

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PHO 692484

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED NOV 20 1978

DATE ENTERED JAN 29 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Midland Packing Company (Smith's & Company Packing Plant) (H.A.)

AND/OR COMMON

K-D Stockyards Station

OK M. Bennett R-4-78 CE.

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

2001 Leech Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Sioux City

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

Sixth

STATE

Iowa

CODE

COUNTY

Woodbury

CODE

193

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

X OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

X BUILDING(S)

X PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

X COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

X YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Kermit and Doris Lohry

STREET & NUMBER

1721 Rebecca Street

CITY, TOWN

Sioux City

VICINITY OF

STATE

Iowa 51103

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Woodbury County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Sioux City

STATE

Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Midland Packing Company plant, opened in January 1920, is located on the flats west of the Floyd River, on the southern edge of Sioux City. This area has since 1880 been the locus of the meat packing industry in the city, with most of the major plants and the stockyards centered here. The Midland plant is situated on Leech Avenue, with an abandoned channel to the east, US Highway 20 and extensive rail yards to the north. The area is very open, with many vacant areas interspersed with assorted industrial and commercial complexes.

The Midland plant is approximately 240' east-west, 330' north-south, and about 90' high. The main part of the plant has 6 floors plus basement, while sections to the northeast and south have five floors. At the north end is a five-floor rendering plant, with holding pens, enclosed in a one-story structure of more recent vintage, beyond.

Exterior walls of the packing plant are reinforced concrete with cork insulation, faced with red or buff brick. Interior walls and floors are of the same materials and the large rooms have ceilings supported by thick, concrete pillars. Decoration is confined largely to the south (Leech St.) and west facades, and consists of flat brick engaged piers with molded concrete detail. The south end of the plant, which suffered a major explosion in 1949, was rebuilt using red (rather than buff) brick. Windows (many now filled in) are grouped in threes between brick piers.

The plant was operated by Swift and Company from 1924 to 1974. When purchased by the present owner, much of the equipment and machinery (continually updated over the years) was left in the building. These elements have been incorporated into various decorative schemes as part of the rehabilitation of the plant to house specialty shops and other businesses. The boiler and machine rooms, which contain some equipment from the early days of the plant, are intact, as are the fifth and sixth floors, which are presently vacant.

The packing plant was arranged on a "gravity flow" principle, with the processes beginning at the top and becoming more specialized toward the basement. The packing process began on the fifth floor, below a large hog cooler on the sixth. Livestock entered the northeast corner, directly onto the killing floor across the north end of the plant. The carcasses were then hung in large coolers to the south of the killing floor. On the fourth floor was the pork cutting area, tank area, and freezer.

See continuation sheet

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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At third floor level, operations became more varied: pork cuts were trimmed here, and there were salt rooms, an "oleo room" and again more freezer space. The second floor was occupied by freezers, pork belly grading room, lard tanks and the refrigeration plant for the beef cooler on the floor below. The first floor was largely a beef operation: cutting rooms, coolers and lard tanks were located here, along with a beef loading dock on the west side of the plant. The basement contained a hide cellar, brine tanks, and area for grading hams.

The operations discussed above occupied the greater part of the plant. The southernmost section (which on the exterior is indicated by red brick and extensive window area) was used for the production of processed meats, such as sausages and bacon. Sausage was initially prepared on the fifth floor of this section, with cooler and packing area on the floor below. Bacon was cut and stored with hams on the third floor. The second floor contained smokehouses and lard refinery area. The meats were assembled and packaged on the first floor, and removed via a loading dock on the east end.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES b. 1919

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Garner-Lindberg, Chicago

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Midland Packing Company plant is associated with an interesting chapter in the history of meat packing in Sioux City and in Iowa. Its construction was one of a series of speculative -- and essentially fraudulent -- ventures in meat packing which occurred in Iowa during the years 1917-1925, and involved nearly \$15 million. When the "bubble" burst, the Midland plant was acquired by Swift & Co. of Chicago, whose presence in Sioux City after 1924 ensured that city's national preeminence as a meat packing center.

