

DC  
12/22/92

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name E. B. Colwell and Company Department Store

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 208 South Main Street and 211 South A Street  not for publication

city or town Monmouth  vicinity

state Illinois code IL county Warren code 187 zip code 61462

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William L. Roberts, SHP      12-21-92  
 Signature of certifying official/Title      Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency  
 State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of certifying official/Title      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**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	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	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/department store

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

Commerce/specialty store

Social/civic

**7. Description**

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

Chicago

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation limestone

walls brick

roof rubber

other metal

**Narrative Description**

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

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

E. B. Colwell and Company Department Store

## EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The E.B. Colwell and Company Department Store building is a three story Chicago style building located on the west side of South Main Street, the main commercial street in Monmouth. Located on this block are two and three story buildings. The architectural firm of J. Grant Beadle of Galesburg, Illinois, designed the building which was erected in 1904.

The building is constructed of red brick, the facade being faced with orange/yellow brick, and has a flat roof. The front facade of the building faces east; the side walls are shared with buildings to the north and south; the rear of the building is to the west. Primary exterior decoration of the building is concentrated on the facade front which faces Main Street. The first floor facade has undergone changes over the years. Remodeling took place in 1911 and again during the 1960's. When the building was built the street level consisted of a continuous series of plate glass show windows, parallel with the exterior sidewalk. A set of double doors were located at the southern end of the building. Three-quarters of the way to the north was a larger set of four doors which served as the main entrance to the building. These doors protruded out on to the sidewalk and were encased by an exterior vestibule. Cloth awnings were originally used to shade the store windows. The present metal awning was added circa 1920. A vertical neon sign stating "COLWELLS" was later added, but no longer remains on the building.

Beginning on the first story of the building, located on the south end is a recessed area with plate glass display windows. This area is separated from the other show window areas on the first floor level. The area to the north is divided into five separate large plate glass show window areas. The center area is recessed with an entrance to the lower level with a set of double doors at the bottom of the staircase. To the north of the next showcase window is a single door entrance, followed by another showcase window and glass door which is the main entrance to the building. Metal building supports are encased by wood paneling. Located above this level is an area of prism glass square window lights. Vents for the heating system are present here also. The original wooden sign board remains in the area directly above the windows. Shadows of the original lettering remain; "E.B. Colwell Co. Dry Goods, Furniture, Millinery, Carpets, Cloaks, Suits, Furs, Shoes E.B. Colwell Co.". A metal awning spans the front of the building. Six brick pilasters are present, being located on either end of the building and between the windows. A brick string course is located below the second story windows. The second and third stories are identical. Located on each story are five sets of Chicago style bay-wide, horizontal windows with large fixed central sashes flanked on each side by narrow double-hung windows. Located above the third

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story windows is a raised brick string course. A decorative metal cornice protrudes from the roof line.

The rear side of the building does not have many decorative features. Four sets of double-hung windows, each containing three windows are located on each level. In the center, where the original fifth set of windows would have been located, is a three story ell. This ell connects the main building with the annex building. On the southern end of the rear of the building, on the third story level, is a door and small window. The exterior stairway or fire escape, no longer exists. Two small windows are directly below these windows on the second story level. Located on the first story level is a set of double doors which served as the rear exit, this entrance contains two interior and two exterior doors. To the south of these doors is a loading dock with two doors.

The Annex building was built in 1911 and contains four floors with a basement. It is located directly behind the main building and faces South A Street. At the time of this additional building, a three story ell was constructed. It connects the main building with the Annex building, each level of the ell has six windows, three on each side. An alley runs underneath the ell between the Annex and main building. The Annex building itself is very utilitarian in design. Located on the facade are two brick pilasters with a raised brick design just below the roof line. Originally the front facade contained two Chicago style windows on the second, third and fourth stories. The first story contained two doorways and two windows. The first floor has been extensively altered and now contains a glass double door entrance in the center flanked by windows on either side. There is a door on the southern end which serves as an entrance to a stairway. The Chicago style windows remain on the second story, two of which are boarded up, the third and fourth floors have been covered up with aluminum siding. At the rear of the building on the ground level is a large loading door. Located on the north and south sides of the building are eight double-hung windows on each floor.

A small one story brick addition is located on the southeast corner of the Annex building. This addition housed the heating plant for the main building and the Annex building. Prior to the construction of the heating plant, the building was served by the city power plant which furnished steam heat. This addition was added during the 1920's. This small building now serves as a garage.

The Annex building was sold to the City of Monmouth in 1973. It now operates as the Strom Center, which is a senior citizens' center. It is operated by Warren Achievement Industries. The center uses all four floors. The first floor is used as a meeting room where daily meals are served. The upper floors

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are used for recreation and storage. This building is in very good repair due to the fact that maintenance has been constant in recent years. All pressed metal ceilings and interior woodwork are intact and the elevator is operable.

## INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

## MAIN BUILDING

Building materials used throughout the building are: mahogany wood, pressed metal ceilings and hardwood flooring.

The first floor level consists of the main show floor and an additional show room on the south end. This commercial space also has its own front and rear exits. A mezzanine area is located to the rear of the building and is accessed by a narrow stairway on its north wall. A small rest room is located beneath the staircase.

The main show room consists of open space with 11 classical style wood columns which encase the structural metal supports of the building. The twelfth support is built into the staircase wall. An elevator is located on the north wall. This elevator provides passenger service from the basement to the third floor. A set of double doors exits to the rear of the building. A central staircase is located in the rear of the main show room. This staircase leads up to the mezzanine area which served as the office of the store. A doorway leads to the ell which connects the main building to the Annex building. A fire door separates the ell from the Annex building. The mezzanine office space is narrow. Present here is the main pneumatic tubes system, which is no longer operable.

The staircase continues up to the second floor landing. Located to the right is a hallway which leads to the beauty salon and public rest room facilities. The beauty salon and rest room facilities were added in the 1950's. This hallway has the original wood paneling. Mr. Colwell's office was the first door to the right, and his name still appears painted on the door. A private bathroom is located adjacent to the office. The main show room space faces east. Originally a wall of mirrors lined the west wall. A storage room is located on the west wall along with the fire door access to the ell. On the south side of the main room is a smaller show room area. Rooms for seamstresses, fitting rooms and dressing rooms are also located on the east side. Access to the elevator is on the north wall. Located on the northwest corner of this level is the stairway to the third floor.

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The third floor level consists of the main show room space as well as a separate show room on the south side. A small rest room is located on the east end of the small show room. The ell access is present on the west wall, a fire door separates the building from the Annex building and an exterior door is present here. Elevator access is located on the north wall.

