building at 205 West Reed Street (Photo 2) and the c. 1920 Klein Bakery at 212 North Fifth Street, along with the pressed metal facades of several properties (Photos 4, 5, 11) including 417-419 and 503 West Reed Street and 220 North Clark Street. Substantially less-detailed finishes appear on many of the other properties, including corbelled brickwork (such as corbeled panels and corbeled cornices) along with the occasional use of stone, concrete, metal, and terra cotta trim (Photos 1, 6, 8).

As noted above, this district consists of six square blocks in downtown Moberly. The original building lots were long and narrow, typically in the range of 25' x 100'. In many cases larger buildings occupy more than one of the historic lots. The streets have consistent rights-of-way of eighty feet and alleys are twenty feet in width. The streets and alleys are paved, and the streets have concrete and brick sidewalks and some street trees, planted in the course of a downtown landscaping project.

The individual buildings in the district are in excellent to fair condition. Some properties exhibit deferred maintenance and disinvestment but none appear to be structurally unstable and in no case has the physical condition of any building rendered it non-contributing within the context of the district as a whole.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps indicate that several instances of demolition have occurred in the district since the 1940s; these demolitions have left surface parking lots, each of which is treated as a non-contributing site in the context of the district and are depicted as such on the district map accompanying the nomination. Alterations to properties in the district include the installation of replacement sash, the modifications of storefronts, "slipcovering" of facades with modern materials, and in a limited number of instances, the in-filling of windows.

Summarizing, the Moberly Commercial Historic District retains integrity in its composite qualities and consists of a twenty-acre area in the heart of the community of Moberly and encompasses the historic core of the community's central business district.

The following resources are located in the Moberly Commercial Historic District:

North Clark Street

207 North Clark Street; 1898; Contributing

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

This is a 2-story brick-finished commercial building with a somewhat altered storefront and a second-story oriel clad in non-historic siding. From 1919 to 1976 this was the office of Metropolitan Insurance, under the G.W. Sparks Insurance Co.

209 North Clark Street; c. 1880; Contributing

This 2-story Italianate-style commercial building has a 3-bay upper façade with segmental-arched windows with cast iron hoods. The storefront was compatibly rehabilitated and retains cast iron elements including a plaque from the Smith, Hill, & Company's Eagle Foundry of Quincy, Illinois. Second-story window openings shortened. J. S. Van Cleve and Company, furniture retailers and undertakers, were among the early occupants.

211 North Clark Street; c.1920; Contributing

A 2-story brick commercial building with storefronts partially in-filled. 4-bay upper façade intact and original with 1/1 windows and decorative light-colored masonry trim and a stepped parapet capping the facade. Martin and Mahan, furniture dealers and undertakers, were here 1923-1925, and from 1936-1957 it was the Mahan Funeral Home.

216 North Clark Street; c. 1895 Contributing (Photo 11)

A 2-story vernacular commercial building with painted brick surfaces and an altered storefront with a fixed metal awning. 3-bay upper façade with segmental-arched window openings and flat-topped sash. Corbeled brick panel above second-story windows. Former location of several retail paint dealers, including Reed's Paint Company and H. B. Wegamott's, vendors of wallpaper and paint.

218 North Clark Street; c. 1890; Contributing (Photo 11)

One of Moberly's several pressed metal-fronted buildings, this one has a modern brick storefront but an unaltered upper façade that includes rock-faced pressed metal surfaces, an oriel with a concave roof, a dentil band, various floral motifs, and a decorative cornice. In the 1890s this was the grocery of George Gukhurst, who lived on the second floor. Later occupants include several hardware stores owned or managed by George C. Hazen between 1909 and 1929.

220 North Clark Street; c. 1890; Contributing (Photo 11)

A pressed-metal façade is on this 2-story Italianate-style commercial building, with much of the storefront original and 4-bay upper façade with the windows enclosed by corrugated fiberglass panels. Classically-inspired trim includes pilasters, set singly and in pairs, along with a variety of floral trim and bracketed storefront and main cornice. Cast metal balcony extends across entire building. Several grocers occupied the first floor retain space between 1902 and 1913. William

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

Fennell, a blacksmith, lived on the second story with his family from the 1890s until the 1930s, Mary, presumably his widow, until 1945.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

222 North Clark Street, c. 1900; Contributing

This is a 2-story red brick commercial building on a corner lot, with a brick storefront. The 3-bay upper façade has segmental-arched windows with anodized replacement sash and the original brick window heads with drip labels. For the first half of the twentieth century, this building housed a grocery under George Gutehunt, Dameron & Gutehunt, F. O. Dameron, and F. P. Gutekust.

223 North Clark Street, 1874; 1930s; Contributing

Originally a 3-story French Second Empire-style building, the upper stories were lost in a 1930s fire, leaving the present single-story building with brick finishes, an altered storefront, and a stepped parapet on the façade.

315 North Clark Street; c. 1907; Contributing

Industrial vernacular building of brick construction, built in at least two stages. The building has a flat roof and a dearth of architectural detail. Overhead garage doors access the North Clark Street elevation. This was formerly the J. T. Cross Lumber Company. James Thomas Cross (1856- ?) graduated from the University of Missouri at Columbia in 1881 and was a teacher before serving as manager of Flagg Lumber Company at Clark and New Franklin. In 1907, Cross purchased an interest in the C.D. Everhart Lumber Company, located at Williams and Franklin streets in Moberly. Because the location was subject to flooding, Cross and his partner, R.L. Kingbury, bought the Holtsinger Livery Stable on North Clark Street and moved his office and the lumber yard, renaming it the J. T. Cross Lumber Company.

335 North Clark Street; c. 1910; Contributing

Listed in the 1916 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* as an "office," this is a 1-story hip-roofed vernacular building of red ceramic tile construction, with rolling loading doors on the north elevation.

North Fifth Street

205-213 North Fifth Street; c. 1890; Contributing

This two-story commercial building is finished in painted brick, with two commercial spaces on the first story. The upper façade consists of 8 segmental-arched openings, some of which exhibit replacement sash and exterior fixed shutters. A series of seven tie rods with star caps are between the first and second story and another row is between the upper-story windows and the roofline that has a stepped parapet.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

212 North Fifth Street; c. 1915; Contributing

Distinctive 2-story former bakery, built of red brick and finished in white glazed brick and terra cotta, with a centered entry flanked by two storefronts, one of which has been in-filled by an overhead garage door (this feature may have dated from the historic period and have been used for the ingress and egress of delivery trucks—this is not known). Upper façade is original and intact with a centered oriel flanked by bands of four flat-topped 1/1 windows on either side. Terra cotta panels are inscribed "LOUIS KLEIN MOBERLY MODEL BAKERY." The parapet is finished in terra cotta, including a curvilinear centered pediment.

214 North Fifth Street; c. 1970; Noncontributing

This is a single-story non-historic professional building finished in corrugated vinyl panels, with display windows and centered entry door on the façade; appears to date from after the period of significance.

218-218B North Fifth Street; c. 1940; Noncontributing

A single-story L-shaped brick commercial building with a side wing that is set back c. 40 feet from the sidewalk. The front section is totally clad in non-historic materials, obscuring historic features.

North Fourth Street

110 North Fourth Street; 1913; Contributing (Photo 14)

Constructed in 1913 as a motion picture and vaudeville theater, the Fourth Street Theatre was designed by local architect Ludwig Abt and Kansas City architect Robert Sanneman. According to the *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*, it was built strictly as a movie house. It retains much of its exterior character including polychrome brick and a Rococo Revival facade with a profusion of high-relief terra cotta ornament.

