

LAWRENCE MACHINE SHOP, BUILDING 3A
70 General Street
Lawrence
Essex County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-988-H

HABS
MASS
5-LAWR,
14-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Northeast Area Office
National Park Service
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS
MASS
5-LAWR,
11-

LAWRENCE MACHINE SHOP, BUILDING 3A HABS No. MA-988-H

Location: 70 General Street (bounded by General and Canal Streets), Lawrence,
Essex County, Massachusetts
USGS Lawrence, Massachusetts - New Hampshire Quadrangle,
UTM Coordinates 19.323783.4730371

Present Owner: GenCorp Inc.
175 Ghent Road
Fairlawn, Ohio 44333-3300

Present Use: Vacant.

Significance: This building, built in 1906, was one of a handful of buildings built by Everett Cotton Mills in the former Lawrence Machine Shop yard. It was built as an extension to the Everett Mill Co. Picker House (Building 3). When the main mill was built, Everett Mills was the world's largest cotton mill. The Everett Mills figured prominently in the Lawrence Bread & Roses Labor Strike of 1912.

PART I - HISTORY OF THE LAWRENCE MACHINE SHOP, BUILDING 3A

Building 3A is listed in the National and State Historic Registers of Historic Places as Everett Mill Co. Picker House Extension and is part of the North Canal Historic District. It was constructed in 1906.

The Picker House Extension is one of a series of buildings built by Everett Mills to improve the former Lawrence Machine Shop yard. This building became a supplement to the soon to be completed world's largest cotton mill (6 story; 650'x75'; 12 acres of floor space). It was used for carding and weaving in the cotton manufacturing process. These mill buildings were the last of the large-scale brick mills to be constructed along the North Canal. It has been documented that A.H. Dennett was the architect of the building.

As part of the Everett Mills, Building 3A was in use during the famous Lawrence Bread & Roses Labor Strike of 1912. Nearby was the site of many confrontations between strikers and the militia, including the death of a woman, which led to the arrest and trial of prominent union leaders. The strike particularly brought attention to the labor practices involving women and children.

Everett Cotton Mills ceased operation in 1929 and various tenants have used the buildings. Building 3 was bought by the Bolta Company in 1931 which manufactured hard rubber and vinyl plastics. As part of this manufacturing, tray finishing, shipping, quilting and comb cutting were performed in this building. General Tire & Rubber Co. bought the building in 1954 and continued plastics manufacturing until it ceased operation in December 1980. Since then equipment has been removed and it remains vacant. The company changed its name to GenCorp Inc. in 1984.

PART II - DESCRIPTION OF THE LAWRENCE MACHINE SHOP, BUILDING 3A

Building 3A is five stories high, has a basement and is approximately 78,600 square feet. It is a trapezoidal shaped structure attached to Building 3. It is made of masonry brick walls, wood floors and roof, and cast iron columns. The basement floor is a thin layer of concrete overlaying a soil subgrade. There are many small areas where there is no concrete. Also, abandoned concrete equipment foundations exist in the basement. The tops of some of these old foundations are near the first floor level. Steel tread plates cover some areas of the first and second floors.

This structure contains an elevator and a cyclone/dust bin. The masonry shafts for these features extend from the foundation level to a penthouse above the roof. The loading dock area (second floor, south side) is reinforced with steel beams and columns. There is a one story addition over the ramp down to Building 20 at the northwest corner of Building 3A. The addition roof is concrete planks on steel joists and the floor is concrete slab on grade. There is an overhead walkway at the third floor level of the northwest corner between Building 3A and Building 8. The walls and floor are finished with wood and the exterior is covered with corrugated metal. Located at the southeast corner of Building 3A, there is a concrete retaining wall which forms a ramp leading to the east side of Building 20.

PART III - SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Interviews

Devaney, Robert J. Jr., Gauvin, Mark R. and Kfoury, Kasper J. *November 1995 - March 1996 GenCorp Inc. - Lawrence.* GenCorp Inc. - Lawrence Location employees and retired employee.

