

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

*2003*

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Axton-Fisher Tobacco Company Warehouse  
other names/site number National Candy Company Building, JFSW436

**2. Location**

street & number 1405 West Broadway not for publication N/A  
city or town Louisville vicinity N/A  
state Kentucky code KY county Jefferson code 111 zip code 40211

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant    nationally statewide X locally. (    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

David L. Morgan  
Signature of certifying official David L. Morgan, SHPO Date 3-04-03

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register criteria.

    
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
    
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register Edson A. Beall  
   See continuation sheet.  
   determined eligible for the National Register     
   See continuation sheet.  
   determined not eligible for the National Register     
   removed from the National Register     
   other (explain):   

    
Signature of Keeper Date of Action 4.18.03

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property	Category of Property
<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure
	<input type="checkbox"/> object

Number of Resources within Property		
Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing N/A

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions  
 Cat: Industry Sub: Manufacturing Facility

Current Functions  
 Cat: Vacant Sub: Not In Use

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
 Twentieth Century Revival Beaux Arts-inspired

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	Poured concrete
roof	Tar
walls	Brick
other	N/A

Narrative Description - See Continuation Sheets

**8. Statement of Significance**

## Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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	Industry
Period of Significance	1932-1944
Significant Dates	1932 1944
Significant Person	N/A
Cultural Affiliation	N/A
Architect/Builder	Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance: See continuation sheets

**9. Major Bibliographical References** See 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: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property: **Less than five acres**

UTM Coordinates: Zone Easting Northing Louisville West Quad  
**16 607 100 4234 100**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Being the property described in Deed Book 4754, Page 783.

**Boundary Justification**

The proposed boundaries represent the property historically associated with the Axton-Fisher Tobacco Company at this site.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Donna M. Neary date September 20, 2002  
street & number 1435 Willow Avenue telephone 502-456-9488  
city or town Louisville state KY zip code 40204

**Property Owner**

name Bethlehem Development Inc.  
street & number 2205 West Broadway telephone 502-767-7820  
city or town Louisville state KY zip code 40211

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 7**

**Page 1**

**Axton-Fisher Tobacco Company Warehouse, Jefferson County, Kentucky**

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**Description**

The Axton-Fisher Tobacco Company Warehouse (JFSW436) was constructed in 1921 at 1405 West Broadway in Louisville, Kentucky. The building was built for the Frank A. Menne Candy Company, and became part of the Axton-Fisher Tobacco Company when it was purchased from the National Candy Company in 1932.

The building is situated on the north side of Broadway and Fifteen Streets on the fringe of the central business district, in the Portland Neighborhood of Louisville. The five story building is sited at a zero lot line on Broadway, and a sidewalk stretches to the street. The site includes a paved area to Fifteenth Street which provides access to the loading bays on the west façade.

The building is sited adjacent to the PennCentral Railroad (now CSX) tracks. The building fronts on Broadway, a major thoroughfare for the city of Louisville. The Axton-Fisher factory building was located at Twentieth and Broadway, only five blocks away.

Centers of the tobacco industry in Louisville have included West Main Street and East and West Broadway. River traffic relied on warehouses on Main Street for storing and distributing tobacco and tobacco products throughout the nineteenth century. The tobacco industry concentrated on West Broadway in the early twentieth century, relying on rail, river and overland transport of goods and supplies.

The architect of the building is unknown. The building is designed with Beaux Arts-inspired detailing. The main, or south, façade is faced in brown brick and topped with a parapet. The east, west and north facades are exposed reinforced concrete. A yellow glazed brick cornice is topped with a concrete detail at the east and west corners of the main façade. Stone keystones and pilaster capitals accent the main façade.

Construction is reinforced concrete. The interior is open floor spaces supported by columns. This open floor plan allowed for the building to be easily converted to warehouse space from space used for candy production.

The main façade is divided into five bays with brick pilasters between each bay. The main pedestrian entrance to the building is located on the west corner of the main façade on Broadway. A pedestrian entrance is sited on the east corner of the main façade, and a one story attached garage entrance is now fitted with windows. A three story neighboring building shares the east façade with the attached garage. The original iron gates are in place on the west façade.

A three-bay delivery entrance is located on the west façade. The rear of the building is a loading dock. An alley on the north façade provides access to the loading dock.

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The building is topped with a flat roof. A large steel crane is situated on the roof of the building. A large marquis on the east façade has been removed. During the 1930s the sign promoted the Twenty Grand brand of cigarettes made by Axton-Fisher.

The windows of the building fitted with steel frame double hung sashes. The first story windows are fitted with one-over one windows, and upper story windows are outfitted with eight-over eight multi-panes. Several panes of glass are missing, and some window and door openings have been covered by plywood. The window openings have not been changed from the original design.

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**Significance**

The Axton Fisher Tobacco Company Warehouse (JFSW436) at 1405 West Broadway is locally significant under Criterion A within the area of Industry for its role in the manufacturing and distribution of consumer tobacco products from 1932 to 1944. This building is important within the context of Tobacco Manufacturing in Louisville, 1880-1945, and is important as an extant symbol of the evolution of the tobacco industry in Louisville. This warehouse illustrates the growing importance of the Axton-Fisher Tobacco Company as the largest independent tobacco company in the United States by the end of the first decades of the twentieth century. The introduction of individually packaged cigarettes by Axton-Fisher in the 1920s and early 1930s necessitate the purchase of this warehouse for storing loose leaf tobacco acquired by the newly formed leaf-buying affiliate begun by AFTC in 1931.

**Historical Context: Tobacco Manufacturing in Louisville, 1880 - 1945**

The tobacco industry in Louisville began soon after early settlement. Louisville's location on the Ohio River made it ideal for manufacturing and shipping tobacco products. Tobacco became an important crop in Kentucky in the 1830s. Tobacco was the most important crop to early nineteenth century Virginia, and the most important to that state's economy. Kentucky's early nineteenth century economy relied heavily on tobacco and it was the second most important crop to the farmers of the state (George Yater – Two Hundred Years at the Falls).

Louisville was the center of the tobacco market in Kentucky by 1880, hosting the largest hogshead auctions, and was the center of tobacco manufacturing for the state. Louisville's location at the Falls of the Ohio gave it an advantage of access to both local and international tobacco supplies. There were many contracts with European tobacco concerns to supply tobacco to factories in Louisville (Price).

By the end of the nineteenth century Louisville was the site of the largest loose leaf tobacco market in the world. Many of the tobacco warehouses were located in the city along Main Street between Sixth and Twelfth Streets. That area of the city became known as the Tobacco District, and sometimes called the "Breaks", because of the practice of breaking open of the large wooden barrels which tobacco was stored in, called "hogsheads" (Hugh Foshee – Enterprise Tobacco Warehouse National Register Nomination). Tobacco-related buildings were also concentrated along East and West Broadway from the late nineteenth into the twentieth century, and some still exist there today.

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The importance of tobacco to the economy of Louisville can be seen in the city directory of 1890. A review of businesses in Louisville shows that all aspects of tobacco storage and manufacturing were represented in the directory. The storage of raw materials and finished products was evident in the existence of fifteen tobacco warehouses. There were sixteen manufacturing plants making tobacco twists by the turn of the century, and nearly 80 other tobacco production concerns that accounted for snuff and cigar production in Louisville. These businesses provided tobacco products across the state and the region.

By 1906 the method of packaging tobacco as loose leaf was introduced in Lexington, modeled on Virginia auctions. This new technique of loose leaf tobacco replaced the packing of twists of tobacco into barrels. The new method tied tobacco stalks and stored them in open baskets. This method took predominance over packing and sales in barrels across the statewide burley market. Lexington replaced Louisville as the center of the burley trade, with its new loose leaf auction houses, by 1930. The last hogshead auction was held in Louisville in 1930.

Tobacco use increased at the turn of the century, as did tobacco production. Cigarette consumption in 1900 was reported at approximately three billion for the year 1900. By 1916, industry figures showed an increase to twenty-five billion cigarettes smoked annually by consumers. The first blended tobacco cigarette was introduced in 1913. Those smokers who had formerly rolled their own cigarettes were moving to manufactured cigarettes in record numbers in reaction to the improved cigarettes being offered (Courier-Journal, November 30, 1941).