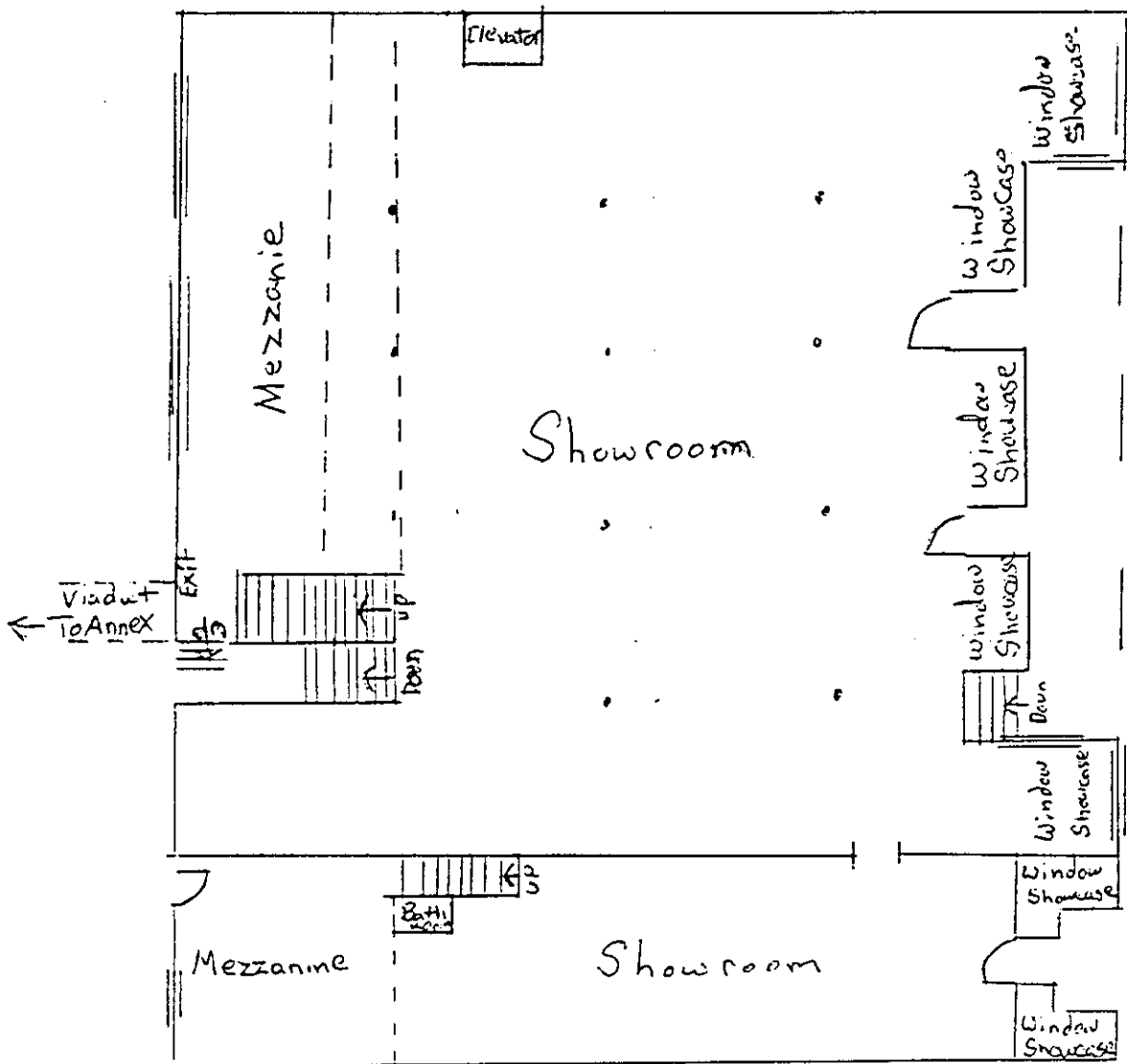
The basement consists of a show room about half the size of the area on the upper floors. The area to the rear serves as storage space and utility space. There is tunnel access with a fire door to the Annex building. Elevator access is on the north wall. A set of double glass doors provides exit access and is located on the southeast corner of the room.

## ANNEX BUILDING

Building materials used throughout the Annex building are mahogany wood finishes, pressed metal ceilings and hardwood floors.

The first floor consists of one large room with a temporary office constructed on the south wall; rest room facilities are present here also. Located on the southwest corner is a door which leads to a staircase which serves the first through third floors. Located on the southeast corner is an area which leads to the elevator and main staircase. The elevator provides freight/passenger service from the basement to the fourth floor, as does the staircase. The staircase remains intact with its original finishes. The upper three floors have fire doors located on the east walls which lead to the ell. The second floor show room is divided in the center by a temporary wallboard wall. On the northwest corner, at the front of the building is a glass walled office area. Rest room facilities are located on the south wall. The third floor consists of one large show room with rest room facilities located on the south wall. The fourth floor level is one large show room. The basement serves as a utility area. Remnants of the pneumatic tubes system are present in the building.

