

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Live Oak Creamery

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 88 Martin Street not for publication

city, town Gilroy vicinity of congressional district 13th

state California code 06 county Santa Clara code 085

3. Classification

Category <input type="checkbox"/> district <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) <input type="checkbox"/> structure <input type="checkbox"/> site <input type="checkbox"/> object	Ownership <input type="checkbox"/> public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private <input type="checkbox"/> both Public Acquisition <input type="checkbox"/> in process <input type="checkbox"/> being considered	Status <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress Accessible <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> no	Present Use <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> museum <input type="checkbox"/> park <input type="checkbox"/> private residence <input type="checkbox"/> religious <input type="checkbox"/> scientific <input type="checkbox"/> transportation <input type="checkbox"/> other:
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4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Eugene F. Sachara

street & number 1160 Third Street

city, town Gilroy vicinity of state California 95020

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Santa Clara County Recorder's Office

street & number 80 West Hedding Street

city, town San Jose state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1975 and revised 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commission

city, town 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose state California

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" 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

This manufacturing structure represents the most important early industry of Gilroy. Measuring 37'-2" x 96'-2½" this beige creamery is rectangular in plan. The original brick portion has common bond brick bearing walls. The additions are frame covered with stucco. The largest addition is covered with board and batten and the interior wall is stuccoed. Four wood steps lead to the doorway on the east elevation. All doors and windows are made of wood. *Most* windows have double-hung sashes. There are five metal ventilators (cylindrical) cone-shaped or circular metal hoods. The roofs are simple pitched and covered with tar paper or asbestos shingles except for the monitor roof of wooden shakes. The original brick portion has a brick parapet with a decorative brick cap of two courses. There is a monitor roof on the large addition, four windows along each side awning-hung.

The original brick building has been added to and subdivided in several stages. Upon entering from the Martin Street entrance, one enters the Refrigerator Room, a room with thick walls, itself an alteration to the original structure. In the left-hand wall (facing South) of the Refrigerator Room, there is a door to the office addition. In the far wall of the Refrigerator Room, there are two openings, both leading to the Packaging and Processing Room. In the left-hand wall of this room there is a door to the outside and several windows that have been closed because of an addition. In the right-hand wall of the Packaging and Processing Room is a large freight door which faces the railroad tracks, and in the far wall of this room, a large opening has been closed and a smaller one created at the extreme right portion of the wall. This opening leads to the Processing Room that once contained the vats. In the left-hand wall of this room, there is an entrance to the Milk Sales Room, and in the right-hand wall, there is a door to outside. The far wall has no doors or windows. One room, the Milk Arrival and Testing Room, is not accessible from any of the rooms described, but is reached from its own door from the outside.

The additions to the original 1908 creamery were probably erected in 1919 and 1930. The tax assessment books indicate a big increase from 1918-1919 to 1919-1920 as follows:
1918-1919, Lot value: \$220; Improvements: \$720.
1919-1920, Lot value: \$700; Improvements: \$1800.

This was the time when the Learnard family had hired William R. Garlock. "Garlock, local manager for the Live Oak Creamery, recently in from San Jose, is making improvements." It is possible that the board and batten addition with the monitor roof was constructed at that time. Also, the insulation in the refrigerator room could have been added at this time. For this installation double-hung sash windows were covered up, as well as a door. The location of the former refrigerator door is still visible in the south wall of this room. The next big jump in assessments occurs in 1930-1931 as follows:

1929-1930, Lot value: \$630; Improvements: \$1620.
1930-1931, Lot value: \$3,000; Improvements: \$2500.

This could be the time when the testing laboratory and retail store were added. Louise Berri, a Luchessa family member, recalls the cheese factory vividly. She said that all the existing building was there in the early 1930's except for the office which was added by the subsequent owner in the 1940's.

An adjacent structure to the south, with gable roof and corrugated metal siding, appears to be roughly contemporary with the original creamery building (compare photos 1 and 8). It is, however, structurally and historically unrelated to the Live Oak Creamery complex.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1908 **Builder/Architect** Not known

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Live Oak Creamery is significant, as it was the first butter factory established in Gilroy in 1908. This plain brick building is also unique as the only insulated structure in the area. In the 1920's and 1930's cheese was processed here. The building now stands as a symbol of the time when the dairy business was a major industry in the Gilroy area.