Thirty-five billion cigarettes were consumed in 1917, the first year of the First World War. Louisville was the center of cigarette production during World War One when tobacco use by soldiers created a huge boon to the market. Tobacco industry sources reported that cigarette use doubled during the years of World War One (Courier-Journal, November 30, 1941). The Louisville market of cigarettes may also have been positively impacted by the large population of soldiers stationed at Camp Taylor in Jefferson County.

Changes in state laws also increased new markets for cigarettes, and increased production met these needs. Eleven states (all located in the Midwest) repealed laws which had prohibiting smoking and therefore the sale or purchase of cigarettes. Following the repeal of the ban on cigarettes, Iowa became the first state to levy a tax on cigarette sales (Courier-Journal, November 30, 1941).



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The burley tobacco market hit on hard times in 1920 when weather conditions resulted in poor quality tobacco being grown in the state. Demand had not declined, but the substandard product threatened the market. A group of Kentucky businessmen, including Robert Worth Bingham of Louisville, worked to form the Burley Tobacco Growers cooperative Association to help increase the quality, and thus the price of tobacco on the market. These efforts quickly restored the market and made growing tobacco profitable once again. In fact, the tobacco industry, unlike others in Louisville, thrived during the Depression era of the 1930s.

A major boon to the cigarette industry was the increased use of cigarettes by female consumers. The returning Doughboys brought their cigarette habits home with them following World War One, and the women in their lives began acquiring the habit. An advertising campaign for Lucky cigarettes appealed to the stated desires of women in America during the Flapper-era of slim, boyish figures to shed the "old fashioned figure" and aspire to "the slim,...when diets were at their height." The slogan, "Reach for a Lucky instead of a sweet" resulted in millions of women choosing to have a cigarette instead of candy. This assertion is born out by the cigarette sales figures of 1928, when with the added female consumer's cigarette consumption recorded total cigarette consumption figures in that year to exceed 100 billion cigarettes for the first time in history (Courier-Journal, November 14, 1941).

Brown and Williamson opened a factory in Louisville in 1929, and moved its headquarters to Louisville by 1931. By 1931 the tobacco industry in Kentucky was bringing in approximately 150 million dollars annually, and tobacco farmers were earning nearly 100 million dollars for their produce (Lexington Herald Leader, November 19, 1931). The British-American Tobacco Company moved to Louisville in 1931 from it's former United States headquarters from New York City in 1931. By 1934, the Axton Fisher Company, the largest independent tobacco company in America, was grossing \$28 million in sales, thanks in large part to the introduction of "Spud" the first mentholated cigarette (Price). The tobacco industry continued to grow with increased production and sales throughout the mid-twentieth century, and by 1944 Philip Morris purchased the Axton Fisher Tobacco Company and took over production at its facilities.

Philip Morris' acquisition marks a trend in the Louisville tobacco industry of large companies purchasing smaller, local tobacco companies and creating large conglomerates. The importance of the Louisville tobacco market is illustrated by the move of two international tobacco companies, British-American Tobacco and Phillip Morris, to Louisville in the 1930s and 1940s. This trend in the tobacco industry documents the movement from indepently owned, multiple tobacco factories making small batches of products to a few large, international companies making numerous brands of cigarettes, and other tobacco products.

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**History of Axton Fisher Tobacco Company and the 1405 West Broadway Warehouse**

Woodford Fitch Axton and brother Edwin Dymond Axton formed the Axton Fisher Tobacco Company (AFTC) in 1905 at Twentieth and Broadway. The company manufactured and sold leaf tobacco products which enjoyed regional success. The company produced primarily bagged, or chewing tobacco at its factory at Twentieth and Broadway. Products included *White Mule*, *Axton's Natural Leaf*, *8 Hour*, *Booster* and *Wage Scale* chewing tobacco. The company also manufactured a Turkish cigarette known as *Clown*.

The company operated as a local manufacturer for the first decades of its existence. AFTC entered the national tobacco arena in 1926 when the company purchased the rights to manufacture the first mentholated cigarette called Spud. The company purchased the product from Lloyd "Spud" Hughes, the products inventor. The company hired an advertising agency from New York City to promote Spud cigarettes nationally (Axton, W.F.) Spud cigarettes quickly became an international brand, and it was reported that members of the Antarctic Expedition led by Byrd packed Spud cigarettes.

AFTC purchased the building at 1405 West Broadway in 1932 from the National Candy Company for use as a warehouse to store loose leaf tobacco used in the production of the Axton-Fisher brands of cigarettes. The building was constructed in 1921 by the Frank A. Menne Candy Company and was considered "one of the most modern in the city" (Courier-Journal, *Axton-Fisher Buys Plant On Broadway*, November 15, 1931). The purchase of this building was the Axton-Fisher Company's response to the increased sales of their products—increasing their physical plant to increase operations. Interestingly, it was at this time that candy sales were being compromised by increased use of cigarettes by female consumers. The purchase of the candy factory for the warehouse is yet another indication of the growing economic importance of the tobacco manufacturing industry. This building was used to store loose leaf tobacco being purchased by a newly formed affiliate of the company. This affiliate purchased loose leaf tobacco in large quantities, and this was the first off-site warehouse purchased for loose leaf storage. The building's 165,000 square-foot, open floor plan made it ideal for use as a warehouse for tobacco. In addition, its proximity to the factory only five blocks West on Broadway made this existing building an ideal

Beginning in 1932 the Axton-Fisher company manufactured and packaged individual cigarettes for ten cents, for those who could not afford a pack of cigarettes. The Economic Depression of the 1930s was the inspiration to the product, providing an affordable single cigarette called Twenty Grand. The name for the cigarette was chosen from the winner of the 1931 Kentucky Derby, Twenty Grand.

The production of Spud and Twenty Grand opened international markets for Axton-Fisher and the production of cigarettes was an industry which improved during the years of the Economic Depression of the 1930s. The Twenty Grand brand was wildly popular, earning total annual sales of 28 million dollars by 1934. (Axton, W.F.)

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Axton Fisher plants manufactured five percent of the cigarettes produced in America by the 1930s. A new factory was built at Twentieth and Maple Streets in 1933, and the plant at Twentieth and Broadway was converted to a loose leaf tobacco storage warehouse. During its peak of production, AFTC employed 1200 people, running three shifts. The company owners actively supported Union membership and operated programs to assist employees and their families. The construction of the factory building in 1933 included showers for the men in the factory and special restrooms for female employees. Many of the products created by AFTC were aimed at working class consumers (Axton, W.F.).

Woodford Axton died in 1935 and his brother Edwin retired soon after. The family sold shares of the company to keep the manufacturing plant going, but the business suffered. In 1944 the Axton-Fisher Company was purchased by Philip Morris and consumed into its international operations. This warehouse was not part of the plan for Philip Morris' Louisville operation, and it was sold in 1944.