The "packing house boom" of 1917-1925 was a national phenomenon arising from a combination of greed on the part of investors and speculators, and certain beliefs widely held by the general public at that time. The entry of the U.S. in World War I created a huge market for meat products, resulting in apparently unlimited opportunity for profit. It appeared to many people that most of these profits accrued to the "meat trust" -- big Chicago packers such as Armour and Swift -- who took advantage of their near-monopoly to establish artificially high prices for their products. Another factor, unrelated to meat packing, was that the market in Liberty Bonds declined during 1919, encouraging many people to seek more lucrative investments. (McCarty, pp. 76-78). Speculators seized upon this combination of circumstances, and the results were a series of packing house ventures, four of which were located in Iowa. These ventures were much alike: plans for an independent packing company were drawn up and shares of stock sold to unwary investors responding to the opportunity to make a profit and at the same time undercut the "meat trust". A great deal of money changed hands, but little of it ever returned to stockholders, instead being siphoned off by "company officials" and assorted politicians.

The Corn Belt Packing Company in Dubuque was the most "successful", in that it actually operated for three years before investors forced its close. The plant was housed in the old Dubuque Brewing and Malting Co. buildings. The Farmers' Mutual Packing Company, in Muscatine, was less substantial: it consisted of a former lumber company property with a new name on the office door. Still more ephemeral was the Associated Packing Company plant in Des Moines, which never grew beyond the purchase of a second-hand hog-scraping machine.

The Midland venture was different from these in that a new plant was built and put into operation -- although only for a few months. The company was incorporated in 1918 and the plant -- reputed to have cost \$3 million -- opened in January 1920. It closed the following May, amid stockholders' suits and petitions from the state Attorney General asking the courts to put the plant in receivership. However, a plant so new would not long remain idle. In 1924 it reopened, having been acquired

See continuation sheet

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

McCarty, H.H. and C.W. Thompson. "Meat Packing in Iowa." Iowa Studies in Business XII (June 1933) (published by the College of Commerce, State University of Iowa, Iowa City).
 Sioux City Journal, Centennial Edition, Agriculture and Livestock section, July 25, 1954.
 Sioux City Journal-Tribune, December 15, 1949.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 4

QUADRANGLE NAME Sioux City South, Iowa

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,4	711,511,2,0	4,710,712,2,0	B	1,4	711,511,2,0	4,710,710,5,5
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1,4	711,510,2,0	4,710,710,5,0	D	1,4	711,510,2,0	4,710,712,2,0
E				F			
G				H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 1 through 12, Block 9, and S 1/2 Grand Ave. between Prospect St. and Floyd River and Dace St. between Prospect St. and Floyd River, and Prospect St. between Blocks 9 and 10 and all alleys in blocks 6 and 9. Lots 9 and 10, Block 6

