FHR-8-300 (11-78)

B- 4091
MAGI # 0440912614

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only
received
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic: Swiss Steam Laundry Building

and/or common: Swiss Building

2. Location

street & number: 100-102 North Greene Street — n/a not for publication

city, town: Baltimore — n/a vicinity of — congressional district: Seventh

state: Maryland — code: 24 — county: independent city — code: 510

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	___ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	X private	X unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	X yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	X not applicable	___ no	___ military	X other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name: Greene Street Joint Venture, Mendel Friedman

street & number: 19 North Central Avenue

city, town: Baltimore — n/a vicinity of — state: Maryland — 21202

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.: Baltimore City Courthouse

street & number: Calvert Street

city, town: Baltimore — state: Maryland — 21202

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title: Maryland Historical Trust Historic Sites Inventory — has this property been determined elegible? ___ yes X no

date: 1980 — ___ federal X state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records: Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town: Annapolis — state: Maryland — 21401

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	X original site
X good	___ ruins	X altered	___ moved date n/a
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Number of Resources Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Number of previously listed National Register properties included in this nomination: 0

Original and historic functions and uses: commercial, industrial

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

The six-story 1895 Swiss Steam Laundry Building fronts easterly on North Greene Street, with a facade dominated by two five-story arched bays each consisting of tripartite fenestration on the first four floors. The first story features brick rustication at the corners and a cast iron storefront with an ornamental scroll and egg-and-dart molding at the cornice. The facade, framed by large brick pilasters with rough stone capitals supporting a metal cornice, which runs between the fourth and fifth floors, is accentuated by one-over-one windows with stone sills and lintels, and brick panels between floor levels two, three and four. The features of the front facade continue on the most easterly portion of the Fayette Street (south) facade in a single arched bay. To the west of this highly articulated corner are four bays of one-over-one windows grouped in twos. The windows are segmentally arched with stone sills and splayed brick lintels. The windows on the fifth floor are arched, as are the smaller sixth floor windows, which are grouped in threes, except over the corner arch where there is a group of four. The interior of the building features iron columns on all levels and wood flooring. The first two floors are 20 feet high. The third and fourth floors are 16 feet high, while the uppermost floors are 10 feet high.

For General Description, see Continuation Sheet No. 1

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The six-story Swiss Steam Laundry Building, located in downtown Baltimore at 100-102 North Greene Street, was built in 1895. It has not been significantly altered, and remains a fine example of its type: the Romanesque-style brick manufacturing loft building, once the pride of Baltimore's commercial architecture. Located at the northwest corner of Fayette and Greene Streets, the Swiss Building, the architect of which is unknown, rivals many of the loft district buildings to the south in terms of its architectural design and detailing.

The building fronts easterly on North Greene Street, with a facade dominated by two five-story arched bays each consisting of tripartite fenestration on the first four floors. The first story features brick rustication at the corners and a cast iron storefront with an ornamental scroll and egg-and-dart molding at the cornice. The facade, framed by large brick pilasters with rough stone capitals supporting a metal cornice, which runs between the fourth and fifth floors, is accentuated by one-over-one windows with stone sills and lintels, and brick panels between floor levels two, theree and four.

The large arched openings on the fifth floor features four windows and a brick archway consisting of four courses of header brick and billet moulding projecting from the building walls. A projecting brick band course divides the fifth and sixth floors. Small windows with double header brick arches punctuate the building walls on the sixth floor. A modillioned metal cornice caps the facade.

The features of the front facade continue on the most easterly portion of the Fayette Street (south) facade in a single arched bay. To the west of this highly articulated corner are four bays of one-over-one windows grouped in twos. The windows are segmentally arched with stone sills and splayed brick lintels. The windows on the fifth floor are arched, as are the smaller sixth floor windows, which are grouped in threes, except over the corner arch where there is a group of four.

The rear (western) elevation features a fire escape and many four-over-four and six-over-six windows. Here, the building wall is laid in common bond brick as opposed to the stretcher bond bricks with tight mortar joints on the main facades. The northern side wall is blank. A wall sign from the 1950s for "Kravitz and Rothbard, Novelties" partially covers an earlier sign for the "Elite Laundry Company."

The interior of the building features iron columns on all levels and wood flooring. The first two floors are 20 feet high. The third and fourth floors are 16 feet high, while the uppermost floors are 10 feet high.

See Continuation Sheet No. 2

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

The setting of the Swiss Building is very interesting. Smaller, mid-19th century buildings stand to the north, and to the east, across Greene Street, is the large three-story brick Poe School. Diagonally opposite is the Gothic-style Westminster Church with its historic burying ground, which is the final resting place of many of Baltimore's most notable early citizens, among them Edgar Allan Poe. University of Maryland hospital buildings stand to the south and west.

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8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion	
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science	
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture	
___ 1600–1699	_X_ architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian	
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music		
_X_ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater	
_X_ 1900–	___ communications	_X_ industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation	
		___ invention		___ other (specify)	

Specific dates 1895–1910 **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Applicable Criteria: A, C
Applicable Exceptions: none
Significance Evaluated: local

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The Swiss Steam Laundry Building is a prominently sited six-story loft Romanesque building that is significant architecturally as an excellent example of the loft type building as constructed in Baltimore at the turn of the century and for its association with a period in Baltimore's history when the city was a national leader in the manufacture of ready to wear clothing. In the second half of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth, Baltimore ranked among the country's leading industrial cities. From 1880 until 1905, the city placed eighth when it dipped to ninth, with the major industry in the metropolitan district being clothing. Most of this manufacturing took place in the loft district, about three blocks to the south of the Swiss Steam Laundry Building, that is dominated by loft type structures. These buildings are characteristically massive brick vertical Romanesque and early modern designed structures erected between about 1880 and 1910. The Swiss Steam Laundry Building has the characteristic Romanesque arches and brick and stone work. As a manufacturers' laundry, the Swiss Steam Laundry and its successor the Elite Laundry, played a significant role in the clothing industry.

For History and Supporting Documentation, see Continuation Sheet No. 3

HISTORY AND SUPPORT:

As Baltimore City grew into a major metropolitan area in the late nineteenth century, the structure of its downtown area changed from a homogenous nature to a central business district with distinctive centers of finance, government, retailing, and industry. Industries which were closely related to shipping and major financial institutions generally located near the waterfront on the eastern portion of the downtown area. A small government center grew up in the vicinity of the Battle Monument and City Hall. The major retailing and department stores located near Lexington Market the major market place for the city. Other industries, most notably the closthing industry located just west of the harbor, but near the major railroad terminal in the city. The greatest concentration of the period (1870-1910) warehouses, vertical manufacturies, and commercial buildings in the entire state are still extant within this general area known as the loft district.

According to the Baltimore Sun of July 12, 1895, the Swiss Steam Laundry Building was built for furniture manufacturer, Charles T. Bagby (1860-1943) as a speculative real estate venture and then leased in 1896 to the Swiss Steam Laundry Company. Although contemporary accounts do not list an architect, the building permit, issued on July 11, 1895, was noted in the Baltimore Sun, the Baltimore American, the Daily Record and the Manufacturers Record.

By January 3, 1896, the entire building had been leased to John W. Lowe, who established the Steam Laundry. According to the publication Baltimore: Gateway to the South, the Liverpool of America,

> ...Mr. Lowe realized Baltimore was going to become one of the greatest shirt manufacturing cities in the country and determined to develop that most difficult and important branch of the business, the "laundering." The high class of work done made this institution a success from the start.[1]

According to Sanborn Atlases, each floor was used for a different function of the laundry: washing in the basement; sorting on the first floor; dyeing on the second; ironing on the third; drying on the fourth; packing on the fifth; and sorting on the sixth.