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**Bibliography**

**Axton-Fisher Tobacco Company Warehouse, Jefferson County, Kentucky**

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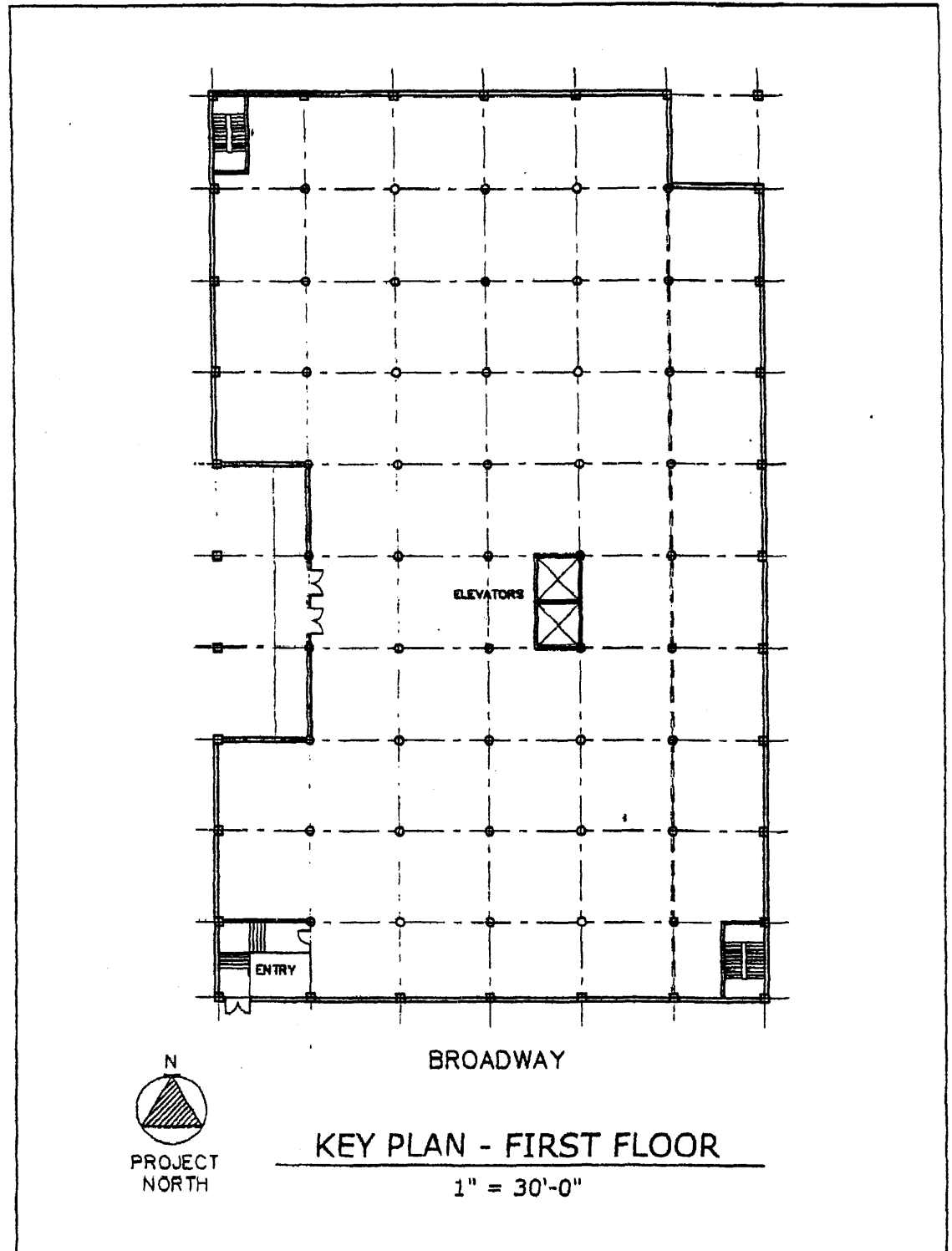
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# EXISTING FLOOR PLAN

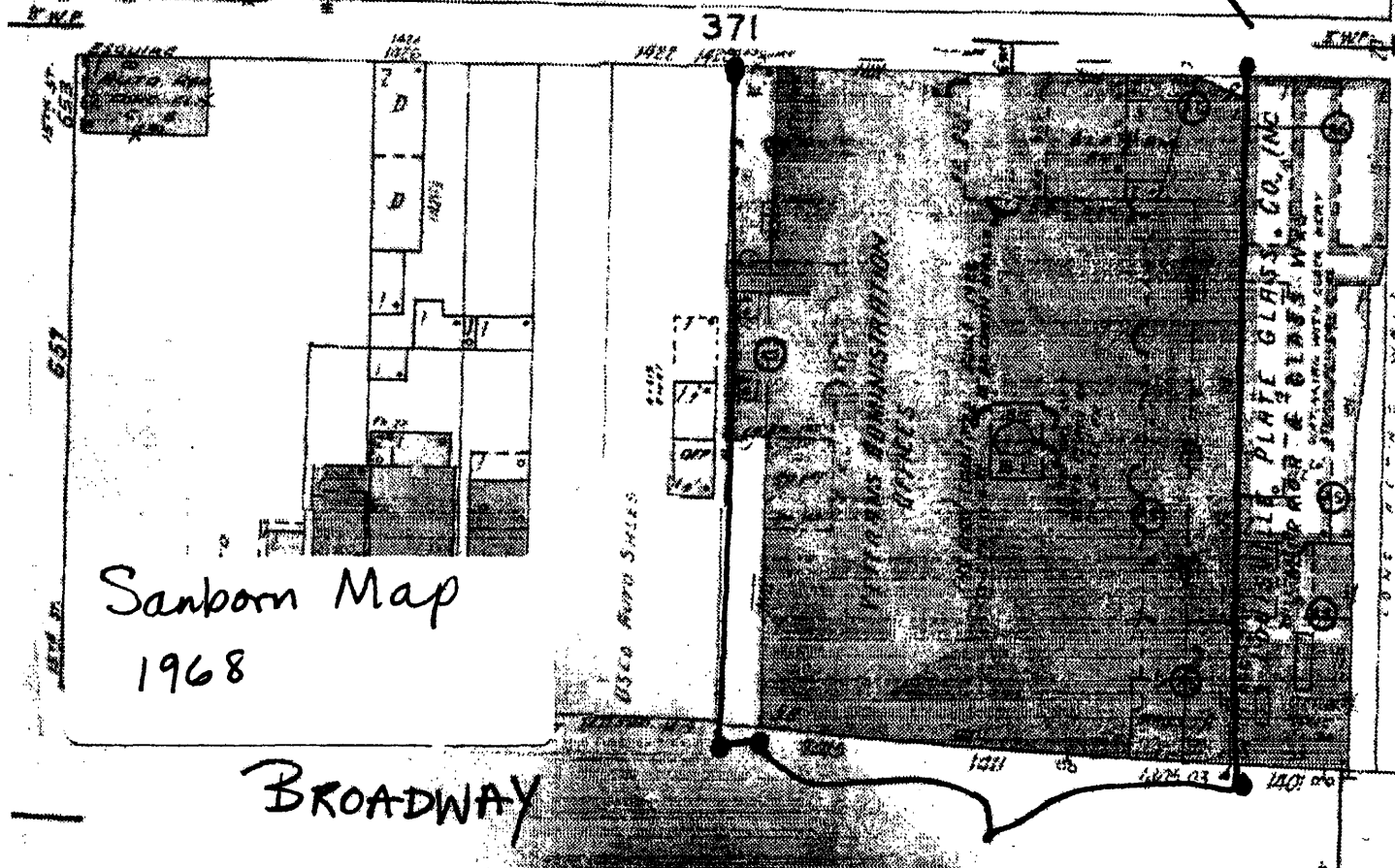


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1405 W. Broadway  
Louisville, Ky