111 N. Fourth Street; 1903; Contributing (Fig. 3)

This Carnegie Library, a Neo-Classical Revival-style library of brick construction with a 3-bay façade, is dominated by a monumental full Corinthian portico with a copper entablature with the name "Public Library" and a pediment with floral motifs and a datestone. The original building has a copper cornice. A contemporary addition has been built onto the south elevation. In 1901, Moberly voters approved a one-mill tax to support a city library. The Railroad Library Club donated its small collection and fixtures, and the city library opened in the space previously occupied by the Railroad Library Club. In January 1902, Mayor Willard P. Cave wrote Andrew Carnegie requesting a library building. Carnegie's staff responded that if the City Council would pledge by resolution to support a free public library in the amount of not less

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 8

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

than \$1,500 a year and provide a suitable location, Carnegie would contribute \$15,000 toward a building.

112 North Fourth Street; 1984; Noncontributing

Non-historic brick office building with a 2-bay façade and a 2-story bay window on the south side of the façade. A plaque on the building reads "Bennett Haynes Building 1984." Built after the period of significance.

Vacant Lot, 207 North Fourth Street; Noncontributing

206 North Fourth Street; c. 1920; Contributing

Modest vernacular 2-story red brick commercial building with the storefront altered with the introduction of a pent roof. Upper façade penetrated by two pairs of flat-topped windows with corner blocks, above which is a horizontal corbeled brick band. The building has housed a variety of commercial ventures including restaurants, a toy store, a confectionary, and a rooming house on the second floor.

209 North Fourth Street; c. 1920; Noncontributing

Formerly the State Theater, with an Art Deco-style façade and a curved stainless steel marquee, an entirely new veneer of brick has been applied to the facade, penetrated only by an overhead garage door. This alteration has resulted in a loss of integrity.

210-214 North Fourth Street; c. 1890; Contributing (Photo 13)

This is a broad 2-story brick commercial building with the storefront altered but some cast iron storefront elements retained. The upper façade is of 9 bays and terminates in a corbeled brick cornice. North of the retail section is a continuation of the building with a large semi-circular-arched opening that may have accessed a warehouse for the furniture company. In 1914, Morris Bierman, who operated a retail store in East St. Louis, Illinois, moved to Moberly and opened a one-room furniture store on Williams Street. Bierman Furniture later relocated to this building.

211-213 North Fourth Street; c. 1960; Contributing

This is a 1-story commercial building with two commercial spaces. The exteriors are finished in polished marble and enameled metal panels. One of the storefronts is shielded by a flat marquee canopy supported by metal anchor rods.

217 North Fourth Street; 1928; Contributing

A 2-story commercial building finished in polychrome ornamental brown brick with a variety of terra cotta trim. Second-story arched display windows are present and corbeled brickwork

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 9

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

defines the bay spacing. The roofline is broken by a series of horizontal stepped parapets. In 1928, the Moberly Montgomery Ward store was one of the company's first retail stores.

North Williams Street

209-213 North Williams Street; c. 1910; Noncontributing

The 1916 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* indicates that this property likely consists of three small brick commercial buildings that have been visually linked with a façade of non-historic materials. These alterations have resulted in a loss of integrity.

216 North Williams Street, vacant lot; Noncontributing

215 North Williams Street; c. 1880; Contributing

This is a 2-story commercial building of brick with a façade of rock-faced stone, with the storefront in-filled and the 4 windows on the second story in-filled with wood. Ghost sign on the north elevation reads, "Thomas & Son Blue Ribbon Harness Shop." A name stone centered on the upper façade cannot be read. Façade is capped with a modest stone cornice. This building housed Thomas & Son from 1880 to at least 1947. Thomas was Fabricious B. Thomas, who, in 1884, worked as the foreman in a wood shop; the son was Henry L. Thomas (who eventually brought his son, Clare, into the business). Originally dealers in harness and implements, tires and dog supplies were added to their stock later, and by 1940 the store was listed as dealing in paints and wallpapers. Thomas & Son was in business sixty-seven years. By 1948, the business was owned by George Butts. In the 1950s it became the Sportsmans Lounge.

218 North Williams Street; c. 1910; Noncontributing

A 2-story commercial building that has been extensively remodeled, including the addition of a Mansard roof with undersized gable dormers and pilasters on the façade; the remodelings are out of character with the historic character of the building and result in a loss of integrity.

222-224 North Williams Street; c. 1910; Contributing

Originally housing the Moberly Steam Laundry and Dry Cleaning Co., this building has been remodeled into professional offices in a faux Colonial Revival style. A frontispiece enframes the entrance on Coates Street and paired entrances with doors flanked by windows have in-filled in the original storefronts. Upper façade is 3 bays in width.

223 North Williams Street; c. 1915; Contributing

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 10

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

This is the former Moberly Post Office, converted for judicial use. Colonial Revival in style, with a symmetrical 5-bay façade accessed by a modern concrete handicapped ramp. Window openings are segmental-arched, with keystones. The cornerstone is obscured by the ramp, but the building is likely the work of U. S. Treasury Department Supervising Architect James Wetmore, who served in this capacity from 1915 to 1933. The surface parking associated with the building is considered to be part of the site and is not counted as a separate resource.

West Rollins Street

401 West Rollins Street; 1929; Contributing (Photo 15; Fig. 5)

This is the Egyptian Revival-style Moberly Masonic Lodge, No. 344/Israel Shrine #13, and is the work of architect Victor T. Defoe, who is thought to have been associated with local architect Ludwig Abt; this, however, has not been confirmed. The building is monumental in scale, finished in buff-colored brick with a variety of limestone trim and Egyptian motifs, including cavetto elements, papyrus leaves, and an atticurged frontispiece enframing the main entrance, capped with an eagle-and-disc motif.

West Coates Street

104 West Coates Street; c. 1909; Contributing

This is a one- and two-story vernacular commercial building of brick, with the 2-story portion 5 bays in width with a centered overhead garage door and segmental-arched window openings with flat-topped 1/1 sash. The 1-story section has segmental-arched openings as well and a smaller overhead garage door. The smaller section housed a variety of barber shops throughout its historic period and earlier survey information indicates that the larger section may have been a bottling works.

201-209 West Coates Street; c. 1910; Contributing (Photo 12)

A 2-story industrial vernacular building of brick, with a flat roof and segmental-arched windows. Located on a corner parcel, the West Coates Street elevation is 12 bays in width while that on North Clark Street is 6 bays in depth. The first floor is penetrated by windows as well as overhead garage doors. The building was home to the Fennel Auto and Body Works and a ghost sign remains on both principal elevations. It was founded by Werner Fennel, a Hessian who came to Moberly from Ferguson in 1871. Fennel's business was wagon-making and blacksmithing. In 1872, his brother, William E. Fennel, purchased the business and moved it to the present location.

206 West Coates Street, Vacant lot; Noncontributing

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 11

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

208 West Coates Street, c. 1910; Noncontributing

This is a 3-story commercial building of brick that has undergone major alterations including the in-filling of the first story with brick and concrete block, except for one very small window. 4-bay upper façade with 1/1 windows. Integrity has been lost because of the storefront alterations.

300 West Coates Street, Vacant lot; Noncontributing

225-227 West Coates Street; 1911; Contributing

A 2-story red brick flat-roofed utility company building built in at least two stages, modest in its detailing that consists of corbeled brickwork and restrained floral motifs. The earlier section is located on a corner lot and has a 3-bay façade with flat-topped 1/1 windows and the entry offset on the easternmost bay. Built against the original east elevation is a 1956 3-story addition that replicates some of the trim of the older section. Telephone service in Moberly dates from 1880. E.D. Graham and his sons, C.R. and G.T., purchased the telephone exchange and in 1911, they sold the Moberly Telephone Company to the Missouri-Kansas Telephone Company. In March 1912, an agreement between the Missouri-Kansas Company and others created the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company. On January 1, 1917, the companies that were party to the agreement merged as the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company (Missouri), and the Moberly facility became the division office of Southwestern Bell. In 1956, Bell secured options on adjacent property in order to implement an extensive expansion to their building.

