

**HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM ADDENDUM**

**To Determine Eligibility for Individual National Register Listing**

Historic Name: The International Harvester Company of America Building;  
The Allegheny/Pittsburgh Branch House of the International  
Harvester Company  
Current Name: Harry Guckert Company Building  
Address: 810 West North Avenue, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, PA 15233  
Key Number: 004024  
ER Number: 2018-1595-003  
HRSF Date: 3/7/2018 by Michael Baker International, Inc.

Addendum Prepared by:  
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31 March 2020

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE 2018 HRSF**

The 2018 HRSF prepared by Michael Baker International, Inc., recommended the Guckert/International Harvester building as eligible for individual listing under two NR criteria:

Criterion A / Commerce for 1) its association with the 1902 transition of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company to the International Harvester Company (IHC), and 2) as a representative example of the campaign for national expansion during the "Harvester Wars" by the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company in the late nineteenth and very early twentieth centuries. Under the direction of Cyrus McCormick, Jr., the site and plan for the International Harvester Building was selected in 1901. In August 1902, the International Harvester Company was formed in a combine of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company and four other harvester manufacturing concerns. The resource was completed in 1902 as one of the final acts of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company and one of the earliest assets of the newly formed International Harvester Company. Prior to World War I, the International Harvester Company continued this intensive campaign of national expansion. This includes the 1912-13 addition to the resource. And,

Criterion C / Architecture as a high-integrity example of the warehouse building typology exhibiting Classical Revival stylistic influence. Although programmatically utilitarian, the choice of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company (and subsequently the International Harvester Company) to invest in a building of quality design, materials, and workmanship demonstrates a commitment to architecture and aesthetics that is not often observed with the warehouse typology. This commitment is further demonstrated by the deliberate pairing and incorporation of Classical Revival design elements in the 1912-13 addition, such that the resource visually reads as a single, cohesive work of architecture.

**PURPOSE OF THIS ADDENDUM**

The purpose of this addendum is to provide sufficient information to augment the 2018 HRSF so that a Determine of Eligibility can be made for individually listing the Guckert/International Harvester Building in the National Register.

As will be shown below, this addendum expands on the Criterion A argument by establishing that the Allegheny/Pittsburgh Branch House of the International Harvester Company consistently stood apart from its hundred or so branch house peers by excelling in sales in what was regularly described as a uniquely challenging market. This was particularly so under the leadership of Emil L. Mayer, who was branch manager from 1908 to 1921, and whose professional accomplishments form the basis for the introduction of a Criterion B argument. This addendum also expands on the Criterion C argument by establishing the expected elements to be found in an International Harvester branch house of this era, and then demonstrating that the building is a particularly good example.

**CONCURRENCE WITH THE 2018 HRSF**

Review of the 2018 HRSF shows it to be a thorough and accurate documentation of the existing conditions, history and significance of the building. No substantive changes to that document are being proposed.

## PROPOSED SIGNIFICANCE UNDER CRITERIA A AND B

The Pittsburgh Branch House of the International Harvester Company is recommended as eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its impact as a regional branch house for sales and distribution of agricultural implements and motor trucks, initially for the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company, which subsequently became the International Harvester Company. It is also proposed eligible under Criterion B for its association with the productive life of Branch Manager E.L. Mayer and his elevation of this branch house to the top tier of the IHC organization.

## Additional Historic Background and Nomenclature

As noted in the 2018 HRSF, McCormick purchased the property on West North Avenue in October 1901 and had secured a building permit by June 1902. Two months later, the International Harvester Company was formed when McCormick merged with the Deering Harvester Company and three smaller agricultural equipment firms. As a result of this timing, the subject building was initially branded as a branch house of McCormick and then as a branch house of the McCormick Division of International Harvester (as can be seen below in a photograph of the building from 1904; Figure 1), before simply becoming the branch house for International Harvester. Adding further complexity to the nomenclature of the building is the fact that when constructed, it was in the independent City of Allegheny, which was annexed into the City of Pittsburgh in 1908. As a result, the building was initially designated as the Allegheny Branch House, but internally at IHC it did not formally become the Pittsburgh Branch House until March 1, 1911.<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this addendum, the term “Pittsburgh Branch House” is employed from this point forward to refer to all iterations of the building’s name at various times (unless a more specific name is needed to provide clarity at a given point within the narrative).



Figure 1. This view of the front facade from 1904 shows the building in its original three-story configuration with its original McCormick sign and 1902 date of construction in the cornice. The original grade of the street and sidewalk required three steps to reach the entrance and allowed for a generous transom above the doors. The street grade and entrance were subsequently modified ca. 1929, and the street grade changed again in the 1940s. Also shown are the original first-story windows (likely modified post-IHC, ca. 1964) and the still-present six-over-two double-hung windows on the upper stories (Wisconsin Historical Society, McCormick-International Harvester Collection).

<sup>1</sup> “Facts from the Field and Current News,” *The Harvester World* 2, no. 6 (March 1911), 8.

### **Agricultural Implement Branch Houses**

Agricultural implement manufacturers in the United States established branch house systems in the late nineteenth century in order to efficiently accommodate the sale, financing, delivery, and maintenance of their products in a manner satisfactory to both producer and consumer. Branch houses, as direct agents of the manufacturer, sold inventory to independently-owned retail dealers, who made sales directly to the final customer. The system was well suited to the bulky and expensive farm equipment trade. Some manufacturing companies developed company-owned and operated retail outlets, but due to constraints of space and cost, they were often able to carry only part of a company's inventory at any given time. Branch houses by comparison, like those for International Harvester, were full-line distributors, typically with significantly larger facilities, that could provide access to the broadest range of equipment and service available from a given manufacturer.<sup>2</sup>

### **International Harvester Branch Houses**

As president of International Harvester Company beginning with the 1902 merger, Cyrus Hall McCormick II further formalized and developed the branch house system for IHC over the first two decades of the new company's operation. Under his leadership, the company increased its number of branch houses from sixty-five in 1902 to ninety-three in 1922 through a concerted expansion program of leasing, buying, and for the most part, building branch houses (Figure 2, next page).<sup>3</sup> While overall corporate direction would still emanate from Chicago, McCormick moved to decentralize operations and largely delegated the sales, promotion, instruction, delivery, and repair of equipment to the branches.<sup>4</sup> The goal was to make each branch house "complete in itself." In October 1922, the editors of *The Harvester World* (a monthly IHC publication aimed at employees and retailers) emphasized that "In the Harvester scheme of distribution, the branch house occupies the key position. . . Toward it converge all sales activities, from it are launched all campaigns and sales programs for supporting the dealers. In fact, nothing is done in the territory except through the branch manager. He is chief Harvester Company executive in his territory."<sup>5</sup>

John Cameron Aspley, writing in *Survey of Modern Sales Organization* in 1920, described the field organization of International Harvester:

In order to serve their army of dealers most effectively, the United States has been divided into [what were then] eighty-eight separate territories laid out on a basis of practically equal sales possibilities and population. The business of each of these territories is handled through a branch house. Each of these eighty-eight branch houses is [under the] charge of a branch manager and assistant manager, who have direct jurisdiction of all business handled in their territory. Each of these branches is a big business enterprise in itself—some of them do an annual business of almost \$2,000,000. Each has a complement of departments and employes [*sic.*] all of whom are hired by the branch manager. There is an accounting department, credit, advertising, and repairs department at each branch the same as would be found in the establishment of any individual progressive concern doing business on a corresponding scale.

The branch house territories are subdivided by the branch manager into a number of small territories blocked out on the same basis as the branch house territories. These sub-divisions of the branch house territories are called blocks, and each block is in charge of a blockman. The blockman has direct charge of his allotted territory and has working under his direction salesmen and repair experts. The blockman is the all-important medium through which the concentrated sales efforts of the great organization behind him are transmitted to the dealer and the farmer. He is the man whose judgment is relied upon in the selection of dealers. He makes all contracts with dealers in his territory and takes their orders for machines and implements. He also educates the dealers in the adjustments and selling points of such machines and implements.

Working under the blockman are the field salesmen. When a dealer's sales are lagging or if a special effort is needed to be put forth on some machine, or if the dealer has a number of live prospects and he feels that he should have help in "closing," the blockman delegates a salesman to work with this dealer. If machines in the field sold by the dealer should

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<sup>2</sup> Gary Tipler. "McCormick-International Harvester Branch House," Madison, Wisconsin. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. Tipler & Associates, Madison. April 27, 2010, NRHP Reference # 1000231, section 8, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> United States Bureau of Corporations, *The International Harvester Co.* (Washington: Government Printing Office, March 8, 1913) 334; Map of Branch Houses, Plants and Material Properties in the United States, *The Harvester World*, Special Edition, 13, nos. 9-10 (October 1922), after p. 56; Tipler, section 8, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Tipler, section 8, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> *The Harvester World*, Special Edition, 13, nos. 9-10 (October 1922), 37. Prior to 1917, branch managers were known as general agents, with the facilities under their control being known as general agencies.

break down and the repairs or necessary adjustments to put them in good working order are found to be beyond the dealer's ability to cope with, the blockman immediately assigns a traveling repair expert to the job, thus preventing expensive delays during the farmer's busy season and incidently [sic.] building up both the dealer's and the farmer's good will.

Co-operating with the blockman is the branch house advertising man [or ad-man]. He works hand in hand with the blockman and inaugurates sales promotion campaigns for the benefit of the dealer, giving each dealer personal, individual advertising help. The advertising man also handles the branch house sales correspondence and follows up all prospects whose names have been turned in by the salesmen on the territory.<sup>6</sup>

In short, the branch manager and branch house staff wielded considerable autonomy to allow them to effectively and holistically address the often quite different needs of both retailers and farmers from under one roof.

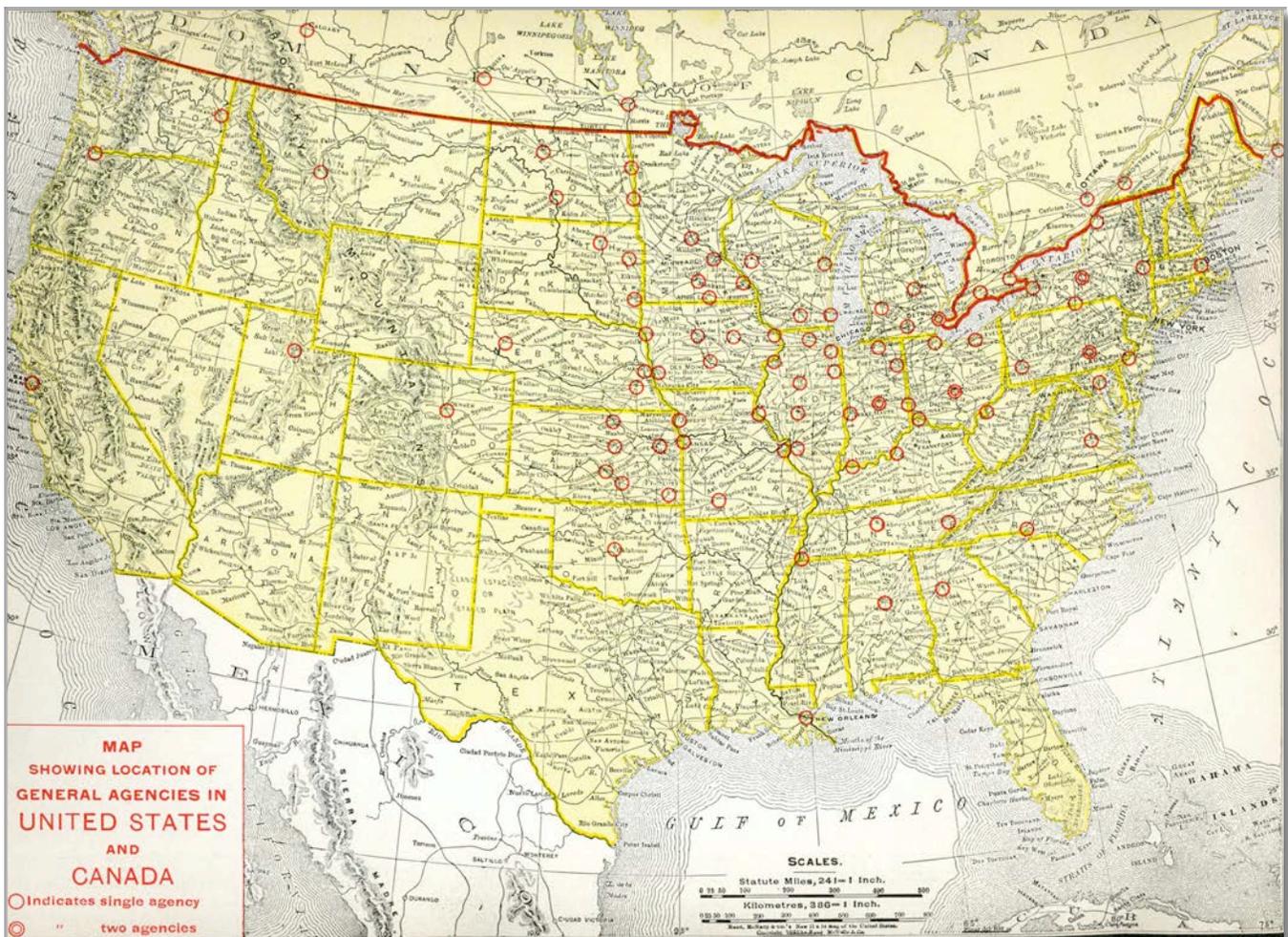


Figure 2. 1907 map showing the extent of International Harvester general agencies, or branch houses. The Pittsburgh Branch House served parts of Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia, with the nearest company rivals being in Harrisburg, Cleveland and Parkersburg (*International Harvester Company Annual Report, 1907*, 54, Wisconsin Historical Society, McCormick-International Harvester Collection).