In 1898, the Company incorporated and changed its name to the Swiss Manufacturing Company. The laundry ranked among the largest in the country, with a capacity of 7200 shirts a day and 200 employees.[2] In 1900, the laundry changed its name again, to the Elite Laundry, which conducted a cleaning and dyeing operation at the same time that a laundry supplies business was carried on here as the Swiss Manufacturing Company. Branches of the Elite Laundry opened in Washington and Philadelphia, and in 1912, it merged with several other Balitmore laundries to form United Laundries, Inc., and

See Continuation Sheet No. 4

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

established new branches in Atlantic City, New Jersey. More modern facilities were needed: and by 1915 the laundry moved from this location.[3]

Stuart, Keith and Company, maker of overalls, drawers, and shirts moved into the building. This is one of several important garment firms that made Baltimore a leader in this industry. George D. Keith (1863-1932), the president of this firm was a member of Baltimore's Board of Commissioners for Opening Streets.[4]

Stuart Keith and Company operated in this building for about 15 years. Other garment firms subsequently located here, including KMW Suit and Cloak Company and Maryland Cloak Company, manufacturers of lady's suits and cloaks. From the 1930s to the 1950s the Union Wallpaper Company operated from this building. It was most recently used by Kravitz and Rothbard Novelties before becoming vacant a few years ago.

Thw Swiss Steam Laundry Building is associated with two notable Baltimore citizens: John W. Lowe and George Allewalt Klinefelter. John W. Lowe (1865-1944) was born in New Freedom, York County, Pennsylvania. He came to Baltimore as a student of the College of Physicians and Surgeons and graduated in 1880 with high honors. He practiced medicine for two years and then became an instructor at the college. However, Dr. Lowe found the life of a doctor too arduous and retired from the profession. He joined his father-in-law in the lumber business in Pennsylvania, regained his health, achieved success, and returned to Baltimore where he began the Swiss Laundry business in 1896. Lowe was also one of the founders of the Guardian Trust Company and the Security Storage and Trust Company.

George A. Klinefelter (1860-1923) started as a vice-president of the Swiss Manufacturing Company and later became president of the Elite Laundry companies of Washington and Philadelphia, and later chairman of the board of United Laundries, Inc. Besides his leadership in the laundering industry, he was active in charitable institutions and in Saint Paul's Luthern Church.

The Swiss Building possesses integrity of design, location, setting, materials, workmanship and association. Because it is designed in a distinctive Romanesque style and constructed of iron columns with an iron storefront and thick brick walls, this loft manufacturing building is unusually elaborate in its design. its vertical emphasis and location evoke a period when Baltimore was a center for manufacturing interests, especially the garment trade. Manufacturing was basic to Baltimore's growth as a major industrial center, and the former laundry and garment businesses which thrived at 100 North Greene Street made a significant contribution to the development of Baltimore as a capital of the clothing industry.

See Continuation Sheet No. 5

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

Loft buildings in Baltimore are generally characterized as follows:

Size: These buildings are built on large lots, generally over fifty feet wide, an indication of the size of industries that originally occupied them. They are not outgrowths of smaller, older structures. Most of them required the combination of smaller lots in order to build factories of this size.

Materials: The buildings have brick facades (primarily red brick, but tan or buff brick is also seen). Cast iron and stone detailing is used, but the districts retain a strong brick character. The construction materials are different from the cast iron facades of other, early industrial buildings in the vicinity.

Height: The buildings are generally from five to seven stories high. They are distinctive from the smaller commercial structures on Baltimore Street and other adjacent areas.

Date: Most of the buildings date from 1880 to 1910. They represent a break from earlier narrower, loft type facades that were often built with cast iron facades. The Abell Building which was built c. 1875 is the earliest of this type of structure.

Architectural Style: Most of the buildings have Victorian, Romanesque or early modern industrial architectural styling with some Neo-Classical details. They differ from some of the earlier industrial buildings which have Queen Anne detailing, the Italian Renaissance styling of cast iron structures or are enlargements of traditional Baltimore rowhouses or storefronts.

Footnotes

[1] Baltimore: The Gateway to the South, Liverpool of America, Mercantile Advancement Company, Baltimore, 1898, p. 71.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Tercentenary History of Maryland, V. III, p. 218-322.

[4] Maryland Men and Institutions, Maryland Biographical Association, 1920, p. 224.

[5] History of Baltimore, Baltimore American, 1902, p. 257.

[6] Tercentenary History of Maryland, V. III, p.318-322.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Baltimore: The Gateway to the South, Liverpool of America. Baltimore: Mercantile Advancement Company, 1898.

Maryland Men and Institutions. n.c.: Maryland Biographical Association, 1920.

History of Baltimore. Baltimore: Baltimore American, 1902.

Tercentenary History of Maryland. 1925.

Walsh, Richard and William Lloyd Fox, ed. Maryland, A History 1632-1974. Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1974, pp. 408-431.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet No. 6

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Baltimore East, Maryland Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	359890	4350140
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification The property is a rectangular plot measuring 46.5' by 100' on the NW corner of the interesection of North Greene and West Fayette Streets and consists only of the city lot upon which the building stands.

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

state	n/a	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Elaine B. Finbury		
organization	Preservation Consultant	date	15 February 1985
street & number	14 Lynde Street	telephone	(617) 595-1970
city or town	Salem	state	Massachusetts

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state X 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 [signature] 5-17-85

title date

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

B-4091

Swiss Steam Laundry Bldg.
Baltimore
Maryland
18/359890/4350040
Women's Hospital
University of Baltimore
5th Reg Armory
Tunnel
St Paul St
4 Lane
Greenmount
Park
Biddle
Eager
Madison
Monument
Gay
Penrad
Library
State Penitentiary and City Jail
Dunbar Jr-Sr High
Hilton Sta
Franklin
Orleans
Pratt Library
Mercy Hospital
Municipal Office Bldg
City Hall
Reading Clinic and Sch
Fayette
Church Home Hospital
Broadway
Courthouse
Shot Tower
U S Customs
U of M Sch of Medicine
TV Tower (WMAR)
Lombard
Pratt St
Camden Station
Weglein Sch
Basin
Armory
Federal Hill Park
Southern High Sch
Charles St
Cross St
West St
General Hospital
South Baltimore
Randall St
Johnson Sch
Riverside Park
Nira
Gas
Riverside Yard
McComas
B & O
Latrobe Park
Swann Park
Western Maryland
Port Covington Yard
Oil
Winans Cove
Middle Branch
Hanover Street Bridge
Ferry Bar
Light
Maryland Yacht Club
Ferry Bar Channel (West Section)
Jr High Sch
Broening Park
Woodson Sch
Cherry Hill
Brooklyn 1.1 mi.
Glen Burnie 6.1 mi.
Washington, D.C. 31 mi.
Frederick 45 mi.
Pine Orchard 14 mi.
30 feet Nov 1941
17'30"
4352
4350
4347
4346
520 000 feet
910 000 feet
39°15'
76°37'30"
362