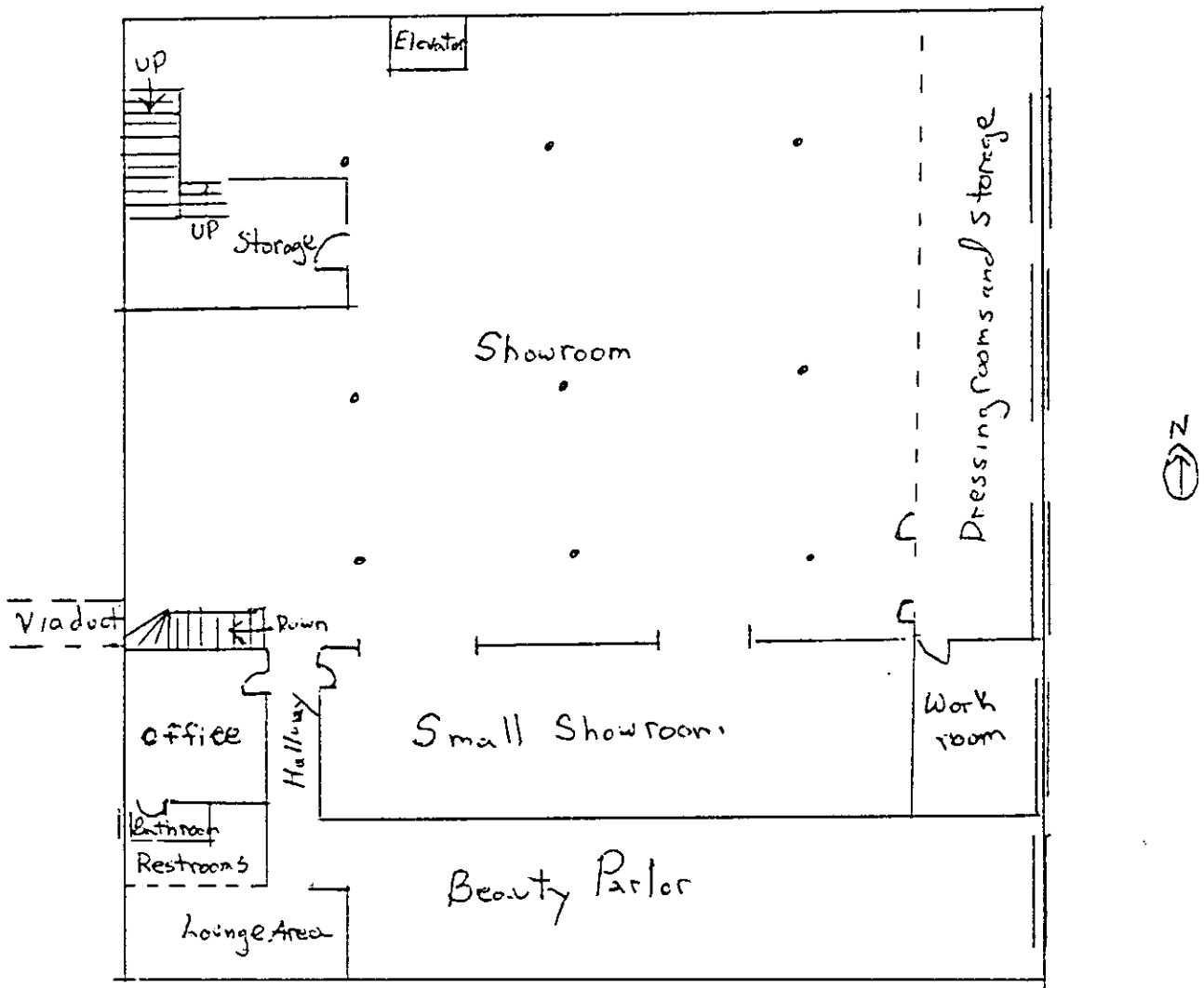
E. B. Colwell and Company Department Store



First Floor (not to scale)

208 S. Main St.

E. B. Colwell and Company Department Store

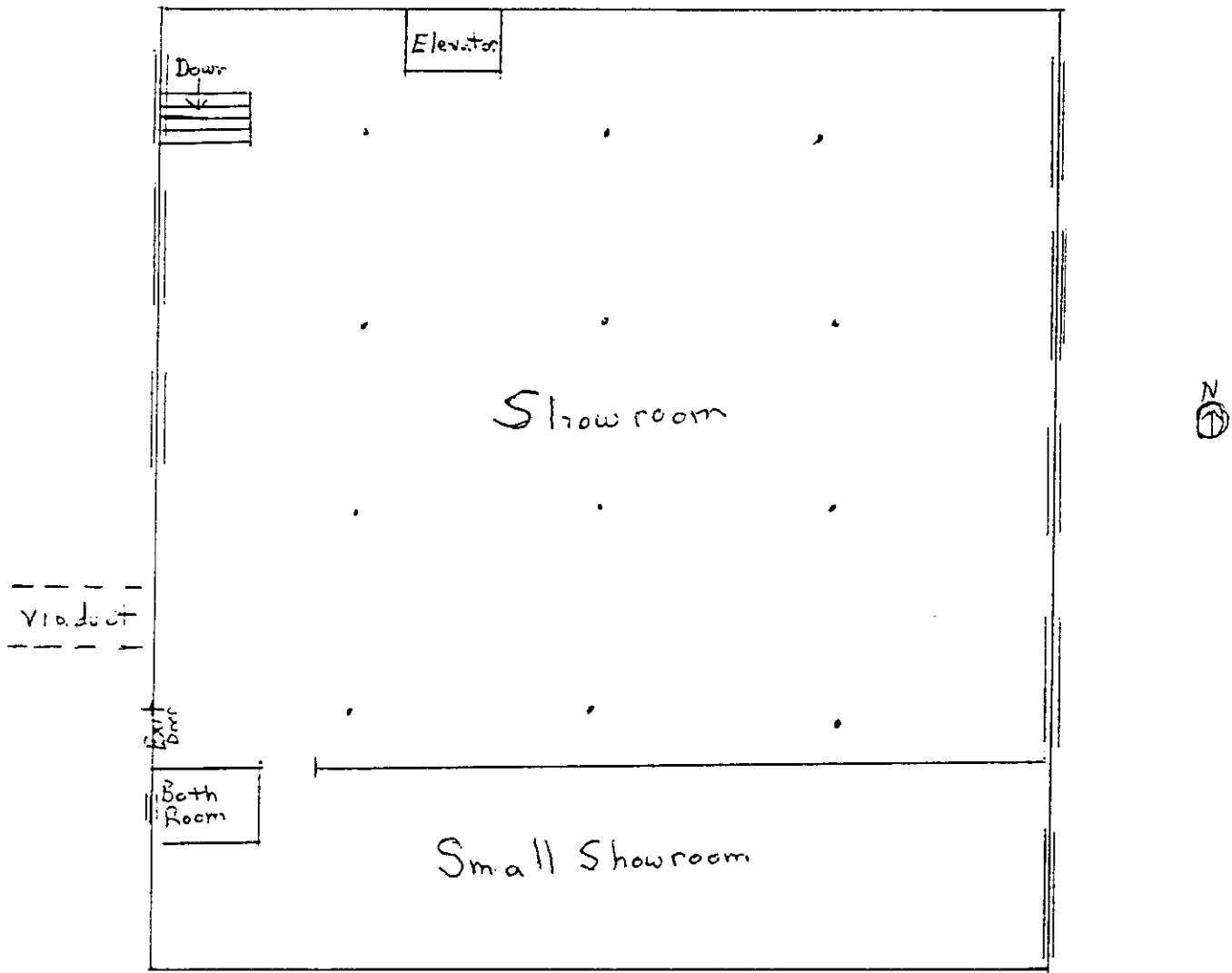


Second Floor (not to scale)