<sup>6</sup> John Cameron Aspley, *Survey of Modern Sales Organization* (Chicago: Dartnell Corporation, 1920), section 4, 5-6.

**Sales Success Under Emil Louis Mayer**

In 1908, E. L. Mayer (as he was known in most published accounts per early twentieth century convention) became IHC's branch manager in Pittsburgh (Figure 3). There, during more than a dozen years, he would oversee a period of remarkable financial and physical expansion that was recognized at the national level.

Mayer was born around 1865 in Albany, New York.<sup>7</sup> In 1879, he started at McCormick's Columbus, Ohio branch, initially as an office boy and later as a salesman before being promoted to blockman. In 1903, after a stint in Indianapolis, he was transferred from the field to the office. In 1906, he became assistant manager of the Toledo Branch House before being promoted to the Pittsburgh Branch House two years later.<sup>8</sup>

Within two years, Mayer had the Pittsburgh Branch House regularly outpacing its IHC peers across the country in sales, as seen in the monthly publication of the company's "Honor Roll" in *The Harvester World*. Final figures for 1910 placed the Pittsburgh branch seventh in cream harvesters (or cream separators) and ninth in auto vehicles for the entire United States and Canada (Figures 4 and 5).<sup>9</sup>



Figure 3. E.L. Mayer, from his IHC obituary (see footnote 8).

Figure 4. In just over a year, E.L. Mayer transformed the Pittsburgh Branch House into a top sales performer within the company. The Final Honor Roll for 1910 shows two top-ten finishes in eight sales categories for what was then the Allegheny Branch, as indicated by the red stars (*The Harvester World*, April 1911).

**THE HARVESTER WORLD** 13

**FINAL HONOR ROLL FOR 1910**

Ten best agency records of total sales on wagons, spreaders, Cream Harvesters, hay presses, autos, disk harrows, engine horse power, and tractor horse power for the year 1910:

<p><i>Autos</i></p> <p><b>GROUP ONE</b></p> <p>Philadelphia, Pa. Omaha, Neb. Aurora, Ill. Council Bluffs, Iowa Buffalo, N. Y. Auburn, N. Y. Boston, Mass. Portland, Ore. Allegheny, Pa. ★ Minneapolis, Minn.</p> <p><i>Tractors</i></p> <p><b>GROUP TWO</b></p> <p>Atlanta, Ga. Charlotte, N. C. Indianapolis, Ind. (Os.) Evansville, Ind. Wichita, Kan. Saskatoon, Sask. Louisville, Ky. Columbus, O. (Os.) Regina, Sask. Boston, Mass.</p> <p><i>Hay Presses</i></p> <p><b>GROUP THREE</b></p> <p>Atlanta, Ga. Memphis, Tenn. Birmingham, Ala. Oklahoma City, Okla. Springfield, Mo. Charlotte, N. C. New Orleans, La. Montreal, P. Q. Nashville, Tenn. Richmond, Va.</p> <p><i>Creamers</i></p> <p><b>GROUP FOUR</b></p> <p>Montreal, P. Q. Springfield, Ill. Ottawa, Ont. Peoria, Ill. Grand Rapids, Mich. Detroit, Mich. Minneapolis, Minn. } Tie Jackson, Mich. } Tie Allegheny, Pa. } Tie Richmond, Va. } Tie Boston, Mass. Parkersburg, W. Va.</p> <p><i>Spreaders</i></p> <p><b>GROUP FIVE</b></p> <p>Columbus, O. (Os.) Detroit, Mich. (Os.) Indianapolis, Ind. (Os.) Toledo, O. Detroit, Mich. Jackson, Mich. Kansas City, Mo. Milwaukee, Wis. Harrisburg, Pa. (Os.) Concordia, Kan.</p>	<p><i>Wagons</i></p> <p>Atlanta, Ga. Birmingham, Ala. Charlotte, N. C. Regina, Sask. Calgary, Alta. Saskatoon, Sask. Memphis, Tenn. Springfield, Mo. Edmonton, Alta. Omaha, Neb.</p> <p><i>Engines</i></p> <p>Regina, Sask. Saskatoon, Sask. Winnipeg, Man. Bismarck, N. D. Minot, N. D. Helena, Mont. Aberdeen, S. D. Calgary, Alta. Watertown, S. D. Grand Forks, N. D.</p> <p><b>GROUP SIX</b></p> <p>M. F. Holahan E. M. Dimon J. C. Robison W. P. Wells J. A. Brookbank R. H. Potter L. S. Jones A. I. Dourgherty W. J. McCallum B. L. Rees</p> <p><b>GROUP SEVEN</b></p> <p>W. P. Wells R. H. Potter M. J. Rodney R. C. Battey C. H. McManus F. O. Wilson E. J. Buholz J. A. Brookbank W. L. Eales L. C. Hazlett</p> <p><b>GROUP EIGHT</b></p> <p>Atlanta, Ga. Charlotte, N. C. Philadelphia, Pa. Harrisburg, Pa. Memphis, Tenn. Davenport, Iowa Cleveland, O. San Francisco, Cal. Des Moines, Iowa Albany, N. Y.</p> <p>M. F. Holahan J. C. Robison O. H. Browning J. G. Young L. S. Jones C. A. Harding O. P. Byers E. C. Drum W. H. Town M. E. McCullough</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">⊗ ⊗</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>BUT, OH, MY!</b></p> <p>Little bits of water Frozen into snow, Make about 50,000 clerks, bookkeepers, office boys, stenographers, shopgirls, cashiers, waiters, engineers, elevator boys, draftsmen, bill collectors, accountants, and other human beings two or three hours late in getting to their work downtown in the morning, And cause no end of woe.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">⊗ ⊗</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>"What's the matter old man you look all unstrung"</b></p>
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Figure 5. IHC Dairymaid Cream Separator (*International Harvester Company Annual Report, 1910, 32*). The company also produced models called Blue Bell and Lily that year.

<sup>7</sup> Marriage license application, Emil Louis Mayer and Eva Ford Jenny, Lucas County, Ohio, January 6, 1911.  
<sup>8</sup> "A Fifty-Four Line Branch Manager Has Gone," *The Harvester World* 13, no. 2 (February 1922): 18.  
<sup>9</sup> "Final Honor Roll for 1910," *The Harvester World* 2, no. 7 (April 1911): 13.

### Pittsburgh Was Challenging Territory

These achievements by the Pittsburgh Branch House—especially regarding cream separator sales—are noteworthy since Mayer’s territory was far from the agricultural heartland of America. The Pittsburgh Branch House was repeatedly acknowledged in the pages of *The Harvester World* for being in a very difficult market. Mayer, who by 1910 had become a frequent contributor to the publication, wrote about this in March 1911, stating that “From an agricultural point of view, no one can accuse us of living in a land which flows with milk and honey.”<sup>10</sup> Six months later, in an article titled “Agricultural Success in an Industrial Section,” he added that Pittsburgh was “an industrial, not an agricultural section; [and] that western Pennsylvania was productive of coal and oil, but not milk.”<sup>11</sup>

Also frequently noted were the challenges posed by the Pittsburgh region’s hilly topography. Unlike its peers in the Great Plains, the Pittsburgh Branch House had to attract farmers with a tractor that could reliably navigate a variety of rugged terrains. In 1913, International Harvester provided a solution when it introduced its 8-16 Mogul Tractor, which quickly became popular for its reputation as a hill climber (Figure 6). The suitability of the Mogul 8-16 to Western Pennsylvania was noted in a number of issues of *The Harvester World* (two examples can be seen below, Figures 7 and 8). In the February 1917 edition, the Mogul 8-16 was simply dubbed “the master of hilly fields.”<sup>12</sup> While this was not sufficient to propel the Pittsburgh Branch House into the Honor Roll for tractor sales, the branch ranked a respectable 21st out of 91 branch houses in the company’s 1921 ten-week long Tractor Drive.<sup>13</sup>

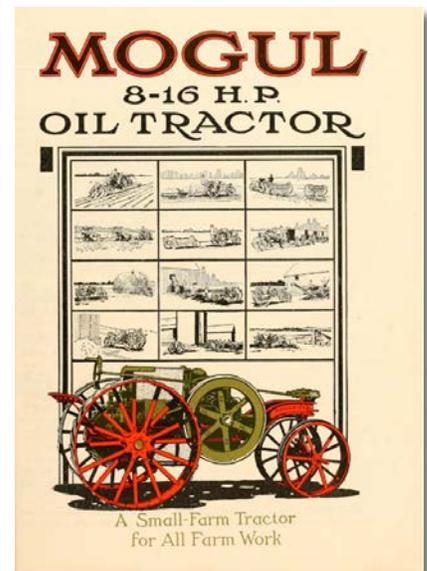


Figure 6. Excerpt from an undated Mogul 8-16 catalog, c. 1915.



Plowing with an 8-16 Mogul on a good stiff grade in the Pittsburgh territory. Pittsburgh has given several demonstrations of late and has demonstrated that the 8-16 will go up and down hills the same as on level ground. Pittsburgh, you know, is hilly.

Figure 7. *The Harvester World* 6, no. 11 (November 1915): 5.



C. V. Curll of Curllsville, Pennsylvania, demonstrating his 8-16 Mogul for the Clarion county commissioners. Mr. Curll’s farm consists of 175 acres of rolling land, mostly “rolling hills.” Pittsburgh territory.

Figure 8. *The Harvester World* 7, no. 10 (October 1916): 8.

<sup>10</sup> E.L. Mayer, “The Call of 1911,” *The Harvester World* 2, no. 6 (March 1911): 19.

<sup>11</sup> E.L. Mayer, “Agricultural Success in an Industrial Section,” *The Harvester World* 2, no. 11 (August 1911): 5.

<sup>12</sup> *The Harvester World* 8, no. 2 (February 1917): 8.

<sup>13</sup> “The Tractor Drive Uncovered Star Salesmen,” *The Harvester World* 12, no. 10 (October 1921): 7.

### International Motor Vehicles

When Mayer arrived in Pittsburgh in 1908, International Harvester had been selling motor vehicles for only a year. Their "Auto Wagons" or "Auto Buggies," were essentially farm wagons that had been motorized (Figure 9). Within a few years, as refinements were made and features added, IHC began to distinguish between motor trucks and passenger vehicles and added the trade name "International" in 1914.<sup>14</sup>

In 1907, the company produced 73 trucks, representing a little more than seven percent of the total U.S. production of approximately 1,000 trucks. At least one was known to have been sold by the Pittsburgh Branch House that first year because E.L. Mayer wrote about it in a June 1914 article in *The Harvester World* titled "A Pioneer Truck." The article contains a photograph of the first truck sold by the Pittsburgh Branch House (Figure 10). Mayer explained that it was sold in Wheeling, West Virginia and was used initially "for the purposes of pleasure," before being used to haul sand, cement and concrete for a local business.<sup>15</sup>

In 1908, International Harvester increased production tenfold, producing 725 units. A year later, they more than tripled production, manufacturing 2,465 units. By 1910, they were the largest producer of light trucks in the country.<sup>16</sup> Although they were initially known for being slow (early instruction booklets warned against exceeding 20 miles per hour), IHC vehicles quickly became known for their durability and longevity. In 1916, an International Model F truck was the first to climb Pike's Peak; and in 1923, one owner attested to having driven his early Auto Wagon over 200,000 miles.<sup>17</sup>

Over the next half century, International Harvester continued to innovate and sold passenger vehicles until 1980, when manufacturing was ceased to concentrate on the company's then more profitable lines of commercial trucks and school buses.

### Mayer Rewarded with a Larger, Modernized Building

While Mayer and his team were successful selling farm implements, they excelled at establishing and expanding IHC's motor vehicle market in the Pittsburgh area. In 1911, for the second year in a row, vehicle sales from the Pittsburgh Branch House finished in the Honor Roll's top ten for the United States and Canada.<sup>18</sup>

Responding to Mayer's success, International Harvester announced late in 1912 that it would build a four-story addition on the west side of the Pittsburgh Branch House and add an additional story to the existing building. The architect-of-record was August C. Wilmanns of Chicago, who worked regularly for IHC (and McCormick before that) and who had designed a number of branch houses throughout the U.S. and Canada; the interior arrangement, or building program, was overseen by W.D. Price, Superintendent of Construction for IHC; and construction was by Rose & Fisher of Pittsburgh.<sup>19</sup>

Work on the expansion was completed within a year. In December 1913, *The Harvester World* featured a photo of the completed building (Figure 11, next page) and under the headline "E.L. Mayer Helps Pittsburgh Grow," directly attributed the need for larger quarters to Mayer's success, stating: "The accompanying picture is an inadequate photographic attempt to show the farm implement world the new headquarters recently provided for E.L. Mayer, general agent at Pittsburgh. After several years application of the form of enterprise and push which Mr. Mayer picked up in the old days at Indianapolis, it was seen that a

## INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER COMPANY'S "AUTO-BUGGY"

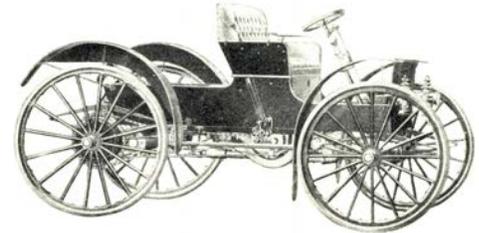


Figure 9. A 1907 Auto Buggy from IHC's 1907 owner's manual.