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

M.H. Bowers, National Register Coordinator

ORGANIZATION

Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

October 1978

STREET & NUMBER

26 East Market Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Iowa City

STATE

Iowa 52240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Ad. D. Anderson

TITLE

DATE

11/20/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

1/29/79

ATTEST: **KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

DATE

1/26/79

William Labovich
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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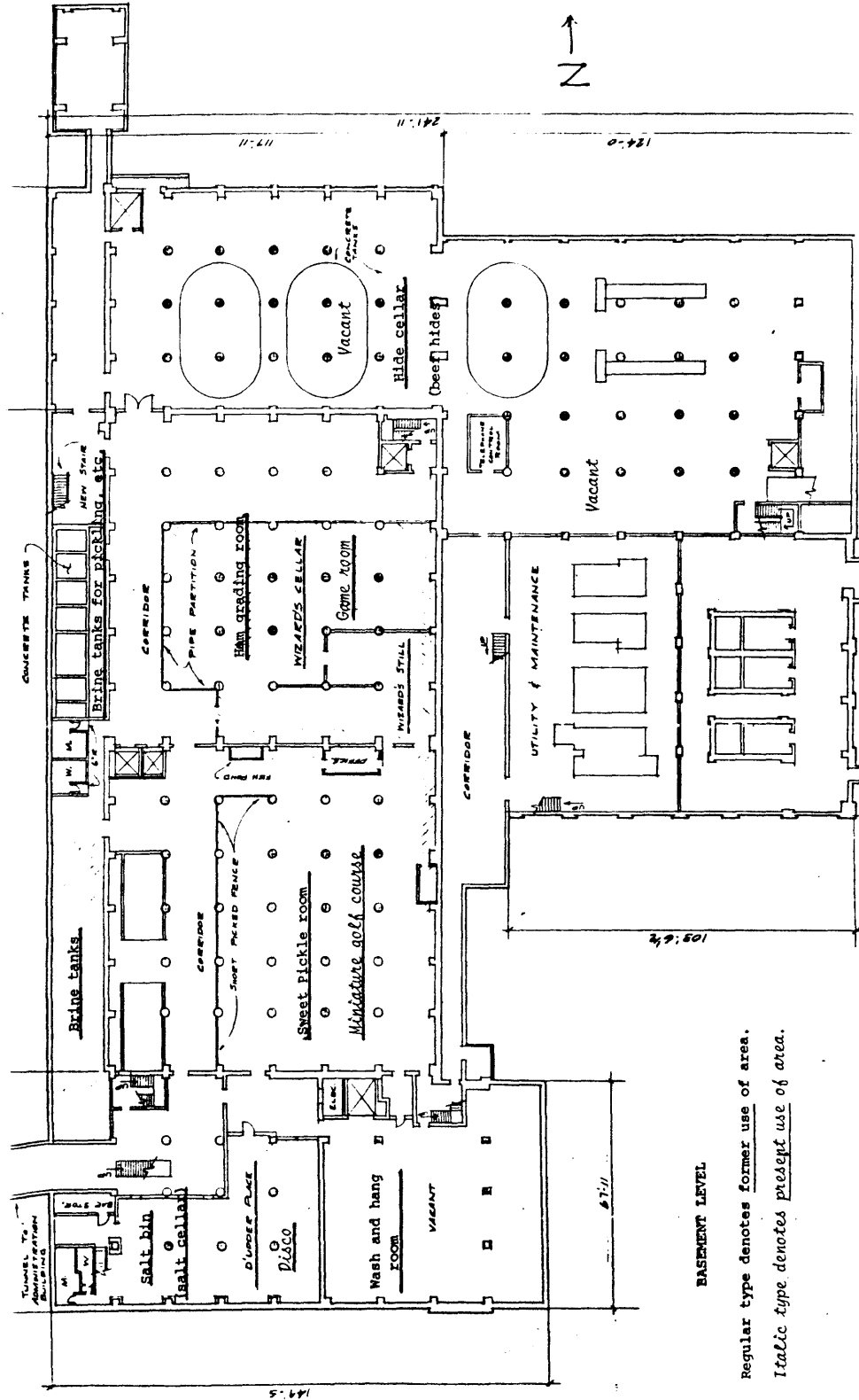
by Swift & Co., which operated the plant until 1974.

The coming of Swift represented a climax in the history of Sioux City meat packing, which had been building since the turn of the century. The industry did not develop in Sioux City until the early 1870's, and for twenty years thereafter was dominated by local, independent firms. The first of the Chicago packers -- Cudahy -- came in 1892. A tradition of sorts was thereby established: Cudahy and the other national firms (Armour and Swift) moved into existing plants, thus avoiding an immediate capital outlay. Armour & Co. opened in Sioux City in 1901, thereby establishing the city as "the leading packing center in Iowa, and one of the important centers in the nation" (McCarty, p. 64). In subsequent years, rumors of a third "big" backer in Sioux City were rife, but they were not realized until the coming of Swift to the Midland plant in 1924. With three major packers located in Sioux City, the city became Iowa's largest packing center, and one of the most prominent in the nation. Today, the Midland-Swift plant is the only one of the original facilities remaining from these important early 20th-century decades.

Midland Packing Company
 Sioux City, Woodbury Co., Iowa
 Floor plans showing original
 and present uses of interior
 space.