208 S. Main St.

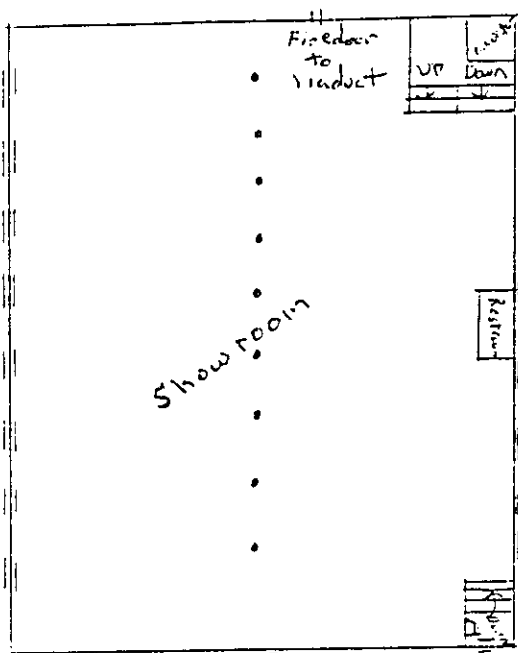


E. B. Colwell and Company Department Store

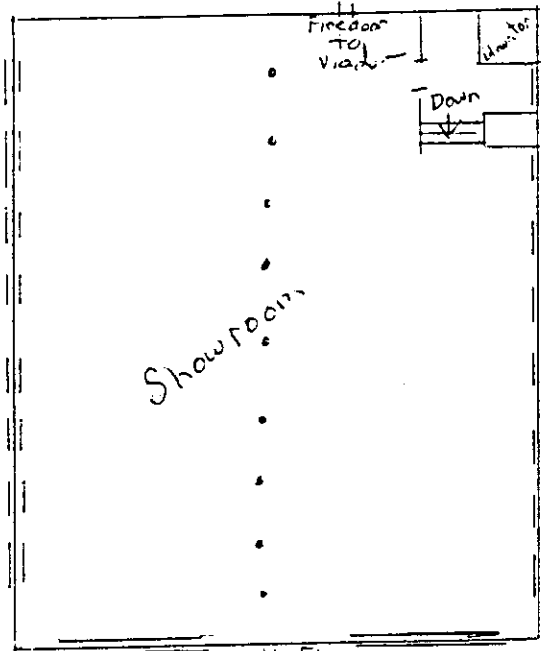


Third Floor (not to scale) 208 S. Main Street

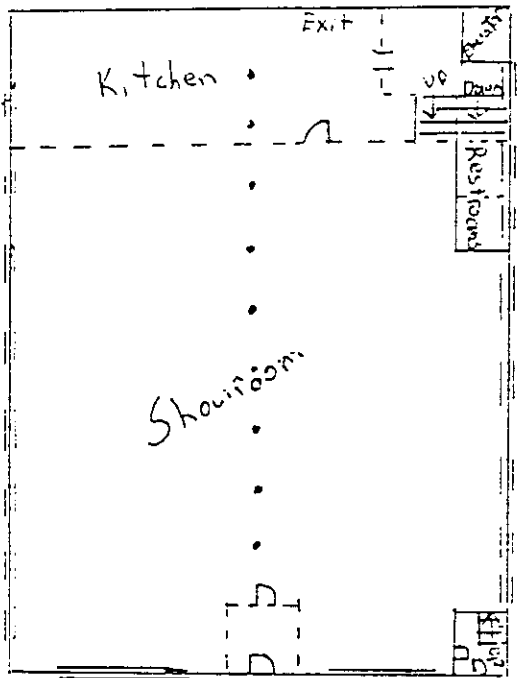
E. B. Colwell and Company Department Store



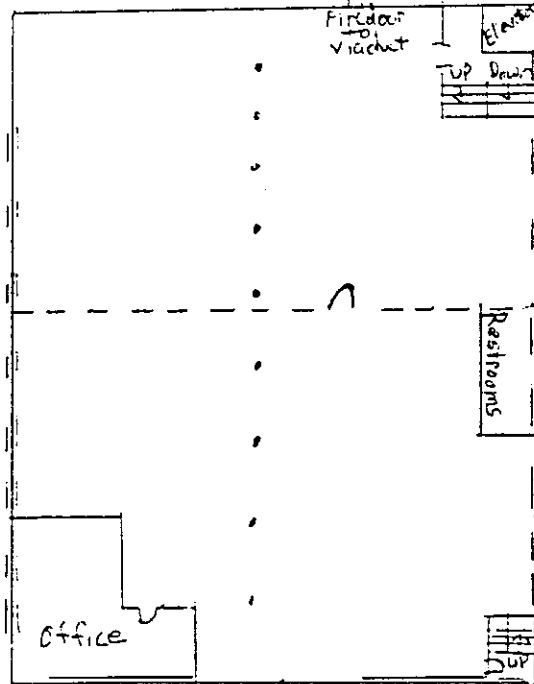
Third Floor



Fourth Floor



First Floor



Second Floor



The Annex building 211 South A Street (not to scale)

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Period of Significance

1904-1936

Significant Dates

1904

1911

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Beadle, J. Grant

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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:

\_\_\_\_\_

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E. B. Colwell and Company Department Store

The E.B. Colwell and Company Department Store building meets Criterion A for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It is a locally significant building associated with early 20th century commercial history significance from 1904-1936. The city of Monmouth was the major retail center for Warren County and surrounding communities from the 1850's thru the late 1920's. The construction of the Colwell Building in 1904 marked the beginning of large scale merchandising in Monmouth. Mr. Edward B. Colwell, known as E.B. Colwell, was the foremost retailer in Monmouth from 1896 until his death in 1936.

Located in west central Illinois, Monmouth was founded in 1831. This prairie town developed into an agricultural and merchandising center for Warren County. Growing from 780 citizens in 1850 to 2,503 in 1860, to 6,237 persons in 1870, and then to 9,128 in 1910. The city attracted the interests of bankers, lawyers, railroad developers, merchants and various entrepreneurs.

## DEPARTMENT STORE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

The first true department store was the Bon Marche, created by Aristide Boucicaut, in Paris, France. Founded as a small shop in 1838, Bon Marche began to assume the proportions of a department store by the early 1850's. What made Bon Marche a success were the merchandising principles that Boucicaut used - fixed prices, clearly displayed merchandise, permission to exchange purchases and a small profit to secure quick turnover.<sup>①</sup>

Although Bon Marche provided American merchants with the inspiration for creating department stores, the great majority of the first grand emporiums, probably three-quarters of them, made the transition from dry goods stores to department stores. Many of the early dry goods stores can be traced to country stores and country peddlers. Peddling seems to have been one of the best possible ways to learn merchandising, for at least a score of the grand emporiums, from Gimbels and May's to Saks Fifth Avenue and Macy's were founded or headed by former peddlers.<sup>②</sup> What became the first New York City department store was founded in 1823 by A.T. Stewart & Co. Stewart, like many of his counterparts, started with dry goods. During the 1860's many other department stores were founded such as John Wanamakers in Philadelphia and Field, Palmer & Leiters in Chicago.<sup>③</sup>

Neither Bon Marche nor any of the world's early department stores would have evolved if economic conditions hadn't been favorable at the time. The American department store is largely a product of the years from 1860 to 1910, with several factors particularly important in its development besides the example of Bon Marche. First, population became far more dense in many regions of the

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country in the nineteenth century. By the time of the Civil War, the American Industrial Revolution caused a great increase in the size of cities, many of which doubled in population within a few years. Large numbers of people lived within comparatively small areas and were easily able to reach almost any place in town with the development of improved mass-transportation systems. Horse-drawn trolleys, precursors of urban electric trolley systems, made shopping areas more accessible to the general population.④

