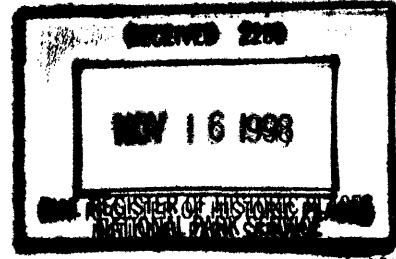


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



1534

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places 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 Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 205 North 400 West N/A not for publication

city or town Salt Lake City N/A vicinity

state Utah code UT county Salt Lake code 035 zip code 84103-

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)

Wilson S. Mad 11/2/98
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Utah Division of State History, Office of Historic Preservation
State or 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 this property is: See Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

entered in the National Register.

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:)

Edson H. Beall 12-17-98

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Name of Property

Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah
City, 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	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		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.) **listed in**

Salt Lake City Business District MRA

Number of contributing resources previously the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

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

COMMERCE/TRADE/Business
COMMERCE/TRADE/Warehouse

Current Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE/Business

7. Description

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

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Commercial Style
Other: Two-part block
Other: Neo-classical

foundation STONE and CONCRETE
walls BRICK

roof Other: built-up
other _____

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 1

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Narrative Description

The Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse, built 1909-1910, is a three-story, rectangular, two-part block building. It is located at 205 North 400 West in the industrial-business section of Salt Lake City. The structure is built in the early twentieth-century commercial style with modest neo-classical details on the street elevations. The west elevation has an angled corner and there is a one-story addition on the north. The main entrance to the building is on 400 West and set back from the street the width of the sidewalk. The building has been altered minimally over the years, and in 1997 received an extensive rehabilitation. The overall integrity of the building is intact and contributes to the historic qualities of the area.

The building is constructed of brick masonry and heavy timbers and sits on a sandstone-concrete foundation. The building is 85 feet wide along the facade and 110 feet deep. The principal elevations (the east and the south) are of a red face brick. The north and west elevations consist of common bricks painted red. A red brick single-story addition was built along the north elevation, circa 1911.¹

At the northwest corner, the building was constructed at an 18 degree angle along a 30 foot portion on the wall. Originally, a railroad spur serviced the warehouse's loading dock and freight doors at the angled west elevation and a portion of the north elevation. There was also a one story brick furnace and coal room (built in 1927) on the south end of the west elevation. This room was demolished in 1997. The coal furnace stack is still located on this wall.²

The primary (east) elevation is symmetrical with five bays and, typical of two-part block commercial buildings, has two distinct zones of facade decoration.³ The lower portion, at street level, features a running bond brick pattern with a six corbeled courses. The number of courses between corbeling diminishes toward the top of the street level which ends in a prominent sandstone belt course.

While the horizontal is emphasized at the lower level, the upper zone is predominantly vertical. Each of the five bays of the upper level (the second and third floors) contains two pairs of windows framed by

X See continuation sheet

¹The addition does not appear in the original architect's rendering published in SLC newspapers during construction, but does appear on the 1911 Sanborn map. "Extensive New Plant of Morrison, Merrill & Company," *Deseret Evening News*, July 20, 1909 and *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 18, 1909.

²Salt Lake City building permits, available at the Utah State Historical Society; Tax cards and photograph available at the Salt Lake County Archives. The tax cards indicate a major remodeling of the building took place sometime between 1939 and 1941.

³Carter and Goss, *Utah's Historic Architecture*, pp. 62-63.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 2

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

brick colossal pilasters. The pilasters have no bases, but have capitals of brick corbeling, light-colored stone keystones and caps. The pilasters are tied together with a string course of brick corbeling in a dentilated pattern. Above the string course is single corbeled course. The upper wall terminates in a parapet which has been capped by concrete (date unknown). The overall style of the building may be described as the commercial style with subtle neo-classical details.

The main entrance is recessed with a pair of doors, side lights, and a tripartite transom. Concrete steps lead to the main entrance. The other bays at street level have large fixed panes of glass and tripartite transoms. The second floor windows are two-over-two double-hung wood windows with sandstone lintels and sills. The third floor windows are similar with sandstone sills and arched brick hoods. Sometime after 1950, painted sheet metal was mounted over the sandstone belt course and some of the sills. This metal and a plywood sign block (not original) was removed during the 1997 rehabilitation. A few aluminum (non-historic) windows were replaced with wood at the same time.

The south, and secondary, elevation which faces 200 North is similar to the east elevation in style, though divided into eight bays with narrower pilasters. The street level has two large windows at the southeast corner bays, three bays of two-over-two double-hung windows, and shorter divided light windows in two bays. A large opening in the south elevation had been filled with glass block (date unknown), but in 1997 was made into a side entrance. There are several basement windows at the foundation level as the ground slopes to the west. The second floor windows are similar to the third floor of the east elevation, and the third floor windows are short divided-lights with fixed panes.

The north elevation is plain with short divided light windows at the third floor level and two-over-two double-hung windows at the second level. Four windows on the north elevation are set in blind arches.⁴

At street level, the circa 1911 addition runs 64 feet along the length of the north elevation. To the east, the masonry of the addition matches the facade. On the north, the addition has three door openings and six-over-six double-hung windows. The loading dock which wrapped around the northwest corner of the was demolished in 1997. The rear (west) elevation features the angled wall where the 1997 rehabilitation created a second entrance with a handicap access ramp. Both sets of freight doors were filled with glass when the circa 1927 mechanical room was demolished.

The roof is built-up with a slope to the west for drainage. A mechanical penthouse on the roof at the west elevation originally serviced the freight elevator and has been left intact. Originally the roof system including large overhanging eaves. The overhang was removed sometime after 1940 (probably in the 1970s) and building's exterior walls capped with concrete.

X See continuation sheet

⁴The windows appear to be original. The location of the blind arches suggest they may have been designed as doorways at the upper level for a future three-story addition to the north.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 3

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

On the interior, the warehouse/office provides approximately 28,000 square feet of floor space. The basement level was 70% excavated and remains unfinished concrete except for restrooms and shower facilities added in 1997. The basement is currently used as an exercise room. Hardware for the original freight elevator has been left intact to the west.

The main floor features a vestibule, a large hallway and a double wide staircase to the upper levels. The staircase, balustrade and handrails are of dark-finished wood in the craftsman style.⁵ The square support posts are finished with a base, a capital and a two-tone paint scheme applied in 1997 (the wood was originally varnished). The main floor offices were originally finished with wainscoting and 12 inch baseboards which have been replicated. Flooring was 2 x 6 inch floor joists covered in maple. The public hallways have been carpeted. There is a vault in the northwest office area. Behind the staircase are the restrooms, a mechanical room, and a ramp-hallway to the rear of the building. The elevator is west of the staircase. The core area is flanked by open office space extending from the front to the rear of the building. Some partitions were removed during the rehabilitation. This configuration is repeated on the second and third floors.

