



People's Supply  
Name of Property

Baldwin Co., Al  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	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**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: general store

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: free standing gable front store

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls WOOD: board and batten

roof METAL: tin

other

**Narrative Description**

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

See continuation sheet

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.)

N/A  
Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1902-1947

Significant Dates

1902

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Johnson, Theodore

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Mobile Historic Development Commission

People's Supply  
Name of Property

Baldwin Co., Al  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	6	4	2	7	9	7	0
Zone	Easting		Northing				

3 

Zone	Easting		Northing				

2 

Zone	Easting		Northing				

4 

Zone	Easting		Northing				

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description see continuation sheet  
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

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

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title John Sledge/Architectural Historian

organization Mobile Historic Development Commission date 26 July 1996

street & number P. O. Box 1827 telephone (334)434-7281

city or town Mobile state Al zip code 36633

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

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

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

#### Photographs

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

#### Additional items

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

### Property Owner

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

name Dr. and Mrs. Joe Spalding

street & number P.O. Box 647 telephone (334)945-5168

city or town Silverhill state Al zip code 36576

**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. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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## 7. Narrative Description

The People's Supply Company, a free standing gable front store, is located in downtown Silverhill, Alabama at the southeast corner of the intersection of U.S. Highway 104 and Baldwin County Road 55 (also known as Broad Street). Silverhill is located in south central Baldwin County in rolling to flat countryside. There are extensive stands of pine trees in the area, as well as numerous pecan groves. Downtown Silverhill's streets are lined with water oaks planted during the 1920s. The People's Supply is set back from Highway 104 by a wooded lot that belongs to the Town of Silverhill which serves as a park. A small paved street separates the building from the park. The west and south elevations of the building face a graveled parking area, while the east side of the lot is lightly wooded.

Constructed in 1902, People's Supply retains its integrity of location, style, materials and setting. The building is a one and a half story, board and batten structure resting on a low brick foundation, with a shed roof porch covering the facade and west elevations.

The facade features a gable roof with a steep pitch. The building retains its original recessed store front. The entrance features double wooden doors with windows and a glass transom above. The entrance is flanked by wooden kick panels with single light windows above and larger 2/2 windows at each side. A pair of 2/2 windows are in the gable above with intact board shutters and a louvered vent in the gable peak. A shed roof porch supported on chamfered posts and covered in standing seam tin covers the facade and wraps around the west elevation.

The west elevation is some eighty feet long, and only includes two doors at the first story in an expanse of board and batten siding. The porch stretches down the length of this elevation, supported on chamfered posts and roofed with standing seam tin. There are a pair of gable dormers in the roof of the building above, each with a 2/2 window and intact board shutters.

The south elevation includes an entrance with bracketed gable stoop and 2/2 window at the first floor and a centrally placed 2/2 window in the gable above.

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The east elevation presents an unbroken expanse of board and batten siding, and a pair of gable dormers above, each with a 2/2 window and intact board shutters added c. 1970.

The exterior integrity of People's Supply is remarkable. Alterations have been limited to the removal of an exterior stair on the east elevation (for fire escape and not original to the 1902 construction) and redecking of the porch.

The interior of People's Supply is typical of rural country stores of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The first floor is an open space with chamfered posts supporting the beaded board ceiling. The walls are beaded board with continuous shelves for display of goods. There is a counter and clerk's desk at the northwest corner of the room. The floors are tongue and groove and laid at an angle. A small office and a bath are located in the rear.

A staircase penetrates the second floor towards the rear of the main first floor room. The second floor features a garret sheetrocked ceiling, hardwood floors, and the four dormers. The walls feature a beaded board wainscot with sheetrock above.

Alterations to the interior of People's Supply are few in number. They include sheetrocking the second floor walls and ceiling to replace decaying fiberboard and reflooring the first floor, the original floor being rotten. A 1950s shed roof bathroom addition was demolished during the 1995 renovation as well as the original outhouse. The low cut woodwork screens at the ends of the porch were added in 1995 as well.