Bibliography

Gwardyak, Chester T. and Keating, John W. *Main Buildings Demolition Structural Report.* Cambridge: Camp Dresser & McKee Inc., 1995.

Grasso, Darren R., Kfoury, Robert T. and Stupich, Martin. *Graphic Sketch Plans.* Lawrence and Boston, 1996.

Poirier, Clarisse A. *Massachusetts Historical Commission - Form No. 809 (Form B - Building).* Lawrence: Planning & Community Development Department, 1981.

Zellie, Carole. *National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form.* Cambridge: Landscape Research, 1983.

Repositories Searched

1. City of Lawrence Planning & Community Development Dept. and Historical Commission
225 Essex Street
Lawrence, MA 01840
Tel: (508) 794-5891
2. Essex Company
200 Bulfinch Drive
Andover, MA 01810
Tel: (508) 681-1900
3. GenCorp Inc. - Lawrence Location
70 General Street
Lawrence, MA 01840
Tel: (508) 683-7123

4. Immigrant City Archives
6 Essex Street
Lawrence, MA 01840
Tel: (508) 686-9230
5. Museum of American Textile History
800 Massachusetts Avenue
North Andover, MA 01845
Tel: (508) 686-0191
6. Society For Preservation Of New England Antiquities (SPNEA)
141 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA
Tel: (617) 227-3956

The above repositories were thoroughly searched and are all appropriate sources of information for this project. Very few historic photographs (two or three) of this site exist, and those that do are copyrighted. They can be viewed at the Immigrant City Archives and The Society For Preservation Of New England Antiquities which are both open to the public. These photographs do not show any of GenCorp's buildings separately, and the two or three group photos show a large area of buildings partially consisting of GenCorp buildings. The best historic photo, which is owned by GenCorp Inc., has previously been submitted to the National Park Service and is now in the Library of Congress and Massachusetts State Archives (Reference: HABS No. MA-988-18 photograph). The Museum of American Textile History has historic site plans of the general area, but all are copyrighted, though they can be seen at the museum which is open to the public. There were no original drawings of the site available.