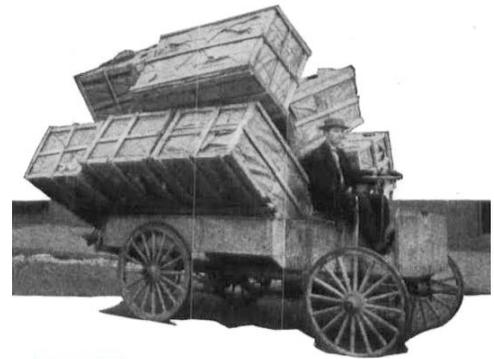


Figure 10. The first IHC motor truck sold by the Pittsburgh Branch House (see Mayer in footnote 15).

<sup>14</sup> International Harvester Company, Consumer Relations Department, "A History of International Trucks," Press Release (25 April 1961).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.; E.L. Mayer, "A Pioneer Truck," *The Harvester World* 5, no. 6 (June 1914): 2.

<sup>16</sup> Patrick Foster, *International Harvester Trucks: The Complete History*, (Minneapolis: Quarto Publishing Group, 2015), 9.

<sup>17</sup> IHC Press Release, 1961.

<sup>18</sup> "Honor Roll: Final for 1911," *The Harvester World* 3, no. 4 (April 1912): 15.

<sup>19</sup> "Construction News," *Engineering News* 68, no. 19 (14 November 1912): 329; *Pittsburgh Press*, 4 December 1912; "North Side Building News," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 4 December 1912; "E.L. Mayer Helps Pittsburgh Grow," *The Harvester World* 4, no. 12 (December 1913): 15.

considerably larger edifice was required not only to accommodate the greatly increased business, but to meet the high grade ambitions which Mr. Mayer had for the future."<sup>20</sup>

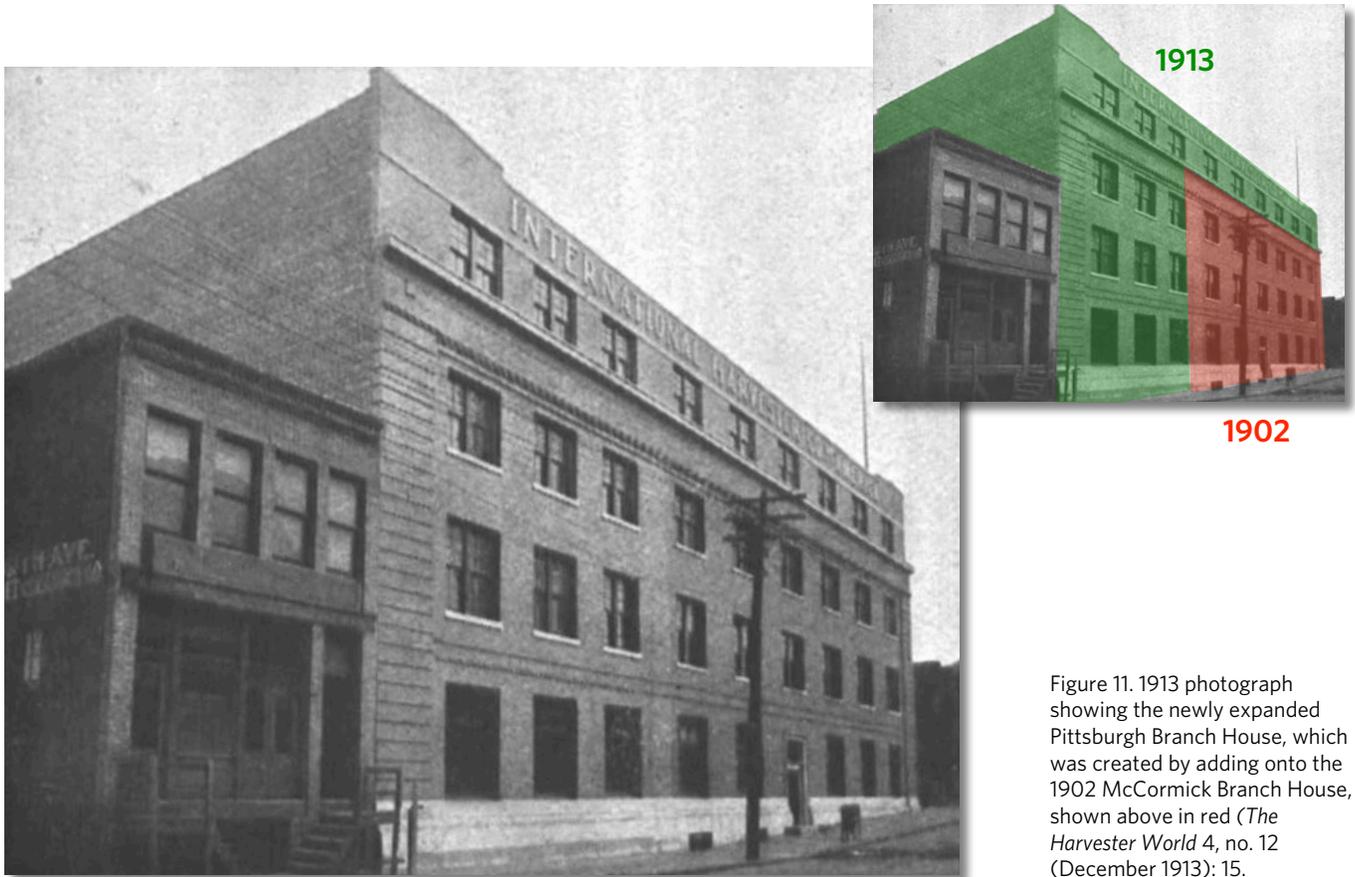


Figure 11. 1913 photograph showing the newly expanded Pittsburgh Branch House, which was created by adding onto the 1902 McCormick Branch House, shown above in red (*The Harvester World* 4, no. 12 (December 1913): 15).

The investment by International Harvester in the Pittsburgh Branch House was substantial. The company's 1913 annual report valued the addition at \$91,127.49 (or almost \$2.4 million dollars in 2020 terms, when adjusted for inflation).<sup>21</sup> The building more than doubled in size, growing from approximately 20,000 square feet to approximately 45,000 square feet, with roughly 610,000 cubic feet of capacity and the ability to store 125 railroad cars worth of goods.<sup>22</sup>

Remarkably, Mayer and his branch house team continued to work through the construction and ended 1913 in the Honor Roll's top ten for vehicle sales.<sup>23</sup> After 1914, it appears that the Honor Roll was no longer printed in *The Harvester World* and that with the advent of World War I, the term was repurposed to memorialize IHC employees who had died in the conflict. However, sales and service of motor vehicles by the Pittsburgh Branch House continued during the war years, as can be seen in an advertisement on the next page (Figure 12).

### Further Expansion

In December 1918, Mayer enticed A.H. Brown to leave his position as head of truck sales at Painter-Dunn (a Pittsburgh vehicle distributor that handled IHC trucks) to become the new manager of motor trucks sales for IHC's Pittsburgh Branch House.<sup>24</sup> In early 1919, just five years after the addition to the branch house was built, Mayer and Brown announced that the motor

<sup>20</sup> "E.L. Mayer Helps Pittsburgh Grow," 15.

<sup>21</sup> *International Harvester Company Annual Report*, 1907; adjusted for inflation based on the Bureau for Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index.

<sup>22</sup> "E.L. Mayer Helps Pittsburgh Grow," 15.

<sup>23</sup> "Honor Roll: Final for 1913," *The Harvester World* 5, no. 4 (April 1914): 11.

<sup>24</sup> "New Manager of Motor Truck Sales," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 8 December 1918.

<sup>25</sup> "Pittsburgh Takes First Place in Sales Contest," *Pittsburgh Gazette Times*, 13 July 1919).

truck department was inadequate and that additional space was being leased. In April, the *Pittsburgh Press* reported the following:

During the past months, the business of the International Harvester Co. has grown to such extent that it was necessary to make arrangements for more space in addition to what they already have at 810-826 North Ave., West, in order to give International truck owners the kind of service they appreciate and also live up to the International standard of service, which is founded upon their experience as manufacturers for over 80 years.

The new garage, which is much larger than the one in the rear of the International Harvester Co. building, will be used for a service station. This new building, together with the complete stock of parts, will give International trucks owners the best service in the city.<sup>25</sup>

The article indicates that truck service was offered in both buildings and not abandoned in the original branch house. This is further confirmed by a 1921 advertisement that shows a picture of the branch house building and a caption identifying it as “the service center of International Trucks for Pittsburgh and vicinity (Figure 14, next page). The garage appears from historic Hopkins maps to have been located directly across from the branch house on West North Avenue, in a large brick building once occupied by the North Side Stair Company (Figure 13, below).



Figure 12. A World War One-era advertisement for the Pittsburgh Branch House (*Pittsburgh Press*, 22 April 1917).

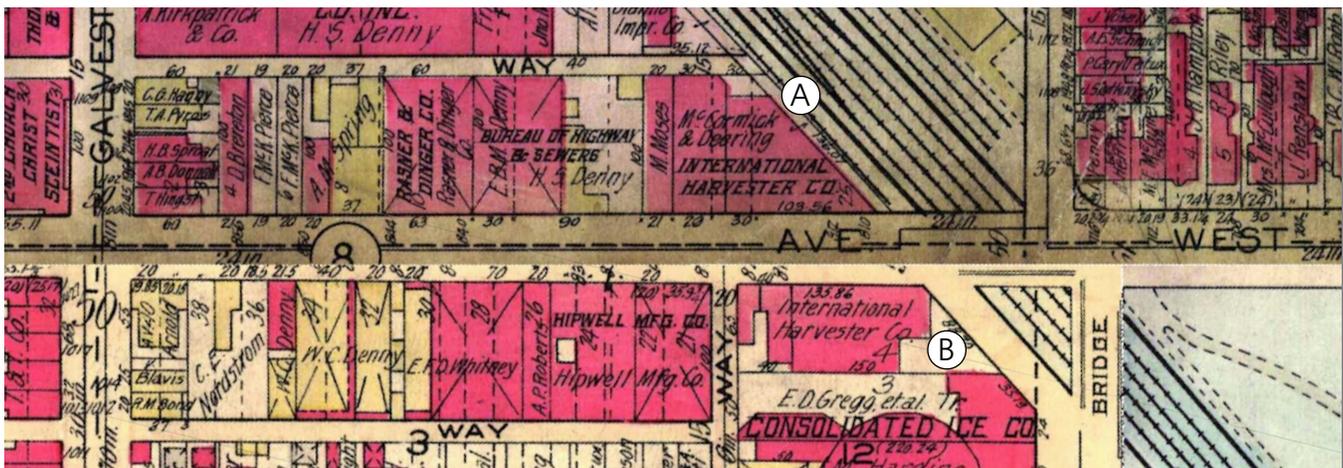


Figure 13. Excerpt from a compilation of 1923 G.M. Hopkins maps, showing the Pittsburgh Branch House at (A) and the leased service garage across the street at (B).

<sup>25</sup> “Harvester Company Lease Big Garage.” *Pittsburgh Press*, 6 April 1919.

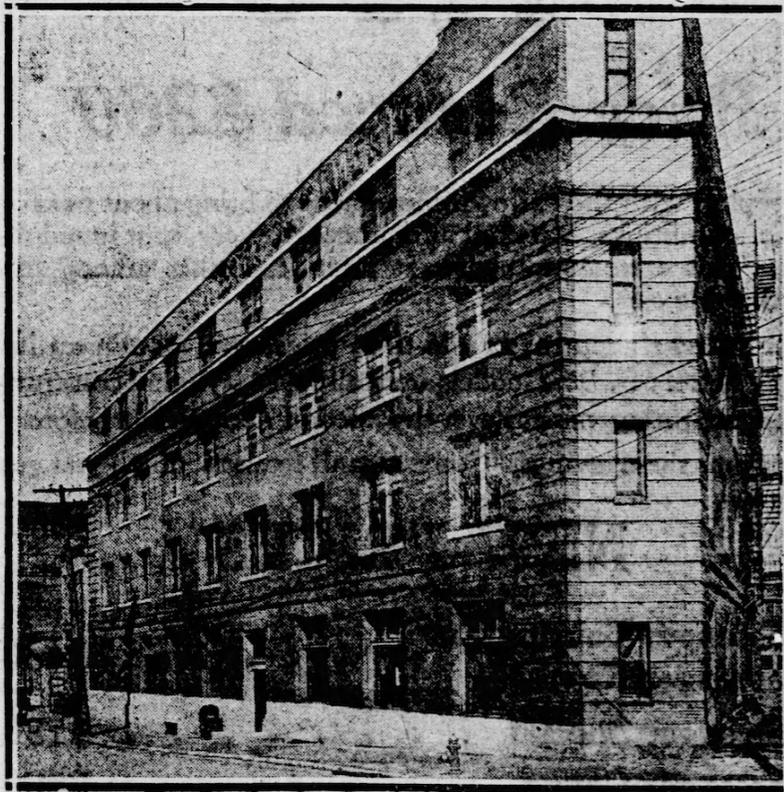
<sup>26</sup> “Pittsburgh Takes First Place in Sales Contest,” *Pittsburgh Gazette Times*, 13 July 1919).