The Live Oak Creamery was built by the Learnards, a prominent family in the Gilroy area. Colonel O. E. Learnard, upon retiring from the first Kansas Regiment had migrated to California, where he gained a reputation as one of the leading journalists in the state. He also owned approximately 1,000 acres of farm land about four miles west of Gilroy in the Solis district. The Colonel's son, Tracey, was involved in the dairy business. The Learnards recognized that the dairy farmers in the area were shipping all their cream to other locations to be made into butter and realized that it would be more practical and economical to have a creamery in the Gilroy area. Therefore, "Tracey Learnard established a creamery at his place west of Gilroy where butter is manufactured daily for market." (Gilroy Advocate, December 28, 1907, no page), under the "Live Oak" brand name. The creamery had the most modern equipment and machinery, which was fully described in a Gilroy newspaper.

"The advancement of age is shown as much probably by the methods in dairying as in anything else. If the dairymen who died thirty years ago could return to earth, they would be unable to understand the way things are being done. In these days, as soon as the milking is done the big cans are carried while yet the milk is warm to the "Separator room" where the machinery, revolving at a high rate of speed, separates the heavier particles -- the cream fats -- from the milk, delivering the two fluids into different cans. The cream is then put away to ripen when the churning and butter making is also done by machinery. It is done thoroughly, expeditiously and with more attention to sanitary details than formerly."

Gilroy Gazette. December 20, 1907, page 12.

Another Gilroy newspaper heralded this new business enterprise with headlines of "New Industry Started for Gilroy -- Long Felt Want Has Been Supplied At Last... A Creamery At Home Will Bring Dollars To The Land." (Gilroy Gazette. March 29, 1907, page 4.)

At about the same time Colonel Learnard purchased the parcel of land in Gilroy at Martin and Railroad Streets and commenced building the Live Oak Creamery, ^{plus} the other creamery in Solis. ?

The reasons for building the creamery in town were not mentioned, but it could be because of a more accessible location, and/or the spur track of the Southern Pacific Railroad, which was adjacent to the property. The new "Live Oak Creamery" had the capacity of manufacturing 1,000 pounds of butter per day. In 1912, Colonel Learnard died and left the Live Oak Creamery to his wife, Mary. Tracey continued to manage the creamery for several years. In 1917, William Garlock, lately of San Jose, was hired to manage the creamery.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Gilroy Advocate. 12/28/1907; 1/18/1908; 4/4/1908; 3/10/1917; 3/28/30; 1/8/32; 6/7/1935.
2. Gilroy Dispatch. -Centennial Issue. 12/21/1970; 1/19/1968; 4/5/68.
3. Gilroy's First Century (1870-1970), Published by the City of Gilroy, California, 1970.
4. Gilroy Tax Assessment Books, 1907-1946, Gilroy Historical Museum, 195 Fifth St., Gilroy, CA
5. Santa Clara Directories, 1905-1955.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .14

Quadrangle name Gilroy

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 1 0 6 2 7 4 8 0 4 0 9 6 5 5 0
 Zone Easting Northing

B
 Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

"A parcel of land on Martin Street, where it intersects the westerly line of Railroad Street, measuring 100' x 61', Lot 12, Block 1 North, Range 1 east. (SEE attached Site Plan)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
<u>CA</u>			

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sibyl McGroff, Supervisor, Santa Clara County HABS Team

organization Historic American Buildings survey
Heritage Conservation & Recreation Services date August 1979

street & number U. S. Dept of the Interior telephone 202-343-6217

city or town Washington state D.C. 20243

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Harry M. Ellison

title SHPO date 12/10/80

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>William H. Brasham</u>	date <u>3.11.82</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED JAN 27 1982
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Live Oak Creamery ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 8-B

(In 1922 Tracey was to become Postmaster of Gilroy, a position that he held for some time and that was considered "one of the most important post offices in the coast counties." (Gilroy Advocate, March 28, 1930.) Business must have been flourishing for the Live Oak Creamery as Garlock installed the latest pasteurizer and homogenizer in 1919. At this time, the dairy industry was listed as the first and foremost among the businesses in Gilroy, the cows bringing their owners an estimated \$150,000 annually. (Gilroy Dispatch, December 21, 1970, no page number.) It appears that the Live Oak Creamery was the only creamery in town. This is substantiated by the fact that "profit also came to the small dairymen through a creamery erected in town during the 1900's." (Gilroy Dispatch, op. cit.).