NOV 28 1978

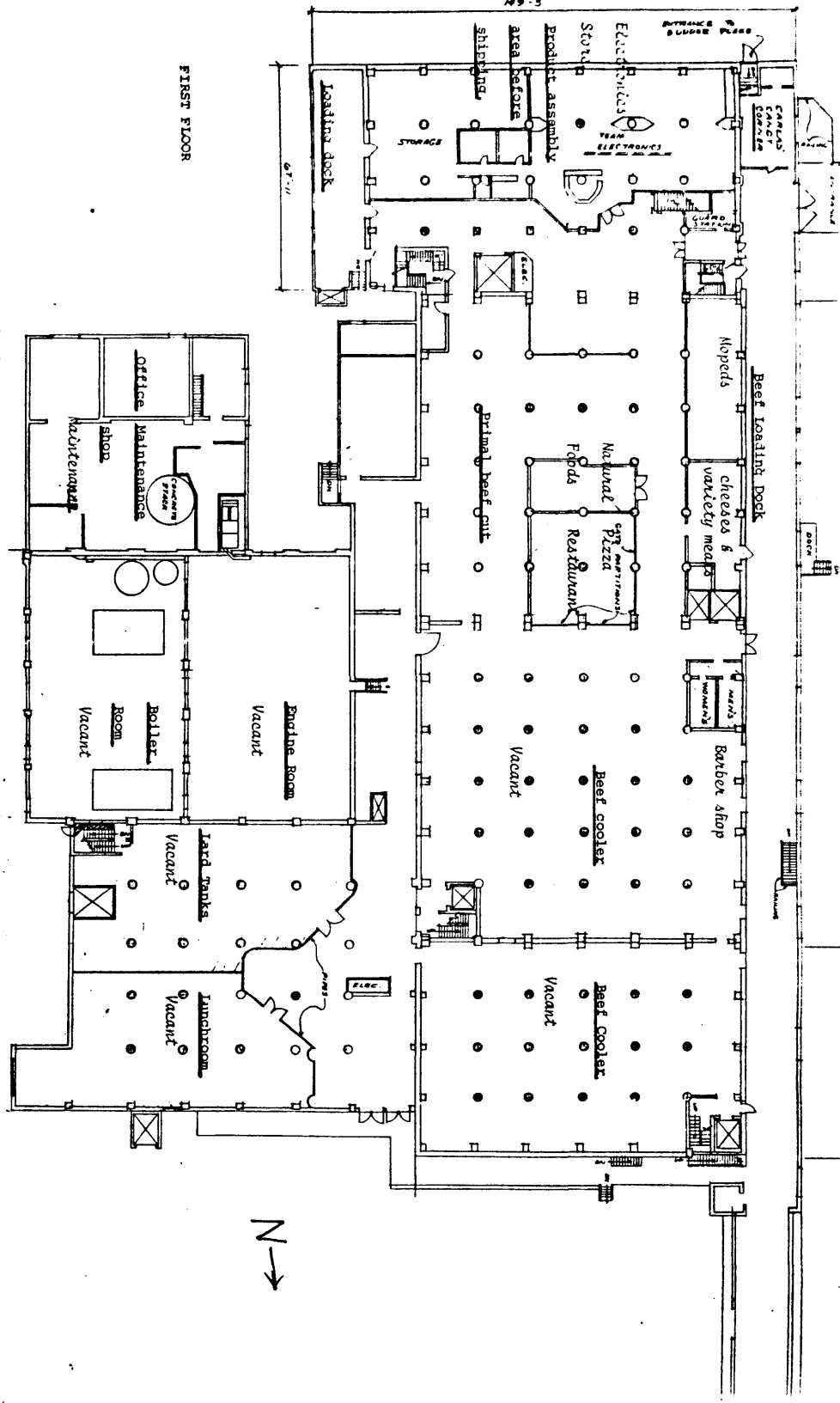
JAN 29 1979

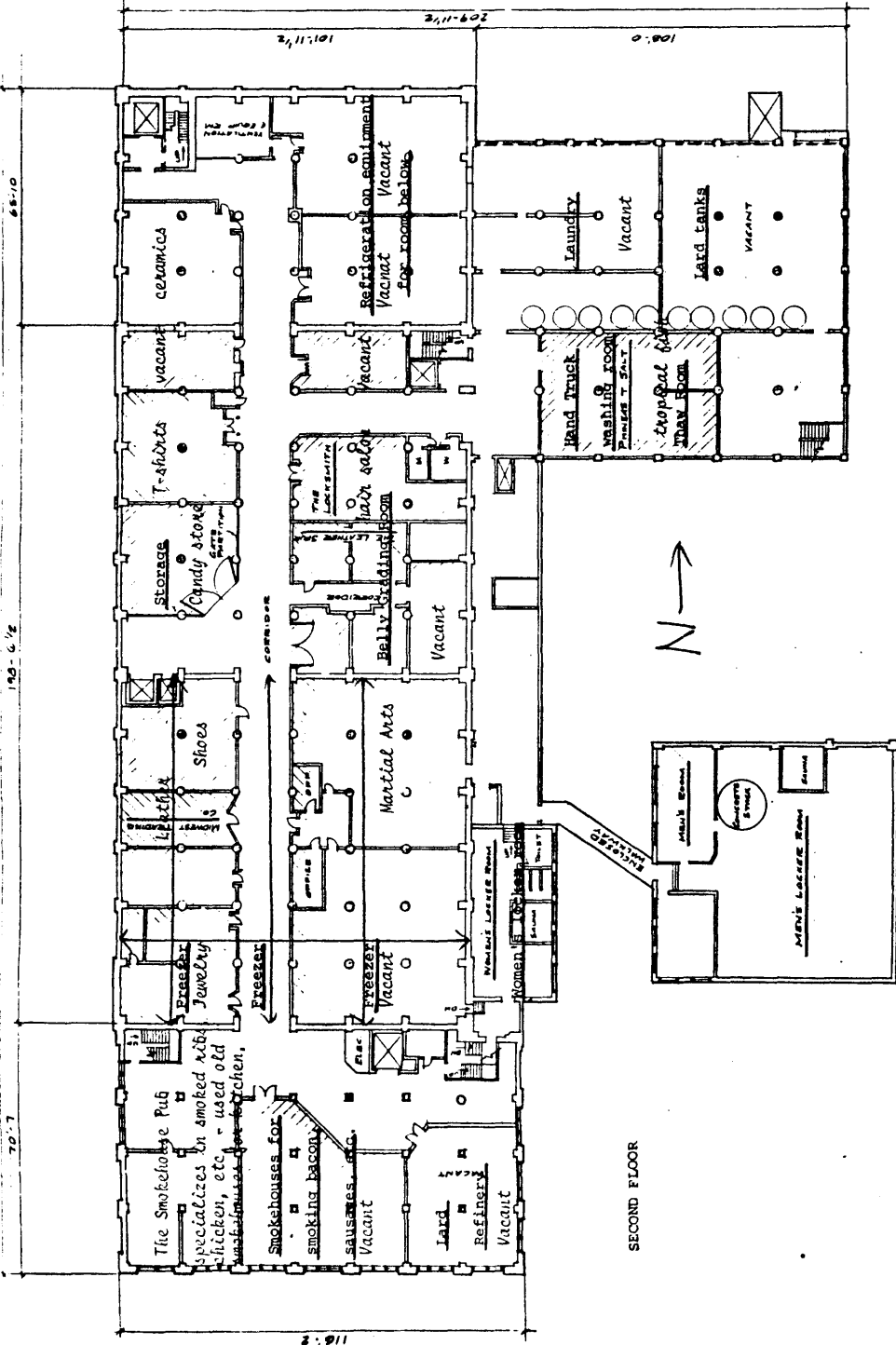


BASEMENT LEVEL

Regular type denotes former use of area.
Italic type denotes present use of area.