The second floor was finished for offices c.1940. There are partitioned offices along the east wall and open space to the south. On the west wall are two more offices, a vault, and a lab area. The third floor was originally used as warehouse space. The 1997 rehabilitation left the masonry exposed on this floor. The heavy timber post-and-beam construction system has also been left exposed. The floor is mostly open with executive offices, conference rooms, and secured areas created by the use of glass partitions. There is a break room at the rear of the building. All mechanical systems in the building are new, and are mostly exposed in the warehouse areas.

Both landscaping and parking places exist along the street elevations. There is a grassy projecting curb at the corner of the building. Historic photographs show lombardy poplars planted parallel to the streets, however these were removed sometime before 1940. The two large sycamores extant on the north side of the building were probably planted soon after 1940. Of the many lumber sheds and storage areas originally associated with the office-warehouse, only a few remain nearby. These may be eligible as part of the complex, but they are currently under separate ownership and are not being nominated at this time. There is street parking on the east and south, and asphalt parking areas are found to the north and west. The Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse maintains its historic integrity.

X See continuation sheet

⁵The 1911 Sanborn map indicates a "plaster block partition" which separated the office area of the building from the warehouse. This note and the Art Deco appearance of the lower portion of the staircase may mean the staircase was changed during the 1939-1941 remodeling noted on the tax card; however a portion of the staircase appears in a historic photograph taken in 1911 indicating it is original.

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Name of Property

Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah
City, County, and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" on one or more lines 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" on all 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)

- ARCHITECTURE
- INDUSTRY
- COMMERCE
- _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance

1909 - 1947

Significant Dates

1909-1910

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Lepper, William H. (architect)
Eckert, J.L. (carpentry)
Rudine, August (masonry)

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

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: _____

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 1

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse, built in 1909-1910, is historically significant as the headquarters of one of Utah's largest and most important lumber companies. The construction of this facility marked the beginning of both the physical and economic expansion of Morrison-Merrill and its transformation into a major regional supplier of wood products. Under the direction of George Merrill, who served as company president from 1911 to 1947, Morrison-Merrill grew from a moderate-size operation with eight outlets in northern Utah to one with thirty-seven outlets in three states and a network of over 100 subsidiary firms. This building was headquarters of the company throughout that period. The Morrison-Merrill building is also significant as one of the major facilities constructed in Salt Lake City's transportation and industrial district. This area, located along the railroad tracks west of downtown, was the logical center for all railroad-dependent industries, especially warehouses and other "working" facilities. The Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company building documents the transition of Salt Lake City's west downtown area from a residential-agricultural neighborhood to a major industrial and commercial district which served as a hub for the Intermountain region. The building is also architecturally significant as an excellent local example of "mill construction," which was developed to provide the volume of space, structural strength, and fire-resistance desired for warehouses of the period. While a comprehensive inventory of mill construction buildings in Salt Lake City has not yet been conducted, preliminary investigations indicate that the type is limited to a relatively small number of structures located in this industrial/railroad sector of the city.

HISTORY OF THE MORRISON-MERRILL LUMBER COMPANY OFFICE AND WAREHOUSE

The history of the Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse and its associated structures at the company's 205 North 400 West location in Salt Lake City documents the transition of a locally-owned Salt Lake lumber yard into a supplier for wood products and other building materials at the national level. As Salt Lake City's west downtown grew from a residential-agricultural area on the fringes of the town center to a major industrial and commercial district with the coming of the railroad in the 1870s, the Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company also expanded. The company's holdings in the area peaked in the mid-twentieth century about the same time commercial activity along Salt Lake's transportation corridor reached an apex. With the diminishing importance of the railroad after 1950, the Morrison-Merrill company declined and eventually closed its doors permanently. By the 1980s, most of the structures owned by the company were sold off, and many were demolished. The 1997 rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the office-warehouse is part of a general renaissance of Salt Lake's west downtown as a service and technology district. Though several structures exist near the office-warehouse and are also

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 2

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

potentially eligible for the National Register, the buildings have been disassociated due to a hodgepodge of ownership and usage. The office-warehouse is the most prominent structure extant of the original Morrison-Merrill complex and is the only building being considered by this nomination.⁶

The Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company was founded in 1890 by Seth W. Morrison and Samuel Merrill. Their first lumberyard was in the same general area as the building at 205 North 400 West, but occupied only one fourth of the block. According to a Salt Lake City building permit, that year the company spent \$10,000 to build an office, warehouse, railroad track and lumber sheds. By 1898, Morrison-Merrill had extended its holdings through the block to the west. In 1900, the area was already traversed with railroad lines. The Salt Lake & Ogden Railroad ran in front of the lumber company's frame buildings along 400 West. The Oregon Short Line Railroad (OSLRR) ran along the west side of the lumberyard. Morrison-Merrill had a spur which ran from the OSLRR through the width of the block. The company was mainly supplying dressed lumber, sashes, doors and building paper. At the time, the lumber company shared the block with several residences and agricultural outbuildings, and an LDS Church meetinghouse.⁷ Until the construction of the 1909-1910 office and warehouse at the site of the lumberyard, Morrison-Merrill also leased office space in downtown Salt Lake City at 28 South Main Street.⁸

Seth W. Morrison was born December 13, 1856 in Wisconsin. In 1872, he moved to Denver with his father Alonzo Morrison, where they both worked in the lumber business. After a preliminary visit to Utah in 1889, Seth Morrison moved to Utah in 1890 and with Samuel Merrill founded the Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company in the fall of that year. Morrison served as treasurer and general manager of the company. In 1906, he disposed of his interest in the company and began his own wholesale lumber company at 62½ West Second South. Seth Morrison was elected to Utah's first state legislature in 1896. He died in November 1935 at the age of seventy-nine.⁹

Samuel Merrill was born in 1853. He also lived in Denver before moving to Salt Lake City. Samuel Merrill was the president of the company, with his brother Edward Merrill serving as vice president and secretary.

X See continuation sheet

⁶A brick garage circa 1900 and a few remaining lumber sheds near the Morrison-Merrill building are in relatively good condition. All other structures on the block were demolished during the expansion of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks and yards in the 1960s, and during the general decline of the area in the 1970s and 1980s. A substantial two-story brick mill building built in 1911 is still extant to the north on the corner of 300 North and 400 West, however concrete block additions have obscured the historic mill building and made it unrecognizable.