At present, People's Supply serves as an antique and fine reproduction furniture outlet. The building was restored in 1995 and the degree of preservation is remarkable. It is the most intact historic general store remaining in Baldwin County.

Although no formal archaeological survey has been made of this property, the potential for subsurface remains is high. Buried portions may contain significant information that may be useful in interpreting the entire property.

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National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 3 People's Supply Co., Baldwin County, Al.**8. Statement of Significance**

People's Supply is significant under Criterion A-Commerce, for its role as a local general store in Silverhill, Alabama during the early 20th century. At this time, People's Supply was the only source of supply for dry goods and agricultural needs in the community. As a place where letters could be mailed and picked up, the building's importance as a nerve center for the town cannot be overstated. The building is further significant for its role in the commercial life and development of rural Baldwin County.

People's Supply is significant under Criterion C-Architecture, as a distinctive expression of free standing gable front store architecture in Baldwin County. With its gable front roof, board and batten siding, wrap-around porch and dormers, People's Supply is a distinctive expression of the free standing gable front store type, of which few survive in Baldwin County. There are only two others, both recorded in the Baldwin County Historic Building Survey in 1986; (BA 2025), a one story frame example in Robertsdale from the turn of the century, and (BA 2066), the Baldwin Supply in Robertsdale, a virtual twin of the People's Supply, constructed c. 1903 by the same person who constructed People's Supply. The free standing gable front store type is characterized by one to two story frame construction with a gable roof. Many examples include display windows, 1/1 double hung sash windows on the second story and a porch. The People's Supply displays all of these characteristics.

During the mid 19th century, central Baldwin County was an undeveloped hinterland with no rail or roadway connections to facilitate its settlement. The area was blessed by a long growing season, however, and it wasn't long before immigrants discovered the cheap land prices. During the late 19th century, ethnic immigrants from the mid-west began to settle central Baldwin County. This process was greatly facilitated by the construction of a rail spur from Bay Minette down to the southern portion of the county in 1905. This spur provided a route of transport for settlers, and allowed for easy marketing of produce. With the construction of the railroad and the development of truck farming, Foley, Robertsdale, Summerdale and Silverhill all benefited and prospered. Though not directly on the railroad, Silverhill was close enough to benefit, and to serve as a center of more remote communities. (Lang, NR form)

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In 1890, the Svea Land Company was formed in Chicago for the purpose of colonizing farm land in the South. Lots were sold in Chicago and at the company office in Baldwin County. The town would come to be known as "Silverhill" because local workers at a turpentine still on the site (before its purchase by the Swedes), were paid in silver on a little hilltop. For those interested in locating south, reduced railroad fares were offered and brochures extolling the area were printed in Swedish. "Earn a permanent income," read the brochure, "be independent, enjoy life, provide for yourself and those who are dependent upon you, these ambitions can be realized if you buy lands in Silverhill Land Colony." (Lang, NR form)

Among the first buildings in town was the Svea Land Office, constructed in 1897 (listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985). As the community grew, the land office also served as a school. Very soon, Silverhill could boast roads, the school and land office, a saw mill, farms and a general store (the People's Supply). Withal, by 1910, there were only some fifty residents. (Lang, NR form)

Central to Silverhill's community life was the general store, known as the People's Supply. The property was purchased by Theodore Johnson in September of 1901 from Carl and Hanna Carlson of Chicago. Mr. Johnson then erected the store, with living quarters upstairs. The building featured approximately 2,000 square feet downstairs and 1,000 square feet upstairs. (Interview, Dr. Spalding) Architecturally, the People's Supply is a southern free standing gable front store with board and batten siding and a wrap-around porch. Most unusual for this type are the dormers, which provided light and air to the upper story.