As noted previously, Garlock & Crook purchased the Live Oak Creamery from Mary Learnard in 1920-1921. If the tax assessment records are accurate, Garlock sold his interest to Crook in 1924-1925. In the early 1920's the Live Oak Creamery started making cheese, too. For this purpose, Walter Luchessa, who had been trained as a cheese maker in his native Switzerland and had immigrated to the Gilroy area in 1919, was hired.

In 1925, Walter together with his three brothers, Peter, Alessio and Quinto bought the factory from Crook. Walter ran the business and the other brothers were investors. Butter and cream production was stopped. A descendant of the Luchessas described how the cheese factory worked. The milk cans were delivered to the testing room, a highly secretive place where only the chemist was allowed. Each patron was given a number to insure fairness in evaluating their cream. The more butter fat content, the higher the price. The milk was then brewed in the processing room with its three huge copper-lined vats. Large wooden rakes were used to stir up the rennet mixture. After the cheese was processed, the residue of whey was very much in demand by farmers, who bought it for feeding their hogs.

In the next processing room, cheese cloth, wax and the date were added, and the cheese was then stacked and rotated daily for the aging process. For the final aging phase the finished products were placed in the refrigeration room. Monterey Jack and cheddar cheeses were made by the Luchessas. The cheese was sold in a five pound loaf or a 24 pound flat piece. With the train spur from the Southern Pacific Railroad, the cheeses were then loaded directly onto the railroad cars for distribution in California. For the whole business, there were only three employees.

In the mid-1930's the Luchessas rented the cheese factory to the Zottola Bros., who carried on the business. The Zottolas had a retail store where cheese, butter and cream were sold. In 1935 Palmer and Ernest Zottola, the proprietors made some improvements. "In addition to remodeling the cheese room, the building has been painted inside and out and other improvements made." (Gilroy Advocate, June 7, 1935, page 2.) The Zottola Bros. made Monterey Jack, full cream cheese and granular cheese, which was distributed to "San Francisco, Los Angeles, Fresno and Bakersfield, where they have established markets for Gilroy cheese." (Gilroy Advocate, June 7, 1935, op. cit.).

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CONTINUATION SHEET Live Oak Creamery ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 8-C

Due to stricter state regulations of the moisture content of cheese, the Zottola Bros. ^{Creamery} ceased functioning about 1940. The Luchessa descendant said that the Zottola Bros. were the last cheese makers to close in Gilroy, thereby ending a viable business, which had started in the 1850's. Gilroy had once been known as the cheese capital of the State. (Gilroy Dispatch, December 21, 1970, no page.) The absence of alkali in the water supply aided the cheese maker in this area, as it was not necessary to heat the milk to a high temperature of 160 degrees to rid the milk of the alkali. This heating process impaired the quality of the cheese.

In 1895 cheese was the main product of Gilroy. "The succulent grasses which flourish along the creeks and in the lowlands having early brought about the development of the industry." (San Jose Mercury, Santa Clara County and Its Resources, 1895, page 57.)