⁷The "intrusion" of the Morrison-Merrill lumberyard is the only difference between the 1889 and the 1898 Sanborn maps of the block. Originally 400 West was called 300 West, and 200 North was 100 North. Though the numbering of addresses did not change, the streets were renumbered in the 1970s. The current address is used throughout the form.

⁸*Salt Lake City Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for Salt Lake City, 1889, 1898, 1911, 1950 and 1969; Polk Directories, Salt Lake City, 1893-1975.* The office on Main Street was demolished almost immediately.

⁹Obituaries for Seth W. Morrison, *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 5, 1935 and *Deseret News*, November 6, 1935.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 3

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

During this time, Merrill had a home in Cheyenne, Wyoming (where he was mayor and a Wyoming state legislator). By 1910, Samuel Merrill had turned control of the company to his son George E. Merrill, and retired to Spokane, Washington, where he maintained ties to the lumber industry. Samuel Merrill died in Oregon on March 14, 1930.¹⁰

George Edmund Merrill, son of Samuel Merrill and Tresa Pennington Merrill, was born in Denver on October 22, 1881. He graduated from the Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts in 1900. Afterward, he became the secretary of the Morrison-Merrill company. In 1906, he bought Seth Morrison's interests in the company. At the age of thirty, he became president of the company. George E. Merrill was actively involved in civic affairs, serving on bank boards, a University of Utah citizens' committee, and as president of numerous state and national lumber company organizations. He retired from Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company in December, 1947, and died in Salt Lake City on June 4, 1960.¹¹

The construction of the office and warehouse marked the beginning of both a physical and economic expansion of the Morrison-Merrill company. By 1911, the Sanborn maps indicate the lumber yard had grown considerably. Along with the construction of a new office and warehouse, the lumber company's sheds, mills, and storage buildings covered all but the northeast corner of the block. The number of railroad tracks to the west had also multiplied, and three spurs fed into the lumberyard from the south. The shortest spur serviced the angled west elevation loading dock of the new warehouse, and two other storage buildings. The company's product line had expanded to include roofing materials, plaster, cement, paint, and corrugated iron. At the time of the construction of the office and warehouse, the lumber company had extensions operating in South Salt Lake, Midvale, Murray, Riverton, Layton, Kaysville, Bountiful, and Park City.

A building permit dated May 4, 1909, describes the office and warehouse as a "three story brick storage building" to be built at a cost of \$25,000. (Newspaper articles stated the building was built for \$50,000, a more likely sum.) The building was designed by William H. Lepper, a Salt Lake architect, who was working on the nearby Salt Lake Hardware Company building at the same time. A local newspaper described the new building as "perfectly plain in appearance . . . without any excess of ornaments," though it also observed that the "handsome" structure would provide the company with "the finest location of any business of the kind between Denver and the coast." The newspaper also noted that the construction of the office had transformed the neighborhood from "an old, run-down residence section to an up-to-date business corner, giving the impression of prosperity to the entire street."¹² With the

X See continuation sheet

¹⁰Obituary for Samuel Merrill, *Deseret News*, March 14, 1930.

¹¹Obituary for George Edmund Merrill, *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 6, 1960.

¹²"Extensive New Plant of Morrison, Merrill & Company," *Deseret Evening News*, July 20, 1909 and *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 18, 1909.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 4

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

completion of the office and warehouse, the Morrison-Merrill company moved all of their operations to the site of the lumberyard. Their new offices would have been deemed appropriately elegant. This is especially true considering that the design of the public facades was more ornate than similar buildings in the vicinity, yet quite reserved when compared to contemporaneous commercial buildings in the downtown area.

The building of the office and warehouse was just the beginning of a burst of expansion for the Morrison-Merrill company. After the completion of the office and warehouse in 1910, the company began expanding to the blocks on the north and the south. In 1911, the company constructed a large brick mill building on the corner of 300 North and 400 West. Sometime later, a sash and molding warehouse was built to the south across 200 North next to the Salt Lake Hardware Company building.¹³ By the 1920s, the lumberyard's neighbors, the adobe and frame residences which were ubiquitous in the area, were obliterated.

Under the direction of George Merrill, the Morrison-Merrill Company grew from a local operation into a chain of lumber distribution centers which covered the Intermountain West. A 1940 catalog of the company reveals that the company had dropped most non-wood building materials from their product line and were specializing in "architectural woodwork."¹⁴ Along with milling their own lumber, Morrison-Merrill acted somewhat as a clearinghouse for prefabricated residential woodwork (e.g., mantels, windows, doors, and cabinets, etc.) produced by other companies. In addition, the company shipped such items as screen doors, counter tops, medicine chests and septic tanks.

During World War II, the Morrison-Merrill company and its subsidiary firms were operating 100 lumber yards with main branches in Pocatello, Idaho, and Reno, Nevada. The network of firms Merrill founded in Utah, Idaho and Wyoming were eventually combined to create the Tri-State Lumber Company. When George Merrill retired in 1947, Tri-State had 37 outlets in the three states.

The Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company remained a vital business until the 1950s. In 1965, the Morrison-Merrill name was no longer used and the company continued to exist only through one of its subsidiary firms, the Boise Cascade Corporation. After 1965, Boise Cascade retained the office-warehouse and a few lumber sheds, but other structures originally associated with the lumberyard had been either sold off or demolished by 1970. Boise Cascade was officially deeded the property in 1979 and continued to use

X See continuation sheet

¹³This building was demolished when the Salt Lake Hardware Company building was rehabilitated in 1996.

¹⁴*Handbook of Architectural Woodwork*, [produced] by Morrison-Merrill & Co., catalog no. 42, 1940, available at the University of Utah, Marriott Library, Special Collections.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 5

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

the building until 1989.¹⁵

Between 1989 and 1996, the building had four owners and was used by a variety of small businesses with a few residential apartments on the second floor. Much of the building was either used for miscellaneous storage or left completely vacant. Several film crews used the building's interior during this period.

In September of 1996, the office and warehouse was purchased by the Olafson Group. The building underwent a substantial rehabilitation in 1997. The adaptive reuse which preserved nearly all of the building's historic features while converting it to a high-tech use was directed by Ron Rowley. The building has been part of a second renaissance of the area in which warehouses structures that are vacant or dilapidated are being renovated to house growing service and technology businesses. The building is currently used as the headquarters for Tomax Technologies, a software development firm founded by Jaye and Eric Olafson.