<sup>27</sup> “Breezes from Pittsburgh,” *The Harvester World* 11, no. 4 (April 1920): 12.

**Safeguarding the Performance of**  
**International Motor Trucks**

**When International Owners Need More  
Trucks They Buy INTERNATIONALS**

The reason for such actions is because they have found the place  
where they can receive SERVICE in return for their investment.



**The Service Center of International Trucks for  
Pittsburgh and Vicinity**

It's the after-sales service that counts on any Truck. Under competent management, with skilled mechanics, and modern equipment, the Pittsburgh branch of the International Harvester Company are always prepared to give prompt and efficient service. Let us prove our worth.

**International Harvester Company of America, Inc.**

810-826 W. North Avenue

North Side, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Bell Phone, Cedar 1900.

Figure 14. 1921 advertisement for the Pittsburgh Branch House and its truck service (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 29 May 1921).

After the new truck service building opened, Mayer and Brown led Pittsburgh in June 1919 to a first place finish in a national IHC truck sales competition.<sup>26</sup> In April 1920, Brown reported in *The Harvester World* that the Pittsburgh Branch was experiencing “a 300 percent increase over the [truck] sales of the preceding year.”<sup>27</sup> And in a sign that the focus hadn’t turned exclusively to trucks, the branch house (as mentioned above) ranked 21st out of 91 branch houses in a 1921 tractor sales drive, having sold 529 tractors.<sup>28</sup>

### The Legacy of E.L. Mayer

On December 28, 1921, Emil Louis Mayer died at his home at 46 South Balph Avenue in Bellevue, a suburb northwest of Pittsburgh. He was 57 years old. Reporting on his passing was widespread, and included the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *The Harvester World*, and the trade publications *Farm Implement News*, and *Iron Age*. Mayer was survived by his wife, Eva Ford Jenney (whom Mayer had met in the Toledo IHC office and married on January 4, 1911); a son, Harry Mayer, of Memphis; and a daughter, Jane Mayer, of Bellevue. He was preceded in death by his brother Adolph E. Mayer, who was Division Manager at International Harvester’s Chicago headquarters at the time of his death in 1911.<sup>29</sup>

Mayer’s obituary in *The Harvester World* was titled “A Fifty-Four-Line Branch Manager Has Gone,” referencing the fact that the Pittsburgh Branch House under Mayer offered every line of merchandise manufactured by International Harvester. Accomplishments cited in the tribute included forty-two years of service with the company (and its predecessors) and the fact that while in Pittsburgh Mayer “increased the business every year and decreased the selling cost every year except one.” The challenges of Mayer’s particular market were again noted: “He had difficulties of soil, geography, buying habits and farming customs confronting him, but he nevertheless increased his business every year.”<sup>30</sup> The vacancy caused by Mayer’s death was filled by the appointment of M.S. Cook, who had been assistant manager for several years.<sup>31</sup>

Part of Mayer’s success was attributed to a policy of giving attention to every line and neglecting none. While all branch managers had the support of programs and services emanating from IHC headquarters in Chicago, it seems that Mayer fully embraced the autonomy of the IHC branch model envisioned by Cyrus Hall McCormick II in 1902, as seen from the following examples:

- In 1913, Mayer ensured that International trucks featured prominently in the Old Home Week parade in Pittsburgh, which featured one thousand motor vehicles (Figure 15). *The Harvester World* described Mayer’s efforts as making sure “the Pittsburgh agency is jumping ahead on its motor truck sales.”<sup>32</sup>



Figure 15. View of some of the International Trucks in the September 1913 Old Home Week parade (*Pittsburgh Press*, 26 September 1913).

<sup>28</sup> “The Tractor Drive Uncovered Star Salesmen,” *The Harvester World* 12, no. 10 (October 1921): 7

<sup>29</sup> “Emil Louis Mayer,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 29 December 1921; “A Fifty-Four-Line Branch Manager Has Gone,” *The Harvester World* 13, no. 2 (February 1922): 18; “Death of EL Mayer,” *Farm Implement News* 43, no. 2 (12 January 1922): 10; *Iron Age* 109, no. 1 (5 January 1922): 131.

<sup>30</sup> “A Fifty-Four-Line Branch Manager Has Gone,” 18.

<sup>31</sup> “Death of EL Mayer,” *Farm Implement News*, 10.

<sup>32</sup> “Elaborate Automobile Parade Held,” (*Pittsburgh Press*, 26 September 1913, 1, 6; Mayer and Motor Trucks,” *The Harvester World* 4, no. 11 (November 1913):18.

- That same year, Mayer instituted a two-month “agricultural campaign among the foreign population” of Pittsburgh. Held at the Pittsburgh YMCA, the series of programs featured motion pictures and slides from the IHC Service Bureau and offered lectures in different languages to “show the use and advantages of IHC machines.” Participation was expected to reach 150,000 people.<sup>33</sup>
- In 1918, Mayer began to aggressively promote tractor schools throughout the Pittsburgh territory. Led by C.N. Lapp and W.A. Mensing, Pittsburgh Branch House admen and tractor specialists, the free courses aimed to educate farmers considering the switch from horse-drawn equipment and to help existing customers get the most from their investment—especially during wartime labor shortages. One course in February 1918 was conducted at the Pittsburgh Branch House and attracted over one hundred farmers from five counties. A year later, after conducting fourteen more schools throughout the territory, the program returned to West North Avenue.<sup>34</sup>
- In 1920, the Pittsburgh Branch House began an active campaign to invite more people to visit the branch house (though the doors had always been open to the public) by adding an inset to their regular print advertising. One example, from April is typical: “You are cordially invited to visit our Showroom, and inspect our display of fully equipped trucks. We would like to show you our immense stock of repair parts and, in fact, have you see for yourself how we back up International Trucks with the vital force of after-sales service.”<sup>35</sup>
- That same year, *The Harvester World* announced in an article titled “She’s a Veteran Ad-Man,” that Mayer had hired Sarah Grace Ditmer to a prominent position in his advertising department. She had previously worked for the Harrisburg Branch House. While further research is needed to understand the significance of Mayer hiring a woman to head the position, this appears to have been a rarity. Searching electronic versions of *The Harvester World* suggests that advertising departments were predominantly male and that women rarely ascended above the position of clerk. Only one other instance of a female advertising manager from around the same time has been found—the January 1922 edition of *The Harvester World* reported the death of Miss Eva. M. Smith, “former ad-man” in the St. John, New Brunswick Branch House.<sup>36</sup>

### The Pittsburgh Branch House After E.L. Mayer

Following Mayer’s death, the Pittsburgh Branch House continued to build on the successful foundation that he had laid, as can be seen from the following examples for both trucks and farm equipment: In April 1922, *The Harvester World* announced leaders in its Red Baby sales drive and Pittsburgh ranked 10th out of 91 branch houses.<sup>37</sup> The term “Red Baby” referred to one-ton Model S trucks that were specially painted and offered for sale to International dealers (Figure 16). The idea was a response to the agricultural depression that followed World War One, and was seen as a way to brand IHC service vehicles. Vice President A.E. McKinstry wrote that “The Red Speed Truck is going to become the symbol of service and of business.”<sup>38</sup> In 1923, the Red Baby drive recognized the IHC dealer in each state with the best annual increase by in overall sales. Fowler & Fowler of Indiana, PA, led sales in the Commonwealth (earning a \$1,000 check) and led to a fourth place national ranking by the Pittsburgh Branch House.<sup>39</sup> Also in 1923, Pittsburgh blockman Jonathan Fugh led his peers in Baltimore, Harrisburg, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh in a sixty-day sales competition for Model 15-30 tractors.<sup>40</sup> And in 1924, the Pittsburgh Branch House placed first in the company’s Eastern District for the sale of cream separators.<sup>41</sup>



Figure 16. An International Harvester Red Baby Truck, as seen in an excerpt from a July 1922 *National Geographic* advertisement.

<sup>33</sup> “IHC Service Bureau,” *The Harvester World* 4, no. 7 (July 1913): 13.

<sup>34</sup> “Harvester Tractor School Draws Large Crowds,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 10 February 1918; “Tractor School Here Aims to Increase Crops,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 27 February 1919.

<sup>35</sup> *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 4 April 1920.

<sup>36</sup> “She’s a Veteran Ad-Man,” *The Harvester World* 13, no. 1 (January 1922): 23; “Death Brings Sadness,” *The Harvester World* 13, no. 1 (January 1922): 16.

<sup>37</sup> “Red Baby Trails: Branch Leaders in Sales,” *The Harvester World* 13, no. 4 (April 1922): 8.

<sup>38</sup> A.E. McKinstry, “The Symbol of Service and Business,” *The Harvester World* 13, no. 3 (March 1922): 1.

<sup>39</sup> “Red Baby \$1,000 State Championship Prize Winners,” *The Harvester World* 15, no. 2 (February 1924): 22.

<sup>40</sup> W.F. McAfee, “Harvester Organization in U.S. Sells 1,000 McCormick-Deering 15-30 Tractors in Off-Season Contest,” *The Harvester World* 14, nos. 6-7 (June-July 1923): 10-11.

<sup>41</sup> H.O. Alexander, “Ten Thousand Separators Enter New Homes,” *The Harvester World* 15, no. 6-7 (July 1924): 6.

### The Dominance of Truck Sales

1925 marked a major shift in the provision of motor truck sales and service for IHC in Pittsburgh. In October of that year, as the result of regularly increasing truck sales and the resulting demands on staff and space, a separate Pittsburgh motor truck branch was created within the Pittsburgh Branch House.<sup>42</sup> Two months later, a sprawling, single-story, brick building at 5200 Penn Avenue (Figure 17) in the city's East End had been secured and most motor truck operations were relocated, though it appears that some limited service remained at the West North Avenue location and that the new facility still fell under the supervision of the Pittsburgh Branch House manager.<sup>43</sup>

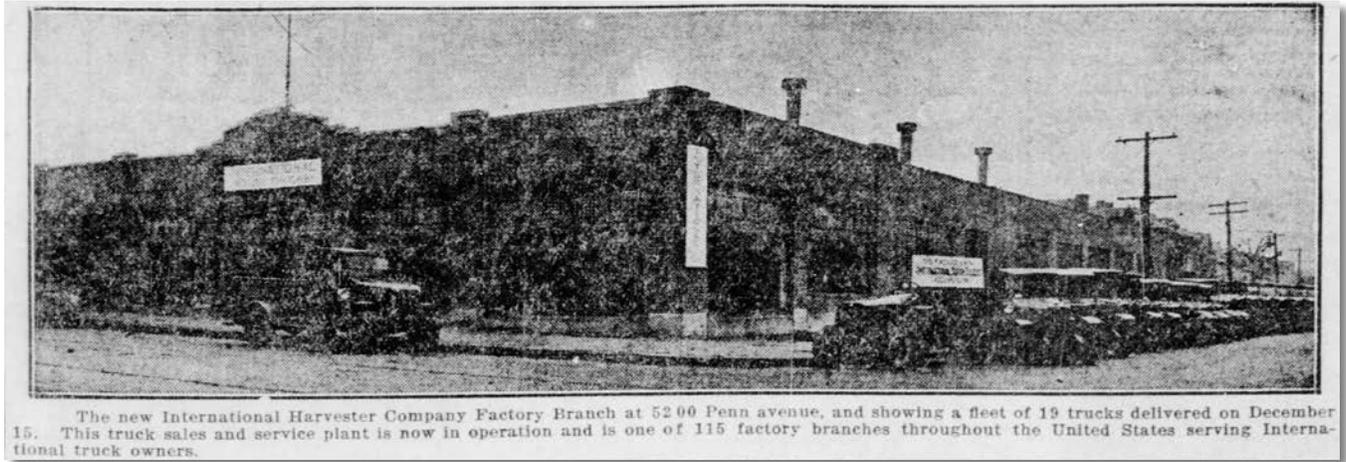


Figure 17. Most Pittsburgh IHC truck operations moved to 5200 Penn Avenue in 1925 (*Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 20 December 1925).

Nationwide, International Truck sales continued to increase throughout the 1920s. By 1930, the company advertised that their truck production had increased seven-fold during the previous decade, while total truck production only doubled (Figure 18). Locally, sales results continued to be exceptional. In 1930, the Pittsburgh Branch House won both titles in an IHC Eastern district truck sales competition, with H.C. McDivitt leading all blockmen and F.W. Ulery leading all local salesmen (Figure 19).<sup>44</sup>



Figure 19. H.C. McDivitt and F.W. Ulery helped propel Pittsburgh to the number one position in truck sales in 1930 (*The Harvester World*, October 1930).