16th Street

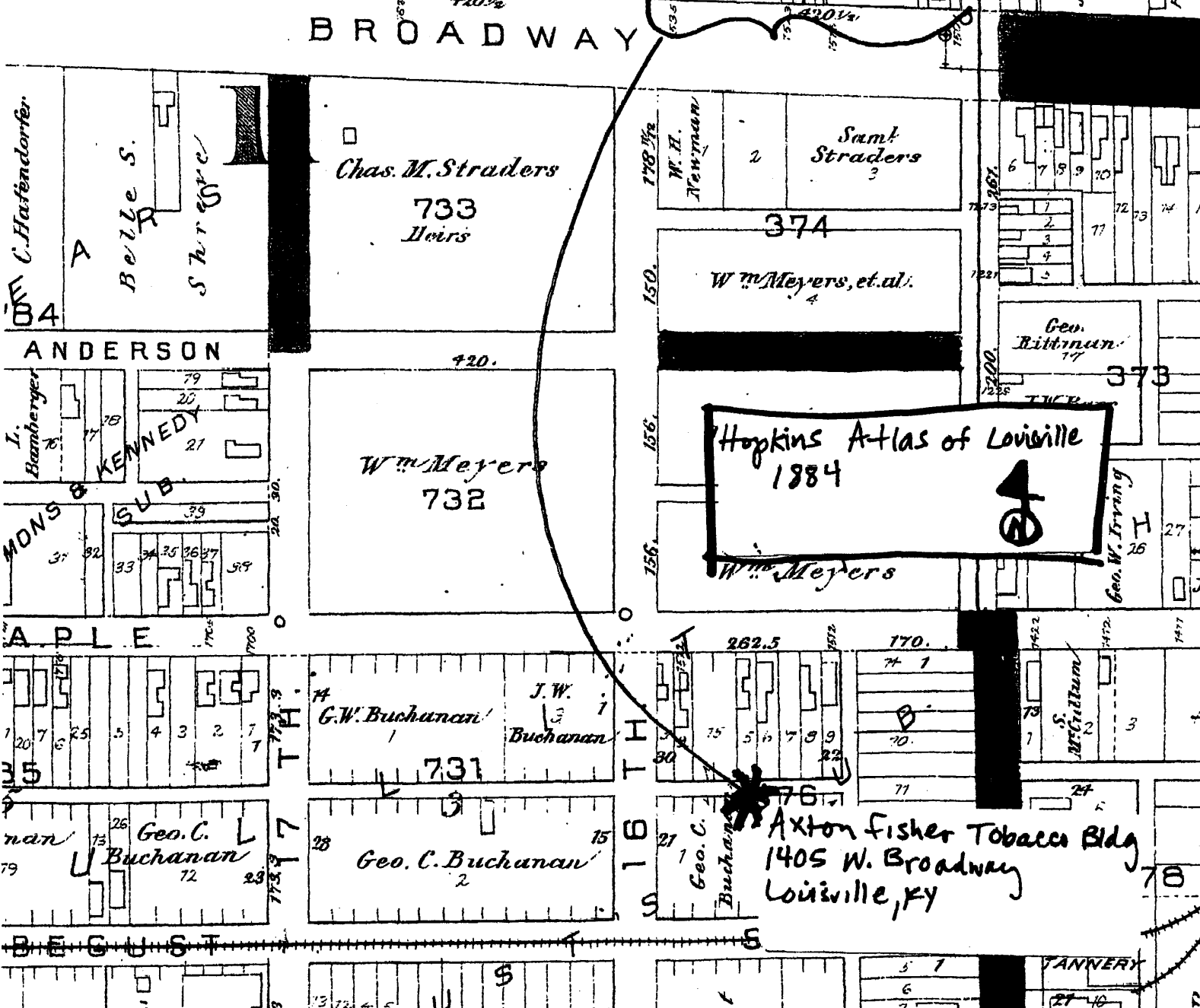
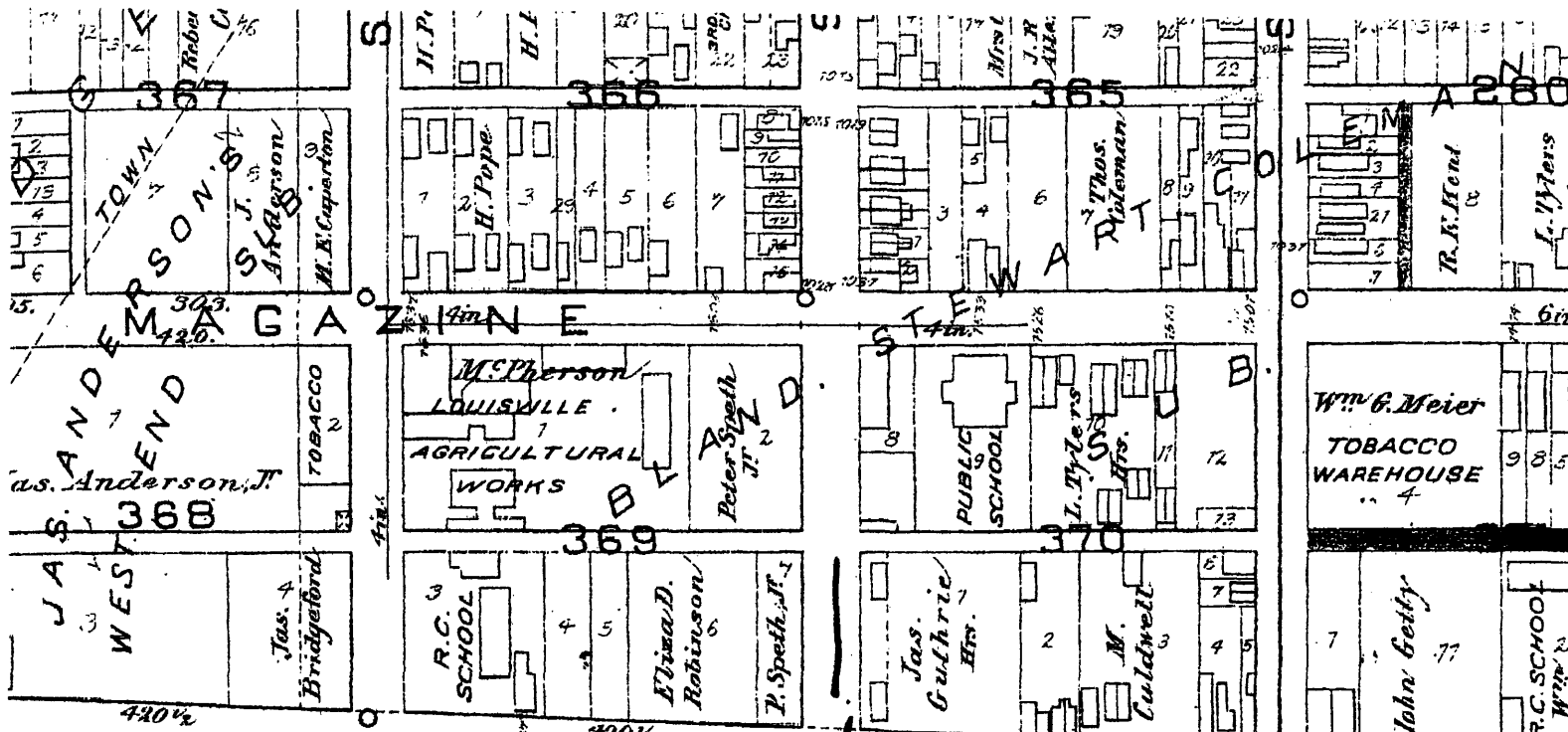
MAGAZINE

Axton Fisher Tobacco Bldg  
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Louisville, Ky