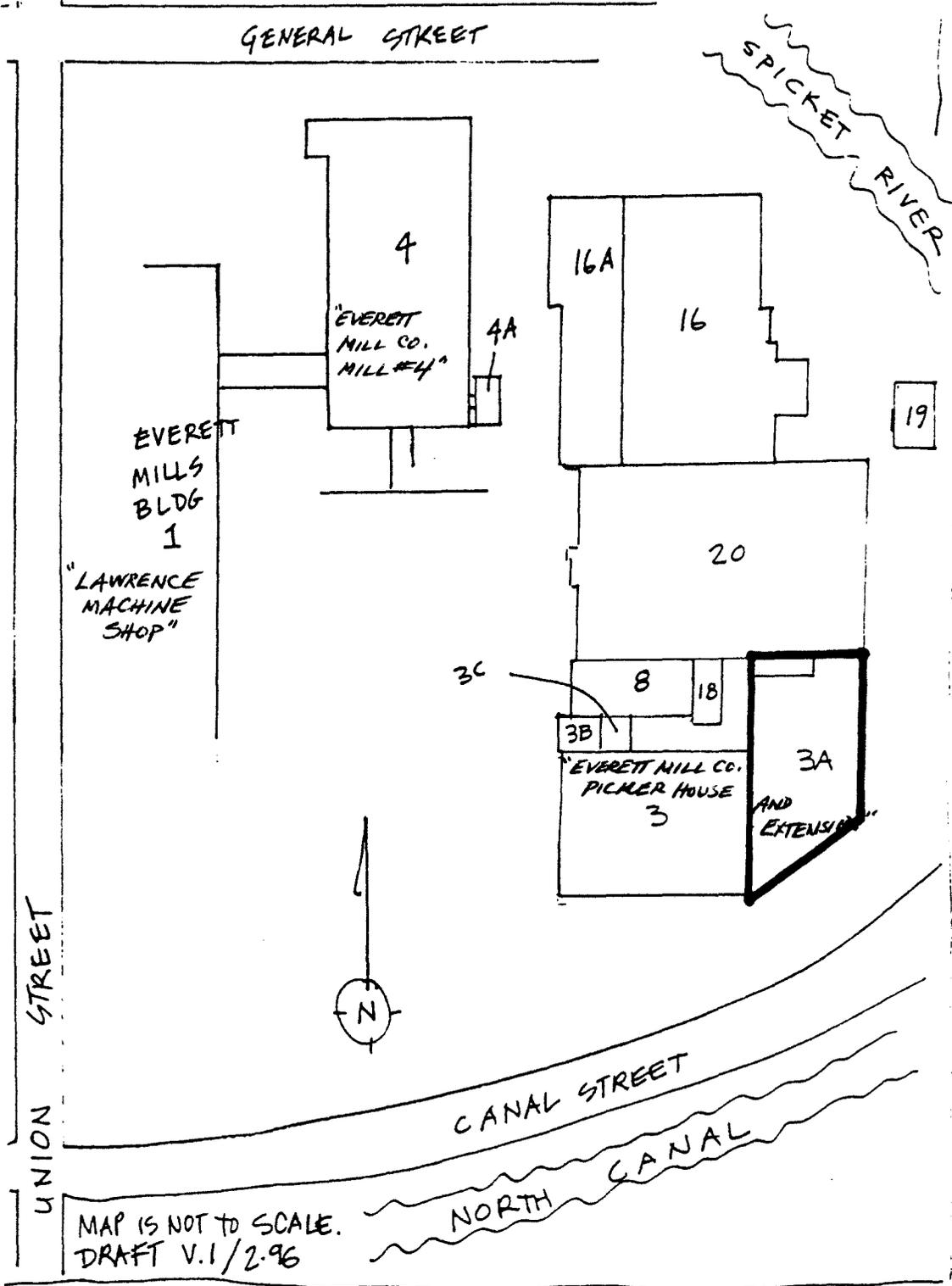
The historical and descriptive information was all found in the records of GenCorp Inc. - Lawrence Location and the City of Lawrence Planning & Community Development Department and Historical Commission (Please see Bibliography). Lawrence Community Development and Historical Commission information included information that could also be found in the state archives with the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