359

Supplies
Supplies

Supplies
Supplies
Supplies

Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer
Southeast elevation

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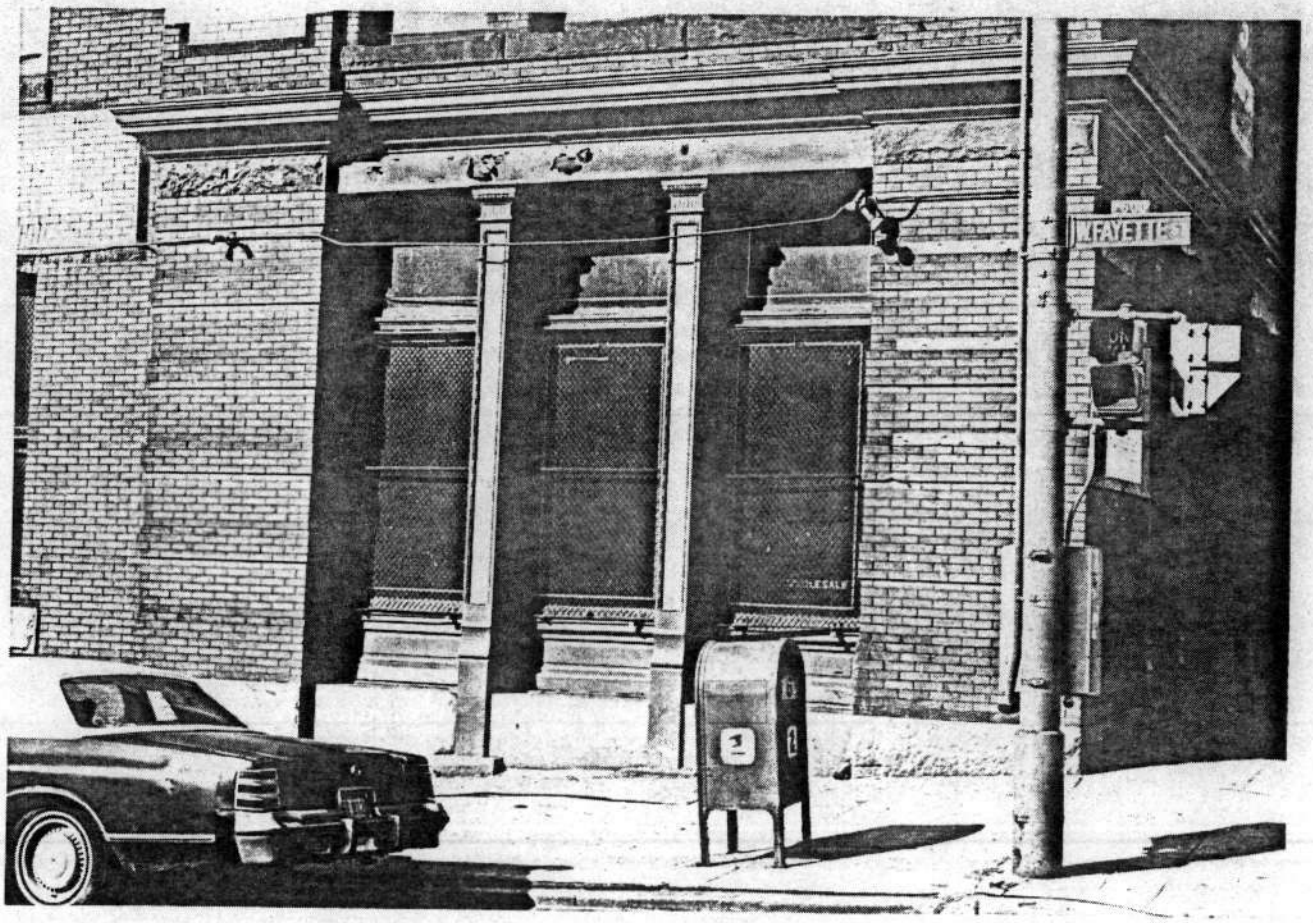
Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer
1st two stories, east elevation

2/18 B-4091

BINGO
CARNIVAL
Supplies
Supplies
Glassware - Novelties - Season Goods
Premium Merchandise - Aluminum Ware


FAYETTE

Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg: photographer
South elevation

3/18

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Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer
Cast iron decoration on south elevation

4/18

B-4091

TUERK
HOUSE

Swiss Steam Laundry Buiiding
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer
Southwest elevation

5/18

B-4091

Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer
Northwest elevation

6/18

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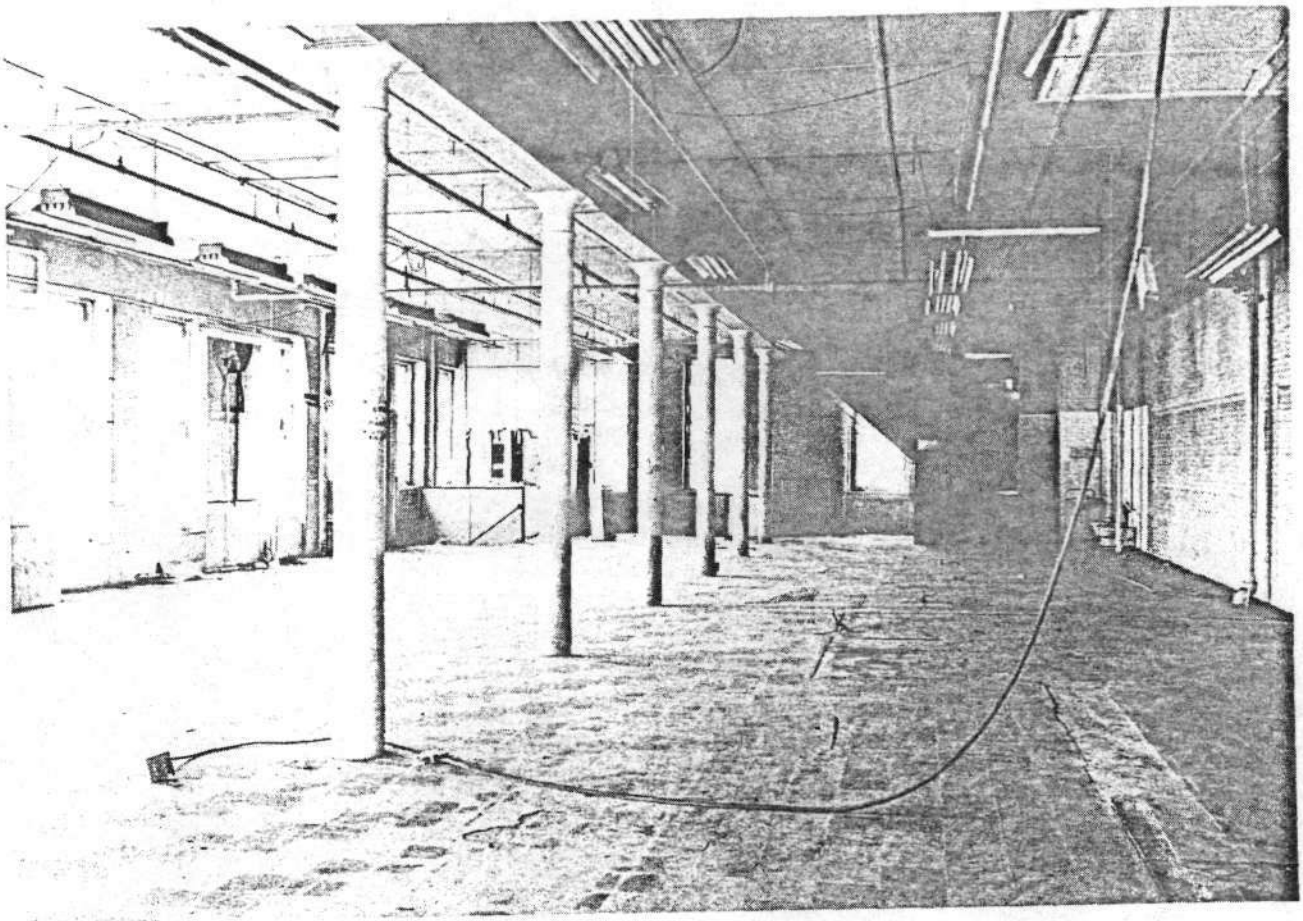