HISTORY OF THE SALT LAKE CITY BUSINESS DISTRICT

The Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Building is being nominated as part of the Salt Lake City Business District Multiple Resource Area (1982). As the political capitol of the State of Utah and the social and economic center for a larger area of the western United States, Salt Lake City has been one of the nation's major regional centers since its establishment in 1847. Initially the commercial control of the region was by held the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons). However, early in the city's history non-Mormon merchants established commercial ventures which, along with the influx of a large number of mining businessmen, challenged the Mormon economic and political control of the city. Thus, the historic resources of the Salt Lake City Business District are significant because they document both the role of Salt Lake City as a major regional center in the United States, and the major transitional theme of the history of Salt Lake City: the rise of Salt Lake as a secular, regional commercial center in the national network of trade and industry.

Founded in 1847 by the Mormon church, Salt Lake City quickly assumed the characteristics of a Mormon settlement: for example, large ten acre blocks arranged in a grid fashion, log and adobe structures, irrigation systems, and areas set aside for religious and communal purposes. The main commercial

X See continuation sheet

¹⁵The Boise Cascade Corporation still exists with three different offices in the Salt Lake area. Its various branches sell corrugated cardboard, office furniture, and some building materials, but Boise Cascade bears little resemblance to the original Morrison-Merrill company.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 6

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

center was eventually established on Main Street, near the Mormon temple, where Mormon businesses thrived, and including such enterprises as the ZCMI (Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution). With the coming of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, and the growth of Utah's commercial mining industry, Salt Lake attracted numerous non-Mormon entrepreneurs, merchants and laborers. These non-Mormon (or Gentile, as they were called by the Mormon majority) businesses flourished on the south end of Main Street creating a polarized business district with Mormon establishments located to the north. As Salt Lake evolved into a more secular city, it began to assume characteristics of other American cities, with businesses divided by type rather than by religious or cultural differences. In addition, the city became a commercial hub for the entire intermountain region.

Social trends also mirrored those in the United States generally. Immigration, always important to the peopling of Utah, was now characterized by an influx of southern and eastern Europeans, and Asians. Many of these immigrants settled near the railroads terminals just west of downtown, where ethnic communities and supportive businesses began to emerge. These immigrants provided a large population of workers for the growing industrial area.

The original Salt Lake City Business District Multiple Resource Area mainly described the city's first commercial district from Main Street to the area of the city's major railroad terminals. The second phase of the MRA documents the area which runs parallel to the railroad to the north and the south.

As new industries emerged and older industries expanded, the polarity which characterized the city earlier began to disperse. Several enterprises moved west from the downtown core, where large tracts of farmland near the railroad could be converted to industrial use. After the turn of the century, large blocks of small Victorian cottages and associated outbuildings began to disappear as warehouses, mills, factories, and foundries were being built on a large scale. The most important function of this area was as a warehouse and manufacturing center. The booming railroad industry played an integral role in the development of the district. The prosperity of the railroads is indicated by the elaborate stations constructed for the Union Pacific and the Rio Grande railroads by 1910. At the height of activity, five major railroad lines converged at the district.¹⁶ According to Sanborn maps, each block contained anywhere from two to seven spurs servicing warehouses and manufacturing buildings. By the 1920s, Salt Lake City, with its downtown and warehouse areas, had become the major commercial point between Denver and the west coast. The importance of these wholesale market centers was evidenced by "wholesalers from the larger cities establishing branch houses in order to be nearer the market and meet local competition more effectively."¹⁷

X See continuation sheet

¹⁶Donald B. Robertson, *Encyclopedia of Western Railroad History: The Desert States*, (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1986). Besides the Union Pacific, other lines included the Denver & Rio Grande, Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad, Salt Lake & Ogden, Oregon Short Line, and the Utah Railway.

¹⁷Bill Reid Moeckel, *The Development of the Wholesaler in the United States, 1860-1900*, (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1986).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 7

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

The Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company complex at 200 North and 400 West is representative of a number of local businesses which utilized the city's west downtown proximity to the railroad to facilitate large-scale operational expansions. In only two decades, the lumber company was able to expand its holdings from a modest portion of a residential block to the several warehouses encompassing the entire block and beyond. The railroad allowed the lumber company to grow from a local enterprise to having 100 lumberyards throughout the intermountain region. The company's decision to build a combined office and warehouse at its lumberyard illustrates the railroad's importance to the growth and prosperity of the westside of Salt Lake City's Business District.

Warehouse Design

According to historian Bill Moeckel, "the changing relative importance of the older wholesale centers, the establishment of new ones, and the development of the railroad all contributed to the modification of the traditional lines of trade."¹⁸ These "lines of trade" were responsible for redesign of the warehouse and the development new construction technologies.

Warehouse is a term for a building type introduced around 1885 to achieve the large interior spaces for the manufacturing and storage needs of the new commercial markets stimulated by the railroad industry. The warehouse was relatively expensive to build because of the structural components, yet often simple and largely undecorated. The parapets were often brick with open arches. Strapwork and knotwork were appropriate brick patterns for work buildings. The ornamentation followed conventional patterns. Windows usually had slender bars and thin panels of light material. Initials were often incorporated in decorative panels. The brick pier was an unbroken line from sidewalk to skyline and served as pilasters to divide the wall into bays as well as stiffen the walls. There was typically storefront glass and many openings on the first floor.

Warehouse structures gave the appearance of low cost and obvious utility.¹⁹ Because they were simple and less ornate than other commercial buildings of the period, the warehouse was usually "separated from any recognized historical styles."²⁰ However, ornamentation and style was often used to establish hierarchies of space based on usage. A warehouse might have a stylish facade along the public street with plain walls to the rear where the more utilitarian functions occurred. The same was true of the

X See continuation sheet

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Russell Sturgis, "The Warehouse and the Factory in Architecture." *The Architectural Record*, XV:1 (January 1904), 1-17.

²⁰Russell Sturgis. "Factories and Warehouses." *The Architectural Record* XIV:5 (May 1906), 368-375.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 8

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

interior. If a warehouse had any public spaces, they were distinguished from the utilitarian spaces by the use of finishing materials. Meeting rooms, showrooms, and administrative offices were usually plastered, painted, with wainscoted walls and paneled columns; while in the warehouse area masonry was left bare and post/beam support systems were left exposed.

The design of warehouses nationwide varied. There was extensive use of brick in a variety of types and colors, but the result had a standard: a load-bearing masonry building of several floors with heavy timber posts and beams spanning large interior bays that were open with flexible floor space. Warehouses were developed during the Modern movement, which aimed at simplifying architecture of any type.