The department store differed from traditional retailing establishments. Unlike the small specialty shop, arcade or dry goods store, it offered low priced, mass-produced goods of all kinds - foodstuffs, household wares, apparel, toys - and sold them in semi-independent departments. Each department operated as a separate unit with its own manager, buyer and sales personnel; each was responsible for developing its own marketing procedures. The store as a whole, however, was run by one administrative body. All non-selling services such as accounting, delivery, customer service, and publicity were collective. This streamlined administrative functions and minimized overhead. With a single organizing head, new marketing strategies were implemented so that seasonal slumps in one line of goods were compensated for by sales in another; "leaders" with little or no mark-up in price attracted customers, with losses in one department made up for by profits in others. Finally, recognizing that customers buying one type of item were often tempted by others and that sales in one department bred sales in others, departments were located to mutual advantage. Impulse items such as gloves and scarves, were situated near entrances; demand items such as children's clothes and everyday apparel were located upstairs or in back. This marketing strategy drew customers up and around the building, past as many display counters as possible.

Prices were fixed, eliminating bargaining and ensuring all customers equitable service. Entry was free. Unlike the small shop where proprietors expected a sale, in the department store customers were encouraged to enter, just to look. Merchandise was machine-made with prices set only slightly above wholesale; the small profit margin per item was offset by the huge volume of sales. Quality was guaranteed, so customers could return defective or unwanted goods. This marked a fundamental shift in attitude, from favoring the proprietor to pleasing the customer.⑤

Early advertising lacked sophistication but ads and promotions were essential to department stores from the beginning. None of today's department store attractions are new, in fact, almost all of them - including Santa Claus, floor shows and free baby sitting services can be traced back to the

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nineteenth century. The young stores boasted many amenities that no longer exist today, such as reading and sitting rooms, stools for customers, dark rooms lit so women could examine gowns to see exactly how they would look under dim ballroom gaslight. Even "silence rooms" or "rest rooms" for the nerve-frazzled shoppers were offered.<sup>6</sup> Early stores promised free delivery to their customers. This new service marked the beginning of free store deliveries, a service long a staple of the grand emporiums. Floor walkers were another creation in the early department stores. They were well dressed men who managed a specific floor of the store. They oversaw the employees and acted as a "living directory" for shoppers. Money transactions in early stores were handled with the employment of "cash children". Young children would take the money from the counter clerk to the office, bringing back change, wrapped goods and receipt. Later the Lampson basket cash system was introduced. This system conveyed all cash taken by sales people to the managers perch where change was made. But much more efficient was the later pneumatic tubes system.<sup>7</sup> This system saved a lot of labor, and transactions usually took less time.<sup>7</sup>

All of the advantages and disadvantages of department stores could clearly be seen by 1900. The department store's main advantage was in offering a wide range of goods under one roof. The department store became an indispensable cog in the economic wheel of the modern city. The number of department stores in America increased to over four thousand, with the majority of new stores founded in the golden years lasting from 1905 until 1930.<sup>8</sup>

## E.B. COLWELL AND COMPANY DEPARTMENT STORE HISTORY

Edward B. Colwell gained his first business experience as a clerk in a dry goods store in Chillicothe, Illinois in the mid 1880's. In 1887 he opened a dry goods business, in Chillicothe, with C.C. Westcott. They continued in business for three years, when Mr. Westcott sold his interest to George B. Temple. Temple & Colwell continued in business for three years, after that time E.B. Colwell bought out Mr. Temple's interest and continued alone. Seeking a wider commercial field, he moved to Monmouth, Illinois on March 12, 1896. He was associated with a Mr. R.H. Truitt and their first store was located on the corner of South Main Street and West Garden Avenue (now West First Avenue).<sup>9</sup> Shortly afterward it became necessary to lease additional space and subsequently plans for a new building were acquired. Plans were accepted from J. Grant Beadle, an architect from Galesburg, Illinois, and construction of the building began in the autumn of 1904.<sup>9</sup> The firm which J. Grant Beadle was associated with designed a number of buildings in Galesburg. Most notably among these are: the Central Congregational Church located on the Central Square; the firehouse on Simmons Street; the Hill Arcade Building, 250

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E. Main Street and the Weinberg Arcade Building located at 64 S. Prairie Street.

The building consisted of three stories and a basement, with a frontage of 106 feet and nearly two acres (32,000 square feet) of retail floor space when completed. Only the finest materials were used with solid mahogany finishes and pressed metal ceilings. Every modern department store comfort and convenience was installed. There were forty-eight complete departments. The lines of stock including: cloaks and suits, millinery, furs, shoes, carpets, furniture and draperies, china and glassware, jewelry, books, player pianos, player piano rolls, pianos and Victrolas, together with notions and miscellaneous articles that were usually found in the great trade emporiums of large cities. The south room on the first floor was rented out to the Maple City Cigar Company. This room was at one time used as a additional sales space for Colwell's and later divided off and rented to Illinois Power Company as office space. (1)

Reorganization of the business took place in 1904 with E.B. Colwell serving as president, R.H. Truitt, vice-president and Edmund B. Colwell as secretary and treasurer. The 1903-04 City Directory of Monmouth listed 5 "department stores". In actuality the other four stores were dry goods stores. The E.B. Colwell Co. was the only true department store while the John Allen Store was the largest dry goods store. Over the years the John Allen Store was Colwell's biggest competitor. Mr. Allen had a store on the Public Square. John Allen offered a wide variety of goods, but displayed and marketed them in much the same way as a dry goods dealer. He did not use the methods or marketing strategies that Mr. Colwell practiced. Also Colwell's provided a large variety of merchandise in a much larger facility.