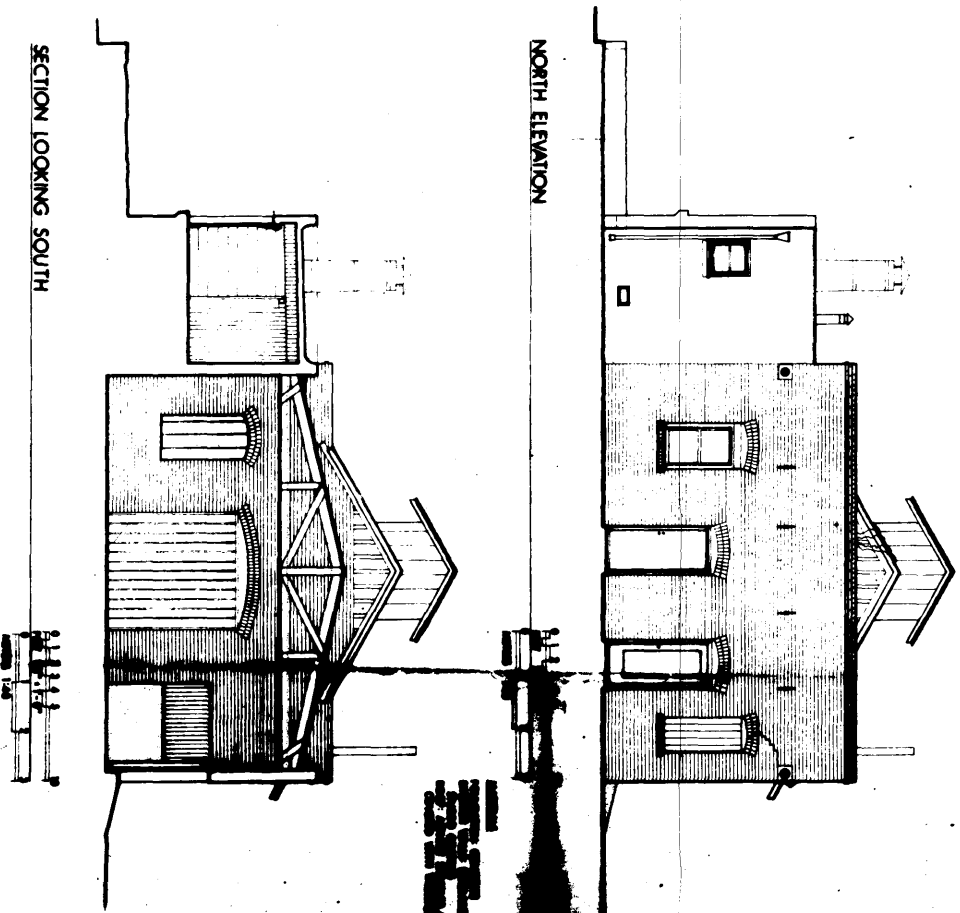
At this time, Gilroy was processing about one-fifth of the state's cheese, or 1,300,000 pounds per year. The Live Oak Creamery was constructed in 1908, while this important local industry was at its peak of production. This structure is the last visual reminder of this pioneer phase in the economic development of the lower Santa Clara Valley.