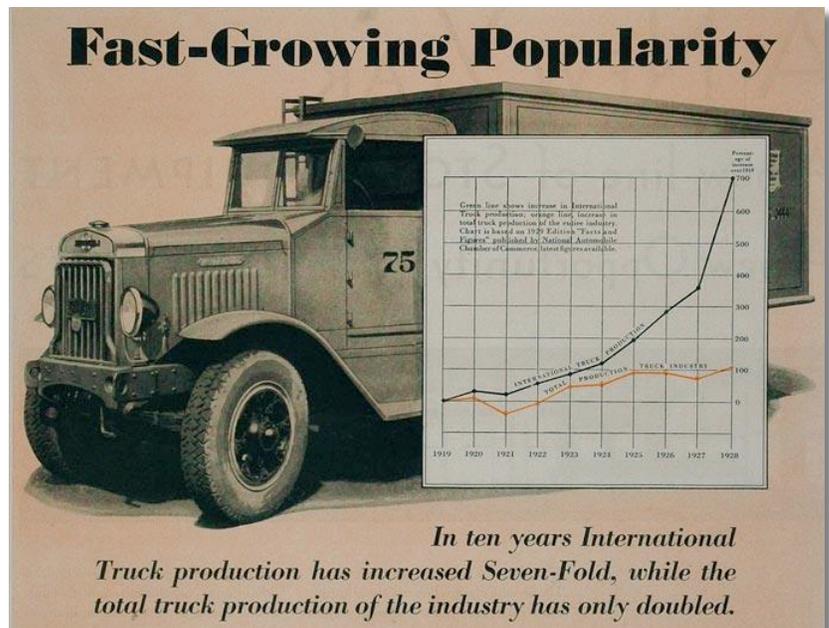


Figure 18. Excerpt of an advertisement from *The Saturday Evening Post*, showing the growth of IHC truck production (black line on graph) versus overall industry growth (red line).

<sup>42</sup> "Changes in Branch House Management," *The Harvester World* 16, no. 10 (October 1925): 9.

<sup>43</sup> "International Harvester Delivers Fleet of Nineteen Trucks," *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 20 December 1925.

<sup>44</sup> "The Fighting Spirit Wins," *The Harvester World* 21, no. 10 (October 1930): 20.

## International Trucks—Serving Pittsburgh Businesses in the Early Twentieth Century

Beginning with E. L. Mayer's tenure, International Harvester trucks were a leading brand purchased by businesses and service providers in the Pittsburgh region throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Fleets of International Trucks were purchased through the Pittsburgh Branch House by corporate leaders like Armour & Co., American Express, American Telephone & Telegraph, Gulf Refining Company, Standard Oil Company, Wells Fargo, Pittsburgh Paints, and the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. Additional examples can be seen below.



Figure 20. U.S. Mail, North Side (*The Harvester World*, June 1911).



Figure 21. Bell Telephone (*The Harvester World*, February 1918).



Figure 22. National Biscuit Company (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 26 May 1918).



Figure 23. Lewis & Fox, Braddock, 1920 (Wisconsin Historical Society).



Figure 24. East Liberty Wholesale Grocery Co., 1924 (Wisconsin Historical Society).



Figure 25. Sewickley Valley Ambulance, 1925 (Wisconsin Historical Society).

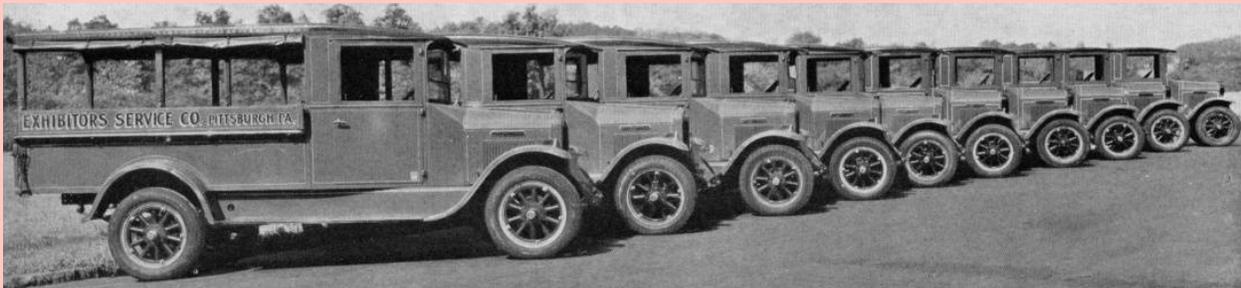


Figure 26. Exhibitors Service Company (*International Trail*, March 1931).



Figure 27. Barsotti Bros., Grocers & Bakers, 1926 (Wisconsin Historical Society).



Figure 28. H.J. Heinz Co. (*International Trail*, August 1932).

Beginning in 1928, IHC began a sales recognition program known as the Triple-Diamond Club (named after the company's logo at the time), to honor top truck salesmen (Figure 29). That first year, Pittsburgh ranked eleventh in the corporation through the efforts of S.T. McFadden; the branch was also recognized for having the most Triple-Diamond salesmen in the Eastern District, at thirteen.<sup>45</sup> In 1929, Pittsburgh moved up to third and eighth places through the efforts of A.L. Holshaw and S.T. McFadden, respectively; and maintained its district lead with thirteen members.<sup>46</sup> Records could not be found for 1930 and 1931, but in 1932, Pittsburgh's ranked ninth as a result of sales by W.C. Young.<sup>47</sup>



Figure 29. International Harvester's red triple-diamond logo from the 1920s.

By 1933, truck operations had outgrown the Penn Avenue location (as well as a subsequently added location near Wilkinsburg), prompting a consolidation and move to a larger building at Centre and South Millvale Avenues in the heart of Pittsburgh's "Automobile Row," continuing the company's focus on the wealthy East End of the city (Figure 30). Containing 45,000 square feet, it had the same amount of floor space as the entire branch house on West North Avenue, along with an additional 10,000 square feet of outdoor space for parking and displaying models to the public. This move marked the end of vehicle-related operations at West North Avenue, which had begun in 1907. Advertisements over the subsequent decade would distinguish between the two facilities with the terms "motor truck branch" and "farm equipment branch."<sup>48</sup> Truck sales continued at the South Millvale Avenue location into the late 1960s. A new truck sales and service facility, which was constructed at 1301 Beaver Avenue on Pittsburgh's North Side in 1965, appears from newspaper advertising to have operated into the early 1980s.<sup>49</sup>

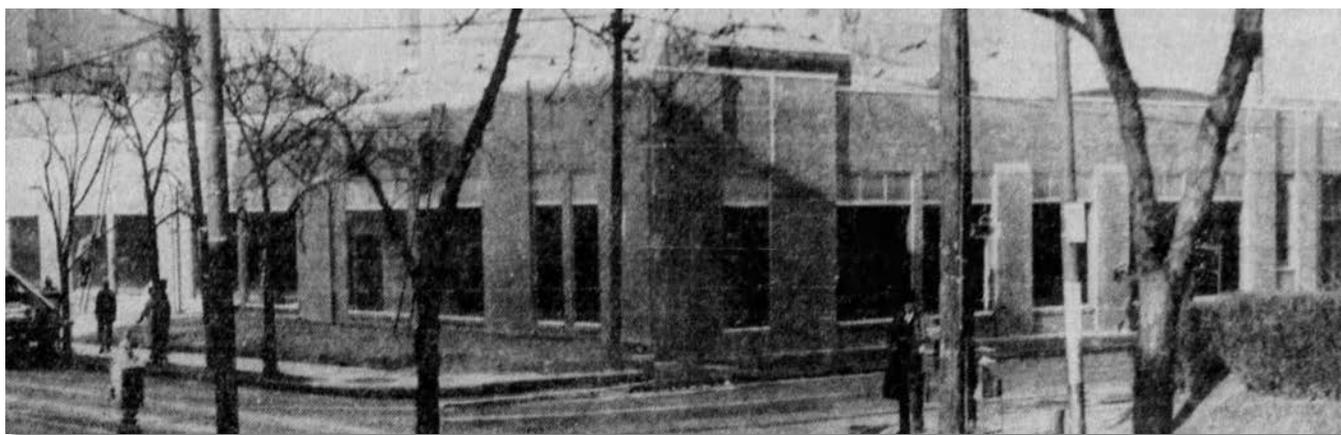


Figure 30. International Harvester's new motor truck branch at 936 South Millvale Avenue nearing completion, as seen in the *Pittsburgh Sun Telegraph*, 3 December 1933.

### Sales and Service into Mid-Century

Even though vehicle sales and service were relocated, the Pittsburgh Branch House on West North Avenue continued to operate until 1959. However, it appears from the dearth of coverage in *The Harvester World*, related online databases from the Wisconsin Historical Society, and local newspapers, that the farm equipment branch failed to distinguish itself as a unique or significant retail force within the company during this time.

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, International Harvester diversified its non-vehicle lines and attempted to capitalize on the post-World-War Two housing boom. In Evansville, Indiana, a plant that had been constructed in 1942 to build P-47 Thunderbolt fighters for Republic Aviation was converted by IHC to house the company's new division for commercial and residential refrigeration and air conditioning equipment.<sup>49</sup> In January 1947, the company "introduced its IH 11-FC freezer as its initial entry in the field of home refrigeration sales." The J.A. Williams Company of Pittsburgh was chosen to receive one of twelve inaugural distributorships, with sales at the Pittsburgh Branch House soon following (Figure 31, next page).<sup>50</sup>

<sup>45</sup> "The Triple Diamonders," *The Harvester World* 20, no. 4 (April 1929): 6.

<sup>46</sup> "More Quality Truck Salesmen Win the Emblem," *The Harvester World* 21, no. 2 (February 1930): 19.

<sup>47</sup> "1932 Top-Notchers," *The Harvester World* 24, nos. 1-2 (January-February 1933): 19.

<sup>48</sup> "International Harvester Occupies New Building," *Pittsburgh Sun Telegraph*, 3 December 1933; "Production! for Food. . .for Arms," advertisement, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 28 May 1941.

<sup>48</sup> "Groundbreaking Set for Harvester Bldg.," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 17 November 1964.

<sup>49</sup> Robert M. Taylor, et al., *Indiana: A New Historical Guide*, (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1989), 193.

<sup>50</sup> J.B. Mann, "IH Refrigeration Enters City Markets," *The Harvester World* 39, nos. 5-6 (May-June 1948): 12, 14.



See the **NEW-**

# INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER REFRIGERATORS

"IH" Refrigerators are your very own because they are designed right out of your dreams! Planned by home economists . . . femineered to give you practical, workable, common-sense features you need! More space inside, cold from top to bottom, big freezer locker, and other extras . . . all plus the "Tight-Wad" Refrigerating Unit with the 5-year warranty! A size and a model for your family!

they're *femineered!*



The refrigerators women throughout the country designed! New, carefree convenience, because women created, improved, okayed every inch, shelf, feature and surface! **INSIDE SPACE** almost doubled — in the same floor space.

**EXCLUSIVE!**

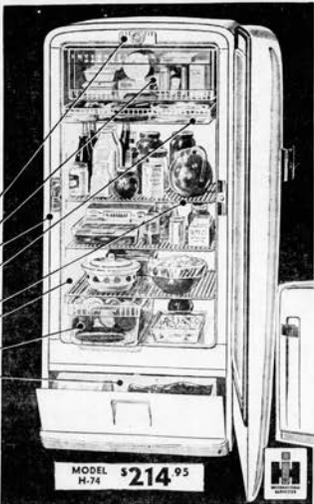
**This BIG 7.4 cu.ft.**

**Packs More Food In Smaller Space To Give You More For Your Money**

Look at this wonder value for small kitchens . . . then see all the food it holds! Up to twice the capacity of old-style refrigerators taking the same floor space! Only \$214.95 and your dealer will make terms to suit your income and convenience.

- TEMPERATURE CONTROL has 12 settings, easy to operate
- FREEZER LOCKER holds 35 lbs. of frozen food; 2 ice cube trays
- BOTTLE OPENER permanently built-in—handy, easy to use
- MEAT TRAY is full width, safely stores 14½ pounds of fresh meat
- CHANGE-ABOUT SHELF ARRANGEMENTS—adjust 24 different ways
- INTERIORS are acid resistant porcelain enameled, easy to clean
- DEEP CRISPER holds 11.3 quarts fruit and vegetables
- "PANTREY-SIN" stores 11.4 quarts of food which require no refrigeration
- "TIGHT-WAD" REFRIGERATING UNIT with 5-year warranty

Women throughout the country designed these "IH" refrigerators for you . . . pre-tested them in their homes for months! Yes, only "IH" refrigerators are femineered.



## HUGE 9.5 CU. FT. REFRIGERATOR WITH EGG-O-MAT

Bigger in Size! Bigger in Value! Exclusive Features! Cold from Top to Bottom! Extra Bottle Storage for 12 Full Quarts! Full Width Crisper! Glass Meat Tray! "Diffuse-O-Lite" Spotlights, Temperature Control and Entire Interior without Glare.

See The Complete Line! You'll See The One for You! 8 Models, from 7.4 to 9.5 cu. ft. capacity, priced for every income, down to the smallest.

**PRICES START AT \$199.95**  
EASY TERMS  
• LOW DOWN PAYMENT  
• UP TO 24 MONTHS TO PAY  
• USUAL TRADE-IN ALLOWANCE

### INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER FREEZER stores 385 pounds

Roomy 11.1 cubic foot family size freezer 385 pounds of full and vegetables, or 80 to 100 pounds of meat, fish or poultry at one time in the exclusive "Free Area." Extra features include automatic interior light and storage pockets. A wonderful investment for through-the-years service and satisfaction.