The Allen Store never achieved the same status in the community that Colwell's enjoyed. Both retailers advertised extensively, as can be seen in the local newspapers of the time. Colwell's played on calling themselves "The Big Store", (2) "The store that shows the new things first", (3) and in 1906 stated - "Monmouth's Biggest Department Store with every convenience for the thrifty shopper, Every preparation has been made to quickly serve you, whether you come prepared to buy or simply to obtain suggestions. You are always welcome. Remember this is your store. All stores are on somebody's shopping list, but Colwell's Store is on everybody's." (4) The store was also advertised as being "Confident to have better values at less prices than any other store in Warren County". (5)

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No other retail business in Monmouth was operated on such a large scale as Colwell's. Colwell's offered lines of goods with the store's brand name. An example of which is a pattern of china with the store name printed on the bottom along with the manufacturers name; i.e. "Haviland, Limoges, France, E.B. Colwell Co., Monmouth, Ill."<sup>(16)</sup> The Colwell Store has been referred to as "the Marshall Fields of Western Illinois."<sup>(17)</sup> Mr. Colwell would often be seen standing by the main entrance welcoming his customers by name.<sup>(18)</sup>

The Colwell store provided the "up to date" and modern conveniences of the day. Colwell's offered such services as free delivery, a lounge which was referred to as the "Rest Room"<sup>(19)</sup>, an elevator and floorwalkers.<sup>(20)</sup> The floorwalkers served as floor managers. These floorwalkers also served as "living store directories", answering customers' questions and directing them to areas requested. Mr. Colwell set rules for his employees; the floor walkers were outfitted in special attire and the sales staff wore only black and white clothing.<sup>(21)</sup> A full service beauty salon was added to the services offered, it was originally located in the Annex building and then later moved to the second floor of the main building.<sup>(22)</sup> Later, coin operated public restroom facilities were added near the beauty salon. Special promotions were offered at different times of the year, such as black portfolios to customers who were teachers. On them were printed, "This portfolio is furnished to teachers with the best wishes of COLWELLS Department Store, Monmouth, Illinois."<sup>(23)</sup> Premiums of dishware had been offered at one time also.<sup>(24)</sup> Fashion shows were another special feature of the Colwell Store. One such event was held on April 22, 1920. A miniature stage was constructed on the third floor and models showed off fashions from the store. Music and readings by local artists were presented during the afternoon, which made the event something more than a mere commercial affair. Following the demonstrations, Dr. C.P. Blair made a short talk on the advantages of front lace corsets, and Mrs. A.J. Aleshire talked on the proper adjustment of undergarments.<sup>(25)</sup>

The store had in use the Lampson cash basket system for sales transactions.<sup>(26)</sup> The Lampson cash system conveyed all sales transactions to a central location on each floor. Each department had a basket which traveled about on overhead trolleys for change making and package wrapping. The sale was recorded and change, receipt and wrapped goods were returned to the clerk. During the late 1920's Mr. Colwell stopped using the Lampson cash baskets and installed cashier stations on each floor. The sales clerks took all transactions to a special teller, which obviously slowed down the sales process. These cashier stations did not please Mr. Colwell, and the basket system was reinstated. Later, during the 1940's, this system was updated by installing a pneumatic tubes cash system which saved labor and the transactions usually took less



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time. The pneumatic system only required the sales slip and cash to be sent to the store office, while the sales clerk wrapped the goods at his or her counter.<sup>(27)</sup>

As in earlier days, the city of Monmouth continued to serve as the main shopping area for the surrounding farming communities. Families would "come to town" on Friday evenings or spend all day Saturday shopping in the city. Depending on the time of year, such as harvest time or holiday seasons, the store hours would be adjusted to accomodate customers. Industries flourished in the city as did commercial growth. The commercial trends for the city developed at the same rate as other communities in America at that time. One of these common trends was the introduction of a mass transportation system. Beginning in 1906, the Rock Island Southern Railway carried hundreds of passengers weekly around Monmouth, to Galesburg and later to Alexis and Aledo, in electric interurban cars. (The last interurban run to Monmouth occurred on March 30, 1951).<sup>(28)</sup> The advent of the automobile also had an impact on Monmouth with the first car being introduced in 1904. By 1910, the familiar sight of horse-drawn carriages and wagons parked around the downtown area was quickly giving way to legions of motorcars. The number of cars increased steadily each year, and in 1930 there were more than 3,000 cars registered in the city.<sup>(29)</sup>

Business at the department store continued to grow, and in 1910 Mr. Colwell felt an expansion was necessary. The store was employing 60 clerks (which grew to 75 by 1927) and had added new merchandise lines. The population of Monmouth had grown to 9,128 and was expected to continue rising. With the completion of the interurban trains, the patronage of the store grew beyond the immediate vicinity.<sup>(30)</sup> Colwell's was already the largest department store in the area. J. Grant Beadle was again contracted to draw up plans for an annex building to be erected on South A Street, directly behind the existing store. A September 22, 1910 newspaper article stated, "this expansion would make the store one of the largest in western Illinois". The annex building was completed in the spring of 1911. It measured 150' x 44' and contained 4 floors and a basement. The building was connected to the original structure with both a subway and by an ell. This expansion increased the floor space to 68,000 square feet.<sup>(31)</sup> All building materials used in the interiors matched those of the original building.

When the Annex building opened for business, the third floor was used for furniture, carpets and linoleum; the second floor displayed ladies' hats and undergarments; the first floor had yard goods and a beauty salon. The fourth floor served as warehouse area.<sup>(32)</sup> A few years later a sheet music department was added in the Annex. The employees here had the job of playing the pieces for

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the customers, and then selling the sheet music to them.<sup>(37)</sup> As a historical notation, President Ronald Reagan resided with his family at 218 S. 7th St. in Monmouth from 1917-1918. During that year his father was employed at Colwell's and worked in the shoe department.<sup>(34)</sup>

Mr. Colwell purchased goods for the store through salesmen and by traveling to larger cities on buying trips.<sup>(35)</sup> He also used marketing ideas that were usually only implemented in bigger cities, such as fashion shows, a salon where musical entertainment was provided and promotions with premiums given away. Mr. Colwell ran the store very strictly and was an honorable man.<sup>(36)</sup> In Monmouth the E.B. Colwell and Company Department Store was virtually unsurpassed in building size and in its quality and quantity of merchandise. The store truly flourished and prospered during the heydays of the early part of this century. The contemporary chain department stores, such as Spurgeon's and J.C. Penney, opened in Monmouth in the early 1940's, with Spurgeon's being the only one remaining today.

By the time of E.B. Colwell's death on March 12, 1936, the store had fallen on hard times. Much of the floor space was vacant. As with the rest of America, Colwell's suffered with the stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression following in the 1930's. Mr. Colwell's son, Edmund B., assumed possession of the store. Edmund did not have the interest in the business that his father had, in fact he really wanted to be a mechanic. After Edmund's first wife passed away he remarried, and it was his second wife that worked to rebuild the business. The Colwells sold the business on April 1, 1959 to Mr. Everett Bowman. It continued to operate as a department store until 1979 under the name of "Bowman-Colwell Store". The Annex building was sold by Mr. Bowman in 1973 to the City of Monmouth in 1973.

The building changed ownership during the summer of 1992. It is now being repaired and renovated for use as a commercial merchandise center. At this time the south room has been rented out by an antique-resale business. The new owners have received community development revolving loan funds from the City of Monmouth, and it is hoped by the community that this property will once again serve as a useful commercial building.