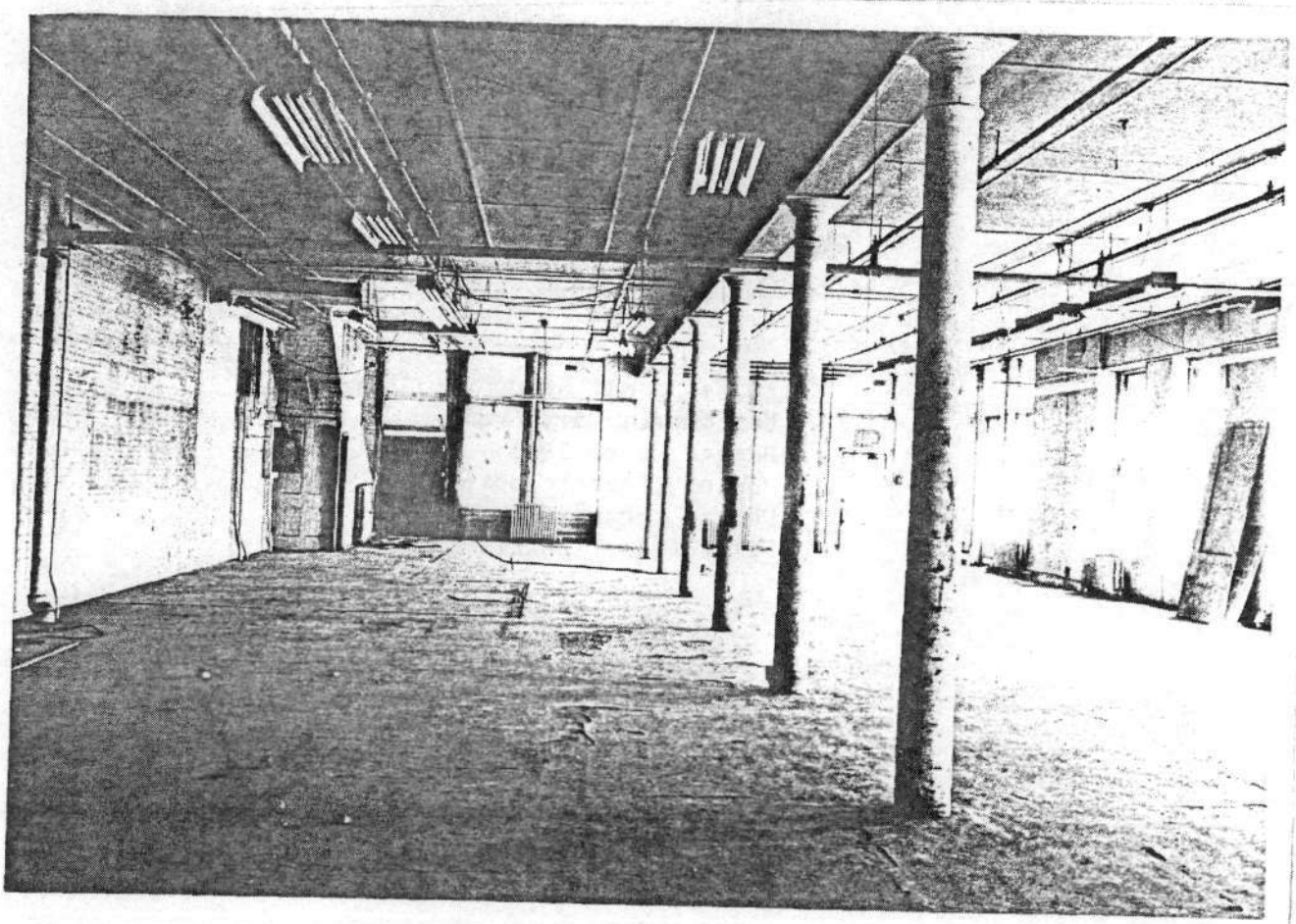

Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer
First floor looking west

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Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer
First floor looking east

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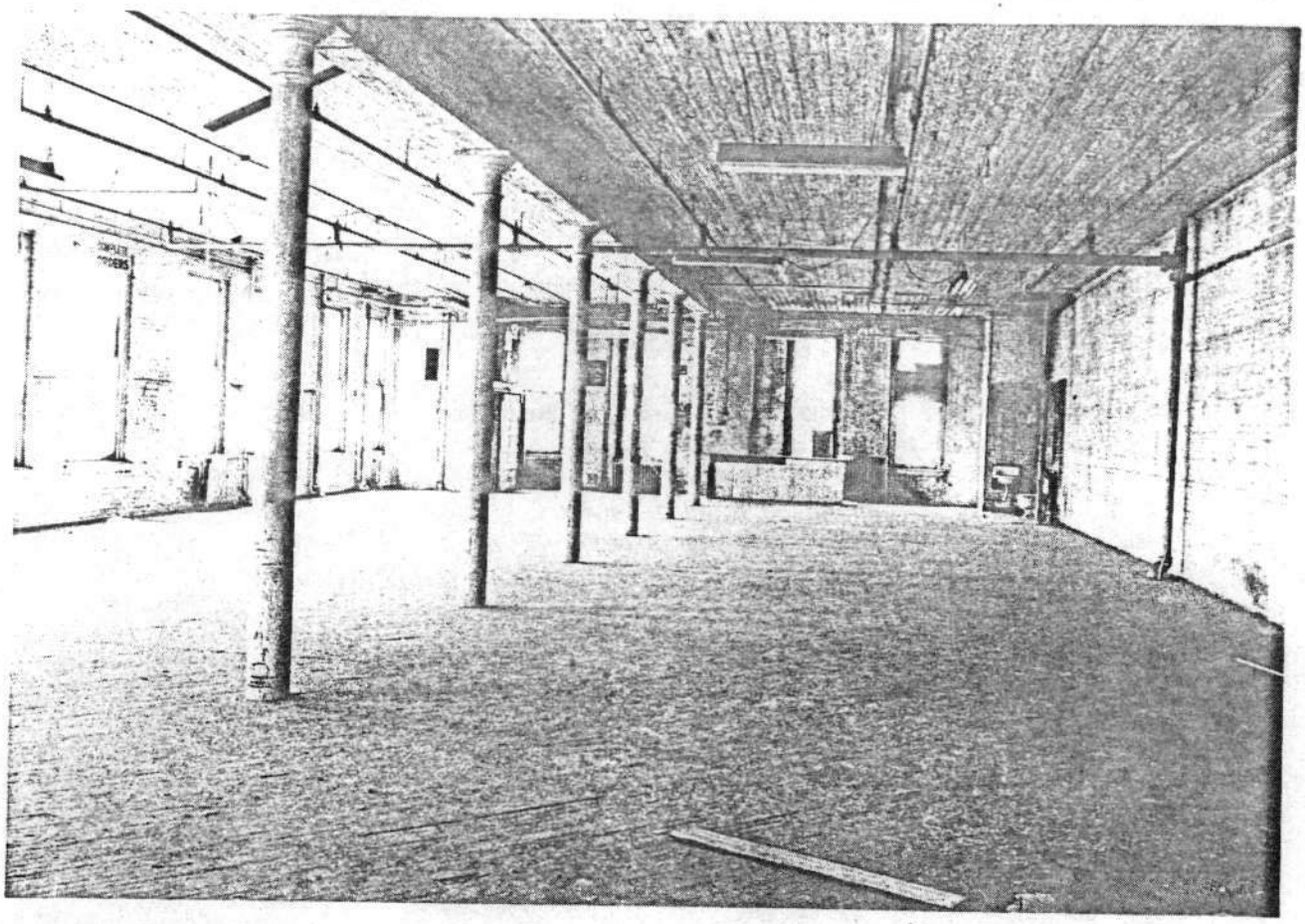