Discussion of the warehouse buildings by authors of articles in the *Architectural Record* between 1904 and 1910 describes the trend toward a simpler architecture as appropriate in general. Specifically it was deemed important that the warehouse clearly articulate its function. The utility and functional honesty of warehouses were integral to the services they provided--the milling, packing, storing and warehousing that occurred in them daily. Later warehouses constructed with reinforced concrete brought industrial architecture even closer to the goal of a purely utilitarian design.

Built in response to the development of the great transcontinental railroads in America, warehouses reveal how modern industrial cities developed and of the importance of shipping and railroads. "Agricultural, mineral, and manufactured wealth flowed freely out the loading bays of the warehouses onto waiting freight cars and carried across the continent. The trade of the nation relied on railroads and upon efficient handling and storage in the great warehouses that adjoined the tracks."²¹ Warehouses were usually rectangular with large open areas to accommodate the functions that occurred within them, however a large number of structures found in Salt Lake's railroad district were designed with angled walls or with a wedge-shaped footprint in order to accommodate a railroad spur. Several warehouses were large enough for an interior loading dock and spur allowing railroad cars to be brought directly into the building for loading and unloading. Ground floors were often elevated from the street approximately 2½ feet to facilitate loading from railway car or carts and trucks.²²

Warehouses in Salt Lake City developed much as warehouses did across the country, as utilitarian, vernacular buildings on the periphery of the commercial district. "The warehouse districts were often built during a brief period of time with similar material and similar functions, expressing a homogeneity and unity of place absent in the central business district."²³

X See continuation sheet

²¹Don C. Miles et al, *Trucksides*, Tacoma: Dept. of Community Development, Office of Historic Preservation, 1988.

²²*Ibid.*

²³*Ibid.*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 9

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Construction Technology

Although many of the first warehouse buildings located near the railroad tracks in Salt Lake City may have been constructed of wood as a temporary measure to keep up with the demand of storing and transferring goods, the technology of fireproof construction was available and implemented as time and money allowed. Gradually these wooden structures were replaced with more substantial brick, and later concrete structures.

Warehouse construction of the early 1900s took two main forms. Mill construction, named because it was first applied to the textile mills of New England, consisted heavy timber construction and floors with thick planks. These solid masses could not burn freely and allowed time for fighting the fire. This type of construction avoided concealed spaces between floors and in roofs. Vertical openings were brick-lined and doors were wood, covered with tin. Water piping ran throughout and gravity tanks for storing water to supply the sprinkler systems were often positioned on the flat roofs. Windows were made of heavy galvanized iron and double glazed with quarter-inch wire glass. Mill construction presented convenient surfaces for attachment of pulleys, shafting and machinery. Heavy timber construction was better than wrought iron, steel, or cast iron which was shown to buckle and collapse under intense heat.²⁴

Reinforced concrete was another method of constructing a relatively fireproof warehouse. Brick walls could not stand up for any great length of time against a hot fire and reinforced concrete was the only kind of construction that had been found not to give way in the hottest fire. Even structural steel had to be protected by brick or terra cotta or concrete. The worst damage to concrete would be the spalling off of some of the surface mortar that could be easily repaired by plastering the damaged places with a rich cement mortar. Typically walls would be six inches thick with the floor slabs being four inches thick.²⁵

Both methods were used during the early twentieth century. Some were noted as using the most up-to-date fireproof construction methods and employed many of the methods that were being discussed during the early 1900s, methods described as important for preventing the loss of lives and goods.

Architecture

The Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse with its classically-derived street elevations, angled loading dock, and distinctions in interior finishes between office and warehouse is a particularly well-preserved example of architecture in Salt Lake City's transportation and industrial

X See continuation sheet

²⁴Franklin H. Westworth, "Factories and Their Fire Protection," *Architectural Record*, XXVII:3 (March 1910), 218-266.

²⁵A.O. Elzner, "Evolution of the Modern Warehouse," *Architectural Record*, XXI:5 (May 1907), 379-384.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section No. 8 Page 10

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

business district. Moreover, the building is an excellent example of mill construction and had several fire-proofing techniques incorporated into the original design.

The architect for the building was William H. Lepper. Lepper appears in the city directory records beginning in 1900 when he was employed as a draftsman for Richard Kletting, a prominent Utah architect.

Lepper later worked as a draftsman for Walter E. Ware around 1903, and subsequently for the firm of Ware & Treganza until 1907, when he began working independently as an architect. Between 1908 and 1917 he maintained offices in the Brooks Arcade at 268 South State Street. He appears to have specialized in the design and engineering of heating and ventilating systems. In 1918 he left his independent practice to work with the engineering and contracting firm of Villadsen Bros. (Anders B. and Jens M. Villadsen). That association lasted only a year or two. Lepper subsequently appears to have worked out of his residence, and then again for the firm of Ware & Treganza before moving to Chicago in 1923. In addition to the Morrison-Merrill building and the Salt Lake Hardware Company building, Lepper's Utah projects include St. John's Cathedral in Logan, the Sarah Daft Home, and the arch of the chapel of Rowland Hall (205 First Avenue).²⁶ The masonry contractor for the Morrison-Merrill building was August Rudine. J. L. Eckert was in charge of the carpentry and paint work was done by Peter Nelson.

The architectural design of the Morrison-Merrill office and warehouse reflects its dual function. The south and east elevations were similar to many two-part commercial buildings in the downtown area, while the north and west elevations carefully crafted to serve the needs of a prosperous lumberyard on a railroad spur. There are currently 45 two-part block buildings within the portion of the Salt Lake City Business District Multiple Resource Area parallel to the railroad lines. Of these, thirteen can be compared to the Morrison-Merrill building in scale (three to six stories), in time period (built between 1900 and 1920), and in function (combined office and warehouse structures). These buildings vary considerably in design, but generally most would be labeled as commercial style, with the more elaborate structures closest to the downtown area. Of the handful of these warehouses built on railroad spurs, the Morrison-Merrill building with its pilasters, corbeled cornice, contrasting stonework, and classical details, is the most ornate.

By contrast, the west and north elevations of the building were remarkably plain and practical. The angled northwest corner and the original loading dock were perfectly suited to a high volume of railroad-driven commerce. The one-story north elevation addition gave foremen and managers direct access to the lumberyard, while the relatively blank wall and blind arches in the upper stories would have facilitated future expansion. The differences in exterior elevations do not reflect distinctions in the interior which was divided by story. The front portion of the main floor was originally finished with as much care (i.e. plasters, hardwoods, wainscoting, etc.) as contemporaneous office buildings in the downtown area. When additional office space was needed, the second floor was also finished (1939-1941). The third floor remained unfinished open warehouse space.