Cellular communications tower; c. 2000; Noncontributing structure

An imposing cellular communications tower that can be seen from most parts of the community. Post-dates the period of significance.

318 West Coates Street; c. 1952; Contributing

This 1-story commercial/industrial building is of concrete block construction with a red brick façade, this building is little ornamented and has a flat-roof and a partially in-filled storefront area. Built for the E. C. Huber Motor Company that was located across the street.

320 West Coates Street; c. 1890; Contributing

A 2-story Italianate commercial building of red brick with the storefront partially in-filled but retaining historic cast iron pilasters. 3-bay upper façade with flat-topped windows capped with stone lintels with incised detailing. Rock-faced brick panels beneath a modest store cornice with ball finials at the outer ends. This building has housed a tavern for most of its existence, operating under a variety of names including the Short Brothers Saloon in the 1920s, the Sip &

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 12

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

Dine Café in the 1930s, and from 1943 into the twenty-first century, the Victory Bar (known locally as the V Bar).

400 West Coates Street, Vacant lot; Noncontributing

412-414 West Coates Street; c. 1940; Contributing

Modest 1-story brick and concrete block commercial building on an alley corner, with a variety of surface finished; the historic brick finish and fenestration remain along the alley on the west elevation. Three overhead garage doors open from the north elevation. The building has served as a machine shop and as a printing business.

420-422 West Coates Street; c. 1910; Contributing

This is a 2-story red brick commercial building located on a corner lot, finished in distinctive rock-faced brick, with two altered storefronts on the façade and an upper façade of six bays on the West Coates Street elevation and five on the North Fifth street side. Windows are flat-topped, 1/1, with stone sills and lintels. Above the windows is a corbeled brick cornice that extends around all sides. The earliest documented occupant was the grocery of George W. Kaufman, who was here 1911-1927.

500 West Coates Street; 1961-1963; Contributing

The most recently-constructed historic building in the district, this distinctively-designed Modern building is a 1-story bank with a curvilinear hemispherical façade penetrated by a series of vertical windows. The date of this building's completion marks the termination of the district's period of significance. It is the latest home of City Bank, which began in 1935 as the City Bank & Trust Co., under the leadership of J.E. Bach, a banker from Grinnell, Iowa, who had the support of a number of Moberly businessmen. Bach served as the first president until 1958, when he became chairman of the board.

West Reed Street

201 W. Reed Street; c. 1880; Contributing

This 2-story brick commercial building has a storefront in-filled with brick, penetrated by undersized windows and a modern metal door. Upper façade intact with semi-circular-arched windows with cast iron hoods on the façade, segmental-arched windows on the west elevation, and a corbeled brick cornice. From 1909 to 1958 this was a drug store operated under the Priesmeyer family name.

203 West Reed Street; c. 1880; Contributing

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 13

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

This is a 2-story brick commercial building with the storefront partially in-filled with brick, with a modern office storefront. 3-bay painted brick upper façade intact with semi-circular-arched windows with cast iron hoods and a corbeled brick cornice. This was a dry goods store in the 1880s and a drug store from the 1890s into the late 1920s, operated by Victor Ferguson, D. W. Embree, and others.

205 West Reed Street, 1919; Contributing (Photo 2)

Former Farmers and Merchants Bank, finished in white terra cotta, Neo-Classical Revival in character with Ionic columns *in antis* framing the main entry. Cornice with dentil band and copper insets and a triangular parapet above.

207-209 West Reed Street; c. 1890; Contributing (Photo 2)

A 2-story Italianate-derived corner commercial building of brick with the storefronts modernized and the 5-bay symmetrical upper façade intact, including segmental-arched windows with stone lintels; the centermost window has been enlarged. Upper façade terminates in a corbeled brick cornice. A 1-bay oriel is on east elevation. The building has been a pool hall, grocery store, meat market, general store and the Moberly Sales Company, operated by Frederick Cooper.

211 West Reed Street; c. 1950 (façade); Contributing

This appears to be a nineteenth-century building with a c. 1950 brick façade that incorporates a first-story storefront with traditional window-to-wall ratio and recessed entry and an upper façade of three bays with 1/1 windows. This was a saloon operated by Ambrose D. Long and later was the National Dairy Lunch Counter and the Recreation Café. Upstairs was a meeting hall that was home to organizations including the International Association of Machinists Lodge No. 57; Ladies Auxiliary, VFW Post No. 2654; U.S. Army Mothers Post No. 16; VFW Post No. 2654, and Western Star Lodge #37.

213 West Reed Street; c. 1920; Contributing

This is a 2-story commercial building finished in red brick with an altered storefront retaining traditional window-to-wall ratio and recessed entry; wood shingle-finished pent roof over the storefront. Upper façade original, 4 bays in width with 1/1 windows. Early occupants include the Little Star Cleaners, operated by George W. Sparks.

215 W. Reed Street; c. 1910; Contributing

This 2-story brick-finished commercial building has a brick and metal storefront with a recessed entry. 3-bay upper façade with 1/1 windows. From 1911-1945 Joseph W. Mullen operated a shoe store here. The second floor had a dental office occupied for decades by Dr. Moses C. Boswell, along with Mullen's Hall, a meeting room used by the Carpenters Union Trades and

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 14

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

Labor Assembly, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers Division No. 86, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen's Lodge No. 129, Painters and Decorators Local No. 656, and the Order of Railway Conductors

219 West Reed Street/210 North Williams Street; c. 1910; Noncontributing

Historic *Sanborn Fire Insurance* Maps record a 3-story brick commercial building on this site, containing a bank on the corner, followed by a pharmacy and a jewelry store, with a tailor shop on the N. Williams Street side. It appears that as it presently exists, this is an office building remodeled c. 2010, finished principally in dryvit and anodized metal, with historic features obscured or removed.

303 West Reed Street, c. 1915; Contributing

This is a corner building with a brick and metal storefront and 5-bay upper façade with 1/1 windows and decorative brickwork. Windows are flat-topped and are capped with soldier-course lintels with corner blocks. Above the storefront is a rectangular brick panel and above the second-story windows is a corbeled brick band. From 1919-1983 this was the New York Store, a leading department store in downtown Moberly.

305 West Reed Street; 1969; Noncontributing

Also sometimes addressed as 307-309 West Reed Street, this building is built on the site of a historic 2-story 2-storefront brick building that was destroyed by fire in 1969. It is a 2-story commercial building with the upper façade finished in vinyl or aluminum and including a marquee canopy over the brick and metal storefront.

310 West Reed Street; c. 1890; Contributing (Photo 10)

This 2-story commercial building is on an alley corner lot, with a storefront of stainless steel and black Carrara glass. Like its neighbor across the alley to the west, the upper façade appears to have been altered in the 1950s with a new brick finish with a pair of second-story windows beneath a longitudinal brick panel. The corners of the first story retain historic cast iron columns. An enclosed stair accesses the second story on the alley side.

312 West Reed Street; c. 1910; Contributing (Photo 10)

Former location of several pharmacies including Mears Drug Store from 1937 to 1951. 2-story commercial building on an alley corner whose upper façade appears to have been altered in the 1950s with a new brick finish, along with a brick storefront with a centered recessed entry and a pair of windows second-story windows beneath a longitudinal brick panel.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 15

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

313 West Reed Street; c. 1920; Noncontributing

This is a 2-story commercial building on a corner lot with the entire upper façade slipcovered in vinyl cladding, with a marquee canopy over the modern brick and metal storefront. Historic brick surfaces are visible on the east elevation, as are in-filled windows.

314 West Reed Street; c. 1970; Noncontributing (Photo 10)

This is a 2-story non-historic commercial building with an upper façade of stained wood shingles, no window openings, and a modern brick storefront; dates from outside the period of significance of the district.