Johnson would own and operate the store from 1902 to 1928. During this time he sold everything needed to farm and live in the area, including shoes, clothing, groceries, hardware and feed and seed. The People's Supply acted as a nerve center for the area, and was a popular place to trade gossip and news. Children played on the porch or outside, and if bad, even played craps. (Interview, Dr. Spalding)

In 1928 the store was run by George Marinos, a Greek immigrant who had also been drawn to Baldwin County. In 1947 he would purchase the building. It was then managed

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for him by Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Chandler, who raised their two children upstairs. The Chandlers would run the store until 1972. It was during their tenure that People's Supply enjoyed its heyday. The inventory was valued at \$18,000 and sales were as high as \$130,000 a year. Nearly 8,000 pounds of coffee were sold per year. During the Depression the Chandlers allowed hungry customers to buy on credit, sometimes erasing the debts. In deference to Swedish tastes, People's Supply stocked herring and lutefisk (dried codfish) in brine for Christmas treats. (Interview, Dr. Spalding)

People's Supply served not only the Silverhill community, but farmers and residents alike from the broader rural area, particularly to the west and south of town. Saturday was usually market day, and the store would be crowded with shoppers. As other Baldwin County communities developed and with the improvements in roads and transportation, the importance of People's Supply declined.

Since 1972, there have been seven owners, none particularly successful, despite the addition of gas pumps during the 1980s. Rural convenience stores and supermarkets in nearby Robertsedale, effectively made People's Supply obsolete as a general store.

The building stood vacant for several years before its purchase by Dr. and Mrs. Joe Spalding in 1993. They began a major restoration effort, and reopened the building to the public as an antique and reproduction furniture shop in September of 1995.

The People's Supply Company is an important historic building in Baldwin County. Not only is it a distinctive expression of the free standing gable front store type, but it is a rare survival of that type in Baldwin County.

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9. Bibliographical References

Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings. American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940. (Ames:  
Iowa State University Press, 1988).

“Svea Land Company Office,” Robin Lang. NR Nomination Form, 1985.

Interview, Dr. Joe Spalding, Silverhill. May 11, 1996.

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### 10. Geographical Data

#### Verbal Boundary Description

The People's Supply Company store is located at 21590 Broad Street in Silverhill, Baldwin County, Alabama as represented as lot 21, block 20, parcel number 47-01-11-2-000-29.000 on the enclosed tax map.

#### Boundary Justification

The nominated boundaries contain all extant historic property associated with the People's Supply Company building.