- Freezer Lock—locks and seals
- Freezer Liner—removable
- Freezer Crisper—removable
- Freezer Light—automatic
- Freezer Storage Pockets—removable
- Freezer Door—removable



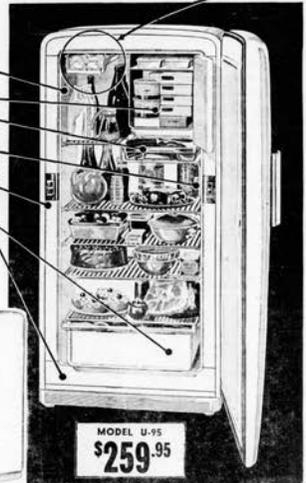
See the complete INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER line of Refrigerators and Freezers at Leading Department Stores, Furniture Stores, Appliance Dealers and Farm Implement Dealers. For the name of your nearest "IH" dealer, write or telephone

**INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER CO.**  
810 WEST NORTH AVENUE  
PITTSBURGH 12, PA.

PHONE CE. 1-1900

### EVERY FEATURE HAS A FUNCTION!

- EXTRA BOTTLE STORAGE for 12 full quart milk or other tall bottles
- FREEZER LOCKER stores 35 lbs. frozen food; has 4 ice cube trays
- GLASS MEAT TRAY—extra top clearance for poultry, bulky meats
- "DIFFUSE-O-LITE" lights temperature control, interior without glare
- BOTTLE OPENER built-in... always handy, can't be misplaced
- FULL WIDTH CRISPER of porcelain enamel; holds 14.2 quarts
- COLD FROM TOP TO BOTTOM—refrigerated for extra storage
- "SHADOWLINE" STYLING—easy to clean, space-saving beauty
- "TIGHT-WAD" REFRIGERATING UNIT with 5-year warranty



**J. A. WILLIAMS COMPANY**  
401 AMBERSON AVENUE  
PITTSBURGH 22, PA.

PHONE MU. 1-5500

Figure 31. International Harvester advertisement for refrigerators and freezers available through the Pittsburgh Branch House and other retailers (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 20 May 1950).

Despite a marketing campaign highlighting that their appliances were "femineered," or designed with a high degree of input from women, and a novel way to customize refrigerator doors in seven minutes with any fabric (Figure 32), the company left the over-saturated appliance market in 1955, selling its manufacturing plant to Whirlpool Seeger.<sup>51</sup>

In 1959, the International Harvester Branch House ceased operations at West North Avenue after fifty-seven years. In July of that year, the company opened a new, 45,000-square-foot, regional farm implement showroom at 1000 Ferry Street in Leetsdale, about fifteen miles northwest of Pittsburgh on the Ohio River.<sup>52</sup>

City directories list the West North Avenue building as vacant from 1959 through 1962. In July 1962, Regis and Mark Guckert ("Guck" rhymes with "Book") of the Guckert Land Company purchased the property. Since that time, the building has been home to the Harry Guckert Company, Inc., a printing supply and equipment firm. In 2015, the family sold the property to 810 West North Avenue LP, though the Guckert Company continued to maintain an office on the first floor through 2019.<sup>53</sup>

**GREAT NEW KITCHEN IDEA!**

*the Decorator Refrigerator*

exclusive with **INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER**

Revolutionary new idea enables you to make your refrigerator a feature of your kitchen decoration. Match it with your curtains—blend it with your color scheme. Use any pattern, any color fabric you choose!

*You can do it in 7 minutes with 1 3/4 yards of fabric*

Here's the inside story

In today's different "lifestyles," home 6' to 10'—to keep all kinds of prizes, trophies, you get all of them mounted on the side of your refrigerator or next to the new IH Decorator Refrigerator—the Fresh-keeper automatic defrosting and more other exciting features. See 1954. See the record of the new record set your IH Dealer's "Tight-Wad" for more in the yellow pages of your phone book.

*truly femineered Refrigerators*

For a folder of new, new color fabrics to use on the side of your new IH Decorator Refrigerator, write for it today. It's free! (See page 10 of this folder.)

**COMING!** New color fabrics to use on the side of your new IH Decorator Refrigerator. Write for it today. It's free! (See page 10 of this folder.)

INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER COMPANY, 100 South Braddock Street, Chicago 1, Illinois  
International Harvester also builds Home Owners, McDonald's, Park Department and National Standard. International Tractor. "Big Red" Tractor Family.

Figure 32. 1951 Decorator Refrigerator ad, featuring do-it-yourself door customization.

<sup>51</sup> "International Harvester Sells Evansville Plant, Equipment," *Princeton Daily Clarion* (Princeton, Indiana), 27 September 1955.

<sup>52</sup> International Harvester Company, Press Release (16 July 1959).

<sup>53</sup> Allegheny County Deeds; 810 North Avenue LP.

**PROPOSED PERIODS OF SIGNIFICANCE UNDER CRITERIA A AND B**

**Criterion A, Events / Commerce,** for its association with the Pittsburgh Branch House of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company and its successor, the International Harvester Company, particular during its years as a leader within the corporation: 1902 (construction) through 1933 (the end of truck sales and service).

**Criterion B, Significant Person / Commerce,** for its association with the professional accomplishments of Emil L. Mayer during his tenure as Branch Manager: 1908 (hiring) through 1921 (death).



Figure 33. 1952 view of the building in its final years as the Pittsburgh Branch House.



Figure 34. 1980 view of the building showing the signage in the cornice for Harry Guckert Company painted over the International Harvester signage (Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, Historic Resource Survey Form).

## PROPOSED SIGNIFICANCE UNDER CRITERIA C

The Pittsburgh Branch House is significant as an example of the Classical Revival style that exhibits a high-level of design, materials, and workmanship and for embodying the distinctive architectural characteristics and programmatic organization developed by International Harvester to brand and operate its buildings during the company's first two decades—particularly under architect August C. Wilmanns and IHC Superintendent of Construction William D. Price.

### Classical Revival Style & August C. Wilmanns

As noted in the 2018 Historic Resource Survey Form, the 1902 building (with its visually integrated 1913 addition) is significant as a high-integrity, Classical Revival Style example of the warehouse building typology and is noted for design qualities not often observed on this type of utilitarian building. As the architect-of-record, Wilmanns would likely have taken the lead drawing and specifying the exterior detailing, while it is known from IHC archival material that Price established overall design direction and led development of the interior arrangement of the company's branch houses (though the two no doubt would have worked closely together on many aspects of the design).

#### August C. Wilmanns

Architect August C. Wilmanns practiced in Chicago for a half-century and was professor of architectural construction at the Armour Institute of Technology for twenty years. For many years, he served as treasurer of the Chicago Architectural Club. He also served in that capacity for the Architectural League of America, which was founded in 1899 in Chicago to forge working relationships between architectural clubs around the country, coordinate traveling exhibitions and promote education that they felt was more relevant to American urban environments and the design of tall buildings than the Ecole des Beaux Arts approaches of the day.<sup>54</sup> In 1921, Wilmanns was part of a committee of the Illinois Society of Architects organized to formulate the state's first building code.<sup>55</sup> He died at his home in Chicago in 1951 at age 82.<sup>56</sup> In addition to designing the expansion of the Pittsburgh Branch House, he is known to have designed branch houses and other facilities for International Harvester in Grand Forks, North Dakota; Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada; St. Paul, Minnesota (for McCormick); and Chicago (for McCormick, with James H. Haskins, et. al.).<sup>57</sup>

### Programmatic Organization & William D. Price

In the March 1911 issue of *The Harvester World*, William D. Price, Superintendent of Construction for IHC, described the criteria the company had developed for a standardized economical branch house and highlighted eleven branch houses constructed in 1910 as case studies.<sup>58</sup> Almost all of the Price's criteria were shortly thereafter incorporated into the Pittsburgh Branch House renovation and expansion:

#### Site / Inventory Management

IHC Standard: Adjacent to rail lines with "Ample trackage, large and substantial shipping platforms, and high speed elevators, [which] all contribute in no small degree to the easy, rapid, and profitable handling of goods."

Pittsburgh: The branch house was constructed next to the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago Railway (now Norfolk Southern Railroad). Originally, the railroad siding was at grade (i.e., at the same elevation as the adjacent tracks) with loading into the basement. When the building was expanded in 1912-13, the rail siding (measuring 120 feet in length) was elevated and the loading dock moved to the first floor, in keeping with more typical IHC designs at the time. The building's original elevator was removed and two new ones installed—a large, centralized model with front and rear doors serving all floors of the original building and the addition, and a smaller one serving just the addition (and only floors one through three). There is no indication that the Pittsburgh Branch House ever had a canopy over its rail siding or loading dock, and Price admitted in his article that "It is unfortunate that the canopy roofs over platforms are frequently sacrificed to bring the building within the limit of the appropriation granted."

<sup>54</sup> "The Architectural League of America," list of officers for 1900-1901, *The Inland Architect and News Record* 36, no. 2 (September 1900): 9; Jeffrey Welch, "Pure Design: Emil Lorch, Architectural Education, and Michigan," *Awards, AIA Huron Valley* 3 (October 2019): 8.

<sup>55</sup> "Revising Building Code," *The Times* (Streator, Illinois), 30 August 1921.

<sup>56</sup> "August C. Wilmanns," obituary, *Chicago Tribune*, 8 February 1951.

<sup>57</sup> *Grand Forks Herald*, 26 April 1906; "782 Main Street—International Harvester Building," List of Historical Resources, City of Winnipeg; "Construction and Contract News —St. Paul—Building Permits," *The Improvement Bulletin* 23, no. 26 (May 18, 1901): 13; Art Institute of Chicago, "Building Index of Selected Chicago Architectural Monographs," Finding Aid, 16 February 2014.

<sup>58</sup> W.D. Price, "Construction Work for International Harvester Company of America, 1910," *The Harvester World* 2, no. 6 (March 1911): 4-6; Tipler, section 8, p. 7.

### ***Materials/Construction***

IHC Standard: Price used the term “brick and mill construction,” referring to brick on the exterior and heavy timber construction on the interior (wood posts, beams and floors).

Pittsburgh: The building is constructed in the expected brick and mill manner.

### ***Stories***

IHC Standard: The majority of branch houses had four floors plus a basement (larger branch houses of this era might have five stories, while smaller ones might have three).

Pittsburgh: The building has four floors plus basement, with the basement being full-height since it originally served as the main shipping and receiving area.

### ***Interior Column Spacing***

IHC Standard: Price specified “modified mill construction,” in regard to interior column spacing, stating that “In strictly mill constructed buildings, the rows of posts are placed quite close together, usually not to exceed eight to ten feet apart.”

Pittsburgh: The building exhibits modified mill construction, with column spacing on the north-south axis measuring sixteen feet and on the east-west axis measuring twelve, fourteen or sixteen feet, depending on location.

### ***Flooring***

IHC Standard: Price specified “‘laminated flooring,’ consisting of three by six planks, placed on edge and spiked together, and making with the finished maple floor over it, a solid flooring six and one-half inches thick.”

Pittsburgh: The areas of the building dating from 1912-13 appear to have a version of laminated flooring.

### ***Overall Capacity***

IHC Standard: While Price did not explicitly indicate a standard storage capacity, the average building size for the eleven case studies in his article was 47,211 square feet; the average capacity in terms of rail cars worth of goods that could be stored in the building was 105.

Pittsburgh: The building matches the case studies. The previously cited 1913 article from *The Harvester World* titled “E.L. Mayer Helps Pittsburgh Grow,” indicated approximately 45,000 square feet of space, while a 1962 IHC building inventory lists a capacity of 49,442 square feet.<sup>59</sup> The 1913 article listed storage capacity as an above-average 125 rail cars.

### ***Interior Features and Arrangement***

IHC Standard: Price called for “light, roomy, and comfortable offices,” “large show rooms, finished, heated, and lighted in the best manner,” “commodious vaults. . . and large rooms for advertising matter,” and “that most essential factor, storage” for everything from “tractor engines” to “automobiles used for demonstrating purposes.” Commenting on the need for display space, Price noted, “Not many years ago, showrooms were thought unnecessary. Now that we handle engines, wagons, cream separators, automobiles, and tillage implements, the necessity of space to exhibit them is apparent and there is a growing demand for neat, roomy, well-lighted display rooms.”

Pittsburgh: The building contains all of the features cited by Price. The second floor retains its six inter-connected offices from 1912-13 with their windowed partitions and abundant natural light from the adjacent windows of the south facade. To the north and east is a large show room with plentiful windows and direct access by stair from the front door. Both the offices and showroom, which would have received the public, retain their ornate tin ceilings and decorated wood column covers. In the office suite is a specialized room featuring a full wall of storage nooks and dividers to hold advertising materials; this is adjacent to a large walk-in vault. Most of the rest of the building would have been used for service (most likely on the first floor) and storage (basement, third and fourth floors). The 1913 article indicated that the 45,000 square feet of space was allocated as follows: Repair department: 7,722 SF (first floor and, given the square footage, most likely the western side of the second floor); Show Room: 2,294 SF; Sales Department: 2,147 SF; Collections Department: 1,303 SF; with the remainder being Storage and related functions like shipping and receiving.

A National Register nomination for the Madison, Wisconsin Branch House offers further insights into the standardized arrangement of spaces at that time and tells a story that closely parallels that of the Pittsburgh Branch House. Originally

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<sup>59</sup> International Harvester Company and International Harvester Company of Canada, Ltd., “Areas of Branch Houses, Service Stations and Dealers’ Buildings,” compiled by Industrial Engineering and Construction Department, October 14, 1958, updated 1962.

constructed in 1898 as a McCormick Branch House, the Madison building was enlarged in size in 1909. Per IHC standards, capacity was doubled, offices were moved from the first to the second floor and provided with more space in order to better serve customers, a large show room was created on the second floor adjoining the sales rooms, and a second elevator was added. As with the Pittsburgh Branch House, the expansion in Madison created a showroom and offices that were ornate, with “stamped tin ceilings and encased beams.” Similarly, “All offices have windowed partition walls, which maintain openness and light communicating among the rooms.”<sup>60</sup>

### **Fire Protection**

IHC Standard: Price indicated that “Elevators and stairways are enclosed in brick walls with openings provided with automatically closing doors.”