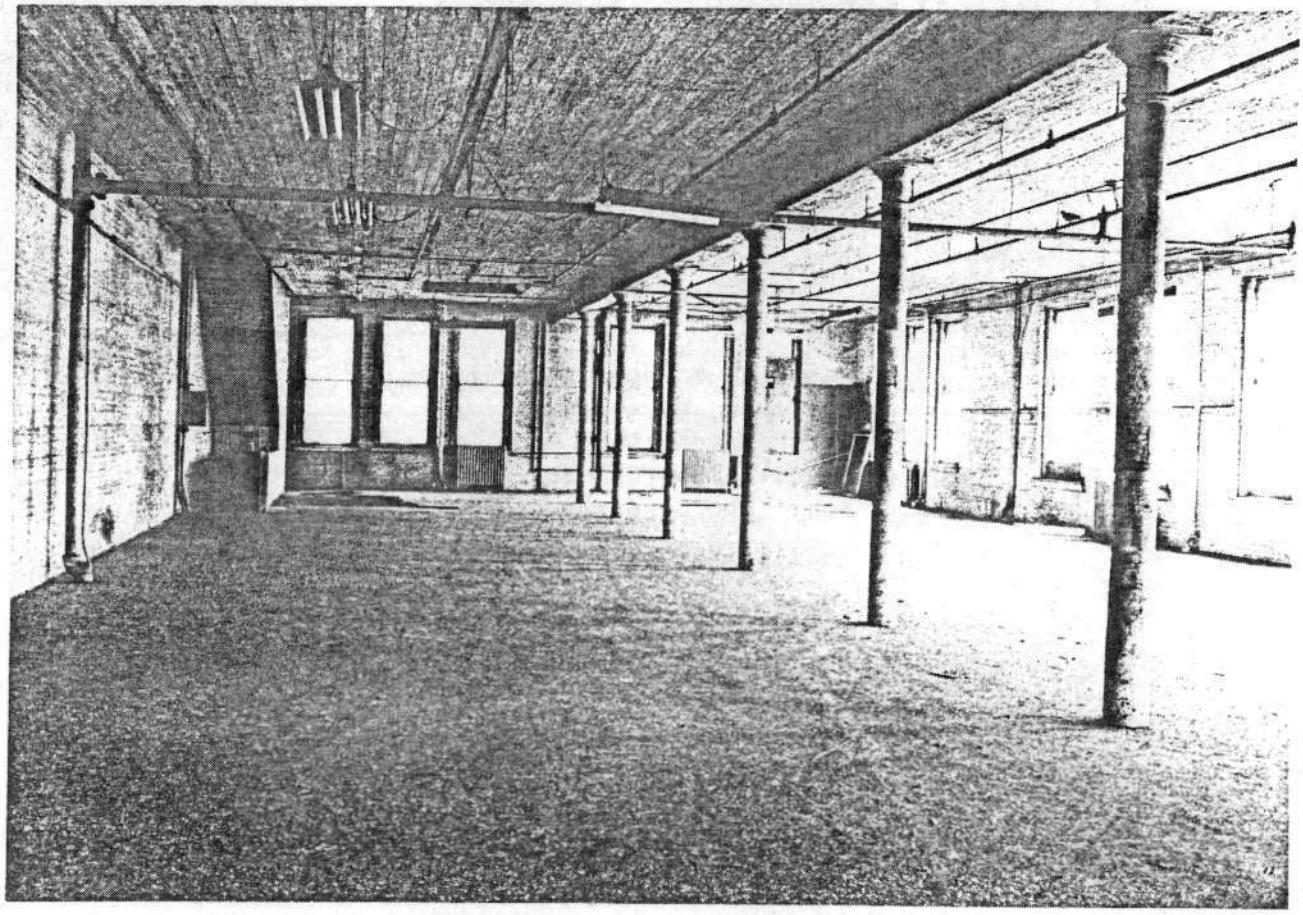

Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer

2nd floor looking west

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Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer

2nd floor looking east

10/18

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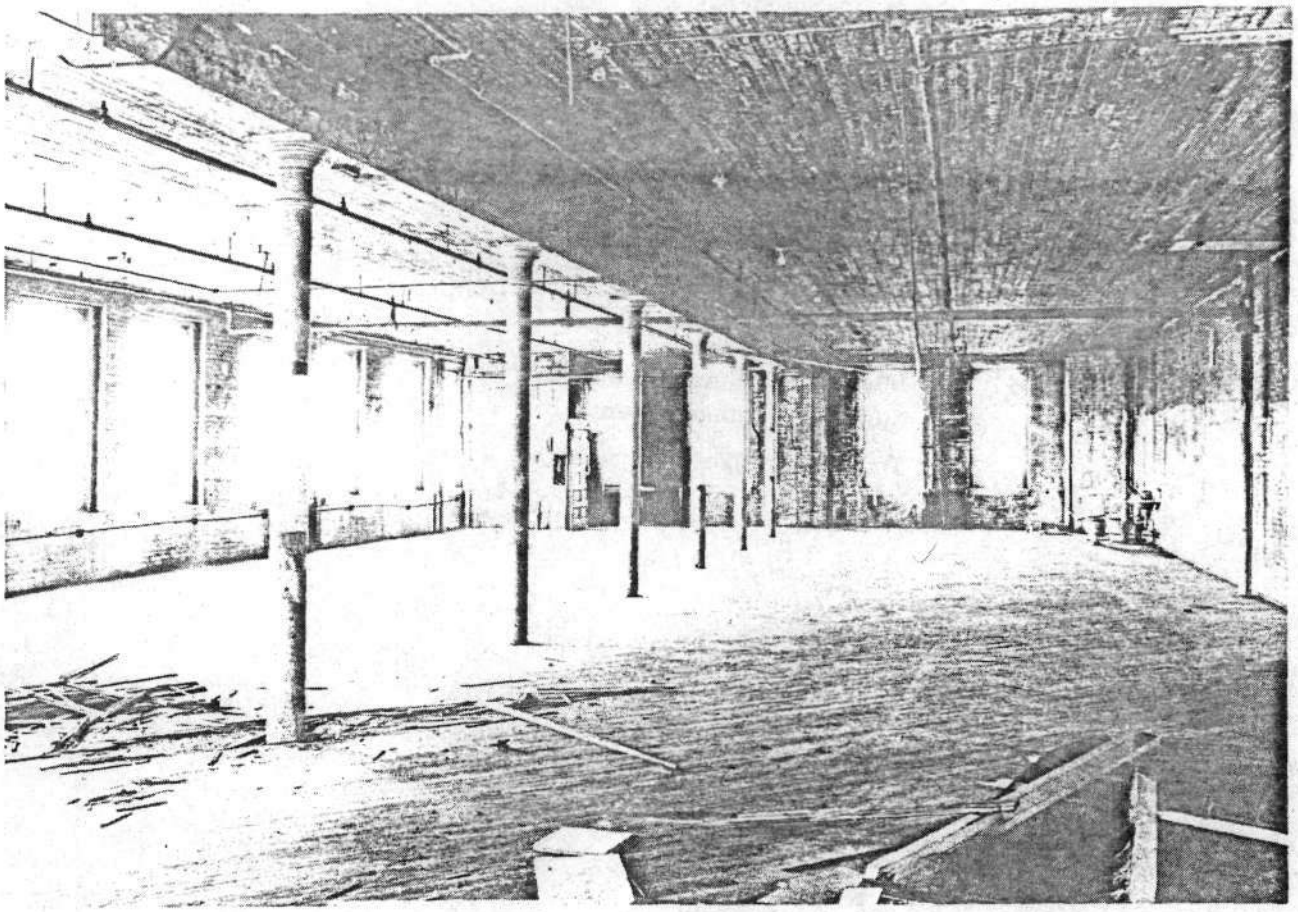