316-322 West Reed Street; c. 1880; Contributing (Photo 10)

Among the district's finest Italianate-style buildings, this substantial multi-storefront corner building includes a black Carrara glass storefront in its centermost commercial space. Other storefronts have been remodeled, but generally retain traditional window-to-wall ratios. The upper façade consists of a series of segmental-arched 1/1 windows with cast iron sills and lintels. Unifying the building is a pressed metal bracketed cornice with paired lancet-arched frieze panels. The west side elevation is less detailed, with painted brick surfaces and a corbeled brick cornice. Historic uses include Woolworth's 5 & 10, pharmacies, and clothiers.

319 West Reed Street; 1918; Contributing

This buff brick-finished 2-story commercial building has a modern storefront and intact 3-bay upper façade penetrated by flat-topped 1/1 windows with prism glass transoms. The centermost of the windows is reminiscent of a Chicago-style window form. A date stone is centered above the windows and corbeled brickwork articulates the upper facade. This was the office of Dr. L.P. Sparks (1919), the B & O (Burton and Ogle) Drug Store (1920), later Burton's Rexall Drug Store.

323 West Reed Street; 1911; Contributing

This was a Neo-Classical Revival-style bank and the building was re-faced after the bank vacated it in 1946. The new façade appears to date from within the period of significance and includes a storefront with display windows and recessed entry and a 2-bay upper façade finished in brick with paired 1/1 windows in each opening. It is a corner building and some windows on the side elevation are in-filled with glass block and some are original.

400 West Reed Street; c. 1920; Contributing

A 2-story vernacular commercial building of red brick, located on a corner lot, with a storefront retaining frosted glass transoms; modern materials have been placed over the storefront bulkheads. 3-bay upper façade with flat-topped windows set on brick sills, with soldier-course brick lintels and stone corner blocks. A longitudinal corbeled brick panel is at cornice height.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 16

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

Tile coping caps the parapet and an enclosed stair on the east elevation accesses the second story. For many years this was the Koester Drug Store, with a soda fountain that survived until 1961.

401 West Reed Street; c. 2000; non-Contributing (Photo 3)

This is a 1-story brick-finished modern building housing Merrell University, located on a corner and dating from well outside the period of significance.

402 West Reed Street; c. 1920; Noncontributing

This 2-story commercial building has a modern brick storefront and an upper façade finished in unpainted modern board-and-batten, with an offset pair of windows shielded by an oversized pent roof finished in wood shingles, all of which results in a loss of integrity.

408 West Reed Street; c. 1890; Noncontributing

This began as an Italianate commercial building with a 6-bay upper façade and a storefront on the first story. It housed the Globe Mercantile Company and later J. C. Penney. It presently has a modern storefront and the upper façade is “slipcovered” in modern materials, obscuring any historic fabric, with a loss of integrity.

411 West Reed Street; c. 2000; non-Contributing (Photo 3)

This is a 1-story brick-finished modern commercial building, dating from well outside the period of significance.

412 West Reed Street; c. 1920; Noncontributing

A 2-story brick commercial building on an alley corner lot with the upper façade altered with the application of a stucco finish and semi-circular tympani over the original flat-topped window openings, along with the insertion of multi-light replacement sash. Modern brick storefront. Incompatible alterations result in a loss of integrity.

413 West Reed Street; c. 1880; Contributing (Photo 4)

This is a 2-story brick Italianate commercial building with an altered storefront including a flat marquee canopy of metal. Upper façade is 6 bays in width, with segmental-arched window openings blocked down with modern 1/1 sash. Corbeled brick panels are above the second-floor windows, above which is a bracketed cornice of pressed metal. This has been a 5 & 10 as well as a hardware store. In the 1890s, the Suppe Brothers operated their 99 Cent Variety Store as well as a 5 & 10 operated by Jared Palmetier; from 1919 to 1955 it housed the Newman Hardware Company.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 17

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

416 West Reed Street; c. 1970 (façade); Noncontributing

Commercial building with “slipcovered” façade that completely obscures and historic fabric; modern storefront with large display windows.

417-419 West Reed Street; c. 1890; Contributing (Photo 4)

A 2-story brick commercial building with a pressed metal façade. Storefront altered with the installation of Carrara glass cladding. Upper façade incorporates paired oriel windows with blocked-down replacement sash, classical motifs, and an elaborate pressed metal cornice. This building has housed a variety of commercial ventures, including jewelry stores, a florist, a restaurant, cafes, and millinery shops.

420 West Reed Street; c. 1910; Contributing

This 2-story brick commercial building has a buff-colored brick façade of pressed brick with buttered joints. A single commercial space is on the first story with a remodeled storefront including a pent roof. 2-bay upper façade with two sets of 9/9 replacement windows, a stone corner pilaster and a stone cornice with modillions. The building housed the Soda Grill in the ‘teens, Poindexter’s Store in the 1930s, and Don’s Bootery in the 1940s.

421 West Reed Street; 1941; Contributing (Photo 4)

This began as a 3-story 1890s commercial building that was severely damaged in a 1941 fire, after which the top stories were removed. It is finished in orange brick, with a modern storefront with a hipped pent roof.

424 West Reed Street; c. 1905; Contributing (Fig. 4)

A 2-story red brick commercial building on a corner lot, with a storefront remodeled with wood cladding. Upper façade has 2 bays on the front and 8 on the side elevation. Corbeled brick panels are present at cornice height. A ghost sign on the east elevation proclaims DEMOCRAT PRINTING CO. BOOK AND JOB PRINTING. The building housed the *Democrat*, a daily and semi-weekly newspaper.

500 West Reed Street; 1967; Noncontributing

This is a single-story corner building with an exterior finished in vinyl, a rigid canopy and a modern storefront. It replaced a historic building destroyed in a 1966 fire.

501 West Reed Street; c. 1890; Contributing (Photo 4)

This corner building has housed a variety of commercial uses, including that of a pharmacy from 1902 until 1965. It is a Queen Anne-style commercial building with a distinctive hexagonal corner tower at the southeast corner, with a finish of pressed metal that continues across the façade as the cornice. 4-bay upper façade with boarded-up windows.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 18

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

503 West Reed Street; c. 1890; Contributing

One of Moberly's distinctive metal-fronted buildings, this example has a modern storefront and an intact upper façade 4 bays in width, with replacement windows nearly matching the original openings. Pressed metal surfaces include classical motifs and a bracketed cornice. Historic uses include that of a grocery, millinery, department store, and beauty shop.

505 West Reed Street; date uncertain; Noncontributing

This 2-story mid-block commercial building has an entire façade clad in non-historic wood; modern brick storefront. Significant alterations with loss of integrity.

506-512 West Reed Street; c. 1913; Contributing (Photos 8, 9)

Among the largest buildings in the district, this brick commercial building has multiple storefronts on the first story, all of which have been remodeled but retain traditional window-to-wall ratios. The upper façade is of 15 bays and is penetrated by flat-topped 1/1 windows with plain stone sills and lintels. The cornice area features decorative brickwork and a flat parapet caps the upper façade. This was an early automobile dealership, including Smith's, that sold Studebakers, and also the Overland Moberly Motor Company; also housed the Forney Furniture Company and later a Ben Franklin 5 & 10.

507-509 West Reed Street; c. 1980; Noncontributing

A 1-story modern commercial building, built well outside the period of significance.

511 West Reed Street, Vacant lot; Noncontributing

513 West Reed Street; c. 1910; Contributing

This 2-story vernacular commercial building has a storefront altered by the shortening of the display windows, but retaining the traditional recessed entry. 4-bay upper façade with flat-topped windows set on rock-faced stone sills and capped with rock-faced stone lintels. Cornice of wood with modillions under the soffit. Housed a variety of businesses including a bakery, merchant tailor/dry cleaning shop, and a furniture store.