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E. B. Colwell and Company Department Store

## NOTES

1. Penser, Nikolas. A History of Building Types. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976. p.267
2. Hendrickson, Robert. The Grand Emporiums. Stein and Day Publishing, pp. 11, 12
3. IBID p. 34
4. IBID pp. 30, 31
5. Bell, David. Journal of Architectural Education. Fall 1985. pp. 20, 21
6. Hendrickson, Robert. The Grand Emporiums. Stein and Day Publishing, p. 46
7. IBID p. 56
8. IBID p.58
9. Robinson, Luther E. Historical and Biographical Record of Monmouth and Warren County Illinois. Chicago: MuseII Pub., 1927. p. 365
10. Daily Review Atlas newspaper- September 22, 1919
11. Robinson, Luther E. Historical and Biographical Record of Monmouth and Warren County. Chicago: MuseII Pub., 1927. p. 365
12. The Maroon and Gold, Monmouth High School Yearbook 1913
13. Ravelings Monmouth College Yearbook 1918
14. Promotional booklet of Monmouth 1906
15. Ravelings Monmouth College Yearbook 1918
16. Conversation with Mrs. Elizabeth Glass, former employe at Colwell's (1924-1959) and a cup owned by Robert Barr, Monmouth, IL.
17. Conversation with Harry Landuyt, former employee at Colwell's (1922-1927)
18. Conversation with Mrs. Elizabeth Glass
19. The Maple City, Monmouth, Illinois U.S.A. promotional publication of the Commerce Club
20. Conversation with Margaret Watt, Monmouth, IL
21. Conversation with Robert Foreman, Monmouth, IL
22. Conversation with Nancy Cavanaugh, former employee of the Bowman-Colwell Store, Monmouth, IL
23. Portfolio owned by John Kesinger, Monmouth, IL
24. Conversation with Robert Forman, Monmouth, IL
25. "Remember When" column by Victor Moffet, Monmouth Daily Review Atlas newspaper.
26. Photographs of the Colwell Store, owned by John Kesinger, Monmouth, IL
27. Hendrickson, Robert. The Grand Emporiums. Stein and Day Publishing, 1979. p. 56
28. Rankin, Jeff. Born of the Prairie. Monmouth, Illinois: Kellogg Printing Co., 1981. p. 23

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29. IBID
30. IBID
31. Daily Review Atlas newspaper, September 22, 1910
32. Conversation with Elizabeth Glass
33. Conversation with Grace Peterson, former employee of Colwell's
34. Conversation with Ralph Eckley, Monmouth, Illinois <now deceased>
35. Conversation with Harry Landuyt, former employee of the Colwell Store  
(1922-1927), Monmouth, IL
36. IBID

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- Lewis, Russell. "Everything Under One Roof: World's Fairs and Department Stores in Paris and Chicago." Chicago History, Fall 1983.
- Miller, Hugh C. The Chicago School of Architecture. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979.
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- Robinson, Luther E. Historical and Biographical Record of Monmouth and Warren County Illinois. Chicago: Musell Publishing, 1927.
- Various articles in the Monmouth Daily Review Atlas. September 22, 1910; April 22, 1920.
- Various articles by Ralph B. Eckley in the Monmouth Daily Review Atlas. January 31, 1984; August 5, 1985; June 24, 1988.
- The Maple City, Monmouth Illinois U.S.A. Monmouth, IL: Monmouth Commercial Club, 1910.
- The Maroon and The Gold. Monmouth, IL: Monmouth High School Yearbook Committee, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1915.
- Ravelings. Monmouth, IL: Monmouth College Yearbook Committee, 1906, 1917, 1918, 1929.

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E. B. Colwell and Company Department Store

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Section 10  
Verbal Boundary Description

LOT FIVE (5) OF THE SUBDIVISION OF LOTS ONE (1), FOUR (4), AND TWO (2) RODS OF OF THE NORTH SIDE OF LOT FIVE (5), IN BLOCK TWENTY-FOUR (24) OF THE OLD TOWN PLAT OF THE CITY OF MONMOUTH, WARREN COUNTY, ILLINOIS, AS PER PLAT THEREOF, RECORDED IN VOLUME 50 OF DEEDS, PAGE 233, SITUATED IN THE CITY OF MONMOUTH, COUNTY OF WARREN AND STATE OF ILLINOIS:

ALSO,

ALL OF THE RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF THE GRANTORS IN A RESERVATION OF THE RIGHT OF SUPPORT FOR THE AERIAL CONNECTION BETWEEN THE BUILDING ON THE PREMISES HEREIN CONVEYED AND A BUILDING CONVEYED BY THE GRANTORS TO THE COUNTY OF WARREN AND THE CITY OF MONMOUTH BY A CERTAIN DEED DATED MAY 13, 1974 AND RECORDED ON MAY 13, 1974 IN THE OFFICE OF THE WARREN COUNTY RECORDER OF DEEDS AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 373840, AND ALL OTHER RIGHTS OF SUPPORT AS SET FORTH IN SAID DEED.

AND

THE SOUTH 39 FEET OF ORIGINAL LOT 3 IN BLOCK 24 IN THE CITY OF MONMOUTH, WARREN COUNTY, ILLINOIS, AS PER PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN VOLUME 3 OF DEEDS, PAGE 518;

THE NORTH 5 FEET OF ORIGINAL LOT 6 IN BLOCK 24 IN THE CITY OF MONMOUTH, WARREN COUNTY, ILLINOIS AS PER PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN VOLUME 3 OF DEEDS, PAGE 518 IN THE RECORDS OF THE RECORDER OF DEEDS, WARREN COUNTY, ILLINOIS, AND ALSO,

THE NORTH 44 FEET OF THE SOUTH 73 FEET OF LOT 6 IN THE SUBDIVISION OF LOTS 1, 4 AND 2 RODS OFF OF THE NORTH SIDE OF LOT 5 IN BLOCK 24 IN THE CITY OF MONMOUTH, WARREN COUNTY, ILLINOIS, AS PER PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN VOLUME 50 OF DEEDS, PAGE 233 IN THE RECORDS OF THE RECORDER OF DEEDS, WARREN COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire parcel historically associated with the E. B. Colwell and Company Department Store.

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E. B. Colwell and Company Department Store

Additional owner:

City of Monmouth  
City Hall - City Clerk's Office  
112 N. Main Street  
Monmouth, IL 61462  
(309) 734-2141

E.B. Colwell and Company Department Store  
Name of Property

Warren, IL  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	5
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6	9	8	0	5	0
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4	5	3	1	2	4	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3 

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--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

  
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

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

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Carla Kanthak

organization Monmouth Preservationists Inc. date October 27, 1992

street & number 416 East Broadway telephone (309) 734-3654

city or town Monmouth state IL zip code 61462

**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 Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Beckinger

street & number R.R. #1 telephone (309) 734-9306

city or town Monmouth state IL zip code 61462

**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.





IN REPLY REFER TO

FEB 22 1993

United States Department of the Interior  
PRESERVATION CENTER



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. BOX 37127  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-7127

The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to inform you that the following properties have been entered in the National Register of Historic Places. For further information call 202/343-9542.