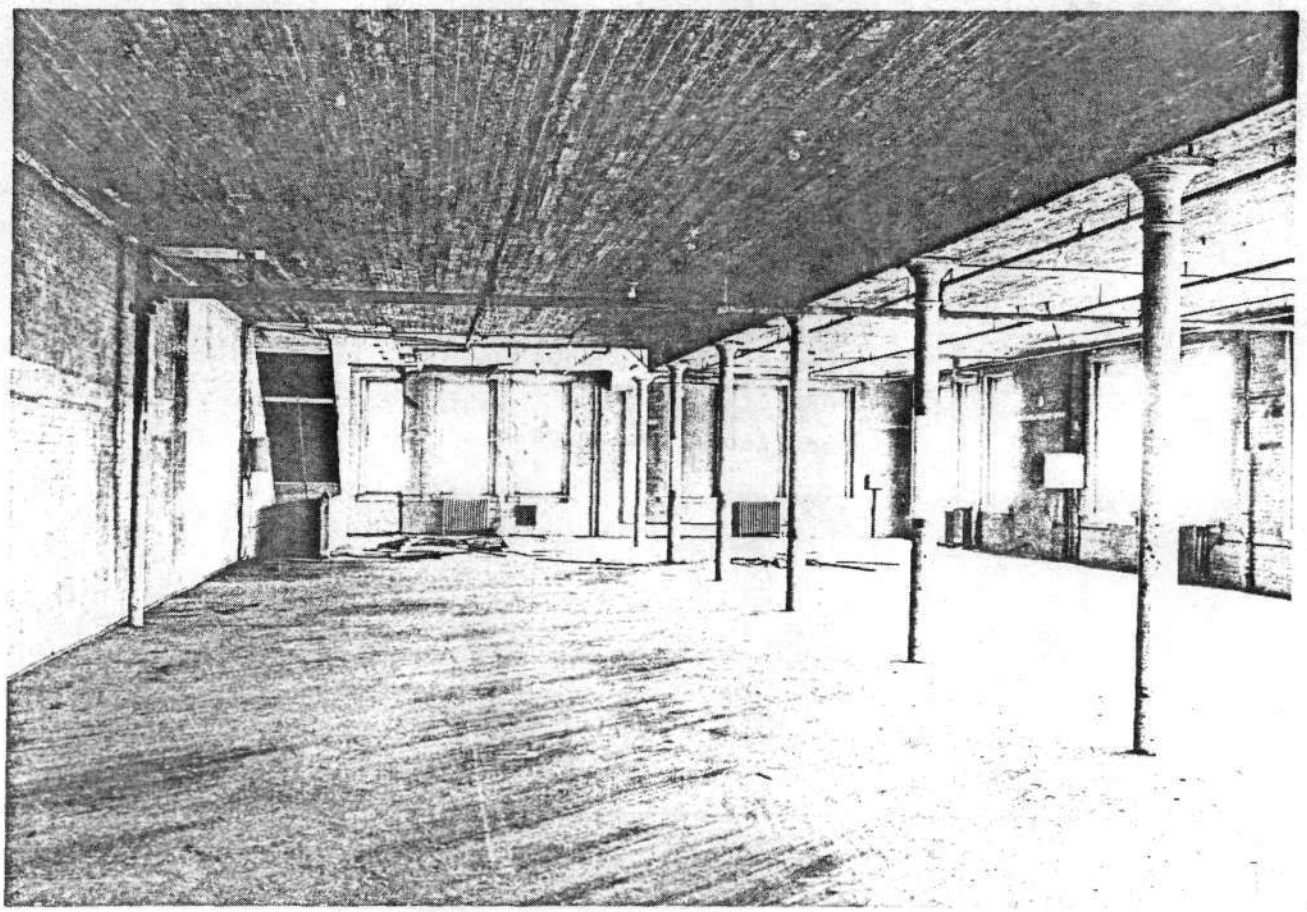

Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer

3rd floor looking west

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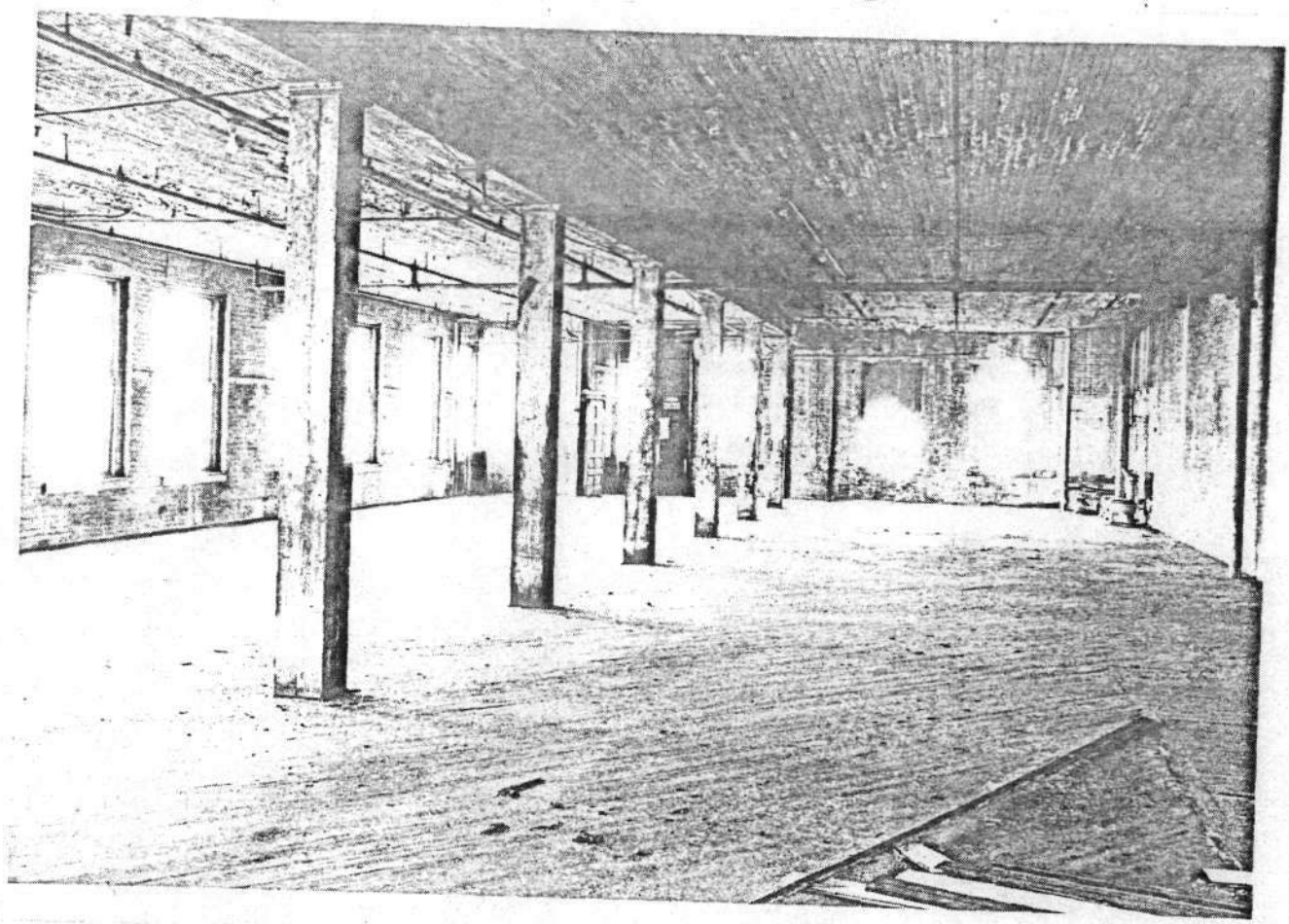
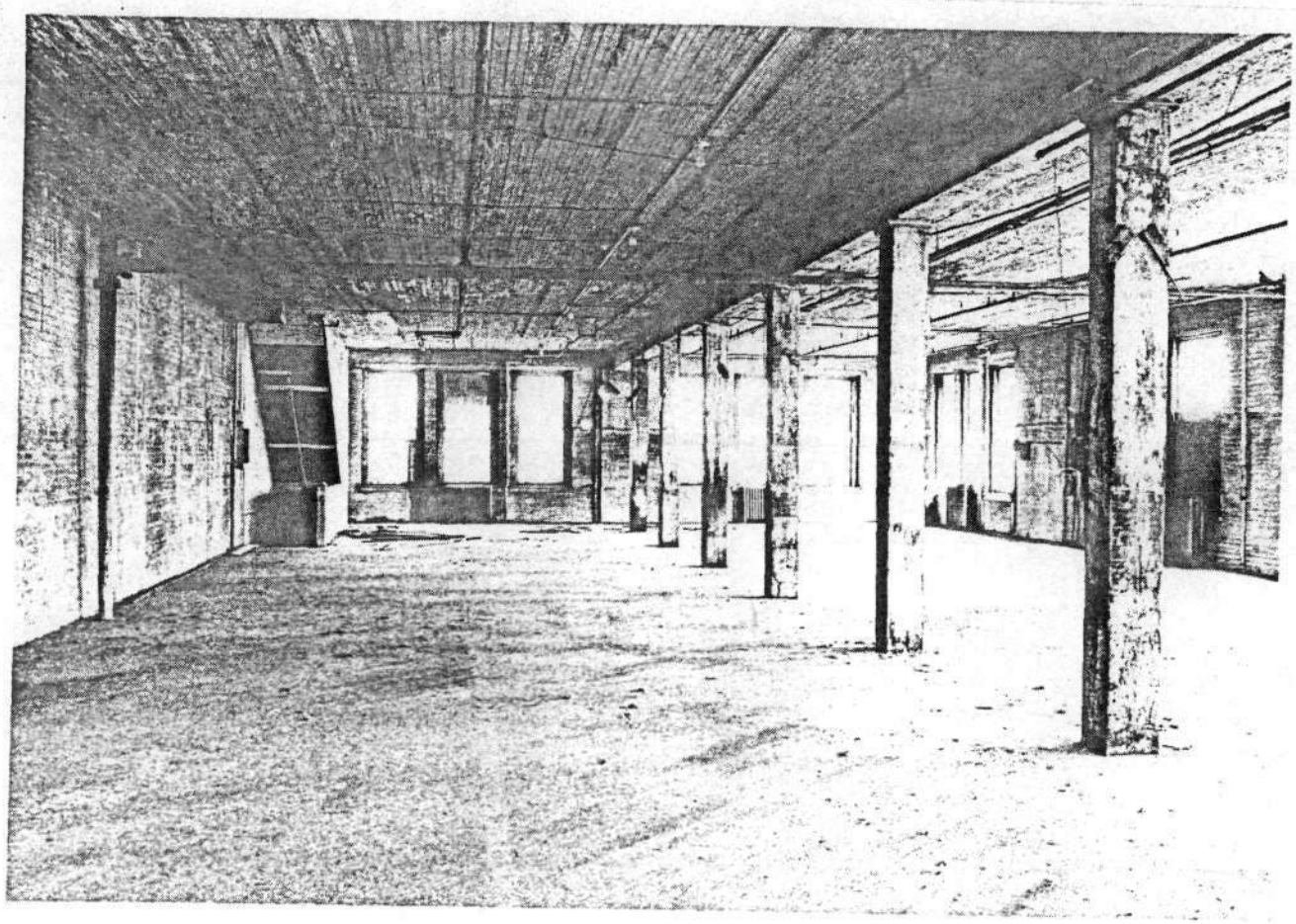
Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: Photographer