514-516 West Reed Street; c. 1920; Contributing (Photo 8)

A 2-story vernacular commercial building with two storefronts on the first story; the storefronts have been remodeled with a polished marble surface and retain traditional window-to-wall ratio. Upper façade appears original, with eight flat-topped replacement windows that occupy the original openings. Trim includes corner blocks at the windows and ornamental brickwork. The building is capped with a 2-stage stepped parapet. Storefronts have contained a variety of

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 19

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

commercial ventures, including a jewelry store, groceries, a radio store, and an appliance retailer.

515 West Reed Street; c. 2000; Noncontributing

This building is a 1-story in height with a modern storefront and a solid upper façade finished in vinyl; it appears to post-date the period of significance.

517-519 West Reed Street; c. 1960; Contributing

Built late in the period of significance, this is a 1-story brick-finished commercial building with 2 commercial spaces with display windows; no other notable detail.

518 West Reed Street; c. 1920; Contributing (Photo 8)

A 2-story vernacular commercial building with what appears to be an early storefront with display windows and a recessed entry. Upper façade is 3 bays in width, with flat-topped windows and decorative brick bands. Above the second-floor windows is an unusually large surface lacking windows.

521-523 West Reed Street; 1957; Contributing

This is the Kehoe Building, identified by a name and date stone inset into the upper part of the upper façade. A single-story building, it incorporates a storefront and a solid upper façade finished in polychrome brick. Built by a prominent local family for whom Kehoe Street (outside the district) is named.

522 West Reed Street; c. 1945; Contributing

This 1-story vernacular commercial building is of red brick construction, with a single storefront and a 1-stage stepped parapet along the roofline. The building lacks entry doors and is interconnected to 524 West Reed Street, immediately to the west.

524 West Reed Street; c. 1945; Contributing

This is a 1-story commercial building of red brick with a single storefront with a recessed centered entry and the display windows shortened and partially in-filled. Tile coping is present along the parapet. The building was added to the front of an earlier side-gable building and from 1945-1968 housed Tuggle's Toggery.

525 West Reed Street; c. 1890; Contributing

This 1-story commercial building has a façade dominated by display windows above which is a relatively large signband that makes up the upper façade. A portion of the original pressed metal façade is visible above the signband.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 20

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

526 West Reed Street; 1948; Contributing (Photo 7)

A 2-story commercial building finished in red brick with a modest façade incorporating display windows, portions of which have been in-filled, and a recessed entry on the first story and a band of five display windows on the second story to further show the store's merchandise. Similar to its neighbor to the west at 530-532 West Reed. Long-time home of Patterson's department store that occupied the space from the time of its construction until 1983. A name/date stone centered in the uppermost portion of the façade bears the name Will and Ruth Fleming and the date 1948. Dr. J. Will Fleming (1914-2002) was a local physician who graduated from the Rush University School of Medicine in 1938 and was a Moberly community leader for decades.

530-532 West Reed Street; 1951; Contributing (Photo 7)

A 2-story commercial building finished in red brick with a modest façade incorporating display windows and a recessed entry on the first story and a band of eight display windows on the second. It is similar to its neighbor to the east at 526 West Reed and in 1953 the second story was added and interconnected with the second story of 526 West Reed. A name/date stone centered in the uppermost portion of the façade bears the name Dr. J. Will and Mary Louise Fleming and the date 1951. The first occupant was the local Kroger grocery store.

531 West Reed Street; c. 1920; Contributing

This 2-story red brick-finished commercial building has residential use on the second floor. The façade retains a deeply-recessed storefront above which is a second-story balcony with replacement modern wood railing. The balcony is accessed by a door with sidelights that is flanked by 1/1 windows. The upper façade terminates in a terra cotta entablature with a name stone bearing the name G. H. Headbrink, above which is a stepped parapet with terra cotta coping. Garrett Headbrink was a fireman on the railroad who became an electrician and built and occupied this store building. His business included painters and electrical contractors and sold retail paint, oil, and electric supplies. Headbrink was active in union affairs and was vice president of Local 730 of the IBEW.

533 West Reed Street; c. 1910; Contributing

A 2-story vernacular commercial building with a modern storefront and a 3-bay upper façade retaining the original 1/1 windows with stone sills and lintels. Modest brick corbelling is present along the roofline. This was Davis' Cash Grocery in the 'teens and 1920s, and the C. G. Wilson Plumbing Company from the 1930s into the 1950s.

534 West Reed Street, Vacant lot; Noncontributing

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 21

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

535 West Reed Street; c. 1910; Contributing

This is a 2-story brick commercial building with a façade of pressed brick, an altered storefront, and an upper façade with a cast metal ornamental balcony and a recessed second-story loggia accesses by an original set of double-leaf doors and a newer door that may have replaced a window. Centered oversized window with art glass transom. Early uses include W.F. Mangus' Drug Store (1919-1920); Jared Palmetier's Department Store and Weber Ice Cream (1920-1924), and Mrs. A. F. Levan's Millinery (1924)

536-538 West Reed Street; 1924; Contributing

This 2-story Colonial Revival-derived commercial building of red wire-cut brick, with two storefronts on the first story and a 3-bay upper façade. Storefronts have been remodeled but retain traditional window-to-wall ratio. Upper façade has three pairs of windows with multi-light replacement sash, stone sills and stone lintels. Above the windows is a parapet incorporating a limestone beltcourse, corbeled brickwork, and centered pediment with a stylized shield bearing the date 1924. Variety of first-floor retail tenants including, in the 1920s, the Piggly Wiggly market, Crookshank's Bakery and the Keith Bakery; on the second floor was the Moberly Junior College.

537-539 West Reed Street; c. 1920; Contributing

This 2-story vernacular commercial building has a façade of orange pressed brick, with a storefront altered with the application of vinyl siding. Upper façade is 3 bays in width with flat-topped windows with replacement anodized sash occupying the original openings; the centermost bay contains a group of three windows and the outermost bays have one window each. From the 1920s through the 1930s this was Wiseman Brothers plumbing supply store.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 22

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 23

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

Significance

The Moberly Commercial Historic District is locally significant and meets National Register Criterion A for commerce, in that Moberly has always been the largest town in Randolph County and was the regional center of commerce and trade during its historic period; in addition, the district consists of the entirety of the surviving elements of Moberly's historic central business district that date from the 1880s to the early 1960s. The district also meets Criterion C for architecture, since it is characterized by a cohesive concentration of commercial buildings reflecting the architectural styles that were popular throughout the period of significance as well as vernacular building types built without any particular reference to formal styles but nonetheless reflective of the local building traditions of the community.

The district is associated with two of the historic contexts identified in the 2007 Historic/Architectural Survey of Moberly: "Moberly Business and Industry, 1873—1909" and "Ludwig Abt and Twentieth Century Architecture in Moberly, 1910—1965."²

The Moberly Commercial Historic District retains integrity and while alterations have occurred to the district's fabric, as a unit, the individual components nonetheless successfully convey the historicity of the nominated area and its overall appearance at the end of the period of significance. The period of significance of the Moberly Commercial Historic District begins with the approximate date of the earliest of the district's buildings, including commercial properties along West Reed Street, and ends in 1963, the date of construction of the City Bank and Trust at 500 West Coates Street. The period of significance extends one year into the 50-year National Register guideline, since this modern bank building was begun in 1961, was substantially completed in 1962, and opened in March, 1963. It marks the transition of the architecture in the district into the modern period and also represents the last major development within the nominated area.

With respect to National Register Criterion A, the Moberly Commercial Historic District is significant for its reflection of commerce and the commercial life in this community throughout the period of significance. With Moberly's position as a major rail transportation center, the downtown district was characterized by a broad array of commercial ventures including specialty stores such as clothiers, confectioners, taverns, bakeries, hardware vendors, pharmacists, along with hotels, department stores and 5 & 10s, and financial institutions.