Pittsburgh: The branch house contains these fire protection features.

### **Appearance/Brand**

IHC Standard: Price emphasized a uniform look that would make the company’s buildings recognizable: “Through an express wish of the management, these buildings have been made as nearly alike in appearance and design as the varying conditions of size, location, and surroundings would permit; the idea being that whether north, south, east, or west, their appearance would stamp them at once as “International. . . . We have tried to make the buildings strong in appearance as well as in construction, and the exteriors, while plain and moderate as far as expense is concerned, have a substantial look which goes to prove that they are there to stay.”

Pittsburgh: As can be seen from the five photographs that accompanied Price’s article (Figures 36-40, next page), the Pittsburgh Branch House fit the mold and was easily recognizable as an International Harvester building. Despite its unique footprint, stemming from the siting of the rail line diagonally to the street grid, the building shares the same overall form, multi-story massing, brick wall cladding, and paired double-hung sash windows as its peers. Additionally, it shares the tall upper cornice/parapet, which on virtually every IHC branch house was utilized for signage that advertised the company’s name (usually on multiple facades).



Figure 35. W.D. Price  
(*The Harvester World*,  
March 1911).

### **William D. Price**

Superintendent of Construction William Douglas Price was born September 25, 1858 in Chicago.<sup>61</sup> His grandfather, Cornelius Price, was a contractor who migrated from Watkins Glen, New York in the 1830s, settling in Libertyville, north of Chicago. There, he taught his sons the building trades and two of them, William (our subject’s father and the eighth postmaster of Chicago) and Cornelius, formed the company C. & W. Price. In 1881, William D. Price joined the firm and began learning the contracting business from his father.<sup>62</sup>

Six years later, he “entered the employ of the McCormick Company in 1897 as superintendent of construction, following a connection first established in 1886 when, as a contractor, he built an addition to the blacksmith shop at [the] McCormick Works. In the period from 1886 to 1897, he was in charge of the construction of many buildings for the McCormick Company, including branch houses at Council Bluffs, Iowa; Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Jackson, Michigan; and Columbus, Ohio.”<sup>63</sup>

Price served as Superintendent of Construction from 1897 to 1931. During this period, he oversaw planning and construction of all buildings in the United States and Canada (first for McCormick and then for International Harvester). Some of the projects in which he is attributed as the architect include branch houses in Amarillo, Texas; Peoria, Illinois; Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada; Salt Lake City, Utah; Sioux City, Iowa; and Sioux, Falls, South Dakota; the IHC tractor plant in Fort Wayne, Indiana; and the First Aid Building at the McCormick Works in Chicago.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Tipler, section 7, p. 2.

<sup>61</sup> Cook County Illinois Death Records.

<sup>62</sup> Herma Clark, “When Chicago was Young,” *Chicago Tribune*, 28 April 1935; “Funeral for W.D. Price Will Be Held Tomorrow,” *Chicago Tribune*, 18 June 1939.

<sup>63</sup> “W.D. Price,” obituary, *The Harvester World* 30, no.s. 7-8 (July-August 1939): 24.

<sup>64</sup> “International Harvester Building,” Amarillo, Texas, State Historical Marker; Edward J. Russo and Curtis R. Mann. “International Harvester Building,” Peoria, Illinois. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. Sangamon Researchers. June 15, 2005, NRHP Reference # 05001254; “Regina,” *Canadian Farm Implements* 6, no. 3 (March 1910): 34; *Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, 27 October 1916; *Sioux City Journal*, 16 September 1909; *Argus-Leader*, Sioux Falls, SD, 20 December 1910; *Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette*, 8 September 1920; Edith S. Reider, “The New First Aid Building at McCormick Works,” *The Harvester World* 7, no. 1 (January 1916): 31.

In 1931, he became consulting architect to the newly formed Industrial Engineering and Construction Department—a reorganization of existing IHC activities related to improving buildings, factory equipment and work processes.<sup>65</sup> While Price was frequently referred to as an architect and sometimes an engineer in IHC and newspaper articles and in trade publications, no evidence has been found to indicate that he ever received formal education in those fields. He may simply have come of age professionally at a time when one could still obtain such skills on the job.

Price retired in 1932 after thirty-five years of service.<sup>66</sup> He died June 16, 1939 at his home in Libertyville. He was eighty years old. He was survived by a daughter, Grace Fletcher, and a brother, Melvin, of Los Angeles.<sup>67</sup> The significance of his passing was marked by his obituary being published in the *New York Times* in addition to *The Harvester World*.<sup>68</sup>

### PROPOSED PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE UNDER CRITERION C

**Criterion C, Architecture** for being a high-level example of the Classical Revival Style and for embodying the distinctive architectural characteristics and programmatic organization developed by International Harvester to brand and operate its buildings during the company's first two decades: 1902, representing the date of construction of the oldest part of the existing building under the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company, to 1913 when the branch house was expanded, taking on its current configuration.

### Examples of Standardized Branch House Designs from 1910



Figure 36. Albany Branch House (*The Harvester World*, March 1911).



Figure 37. Bismarck Branch House (*The Harvester World*, March 1911).



Figure 38. Denver Branch House (*The Harvester World*, March 1911).



Figure 39. Minot Branch House (*The Harvester World*, March 1911).



Figure 40. Sioux City Branch House (*The Harvester World*, March 1911).

<sup>65</sup> "The New Industrial Engineering and Construction Department," *The Harvester World* 22, no. 5 (May 1931): 10.

<sup>66</sup> "W.D. Price," *The Harvester World* 23, nos. 3-4 (April 1932): 20.

<sup>67</sup> "W.D. Price," obituary, *The Harvester World* 30, nos. 7-8 (July-August 1939): 24.

<sup>68</sup> "William Douglas Price," obituary, *New York Times*, 18 June 1939.

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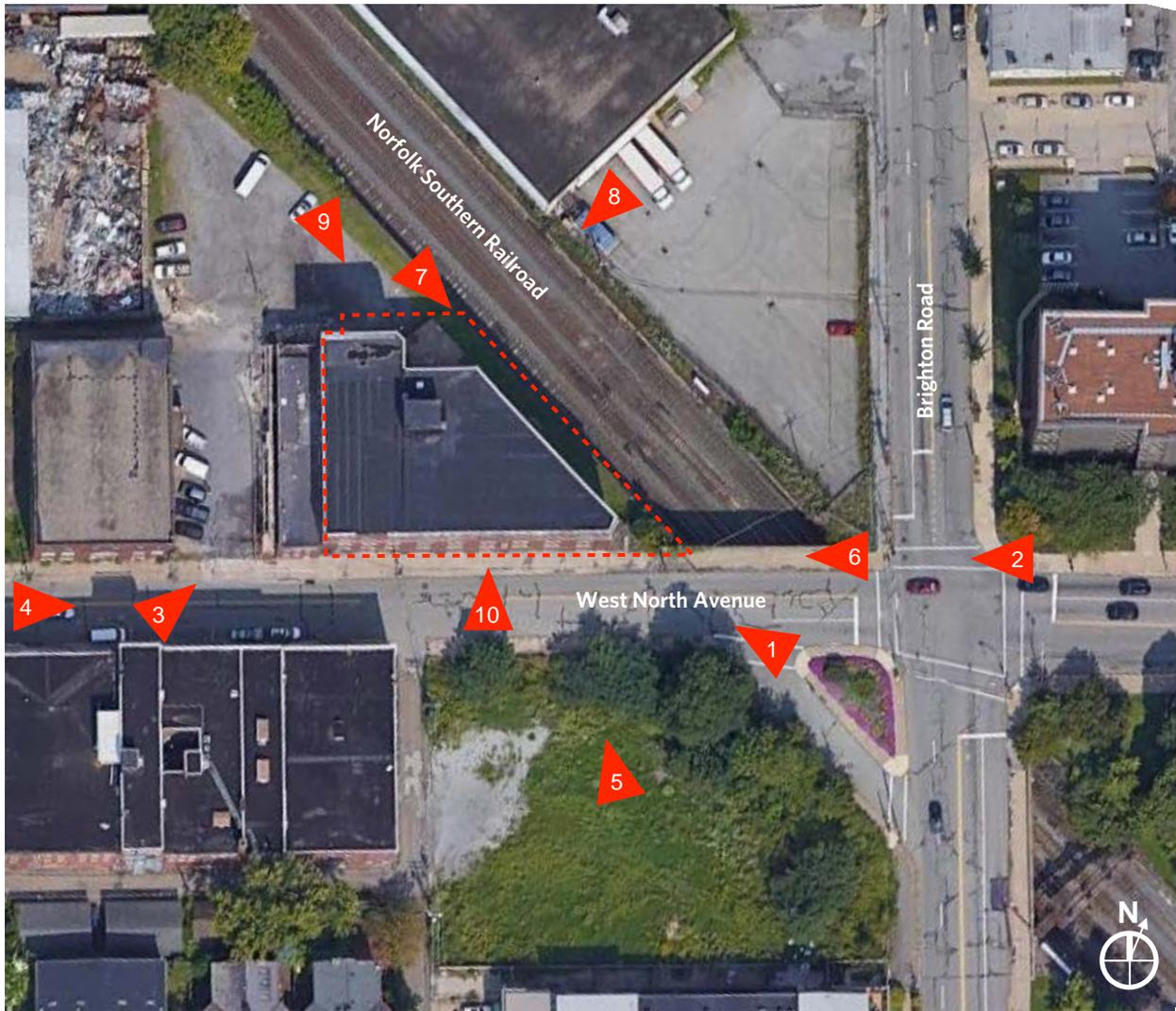
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\* See footnotes for specific citations.



(Google Earth)

### Figure A. Site Plan and Photo Key

The proposed National Register boundary is the boundary of Allegheny County Tax Parcel 23-N-130 (approximate location shown above by the red dashed line). This is the parcel on which the building is currently situated and is the parcel historically associated with the International Harvester Company's Pittsburgh Branch House. The boundary includes the rear and side loading docks.

### Photographs

Date Photographed: 12 December 2019  
Photographer: Jeff Slack, AICP

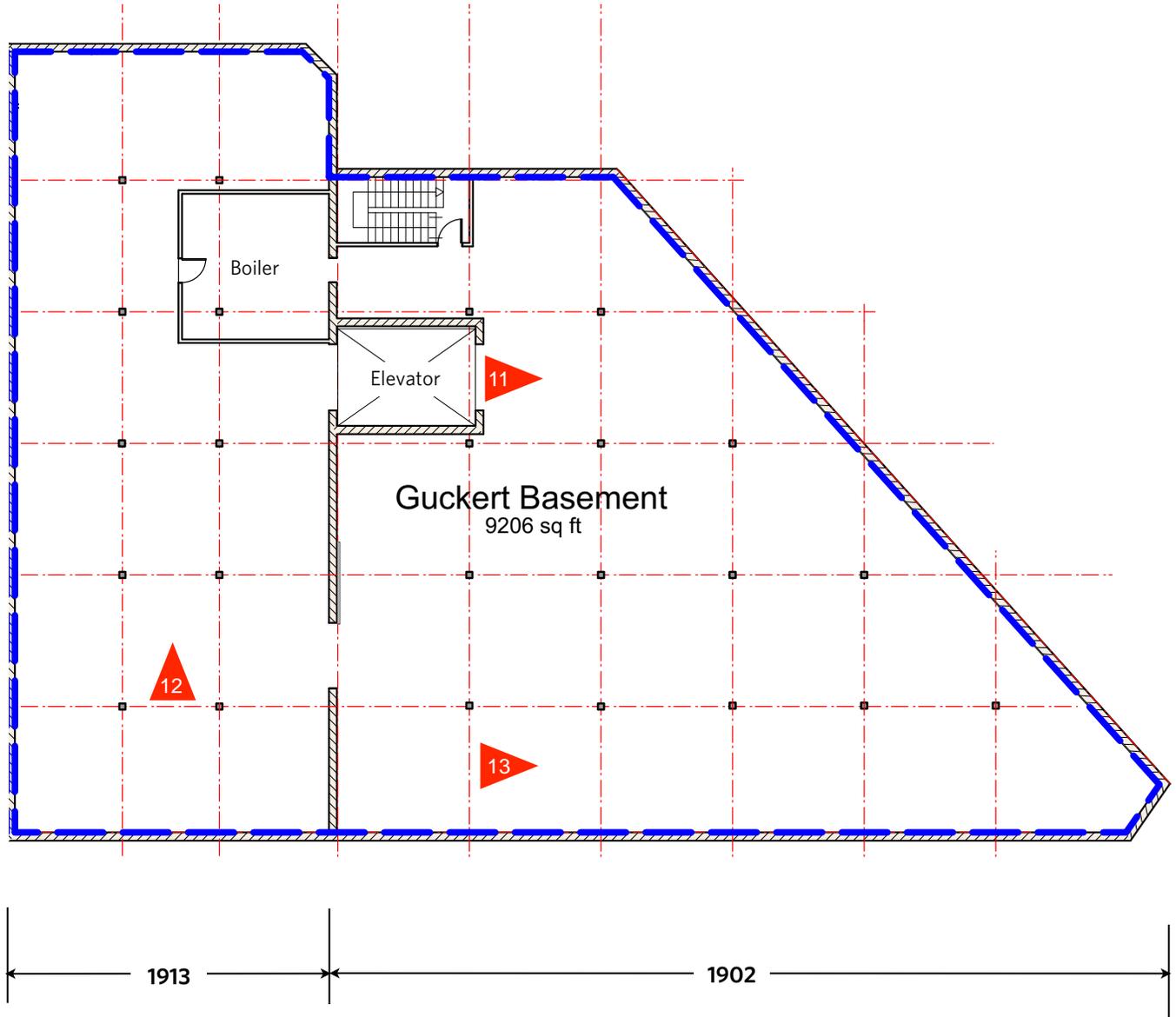


Figure B. Basement Plan and Photo Key.