²⁶Julie Osborne. *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Salt Lake Hardware Company Warehouse*. Draft TMS: 1996. Copy available at the Utah State Historic Preservation Office. Osborne.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section No. 8 Page 11

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

The Morrison-Merrill buildings represents the substantial warehouses built by companies who were experiencing a combination of financial stability and rapid growth. Conditions made it both feasible and desirable to construct permanent structures. The building represents mill construction at the height of its popularity in Salt Lake City. The design of the building incorporates fire-proofing techniques such as wire glass, steel wall hangers, steel post-cops, and 26 inch walls of masonry to protect the vaults.

The Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse is an excellent example of early warehouse construction and documents the significance of the warehouse industry in this area. Its overall integrity is excellent and it contributes to the historic qualities of Salt Lake City.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 9 Page 1

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section No. 9 Page 2

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

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Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Name of Property

Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah
City, County, and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.5 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A 1/2 4/2/3/8/8/0 4/5/1/3/8/4/0 B 1 11111 11111
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

C 1 11111 11111 D 1 11111 11111

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

BEG AT SE COR OF LOT 1, BLK 101, PLAT A, SLC SUR: N 132 FT; W 165 FT; S 132 FT; E 165 FT TO BEG.

Property Tax No. 08-36-328-011-0000

__ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are those that were historically and continue to be associated with the building.

__ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Korral Broschinsky

organization Preservation Consultant date October 1998

street & number 1049 University Village telephone (801) 581-1497

city or town Salt Lake City state UT zip code 84108-3453

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Maps:** **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and/or 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

name Eric L. Olafson and Jaye Olafson, Olafson Group, L.C.

street & number 1227 East Gilmer Drive telephone (801) 964-5100

city or town Salt Lake City state UT zip code 84104

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.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. PHOTOS Page 1

Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Common Information:

1. Morrison-Merrill Lumber Company Office and Warehouse
2. Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT
3. Photographer: Korral Broschinsky
4. Date: June 1998
5. Negative on file at Utah SHPO.

Photograph #1:

6. East elevation of building. Camera facing west.

Photograph #2:

6. South & east elevations of building. Camera facing northwest.

Photograph #3:

6. North & west elevations of building. Camera facing southeast.

__ See continuation sheet

N O R T H

2 0 0

4 0 0

W E S T

PROPERTY LINE

PROPERTY LINE

4" PIPE COLLARED
CONC. FILL 4" REQ'D

TRANSFORMER

CONCRETE

ELEC. SERVICE
SWITCH GEAR

9'-0"

15'-0"

9'-0"
3'-0" 6'-0" 9'-0"

PROPERTY LINE

VAL
5'-0"

PROPERTY LINE

COP. W/TS

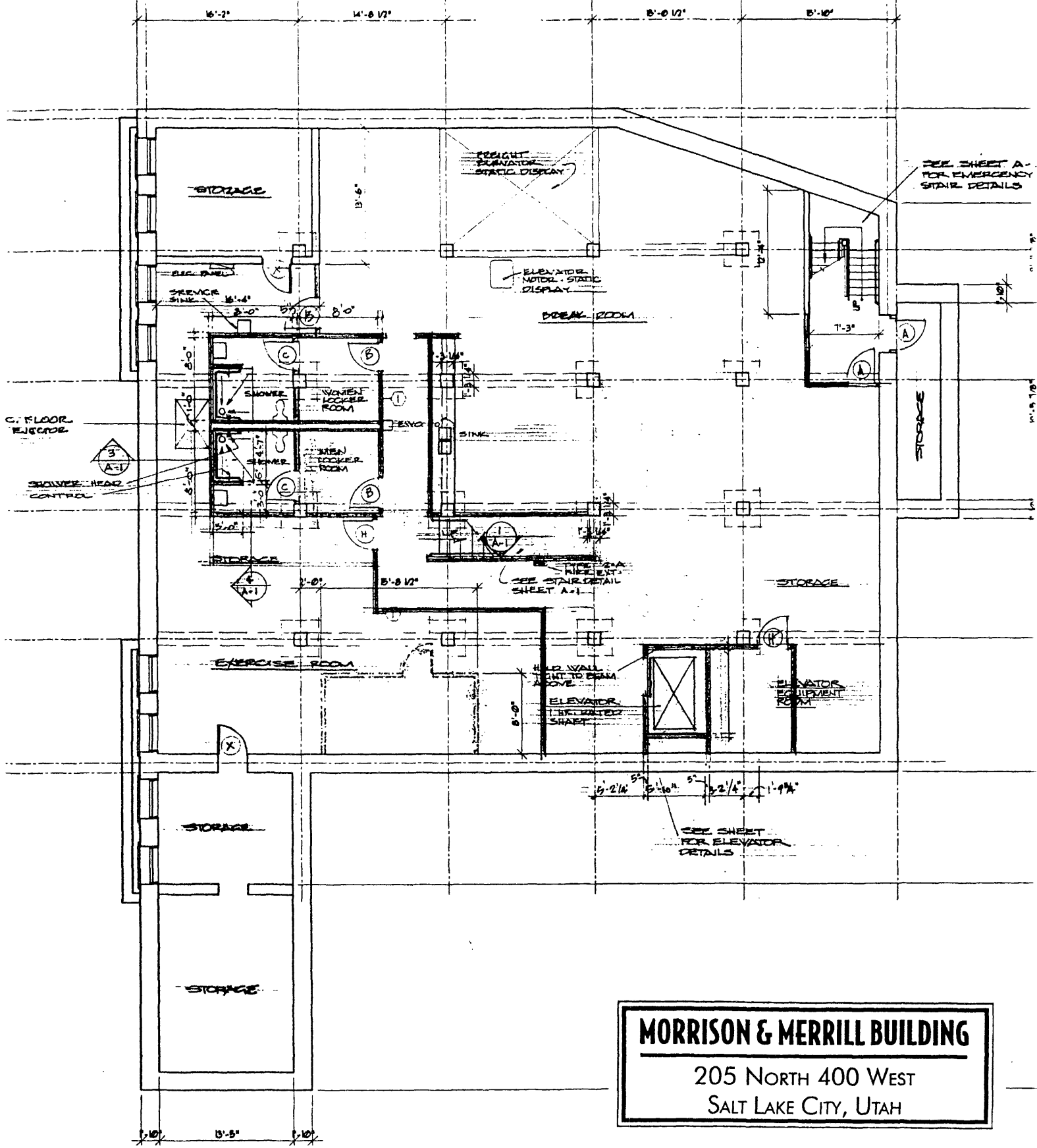
67'-0"