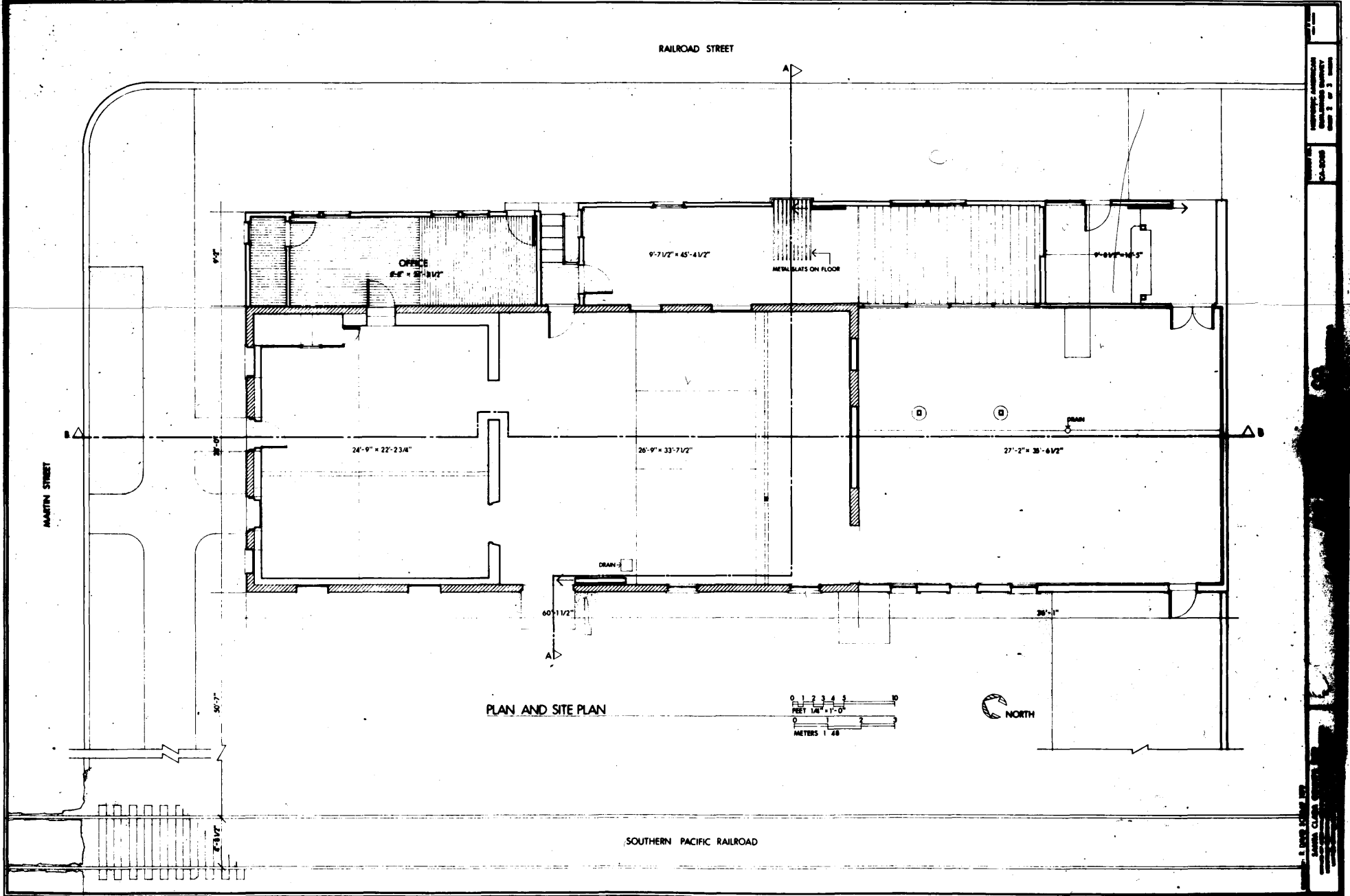
THIS PROJECT WAS UNDERTAKEN BY THE HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY IN COOPERATION WITH THE COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA, CALIFORNIA. UNDER THE DIRECTION OF JOHN FORBES, CHIEF OF HABS, AND KEN ANDERSON, PRINCIPAL ARCHITECT, THE PROJECT WAS COMPLETED DURING THE SUMMER OF 1979 AT THE HABS FIELD OFFICE, UNIVERSITY OF SANTA CLARA. BY SIVIL MC CONNAC GROFF, PROJECT SUPERVISOR; R. DAVID SCHAAF, ARCHITECTURAL SUPERVISOR; AND STUDENT ARCHITECTS W. MICHAEL CORRA (UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA), JON LOUISE (UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND), ANNE MUNLY (BRINCKON UNIVERSITY), JOHN MURPHY (TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY), AND MATTHEW JOE (VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE).



THE LIVE OAK CREAMERY, BUILT 1908, IS SIGNIFICANT AS THE FIRST BUTTER FACTORY TO BE ESTABLISHED IN THE GILROY AREA, THE CENTER OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY'S DAIRY INDUSTRY DURING THE EARLY DECADES OF THE 20TH CENTURY. UNTIL IT CLOSED AROUND 1940, LIVE OAK, USING THE MOST UP-TO-DATE EQUIPMENT AND EXPERT PERSONNEL, PRODUCED HIGH QUALITY BUTTER AND CHEESE. THE ONE-STORY MASONRY STRUCTURE HAS BEEN WELL-MAINTAINED SINCE ITS CONSTRUCTION AND IS PRESENTLY USED AS A WAREHOUSE AND WORKSHOP.

LIVE OAK CREAMERY





RAILROAD STREET

MARTIN STREET

SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD

OFFICE
8'-8" x 21'-8 1/2"

9'-7 1/2" x 45'-4 1/2"

9'-8 1/2" x 14'-5"

24'-9" x 22'-23 1/4"

26'-9" x 33'-7 1/2"

27'-2" x 38'-6 1/2"