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Photographs

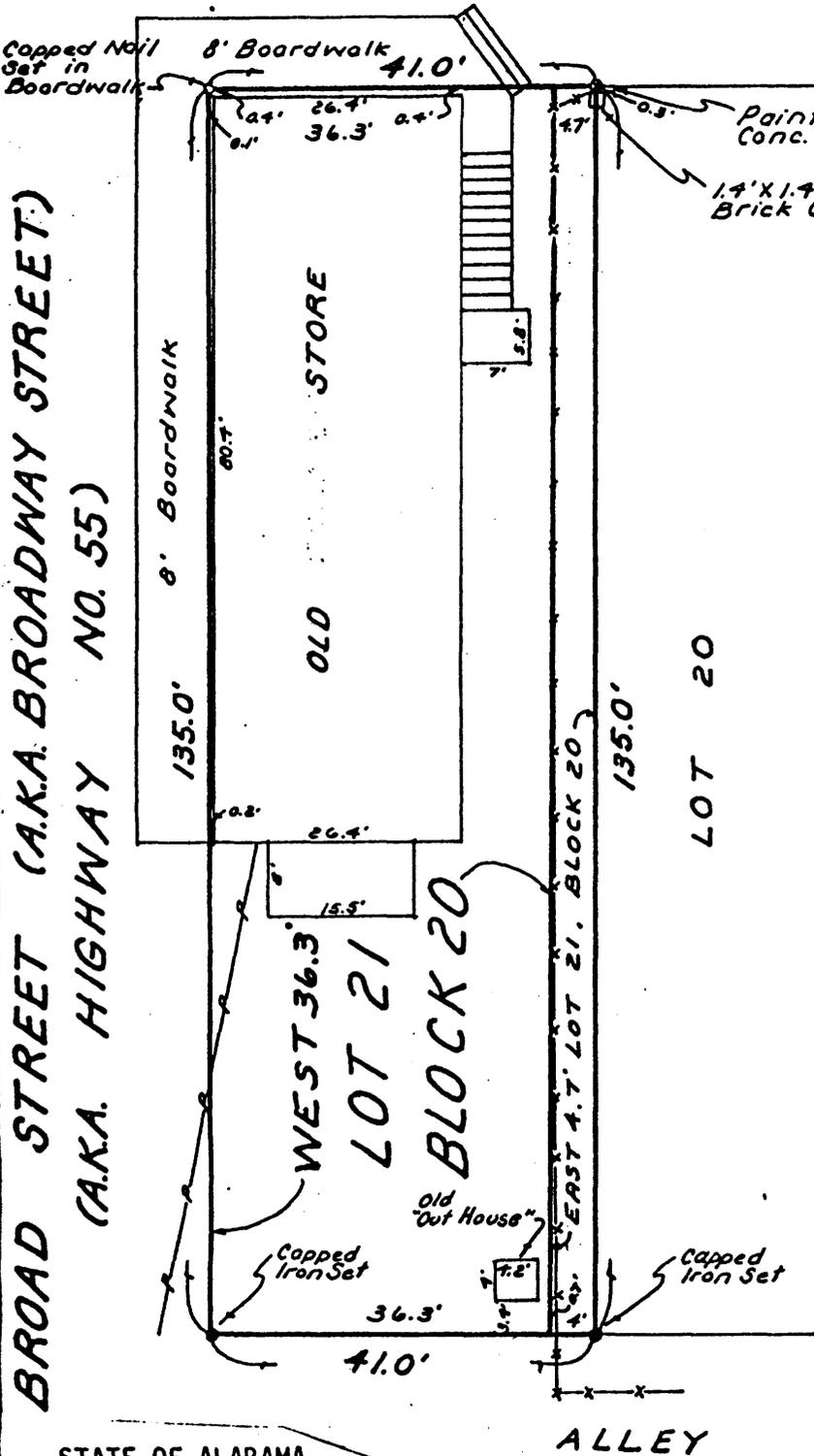
People's Supply Company  
21950 Broad Street  
Silverhill, Baldwin County, Alabama  
John Sledge, photographer  
May 15, 1996  
MHDC negative file: MB 227

1. Facade, camera facing S.
2. General, camera facing SW.
3. General, camera facing SE.
4. West elevation, camera facing E.
5. South elevation, camera facing N.
6. Detail, storefront, camera facing S.
7. Interior, storefront, camera facing NE.
8. Interior, first floor, camera facing S.
9. Interior, second floor, camera facing N.