MORRISON & MERRILL BUILDING

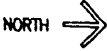
205 NORTH 400 WEST
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

Drawing 1997

North →



MORRISON & MERRILL BUILDING
 205 NORTH 400 WEST
 SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH



BASEMENT LEVEL FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

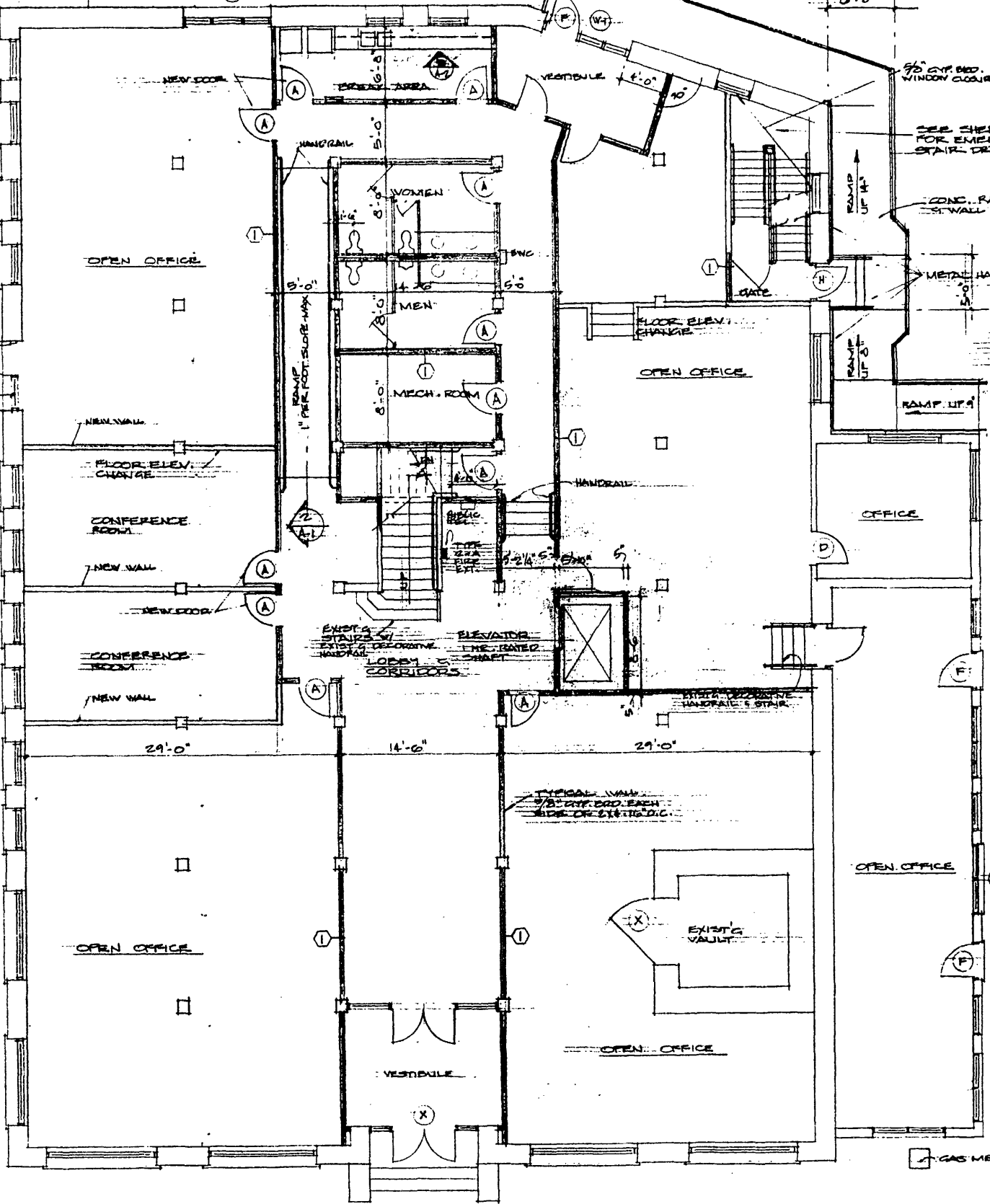
Drawing 1977

10" CONC. PAD

8'-0"

5'-0"

6'-0"



90° GYP. BRD. WINDOW CLOSURE

SEE SHEET FOR EMERGENCY STAIR DETAIL

CONC. RAMP ST. WALL

METAL HANDR.

RAMP UP 1/4"