PART IV - PROJECT INFORMATION

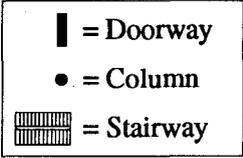
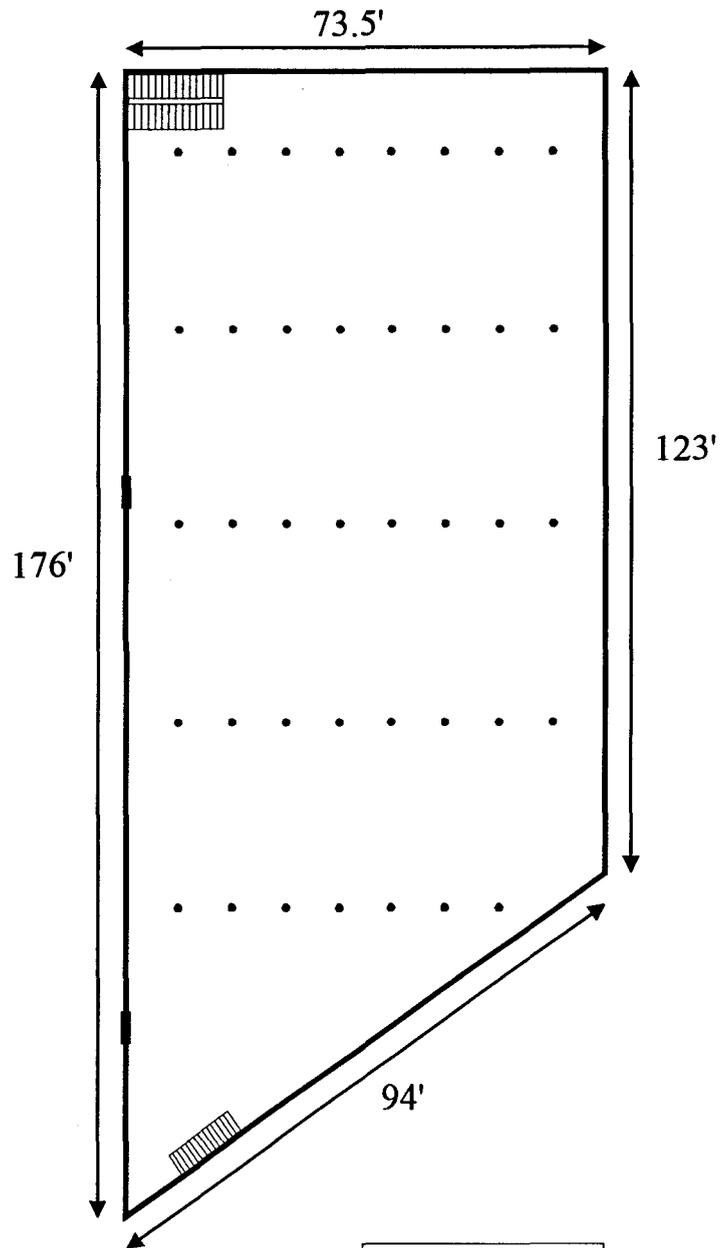
This project is a continuation of an ongoing remediation project with this particular segment known as the GenCorp Inc. Phase II Demolition/Main Buildings Project (Phase II). It is part of a phased comprehensive remediation project addressing environmental, health and safety concerns with the objective to return the property to productive use in the City of Lawrence. Phase II demolition, scheduled to begin in June 1996, is primarily needed to remove contaminated buildings, to provide access to subsurface areas for investigation and potential remediation, and to continue the remediation process in order to achieve compliance with government environmental, health and safety standards. This program is being conducted under the Massachusetts Contingency Plan with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection as the lead agency. Since there are many environmental statutes applicable to this project, the Environmental Protection Agency - Region I, New England (EPA) is the lead federal agency involved. Both agencies concur with GenCorp on the project. Also, EPA, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Massachusetts Historical Commission and GenCorp have all agreed to and signed a Memorandum of Agreement regarding this project. This record was prepared February 23, 1996.

Prepared by: Robert T. Kfoury, Esq.
Title: Consultant
Affiliation: GenCorp Inc.
Date: May 14, 1996