# CENTRAL PARK

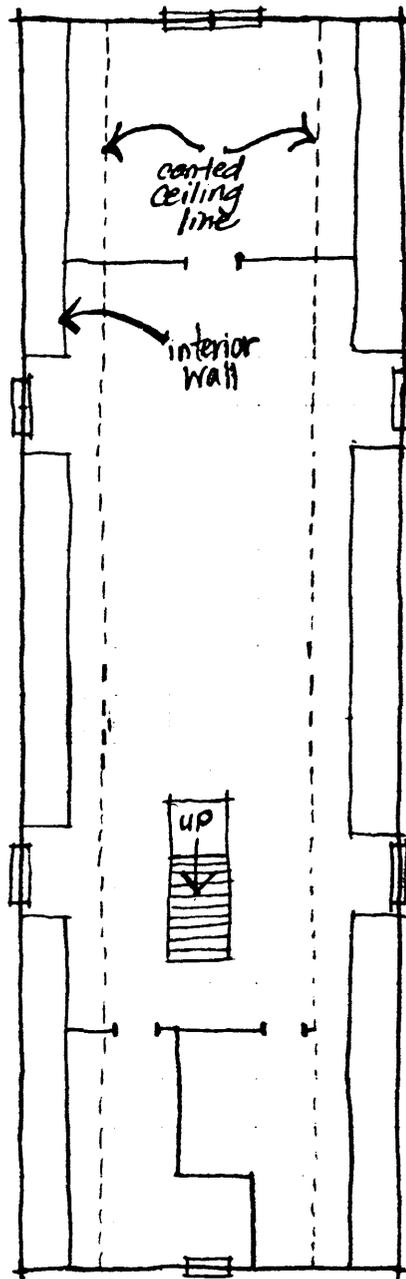
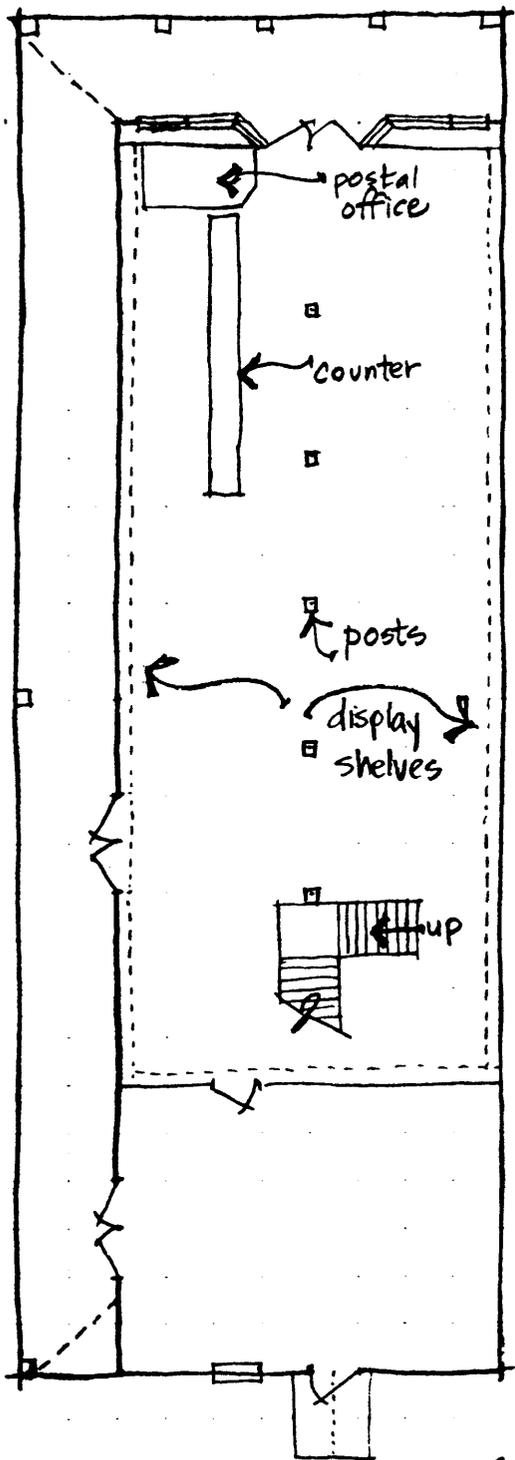


BROAD STREET (A.K.A. BROADWAY STREET)  
A.K.A. HIGHWAY NO. 55



- Historic Map -  
Peoples Supply Company  
Silverhill, Baldwin County,  
Alabama