OFFICE

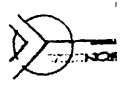
OPEN OFFICE

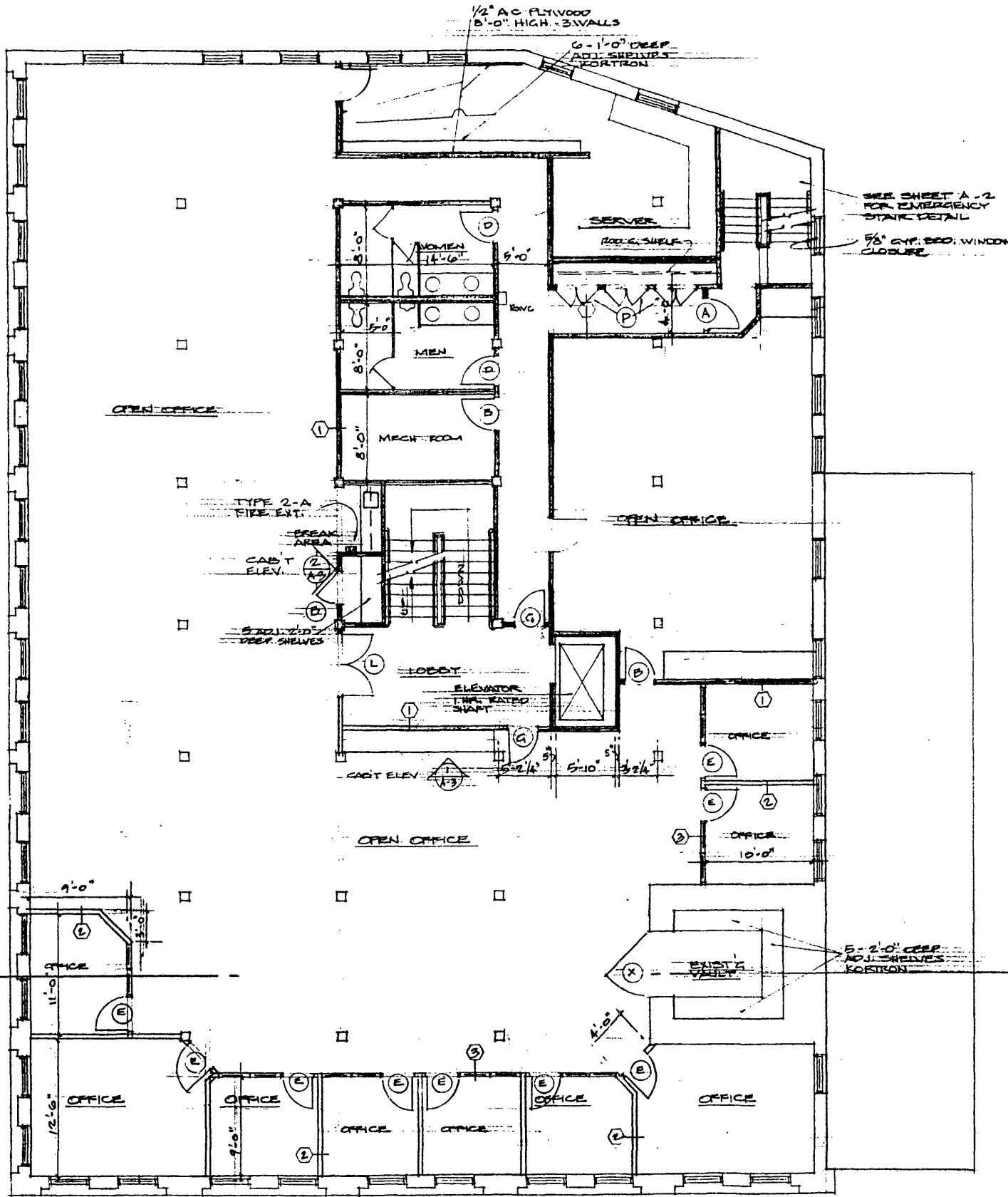
GAS METER

MAIN FLOOR PLAN

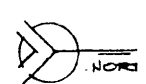
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"
Drawing 1997

MORRISON & MERRILL BUILDING
 205 NORTH 400 WEST
 SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

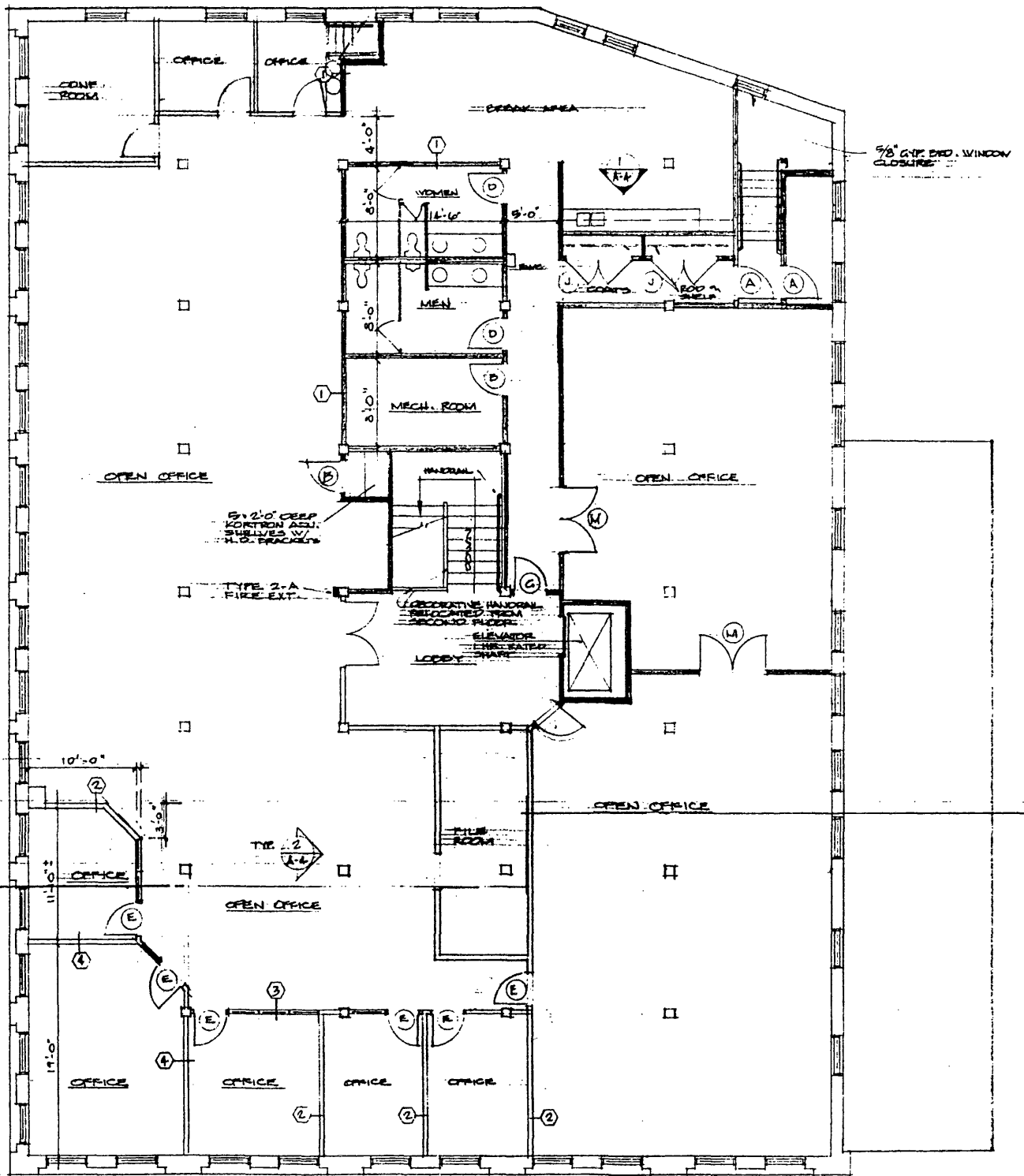




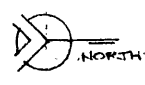
SECOND FLOOR PLAN
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"
 Drawing 1997



MORRISON & MERRILL BUILDING
 205 NORTH 400 WEST
 SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH



THIRD FLOOR PLAN
 SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"
 Drawing 1997



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