Sanborn Map  
1968

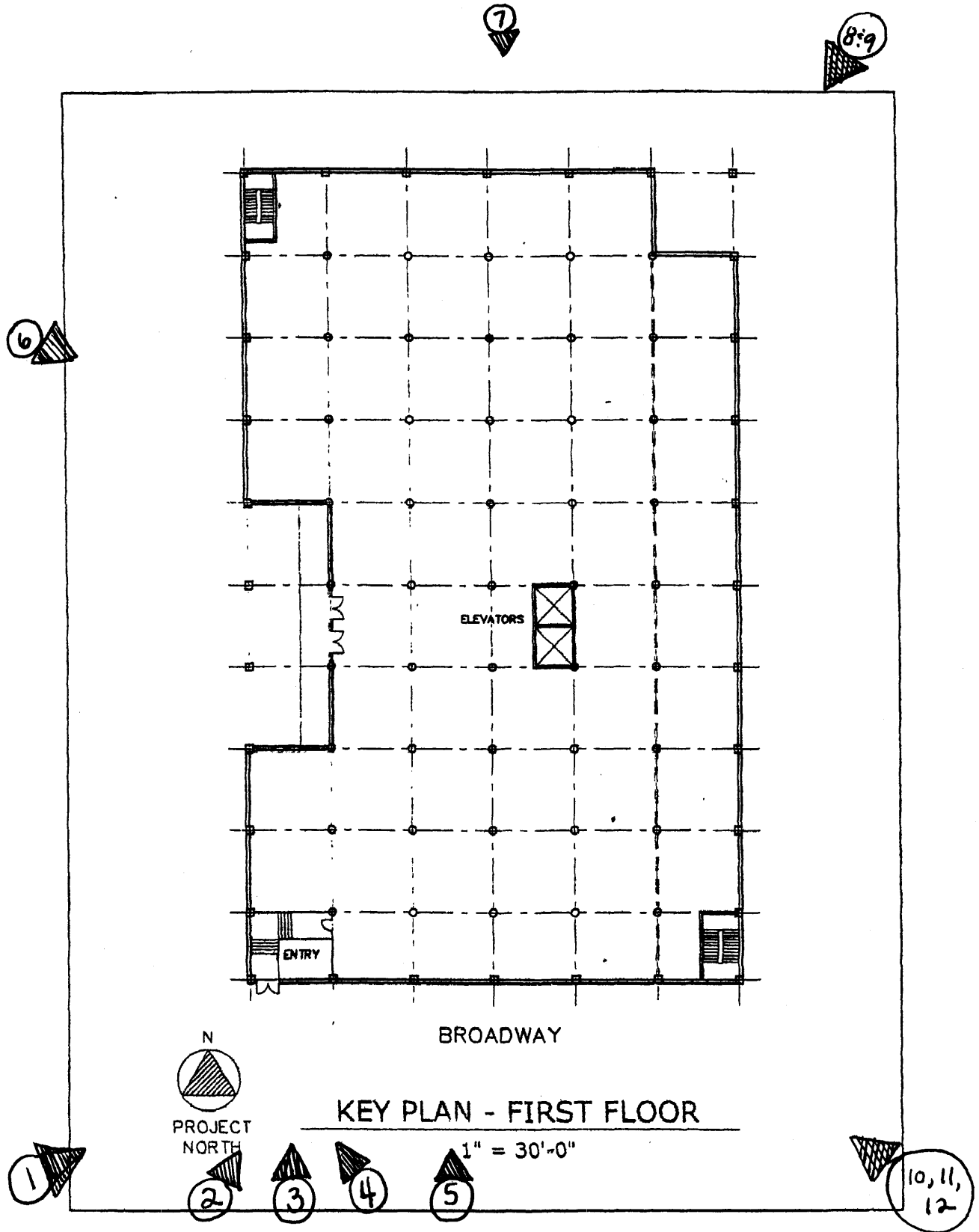
BROADWAY



Hopkins Atlas of Louisville  
1884

Axton Fisher Tobacco Bldg  
1405 W. Broadway  
Louisville, Ky

PROJECT



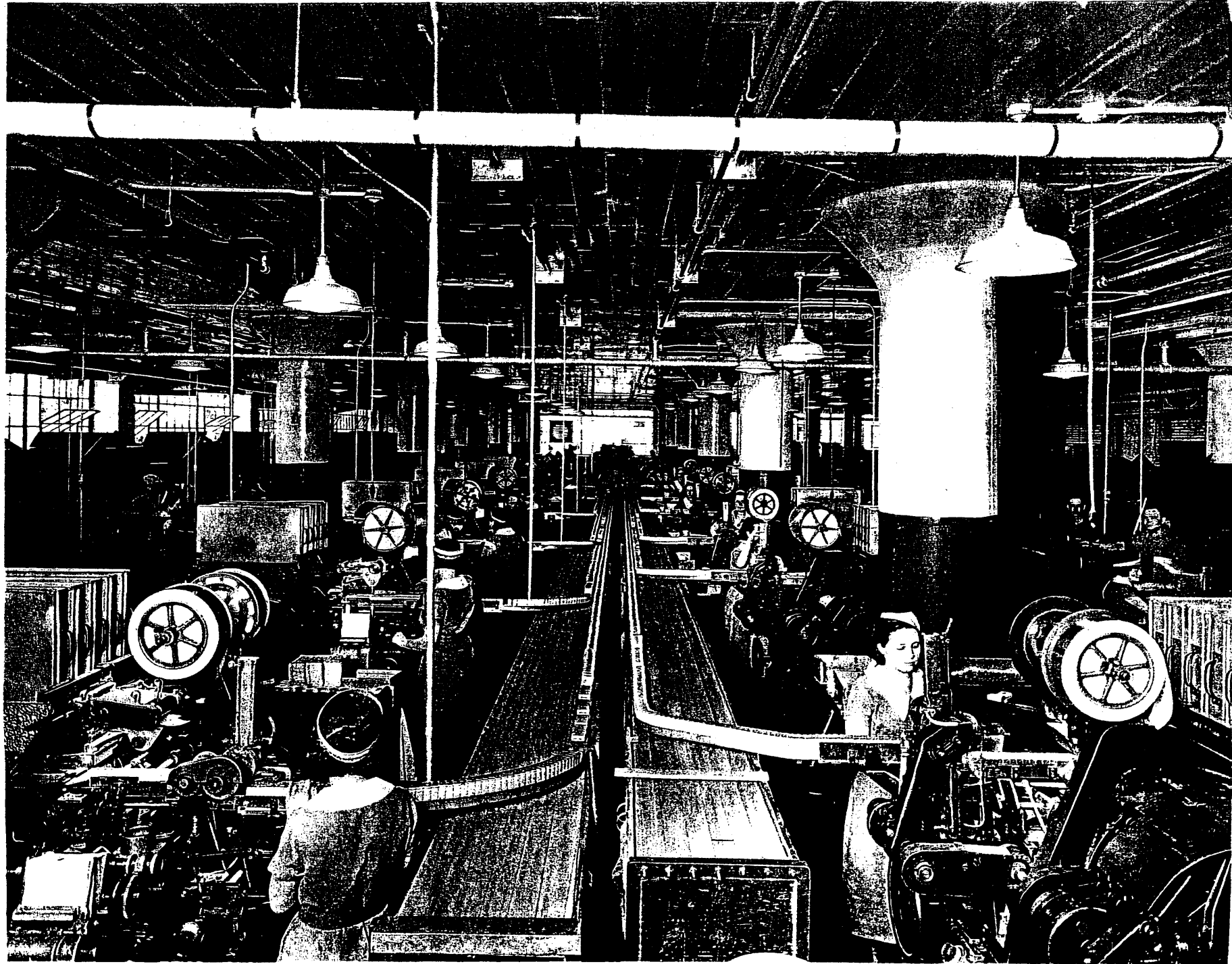