- not to scale -



- floor plan -

first floor

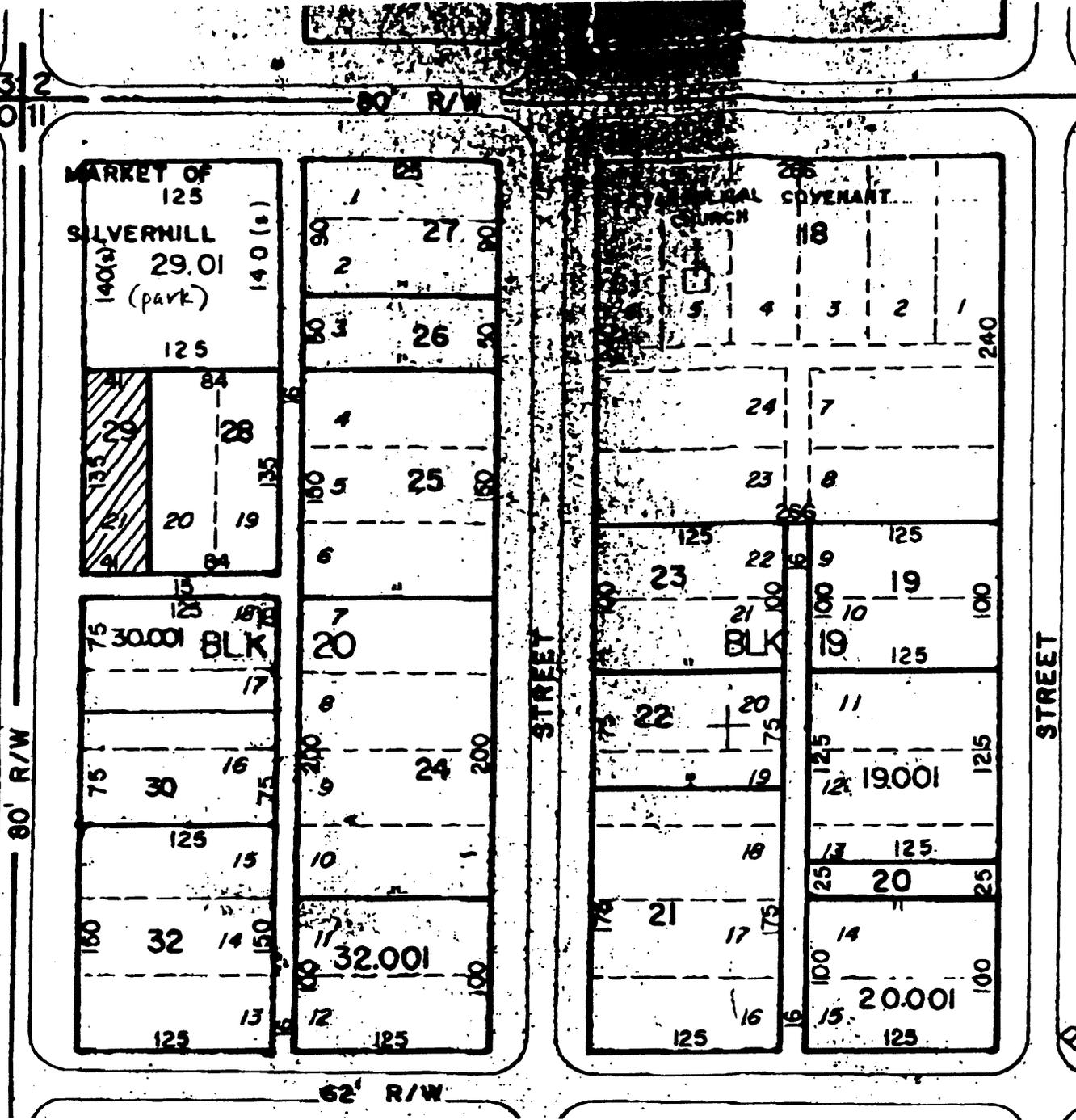
second floor

Peoples Supply Company  
Silverhill, Baldwin County, Alabama



not to scale

47-01-11-2-000-29.000



Baldwin County tax map showing portion of Silverhill and specifically the Peoples Supply Company on lot 21 in block 20 of parcel number 47-01-11-2-000-29.000.

not to scale