² Steven E. Mitchell and Mary Aue Mitchell, *Survey Report: Moberly, Randolph County, Architectural/Historical Survey*. (Jefferson City, Missouri: Missouri Department of Natural Resources, 2007).

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 24

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

Among the leading businesses in the historic district were several financial institutions, including the Merchants Bank, the Bank of Moberly, and the Moberly Trust Company, all established in 1907 and perhaps reflecting the arrival of the Brown Shoe Company the year before. The Farmers and Merchants Bank followed in 1914. At 500 West Coates Street, on the former site of the J. Fessler Manufacturing Company, is the 1963 City Bank and Trust Company, whose date of construction marks the end of the district's period of significance.

In 1911 the Moberly Telephone Company became the Missouri-Kansas Telephone Company and erected a substantial building at 225-227 West Coates Street to which was added a matching wing on the east side in 1956. Perhaps also spurred by the 1906 location of the Brown Shoe Company in Moberly, in 1907 J. T. Cross purchased the C. D. Everhard Lumber Company and his facility at 315 North Clark Street became the largest purveyor of building supplies for the growing community.

Hotels, too, added to the commercial history of the downtown. None are extant but their former presence in the downtown speaks to the thriving economic scene that characterized downtown Moberly during its historic period. Among the hotels were the Commercial (also known as the Eastside and Baltimore Hotel), the Arlington, the Leo, The Merchants, and the Randolph.

Three generations of the Forney family operated a furniture company in the substantial business block at 506-508 West Reed Street. Morris Bierman (d. 1959) came to Moberly in 1914 and opened a one-room furniture company on Williams Street; he later relocated to 210-214 North Fourth Street and Bierman Furniture was a mainstay of downtown Moberly for generations.

Longevity and multi-generational operations were not uncommon in Moberly retailing. Fred Priesmeyer and his family operated the Priesmeyer Drug Store at 201 West Reed Street from 1900 to 1958. In 1903 Louis Klein opened a bakery in town and would later build an all-white glazed brick and terra cotta bakery at 212 North Fifth Street; he remained in business until his death in 1948.

Changing trends in retailing are reflected in the Moberly Commercial Historic District as well, with general stores giving way to department stores and neighborhood groceries being replaced by grocery chains. In 1918, the J. C. Penny Co. opened a store in an Italianate-style commercial building at 408 West Reed Street; that building has been altered and is a non-contributing resource in the district. In 1928, Montgomery Ward, previously a catalog operation, erected a new retail outlet at 217 North Fourth Street, the former site of the F. M. Stamper Produce Company. The Moberly store was one of the first Montgomery Ward retail

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 25

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

stores to open. Patterson's Department Store opened in 1948 at 526 West Reed Street and was the first centrally-air conditioned store in Moberly. Next door, at 530-532 West Reed Street, Kroger's opened a chain grocery store. Both Patterson's and Kroger's were in buildings erected by Dr. J. Will Fleming and Patterson's would expand to the west when a second story was added to the Kroger's building in 1953.

While the county seat was located at Huntsville, that community never surpassed its population zenith of 2,217 in 1910, a figure that had dropped to 1,526 by 1960. On the other hand, with the location of the railroad shops in Moberly and with industrial developments such as the Brown Shoe factory, Moberly became a regional center of commerce that catered to the commercial needs of the thousands of workers and their families who settled in the community and its immediate environs.

Referring to Criterion C, the district's architectural significance is vested in the array of architectural styles that appeared in the community from the 1880s through the early 1960s. Among these are the Italianate, Neo-Classical Revival, and Colonial Revival, as well as the modern style evidenced by the 1963 bank building whose date of construction marks the close of the period of significance. In addition to buildings executed in more academic, formal styles, the district is dotted with buildings that are vernacular in character, employing that term as it is defined in Ward Bucher's *Dictionary of Building Preservation*: "a building built without being designed by an architect or someone with similar formal training; often based on traditional or regional forms."³

The architectural character of the Moberly Commercial Historic District reflects a variety of changes both in architectural and commercial marketing trends. The district's earlier resources retain many of their nineteenth-century physical attributes, retaining tall and narrow upper façade window proportions, several examples of pressed metal facades with cast iron pilasters, and cornices of wood and pressed metal. Later buildings—and buildings remodeled after fires—are significantly simpler and less highly-articulated in their design. In addition, some buildings reflect changes in marketing and merchandising practices, incorporating upper-story display windows to more fully showcase the goods within. Chief among these are the two adjacent 1940s-1950s buildings built by Dr. J. Will Fleming and the 1928 former Montgomery Ward Department Store, located at 526 and 530-532 West Reed Street and 217 North Fourth Street, respectively. The former reflect trends in post-World War II marketing and the latter the flourishing of the retail department store in the 1920s.

The Criterion C significance of the district is enhanced by the district's association with a regionally-prominent architect, Ludwig Abt, who was responsible for the design of the 1913

³Ward Bucher ed., *Dictionary of Building Preservation* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996), p. 512.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 26

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

Fourth Street Theater at 110 North Fourth Street.⁴ A native of Germany, Abt (1882-1967) received his training at the *Technicum Hildburghausen* (college of technology) in Thüringen, Germany. He came to the United States and entered the construction industry, working in a number of American cities before moving to Moberly in 1911. He was in practice in Moberly for the next half-century, designing schools, churches, residences, and commercial buildings, and, in the Moberly Historic District, the Fourth Street Theater.

In an article titled "Milestones and Stumbling Blocks, Continued," cultural geographer Howard Wight Marshall spoke highly of Abt and his talents, noting

Abt's work includes the Fourth Street Theatre with San Simeon-like grandeur; the brick public grade schools that embodied the town's progressive spirit, the noble and perhaps ennobling Classical-style Moberly Junior College; the Art-Deco Municipal Auditorium and his last major contracts, those for the Moberly Housing Authority, the National Guard Armory, the Federal Building, and the new Catholic School.⁵

The genesis, growth, and development of Moberly and of the Moberly Historic District are inextricably linked to the railroad.⁶ In 1858, the Chariton and Randolph Company was granted a charter to lay a new line to join the North Missouri Railroad in Randolph County. While other sites appeared suitable to the leadership of the railroad, it was nonetheless determined that the site of choice for the junction was on land owned by William Roberts that was already crossed by the North Missouri Railroad. Two years after being granted the charter for the new line, a forty-acre tract was acquired from Roberts and the company agreed to establish a town where the two lines met. The new settlement was first called Moberly Junction, honoring Col. William E. Moberly, the first president of the Chariton and Randolph Railroad Company.

The railroad was committed to assuring the growth of its new town and in 1861 created a development incentive to lure new settlers. The community of Allen had been by-passed in favor of Moberly as the new junction town. The railroad offered to residents of Allen who would move to Moberly an amount of land equal to the real estate that they had had in Allen. There was only one taker, but in 1866 the North Missouri Railroad, which acquired the Chariton and Randolph line in 1864, held a sale of lots and the plat of the town was recorded shortly

⁴Biographical information on Ludwig Abt is drawn from Debbie Sheals and Becky Snider, *Moberly Junior High School National Register Nomination* (Jefferson City: Missouri Department of Natural Resources, 2007).

⁵ Howard Marshall, "Milestones and Stumbling Blocks, Continued," *Journal of Cultural Geography* 15:1 (Fall/Winter, 1994), pp. 45-58.

⁶Portions of this historical narrative are adapted from the Moberly Junior High School National Register Nomination noted above.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 27

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

thereafter. Only a few houses were built after the first sale but in 1867 a second sale was held and the following year the town of Moberly was incorporated. By 1870, the population had swelled to 1,514.

In 1872, two railroad-related events occurred that would cement the future of Moberly. The Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad acquired a right-of-way through Moberly, leading to an eastward connection with Hannibal, on the Mississippi River. In addition, the North Missouri Railroad chose Moberly to be the location for the company's shops, which in those days constituted a significant employment and economic development event for any community. The railroad built a sprawling complex (outside the historic district), including a roundhouse with repair facilities for sixty locomotives. The downtown began to grow anew to match the significant investment made by the railroad and Moberly soon became one of the state's leading rail transportation hubs.