METAL SLATS ON FLOOR

DRAIN

DRAIN

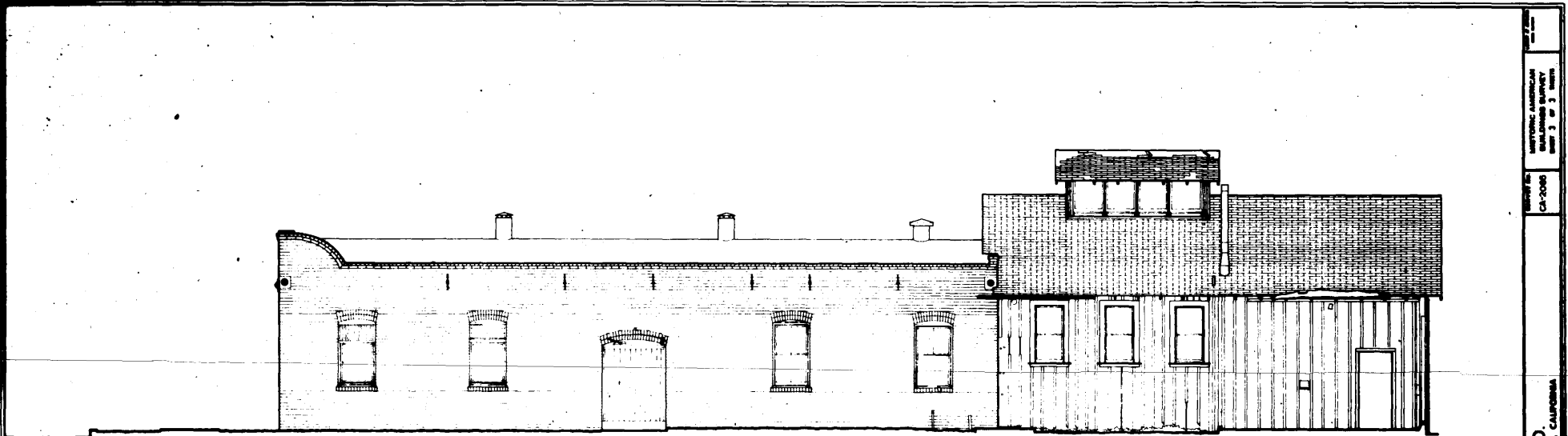
60'-1 1/2"

36'-1"

PLAN AND SITE PLAN

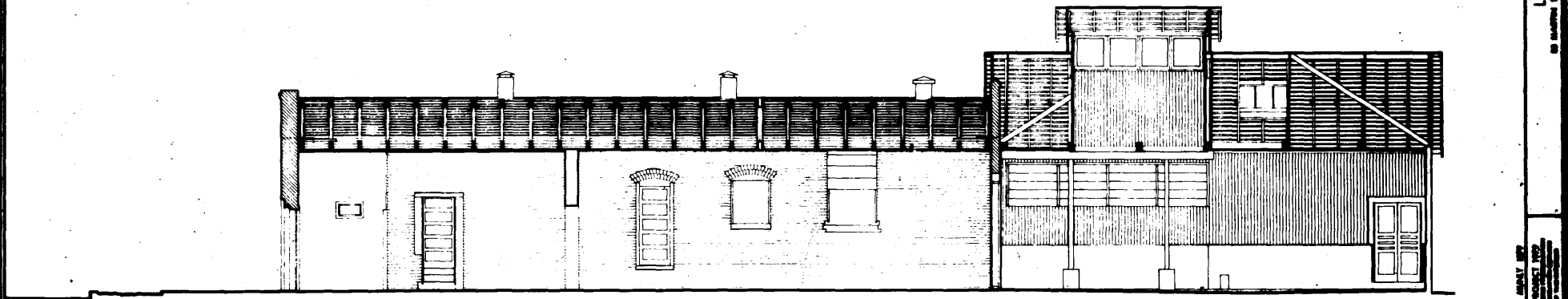


ARCHITECT: [unreadable]
 ENGINEER: [unreadable]
 DATE: [unreadable]
 SHEET NO. [unreadable]



WEST ELEVATION

MATERIALS
 FOUNDATION: CONCRETE
 EXTERIOR WALLS: BRICK AND PLAIN BOARD AND
 BATTEN
 ROOF: ASPHALT SHINGLES AND WOOD PLANKS
 COVERED WITH TARRAPER



SECTION BB



DRAWING NO. 17
 ARCHITECT: AMERICAN ARCHITECTS
 300 S. 3rd ST. S.F. 94107
 PROJECT NO. 177
 LIVE OAK CLEANING CO.
 83 BARRON STREET, GILROY, SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
 DRAWN BY: JOHN MURPHY, JAMES BIRNEY, III
 SANTA CLARA COUNTY PROJECT 177
 PREPARED FOR: AMERICAN ARCHITECTS
 DATE: 11/15/77
 SHEET NO. 1 OF 3