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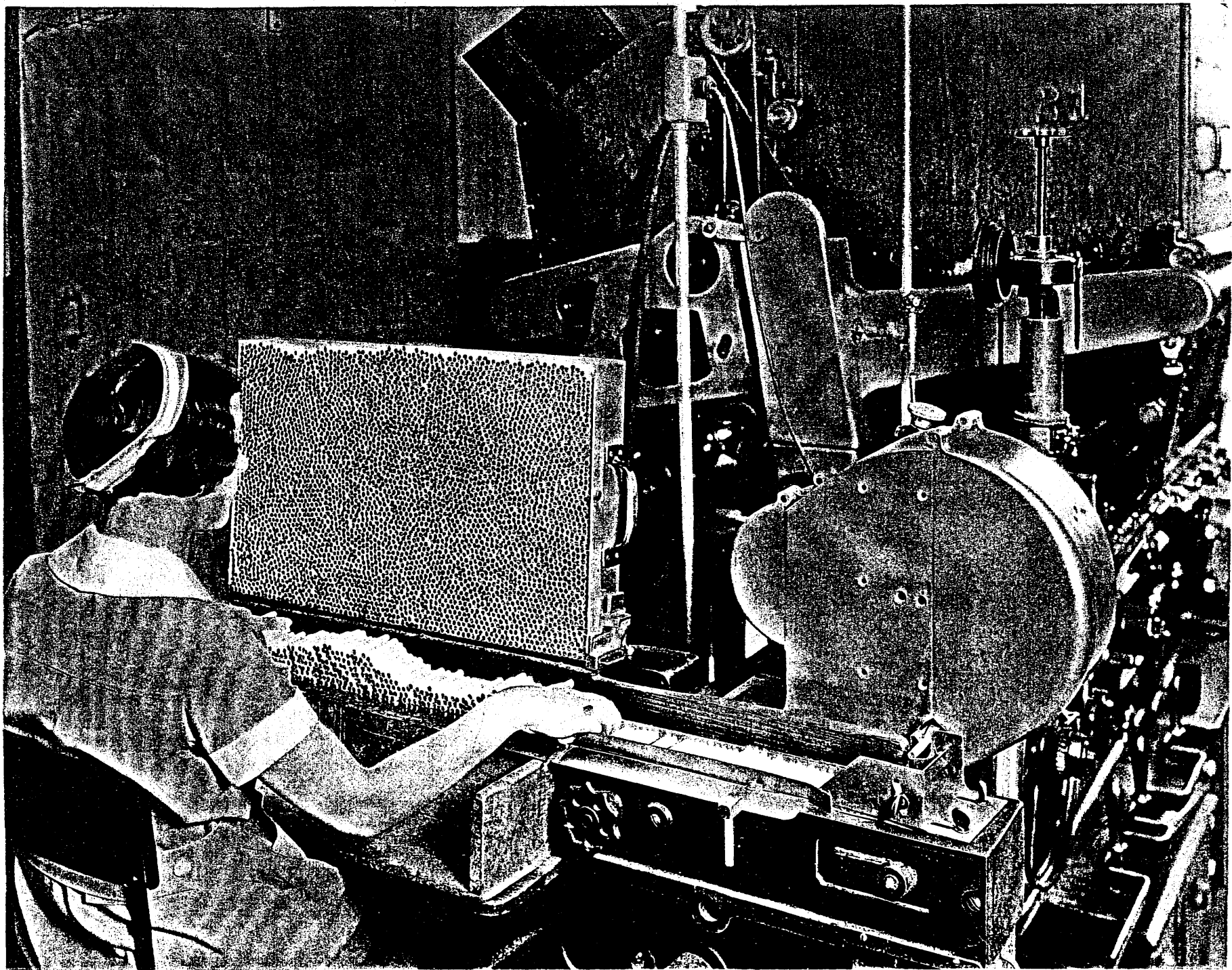
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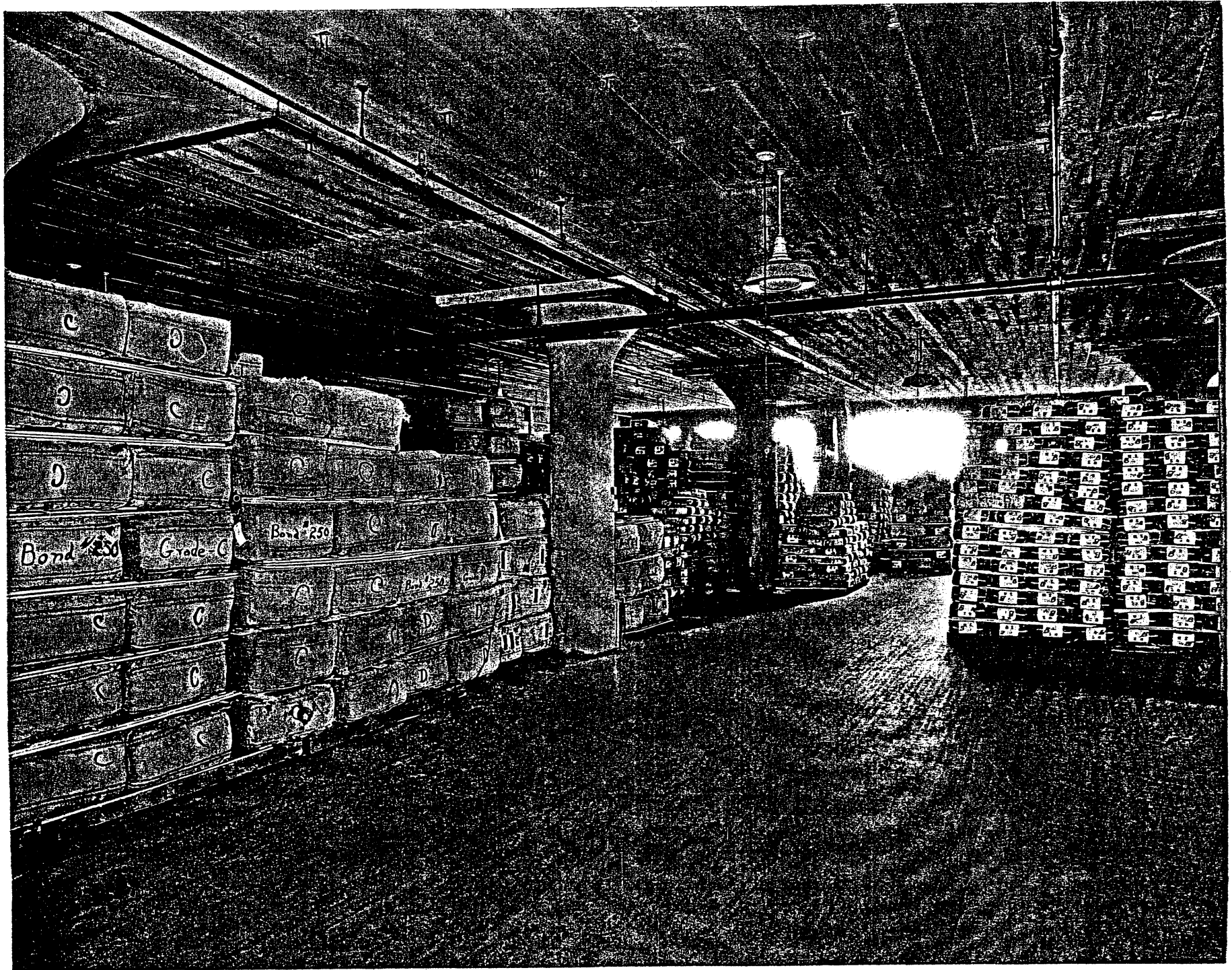
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 1405 W. Broadway  
 Louisville, KY