To address its new stature as a bustling railroad center, the town graded and leveled the principal streets in the community, a fire company was organized, a school was established, and gas lights were installed. By 1880, population stood at 6,070 an increase of more than 5,000 from the previous census. The *1894 Missouri State Business Directory and Gazetteer*, while significantly exaggerating the population, hailed Moberly as

An important, progressive city of 12,000 is situated on the St. Louis and Kansas City line and the North branch of the Wabash R. R. and on the Hannibal section of the M. K. & T in Sugar Creek Township, Randolph County. . . The city is well built up, is lighted by electricity, has broad and well paved streets and avenues, a fine system of water works, excellent sewerage, a finely equipped fire department, 4 commodious public school buildings, parochial schools, a business college, 2 opera houses, first class hotels, 3 banks, lodges of the leading secret and benevolent societies, 2 foundries and machine shops, 2 large brick yards, 2 flour mills, a planing mill and the machine shops of the Wabash R. R.⁷

Randolph County's natural resources also hastened the development of two other substantial late-nineteenth-century industries in Moberly. Coal mining addressed the need for fossil fuels and the local deposits of clay were extracted for brickmaking. The predominance of brick in the construction of most of the historic district attests to the presence of brick manufacturing in the community. Early in the twentieth century, Moberly became one of the largest producers of paving bricks in all of Missouri.

⁷*Missouri State Business Directory and Gazetteer*. (St. Louis: R. L. Polk & Co, 1894).

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 28

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

The early decades of the twentieth century witnessed continued growth in Moberly although not at the boom-town levels that it had enjoyed in the 1880s and 1890s. The 1900 population was 8,012. The Fennell Auto and Body Works was built in the historic district and in 1906 the Brown Shoe Company chose Moberly as its first manufacturing site outside of St. Louis; Brown would remain in the community until it closed in the 1950s. Brown brought more than one thousand new jobs and by 1910 the population stood at 10,923. With the growth of private automobile ownership, passenger train service began to fall off, although a healthy freight business continued to provide employment in the railroad shops and the 1930 population was 13,647, a high that it would not surpass until 2010. Indeed, the population at the end of the period of significance was 13,170, a figure that would followed by four decades of decline.

Over the years, the face of the historic district was altered by several fires and demolitions. As noted above, all of the historic hotels have passed from the scene. In 1911, the Emerson and Forney Buildings on Reed Street were lost to a fire. An Italianate-style brick building at 421-423 West Reed Street was destroyed by a 1941 fire and a new building was built on its site.

The post-World War II years brought both growth and decline to Moberly. Industries closed, the population decreased, and the downtown and the historic district suffered the same sorts of challenges felt by small-town downtowns nationwide. The physical character of portions of the district were affected by architectural fads such as slipcovering but, the general character of the downtown has remained intact and downtown revitalization efforts have assisted in the economic improvement and stability of the central business district.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 29

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 30

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 31

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries for the Moberly Commercial Historic District are clearly depicted on the map that accompanies the nomination, drawn to a 1:200 scale and based on the Randolph County GIS.

Boundary Justification

These boundaries reflect only the extant portion of the historic central business district of the city of Moberly, Missouri. They were drawn to exclude properties that do not match the character of the downtown or that are less than fifty years of age.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photo Log Page 32

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

Photo Log

Name of Property: Moberly Commercial Historic District

City or Vicinity: Moberly

County: Randolph **State:** Missouri

Photographer: David L. Taylor

Date Photographed: June 20, 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 1 of 15 | Streetscape, north side West Reed Street at North Clark Street looking west |
| 2 of 15 | 1919 Neo-Classical Revival-style former bank building at 205 West Reed Street, façade, looking northwest |
| 3 of 15 | Streetscape, north side West Reed Street at North Fourth, with 401 West Reed Street (non-contributing) in foreground, looking west. |
| 4 of 15 | Streetscape, north side West Reed Street, with 413 West Reed Street in foreground |
| 5 of 15 | Façade, 417-419 West Reed Street, detail, showing upper façade of pressed metal. |
| 6 of 15 | Streetscape, north side West Reed Street with 531 West Reed in foreground, looking west |
| 7 of 15 | Streetscape, south side West Reed Street with 530-532 West Reed in foreground, followed by 526 West Reed Street, both of which were built by Dr. Will Fleming in 1951 and 1948, respectively, looking east |
| 8 of 15 | Streetscape, West Reed Street, south side, looking east with 518 West Reed Street in the foreground |
| 9 of 15 | Streetscape, West Reed Street, south side, looking west, with 506-512 West Reed Street in the foreground. |
| 10 of 15 | Streetscape, West Reed Street, south side, looking west, with 316-322 West Reed Street in the foreground, and showing the Italianate-style upper façade and |

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photo Log Page 33

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

pressed metal cornice of this building followed by 314 West Reed Street (noncontributing)

- 11 of 15 Streetscape, North Clark Street, east side looking northeast with 216 North Clark in the foreground followed by two pressed metal facades at 218 and 220 North Clark Street
- 12 of 15 Fennell Auto & Body Works, 201-209 West Coates Street, southeast perspective view looking northwest, with the cellular communications structure (noncontributing) in the background.
- 13 of 15 214 North Fourth Street, façade, looking southeast
- 14 of 15 Fourth Street Theater, façade, looking southeast
- 15 of 15 Masonic Lodge, southeast perspective, showing brick finish and Egyptian Revival-style ornament.

Figure Log:

- 1 . Segment of 1888 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map*
- 2 . Segment 1916 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map*
- 3 . The Carnegie Library from a post card view, c 1910
- 4 . C. 1900 post card view of the Reed Street streetscape
- 5 . C. 1930 Postcard, Masonic Lodge