BUILDING 3A SITE PLAN

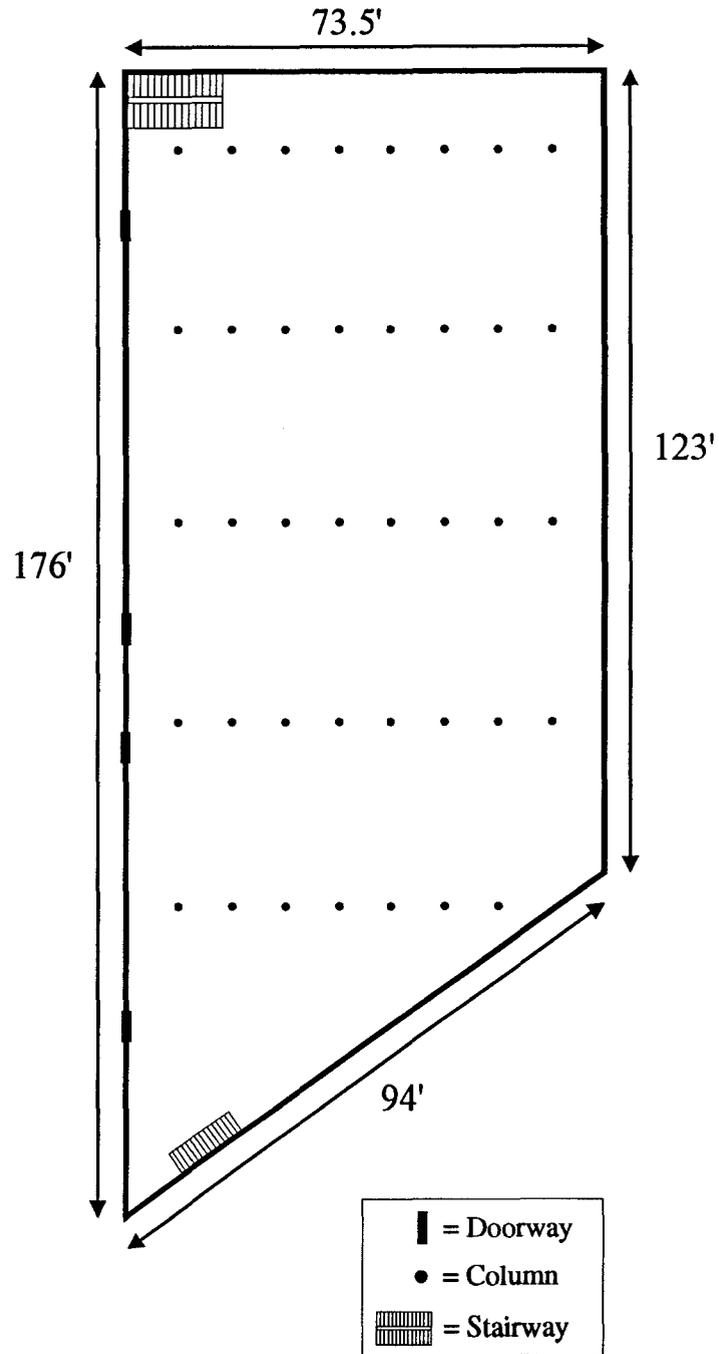


Building 3A
Floor 1

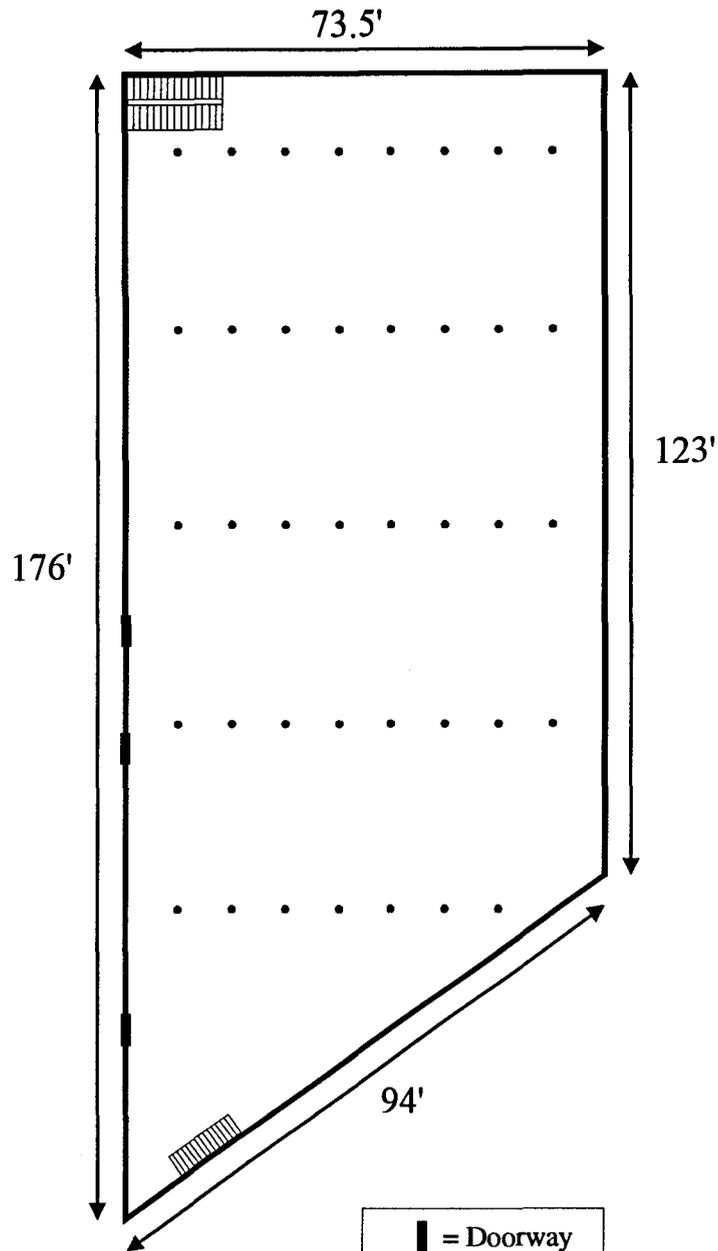




Building 3A
Floor 2