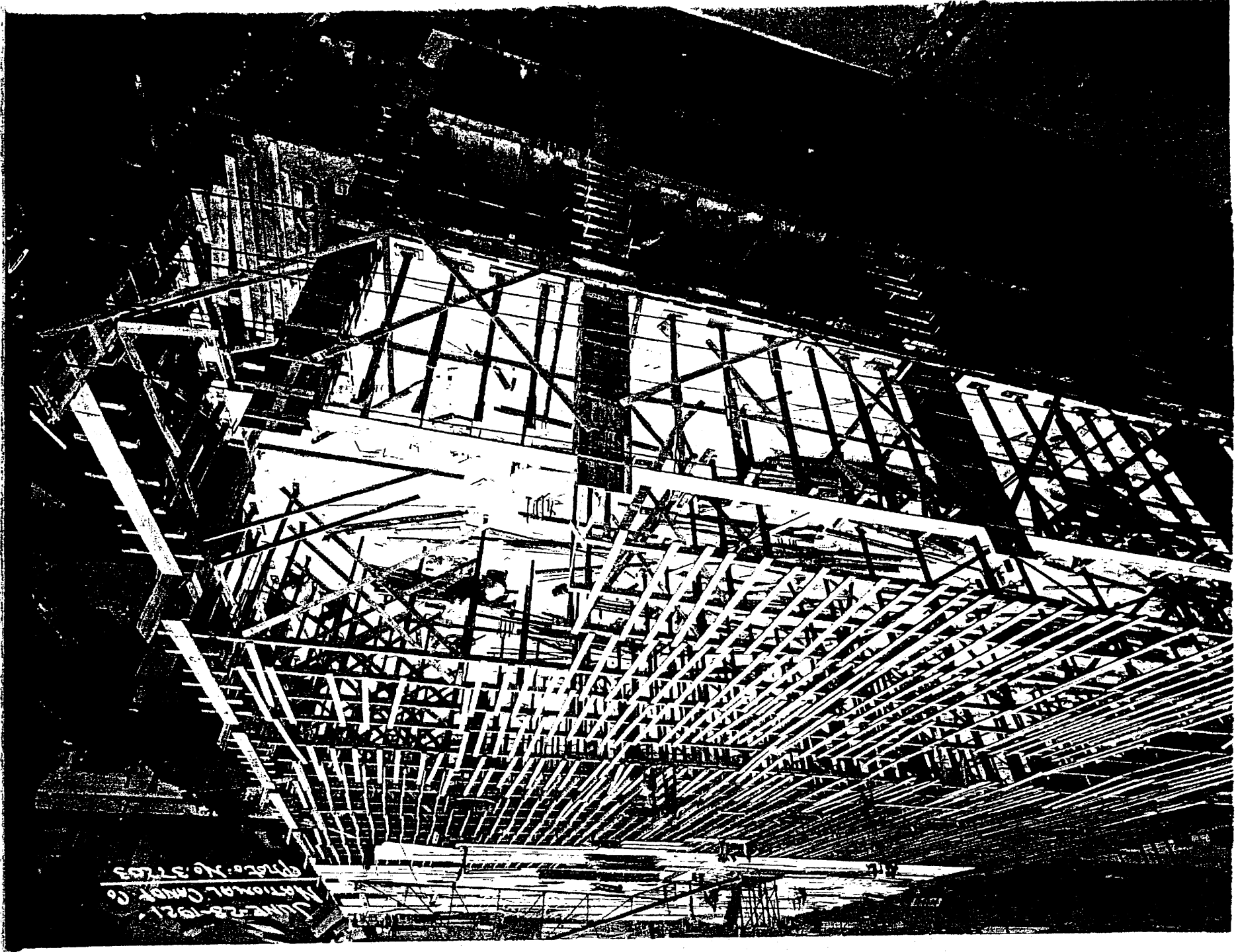
*Axton Fisher Tobacco Co.*



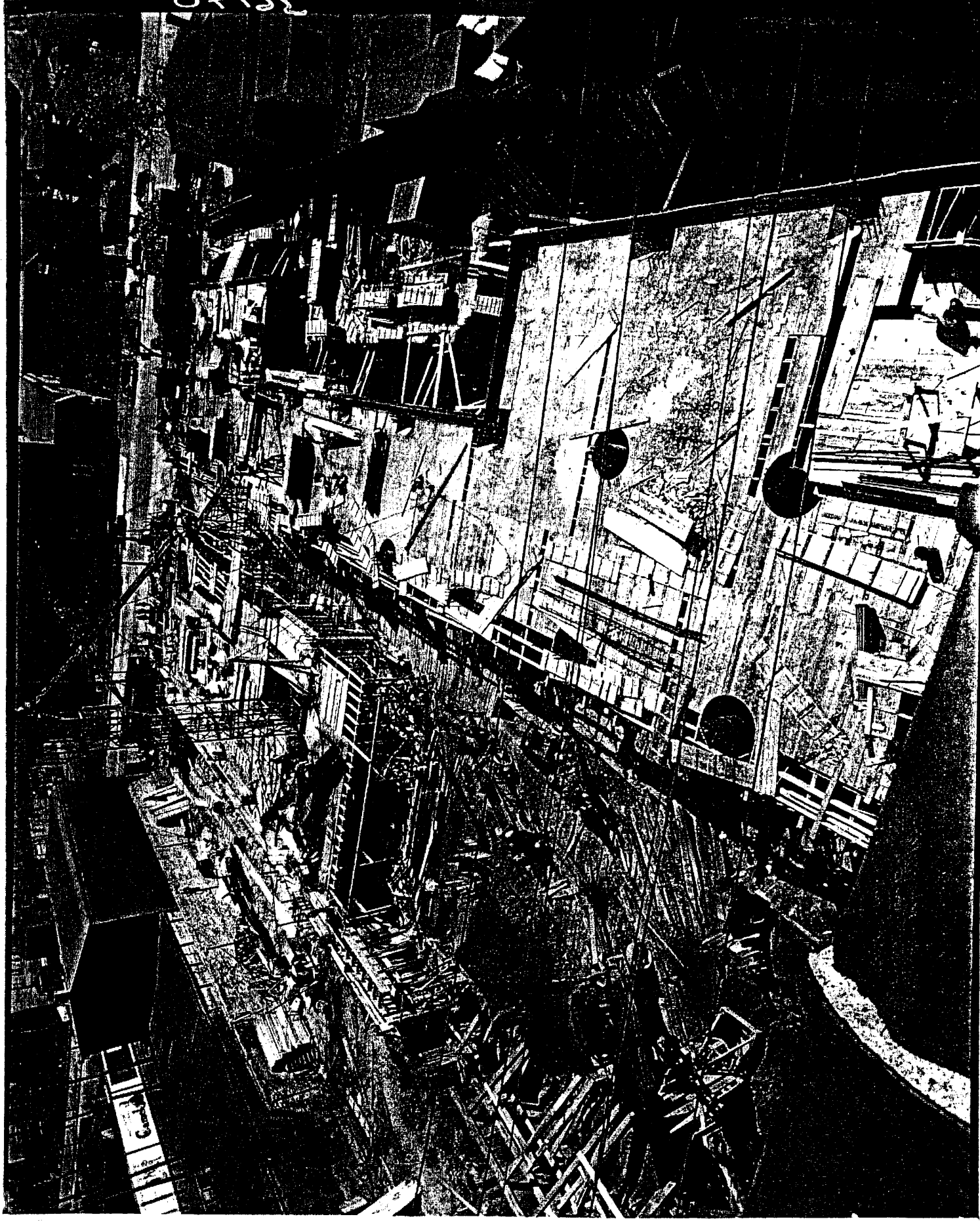








June 28-1921  
National Cement Co  
Photo No. 57693



PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES  
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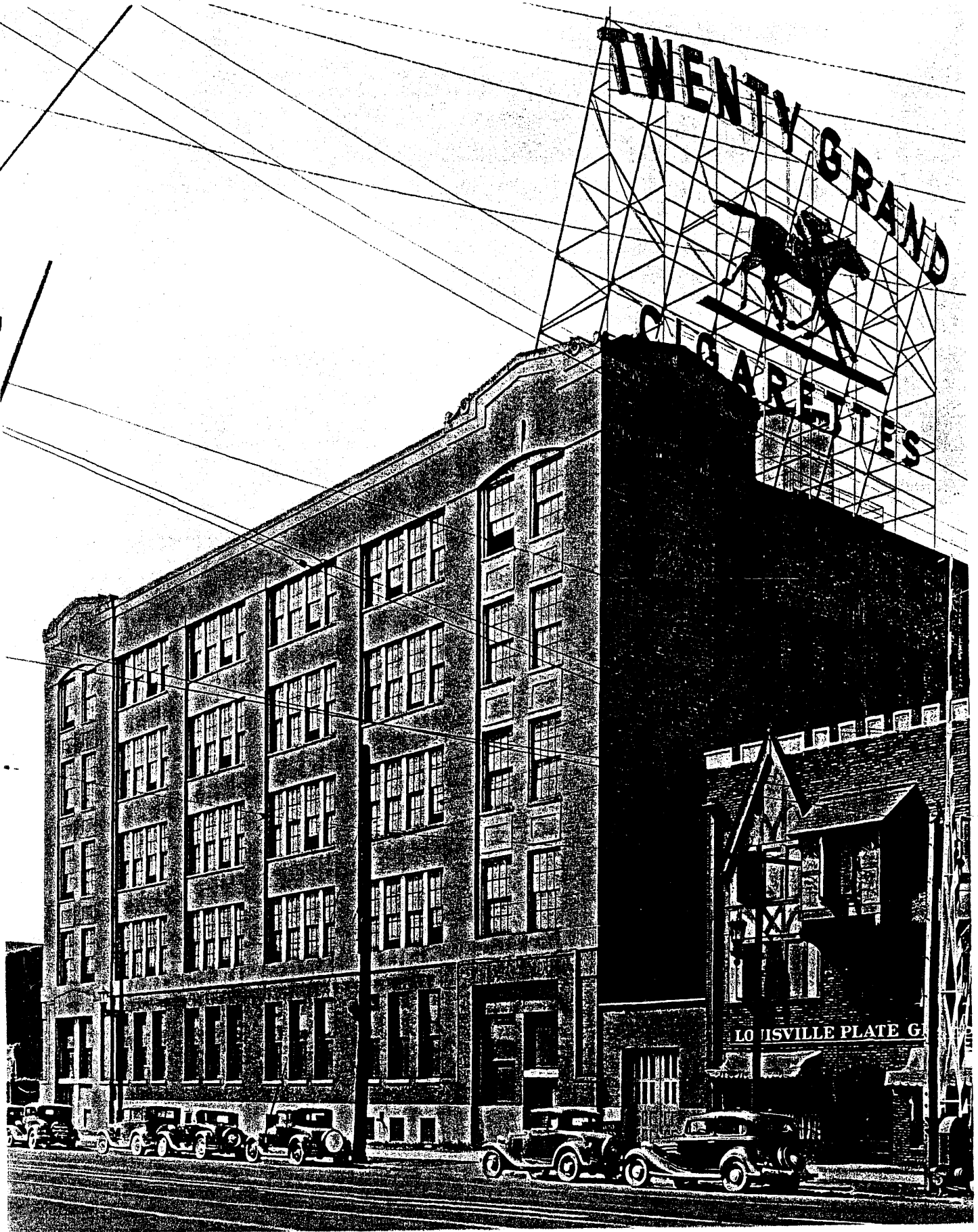
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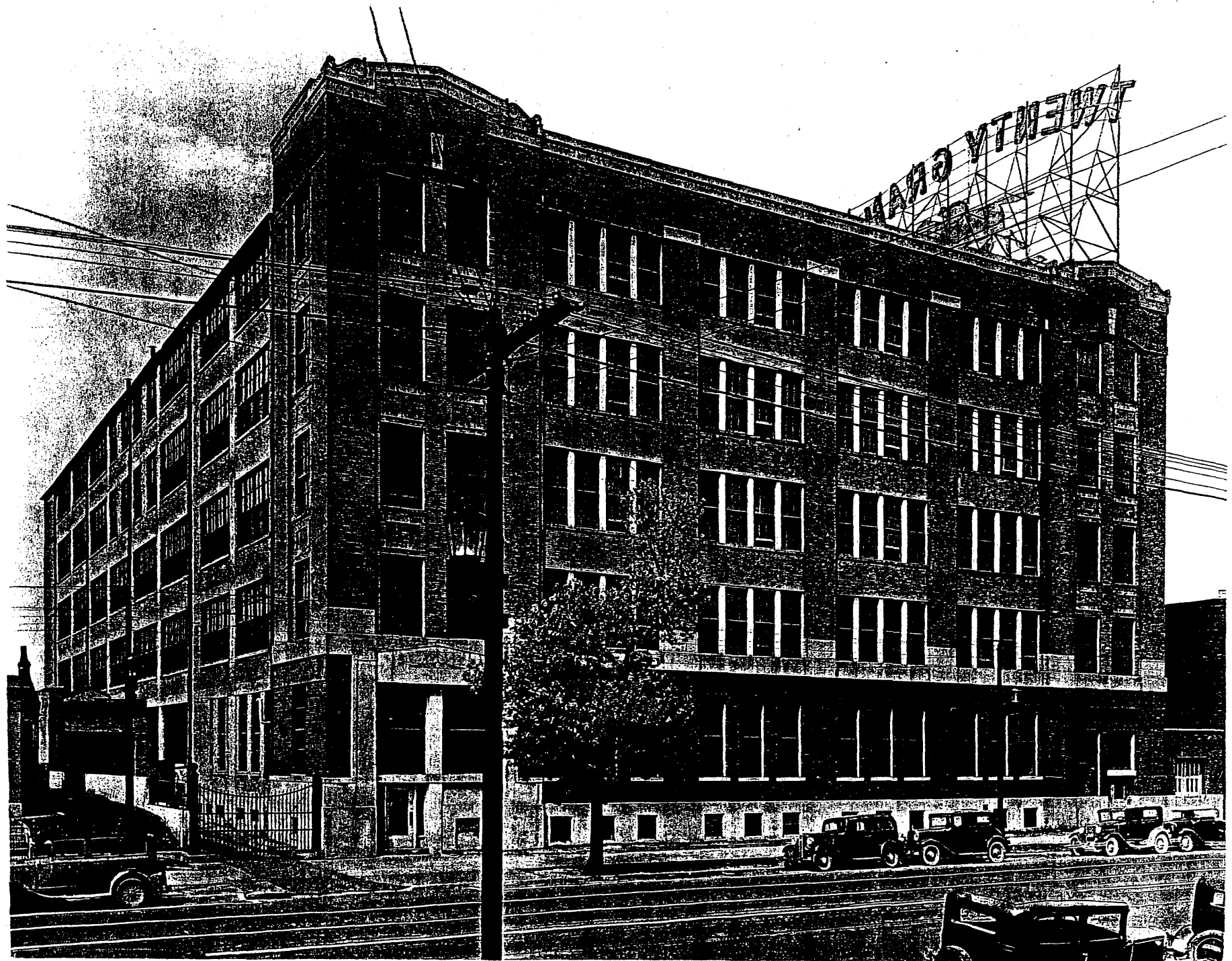
DO NOT REPRODUCE WITHOUT PERMISSION

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TWENTY GRAND  
CIGARETTES

LOUISVILLE PLATE G





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W. F. AXTON, Pres. G. G. WEDDING, Vice Pres. E. D. AXTON, Sec'y-Treas.

# AXTON--FISHER TOBACCO COMPANY

Incorporated

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Manufacturers of

**Cigarettes**

Clown

Spud

**Smoking**

Old Hillside

Old Loyalty

**Scrap Chewing**

Eight Hour

Wage Scale

## T W I S T

AXTON'S NATURAL LEAF—BOOSTER—WHITE MULE

### IT IS SETTLED

#### Work on the New Home Will Begin Soon

(From Journal of March 15, 1925)  
Rumor that an effort would be made to have the Grand Lodge reconsider its action in making the assessment for the New Home has caused the Board of Directors to appeal to the Grand Master for advice. After consulting with the Elective Grand Officers and investigating the source of the rumor, the Grand Master has ordered the work to proceed and assures the Board of Directors that the money will be forthcoming when and as needed. All Masons should read the following communications and govern themselves accordingly:

Louisville, Ky., Feb. 26, 1925.  
Hugh M. Grundy, Grand Master,  
Springfield, Ky.

Most Worshipful Sir: The Grand Lodge of Kentucky directed the Board of Directors of the Masonic Home to erect a new Home for the destitute widows and orphans and, in turn, the Board of Directors selected a Building Committee to carry out the instructions so given to it by the Grand Lodge.

Acting under the reserved authority as contained in Section 147 of the Constitution, the Grand Lodge levied an assessment against each subordinate lodge of twenty dollars (\$20.00) per member to pay that part of the

estimated cost in excess of the voluntary subscriptions made to the Million Dollar Committee, and directed the Building Committee to immediately spend the money for the erection of the new Home for the widows and orphans.