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photo Log Page 34

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri

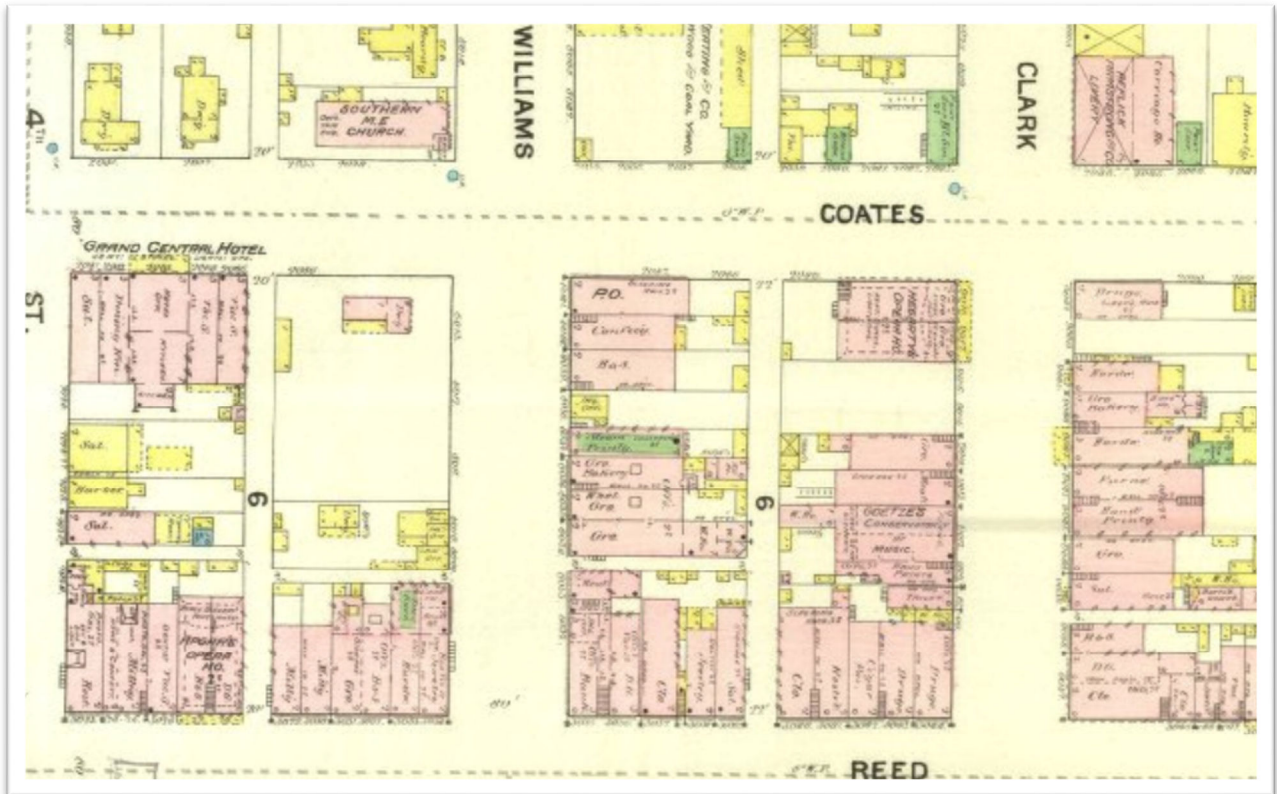


Fig. 1 This segment from the 1888 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* illustrates the built-up character of much of the downtown at that time as well as the continuing presence of some domestic architecture in the area.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photo Log Page 35

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri



Fig. 2 By 1916, the Sanborn map also depicts the newly-constructed Post Office on North Williams Street.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photo Log Page 36

Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri



Fig. 3 The Carnegie Library from a post card view, c 1910

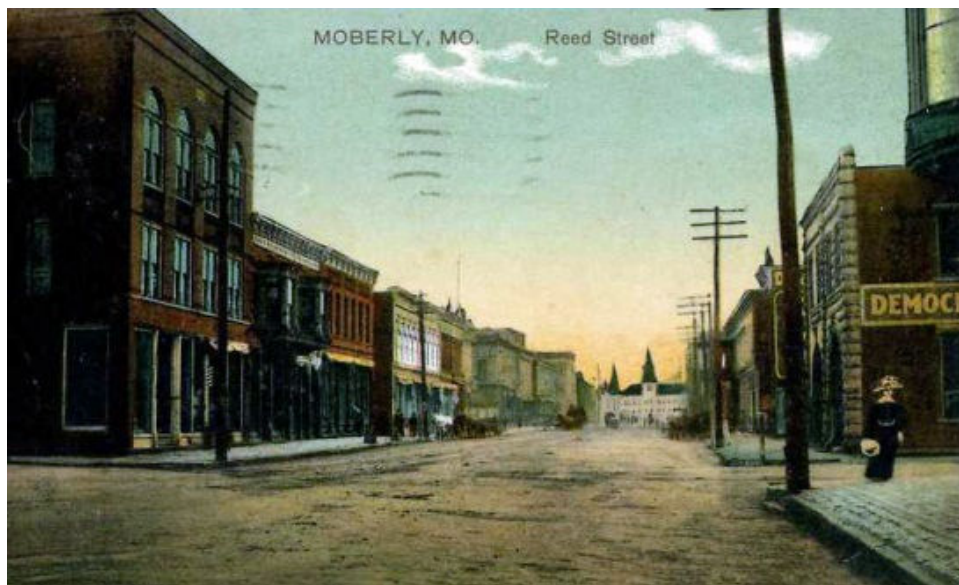


Fig. 4 c. 1900 post card view of the Reed Street streetscape; the *Democrat* sign shown at the right remains on the building

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photo Log Page 37

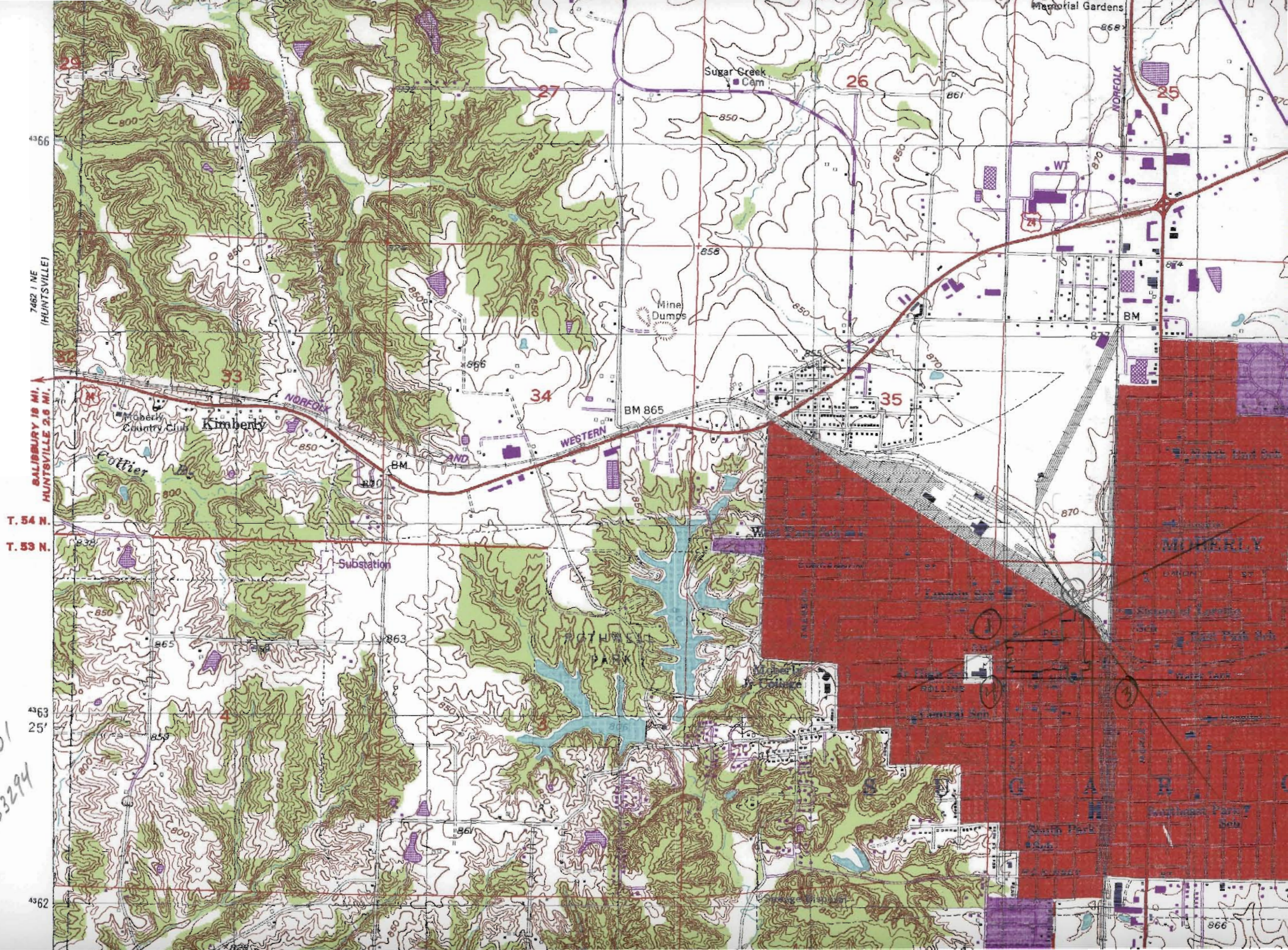
Moberly Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Missouri



Fig. 5 The 1929 Egyptian Revival-style Masonic Lodge, shown in a “linen” post card view shortly after its construction.

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