3rd floor looking east

12/18

B-4091





Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer

4th floor looking west

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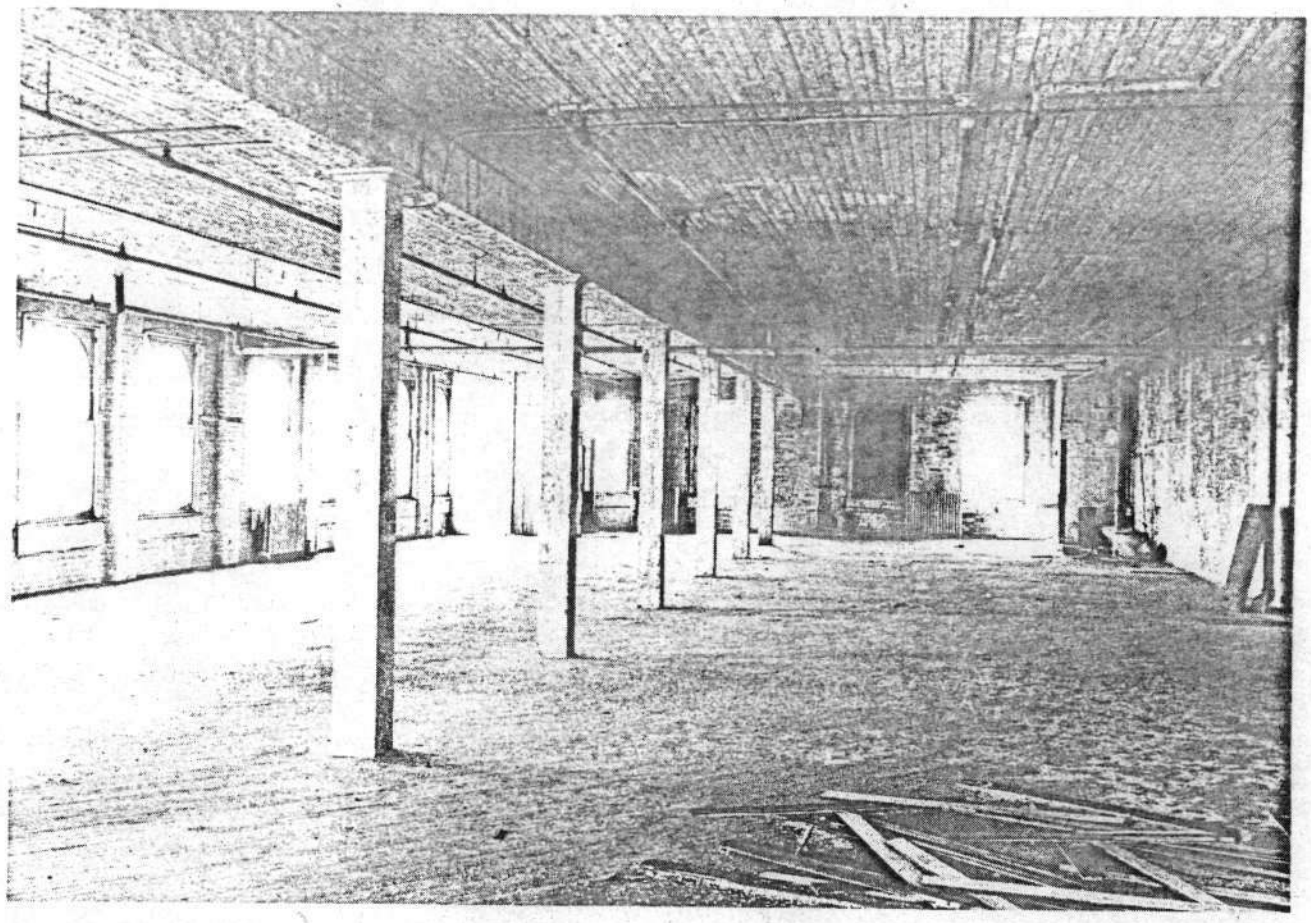
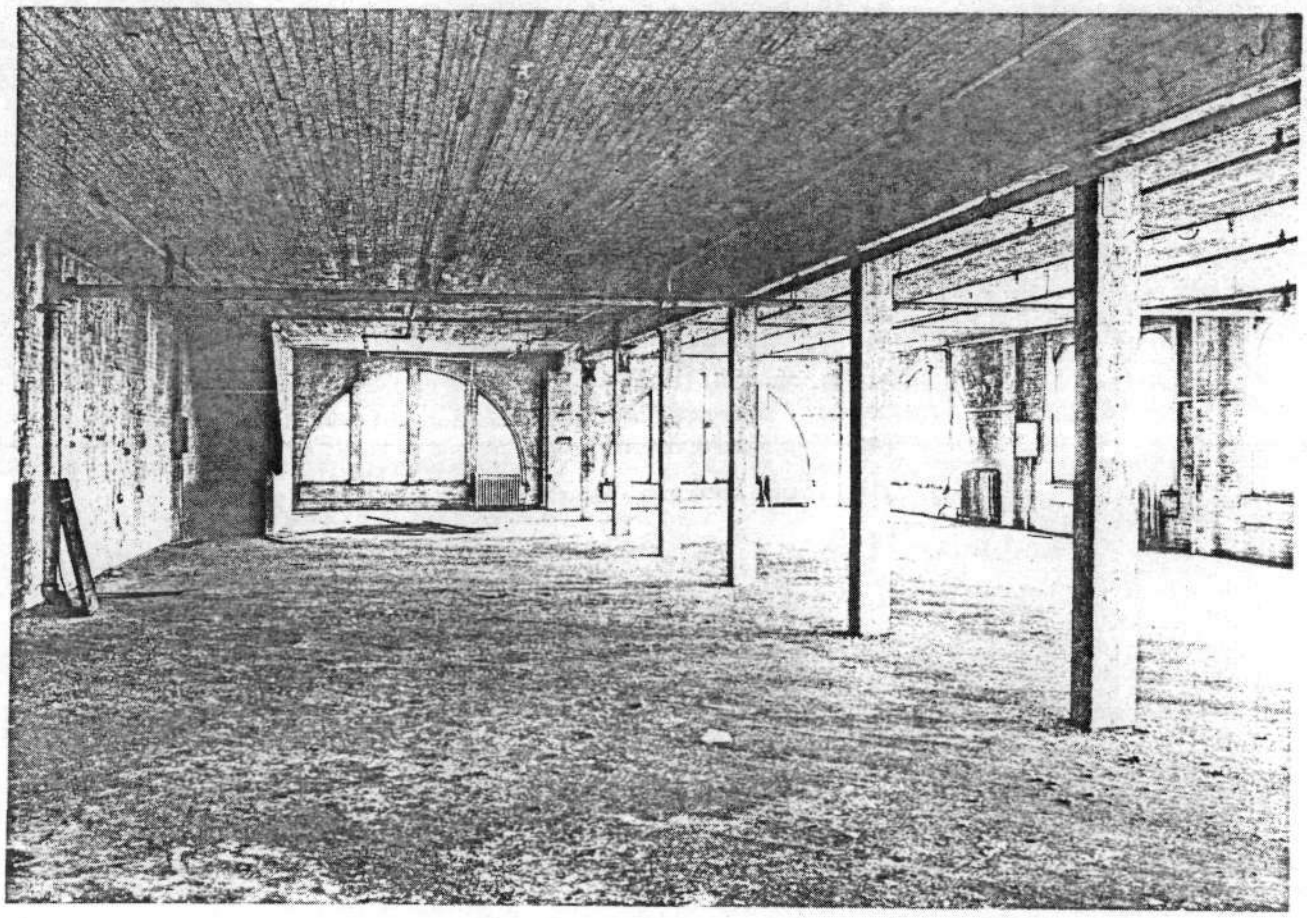
Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg: photographer