FEB 12 1993

WEEKLY LIST OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON PROPERTIES: 2/01/93 THROUGH 2/05/93

KEY: State, County, Property Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number NHL Status, Action, Date, Multiple Name

- ALABAMA, CULLMAN COUNTY, Greene, Ernest Edward, House, 105 6th Ave. SE., Cullman, 92001828, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- ALABAMA, DALLAS COUNTY, Plattenburg, Wesley, House, 601 Washington St., Selma, 92001827, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- ALABAMA, JEFFERSON COUNTY, Rickwood Field, 1137 2nd Ave. W., Birmingham, 92001826, NOMINATION, 2/01/93
- ALABAMA, PERRY COUNTY, Judson College Historic District, Roughly bounded by E. Lafayette, Curb, Mason and Washington Sts., Marion, 92001825, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- ALABAMA, RANDOLPH COUNTY, Roanoke Downtown Historic District, Roughly bounded by White, Main, W. Point, La Monte, Chestnut & Louina Sts., Roanoke, 85003683, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- ALABAMA, TUSCALOOSA COUNTY, Murphy--Collins House, 2601 Paul Bryant Dr., Tuscaloosa, 92001824, NOMINATION, 1/28/93
- ARIZONA, MARICOPA COUNTY, Fort McDowell, Indian Rt. 1, off AZ 87, Yavapai Indian Reservation, Fort McDowell, 92001050, NOMINATION, 8/27/92
- COLORADO, CLEAR CREEK COUNTY, Mint Saloon, 13 E. Park Ave. (US 40), Empire, 92001845, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- COLORADO, CUSTER COUNTY, Westcliffe Jail, 116 Second St., Westcliffe, 92001846, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- COLORADO, DOUGLAS COUNTY, Hammar, Benjamin, House, 203 Cantril St., Castle Rock, 92001847, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- COLORADO, MESA COUNTY, Coates Creek Schoolhouse, D S Rd. 16 mi. W of Glade Park, Glade Park vicinity, 92001839, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- COLORADO, WELD COUNTY, Milne Farm, 18457 CO 392, Lucerne vicinity, 92001840, NOMINATION, 2/03/93 (Historic Farms and Ranches in Weld County MPS)
- FLORIDA, VOLUSIA COUNTY, Barberville Central High School, 1776 Lightfoot Ln., Barberville, 92001838, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Groesbeck, Abraham, House, 1304 W. Washington Blvd., Chicago, 92001841, NOMINATION, 2/04/93
- ILLINOIS, KANE COUNTY, Gridley, Mrs., A. W., House, 637 N. Batavia Ave., Batavia, 92001850, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- ILLINOIS, SANGAMON COUNTY, Flagg, Cornelius, Farmstead, Tipton School Rd., 0.4 mi. W of I-55 Bus. and 0.4 mi. S of Andrew Rd., Sherman vicinity, 92001848, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- ILLINOIS, WARREN COUNTY, Colwell, E. P., and Company Department Store, 208 S. Main St. and 211 S. A St., Mornmouth, 92001851, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- LOUISIANA, ORLEANS PARISH, Canal Station, 2819 Canal St., New Orleans, 92001873, NOMINATION, 2/04/93
- LOUISIANA, ST. JAMES PARISH, Laura Plantation, 2247 LA 18, Vacherie vicinity, 92001842, NOMINATION, 2/03/93 (Louisiana's French Creole Architecture MPS)
- MASSACHUSETTS, HAMPSHIRE COUNTY, Prospect--Gaylord Historic District, Roughly, Prospect St. from Northampton Rd. to Hallock St. and Gaylord and Amity Sts. W from Prospect toward Lincoln Ave., Amherst, 93000007, NOMINATION, 2/04/93
- MASSACHUSETTS, MIDDLESEX COUNTY, Prestor, John, House, 218 Concord Rd., Westford, 93000011, NOMINATION, 2/04/93
- MISSOURI, FRANKLIN COUNTY, Bethel Church, MO T 2 mi. W of Labadie, Labadie vicinity, 92001867, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS COUNTY, Bassett, Dr. Samuel A., Office and Residence, 1200 S. Big Bend Blvd., Richmond Heights, 92001866, NOMINATION, 2/03/93
- MONTANA, CARBON COUNTY, Baldwin Building, Jct. of W. River St. and Harley Ave., Fromberg, 92001777, NOMINATION, 1/28/93 (Fromberg MPS)
- MONTANA, CARBON COUNTY, Benson, Dr. Theodore J., House, 10 N. Montana, Fromberg, 92001780, NOMINATION, 1/28/93 (Fromberg MPS)
- MONTANA, CARBON COUNTY, Blewett, John, House, 2411 E. River St., Fromberg, 92001789, NOMINATION, 1/28/93 (Fromberg MPS)
- MONTANA, CARBON COUNTY, Brooder, Frank, House, 303 North St., Fromberg, 92001787, NOMINATION, 1/28/93 (Fromberg MPS)
- MONTANA, CARBON COUNTY, Fromberg Concrete Arch Bridge, River St. over the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone R., Fromberg, 92001790, NOMINATION, 1/28/93 (Fromberg MPS)
- MONTANA, CARBON COUNTY, Fromberg High School, Kids Ct., Fromberg, 92001788, NOMINATION, 1/28/93 (Fromberg MPS)
- MONTANA, CARBON COUNTY, Fromberg Methodist--Episcopal Church, Jct. of N. Montana Ave. and School St., Fromberg, 92001781, NOMINATION, 1/28/93 (Fromberg MPS)
- MONTANA, CARBON COUNTY, Fromberg Opera House, Jct. of Harley Ave. and C St., Fromberg, 92001779, NOMINATION, 1/28/93 (Fromberg MPS)
- MONTANA, CARBON COUNTY, Gibson, John, House, 219 W. River St., Fromberg, 92001785, NOMINATION, 1/28/93 (Fromberg MPS)
- MONTANA, CARBON COUNTY, Greenblatt, Samuel, House, 215 W. River St., Fromberg, 92001784, NOMINATION, 1/28/93 (Fromberg MPS)
- MONTANA, CARBON COUNTY, 100F Hall and Fromberg Co-operative Mercantile Building, 123 W. River St., Fromberg, 92001778, NOMINATION, 1/28/93 (Fromberg MPS)
- MONTANA, CARBON COUNTY, McCall, Tracy, House, 110 N. Montana Ave., Fromberg, 92001782, NOMINATION, 1/28/93 (Fromberg MPS)
- MONTANA, CARBON COUNTY, Northern Pacific Railroad Depot--Fromberg, Jct. of US 310 and River St., Fromberg, 92001776, NOMINATION, 1/28/93 (Fromberg MPS)