Recognizing the sovereign authority and in obedience to the direction so given, the Building Committee has, during the past four months, devoted a great amount of time to the development of the plans and arranging to carry out the instructions so given. As we approached the time when we should enter into contracts which will place binding obligations on the Grand Lodge, we heard that some of the members of two lodges in the State were objecting to the assessment and had announced their purpose to urge the next Grand Lodge to reconsider the action taken last fall, by which the assessment was made.

We have no doubt that you fully understand how embarrassing this is to the Building Committee and while we do not think this opposition is widespread, we know that you are better acquainted with the sentiment of the Craft throughout the State than any other person, that you fully understand the solemn obligation of every Kentucky Mason to obey the mandates of the Grand Lodge and in order that we may not be embarrassed by any reactionary movement or criticism by failing to obey the commands given to us, we respectfully ask whether we shall go

forward and award the contracts during the present year, or delay further action until after the next session of the Grand Lodge.

Awaiting your advices and directions, which will be followed, we are, fraternally yours,

Board of Directors of the Masonic Widows and Orphans' Home, by George T. Cross, Vice President.

Louisville, Ky., March 11, 1925.  
Board of Directors of the Masonic Widows and Orphans' Home and Infirmary,  
Louisville, Ky.

Dear Brothers:—I have carefully considered the contents of your letter of February 26th asking whether the Building Committee delegated to award contracts and superintend the erection of the new Home, should go forward and award the contracts during the present year, or wait until after the next session of the Grand Lodge.

Upon this question the sovereign Grand Lodge of Kentucky has authoritatively spoken. By unanimous vote you have been, to use its own language, "specially directed by this Grand Lodge to proceed with the letting of contracts that construction will be under way and the cornerstone of the building laid not later than June 24, 1925, \* \* \* That you let the contract of the building and the Grand Lodge pledges its credit and the credit of the several Lodges in Kentucky that the money to meet the cost thereof will be furnished to

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**Photographs**

**Axton-Fisher Tobacco Company Warehouse, Jefferson County, Kentucky**  
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All photographs share the following information:

Photographer: Donna M. Neary  
Date: November 26, 2002  
Location of Negatives: On file with photographer

Axton-Fisher Tobacco Company Warehouse  
1405 W. Broadway

1. Facing Northwest
2. Facing Northeast
3. Facing Northeast
4. Facing Northeast
5. Facing East
6. Facing South
7. Facing Northwest