4th floor looking east

14/18

B - 4091





Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer

5th floor looking west

15/18

B - 4091

Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer

5th floor looking east

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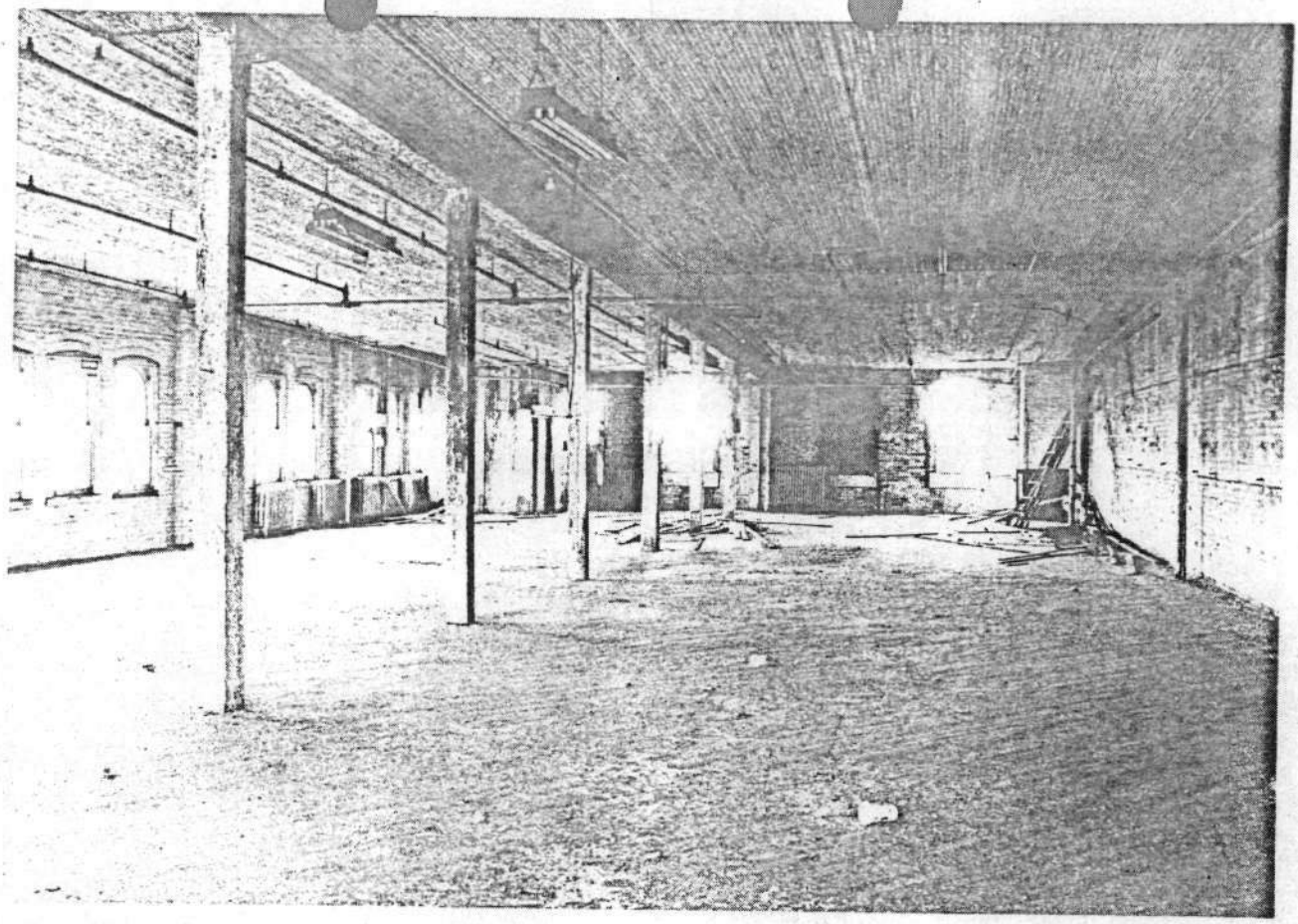

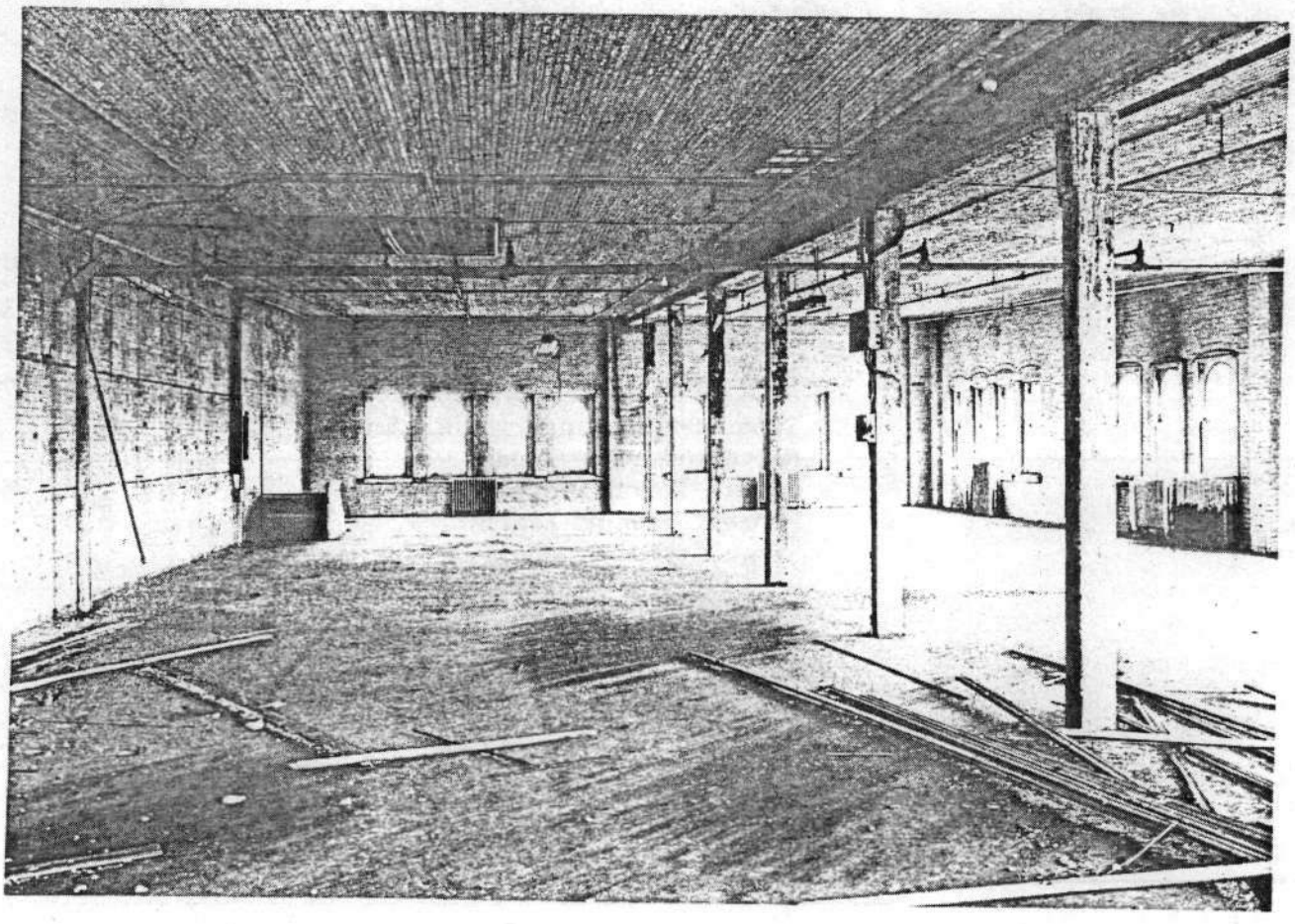

Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer

6th floor looking west

17/18

B - 4091

Swiss Steam Laundry Building
Baltimore, Maryland
Date: March 1985
Photo: Robert Booth
Neg.: photographer

6th floor looking east
18/18

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