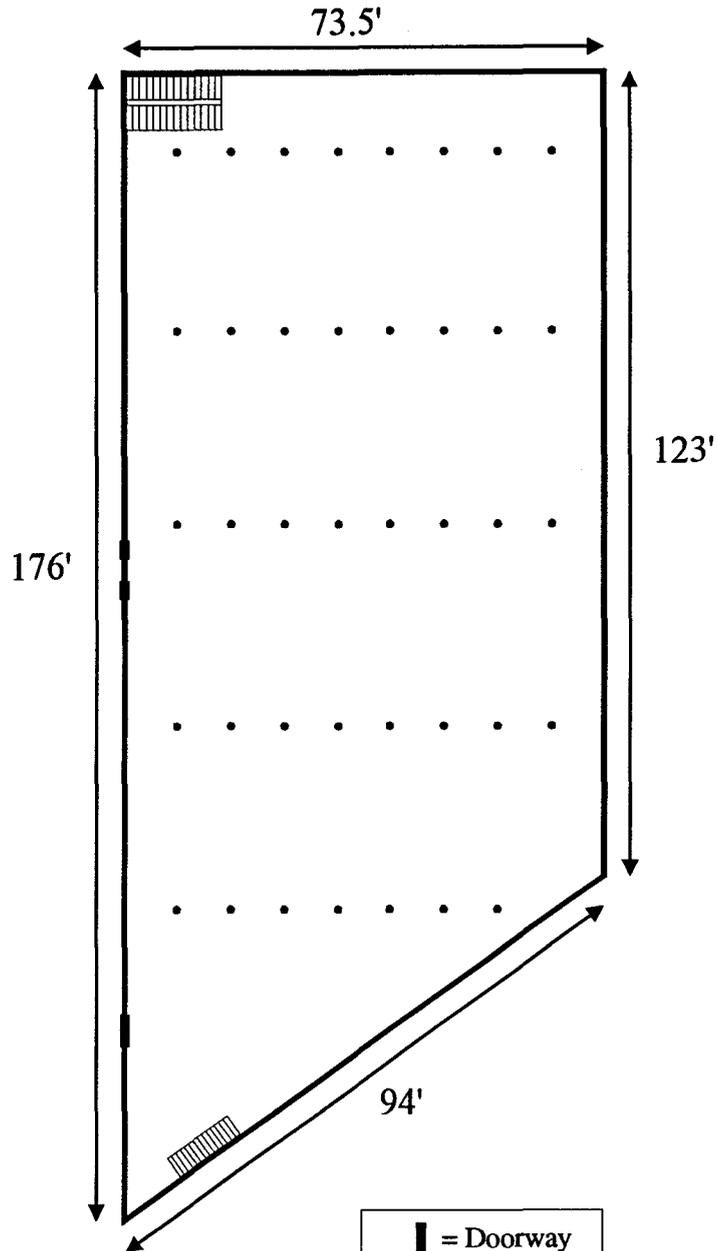
Building 3A
Floors 3-4



- ▬ = Doorway
- = Column
- ▨ = Stairway



Building 3A
Floor 5



- ▬ = Doorway
- = Column
- ▨ = Stairway