FIRST FLOOR





SECOND FLOOR

65-10

140-0 1/2

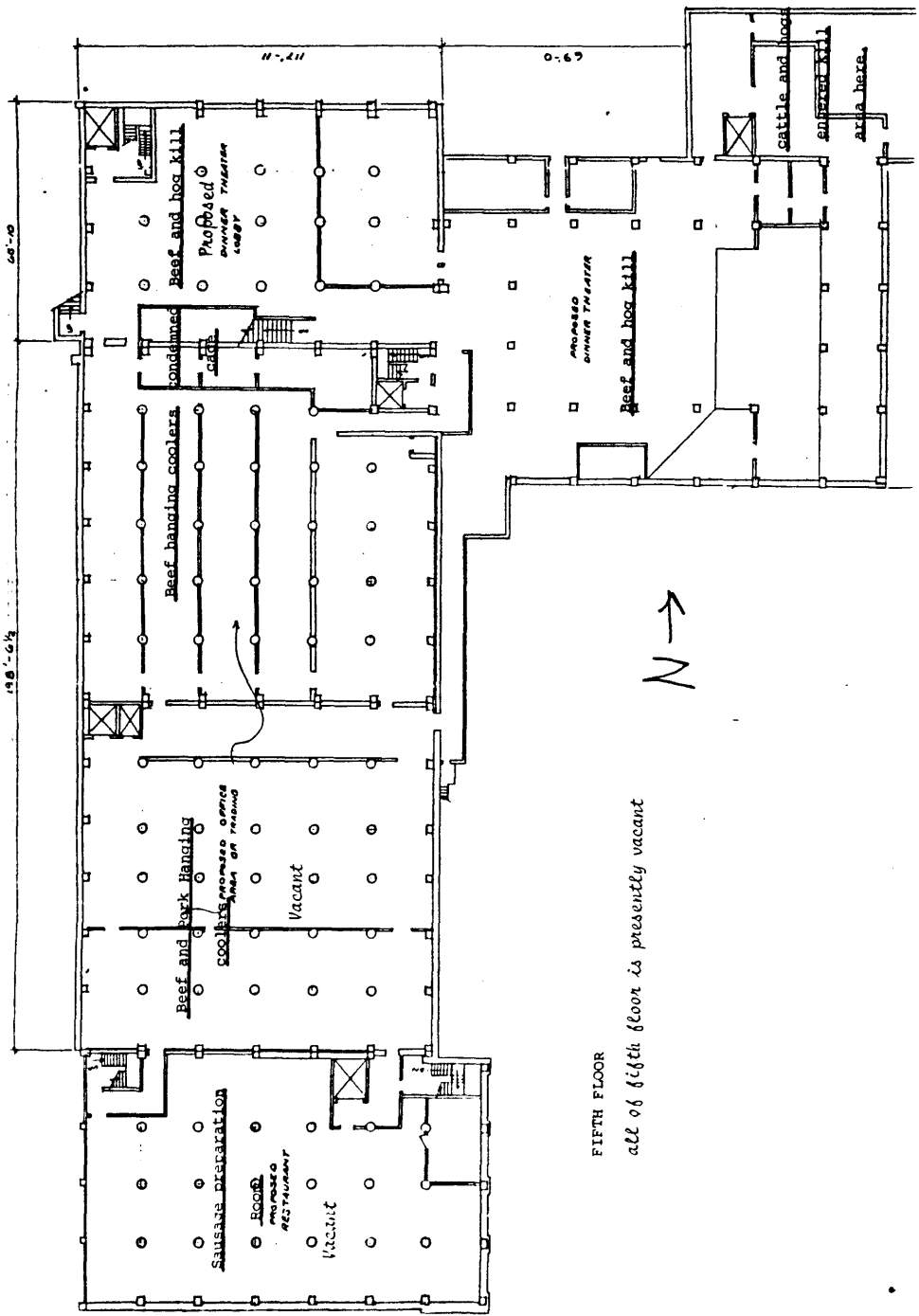
70-7

101-11 1/2

108-0

116-2

209-11 1/2



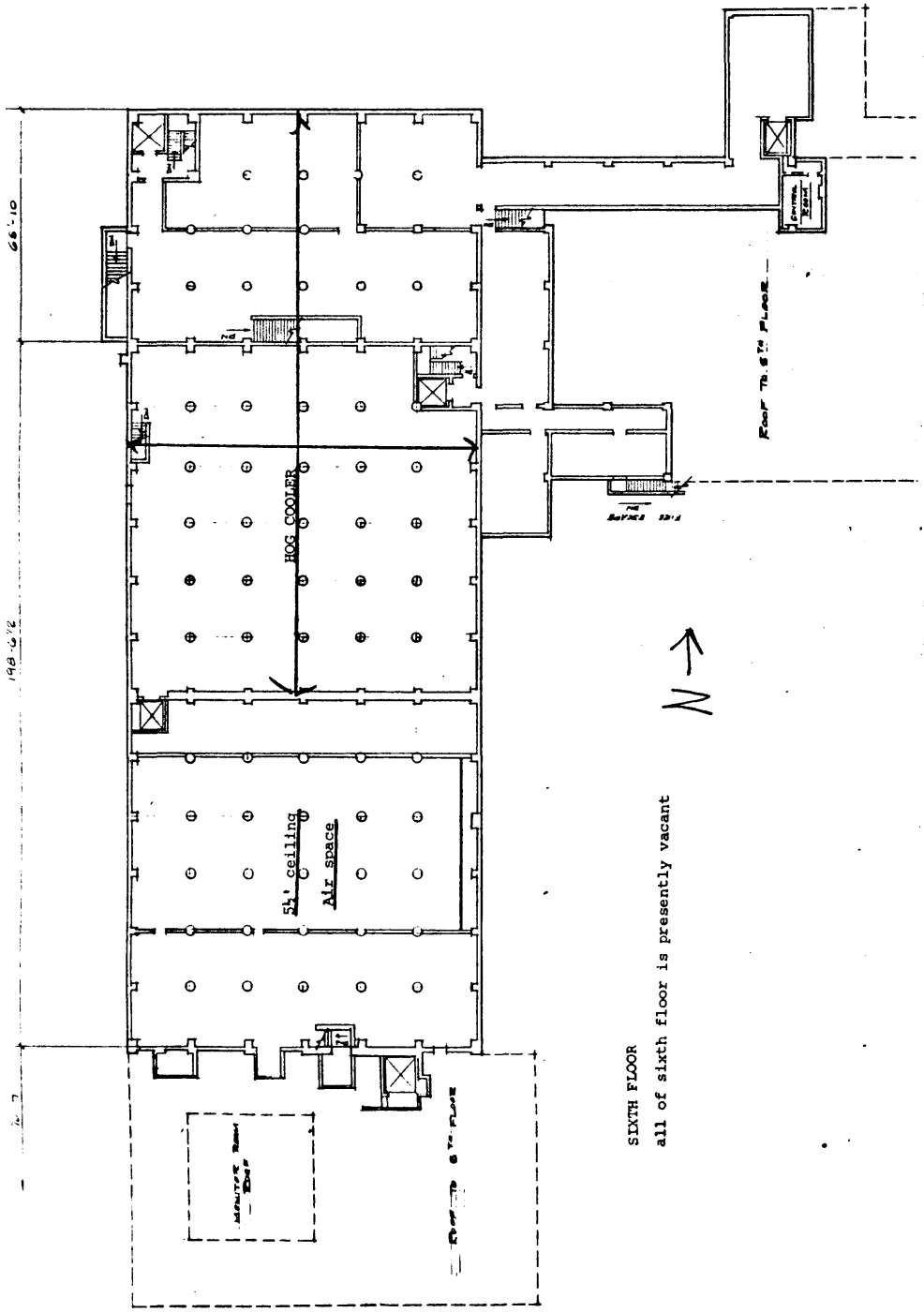
FIFTH FLOOR

all of fifth floor is presently vacant

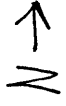
66'-10"

198-072

7-7



SIXTH FLOOR
 all of sixth floor is presently vacant



REMOVED - ARE.