Figure C. First Floor Plan and Photo Key.



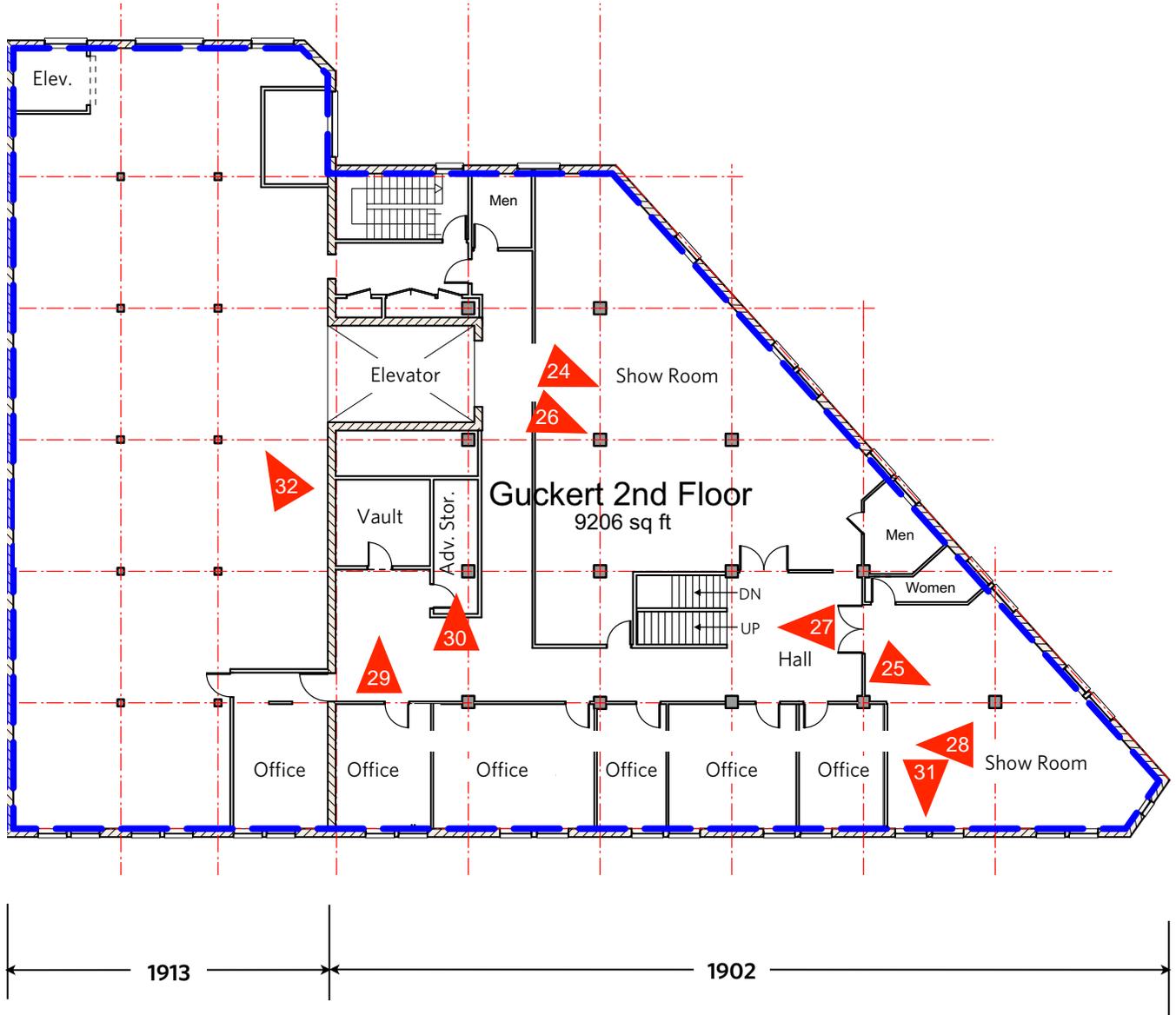


Figure D. Second Floor Plan and Photo Key.



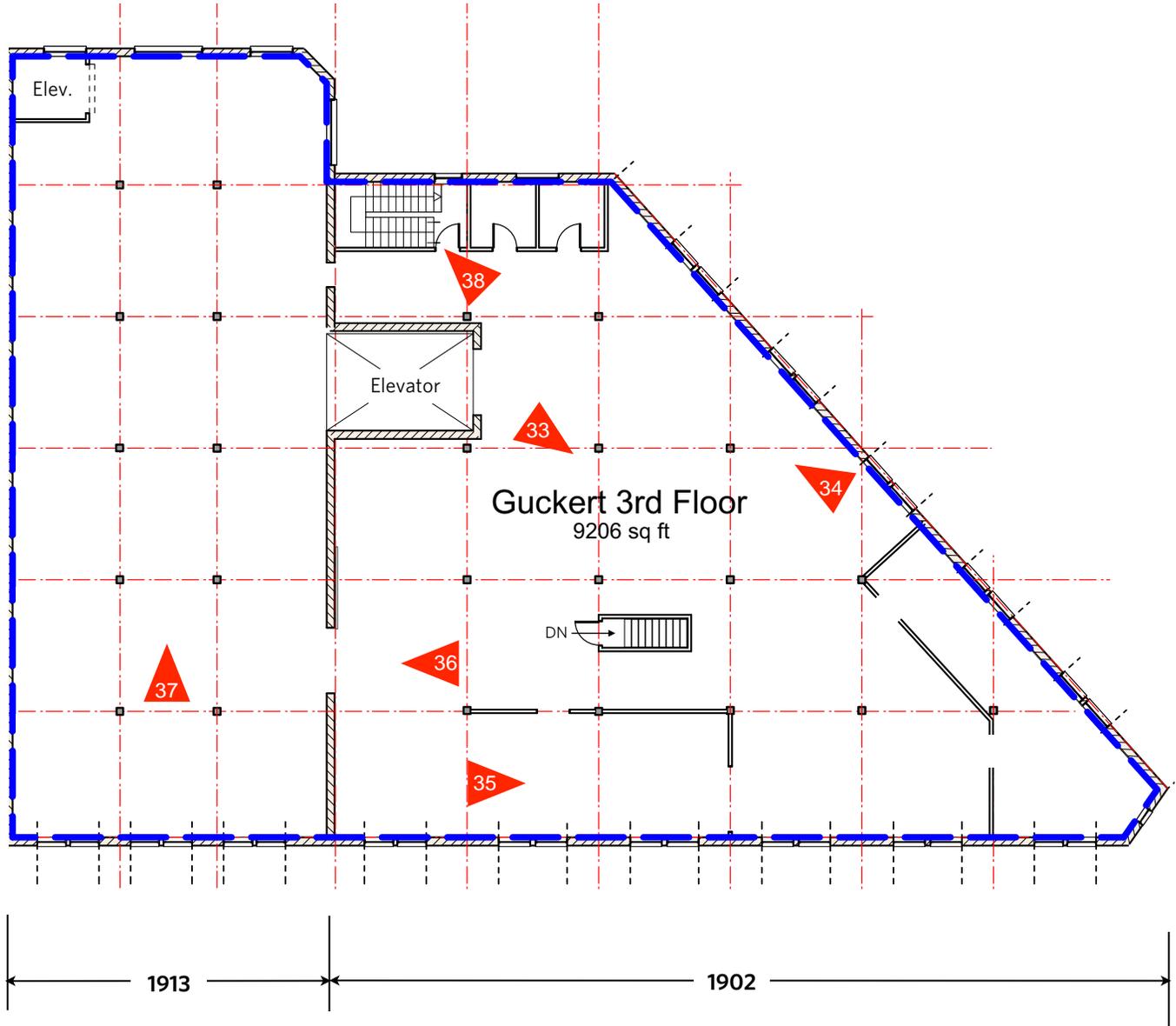


Figure E. Third Floor Plan and Photo Key.



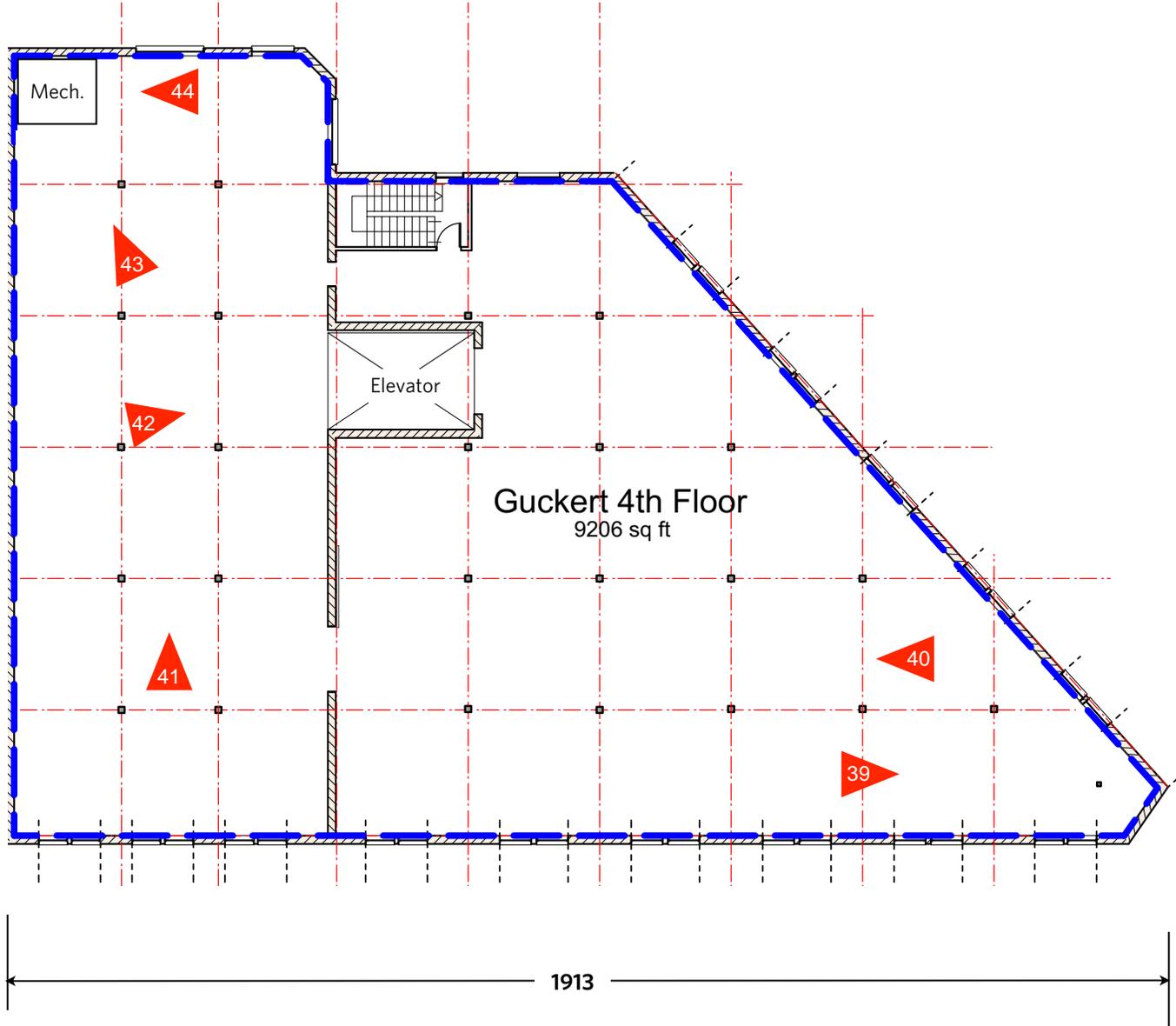


Figure F. Fourth Floor Plan and Photo Key.





Photo 1. Front facade, looking northwest, showing the building's flatiron form and the foreshortened height of first-story window openings resulting from grade changes to the street to accommodate alterations to the adjacent bridge.



Photo 2. Streetscape, showing West North Avenue looking west, with the Guckert/International Harvester Building on the right.



Photo 3. Front facade, looking northeast, showing the adjacent Katsafanas Coffee Company Building on the left.



Photo 4. Streetscape, showing West North Avenue looking east, with the Guckert/International Harvester Building in the center of the image.



Photo 5. Front facade, looking north, showing competing ghost signs painted in the upper cornice. The "Harry Guckert Co." sign is fading and revealing parts of the older "International Harvester Company" sign.



Photo 6. Northeast facade, looking west, showing the elevated rail siding from 1913 and first-story windows that were infilled with brick c. 1962, after International Harvester vacated the building in 1959.



Photo 7. Northeast facade, looking southeast, showing the elevated rail siding and loading dock from 1913.



Photo 8. Rear of building, looking west from across the railroad tracks.



Photo 9. Rear of building, looking south, showing the 1912-1913 edition on the right.

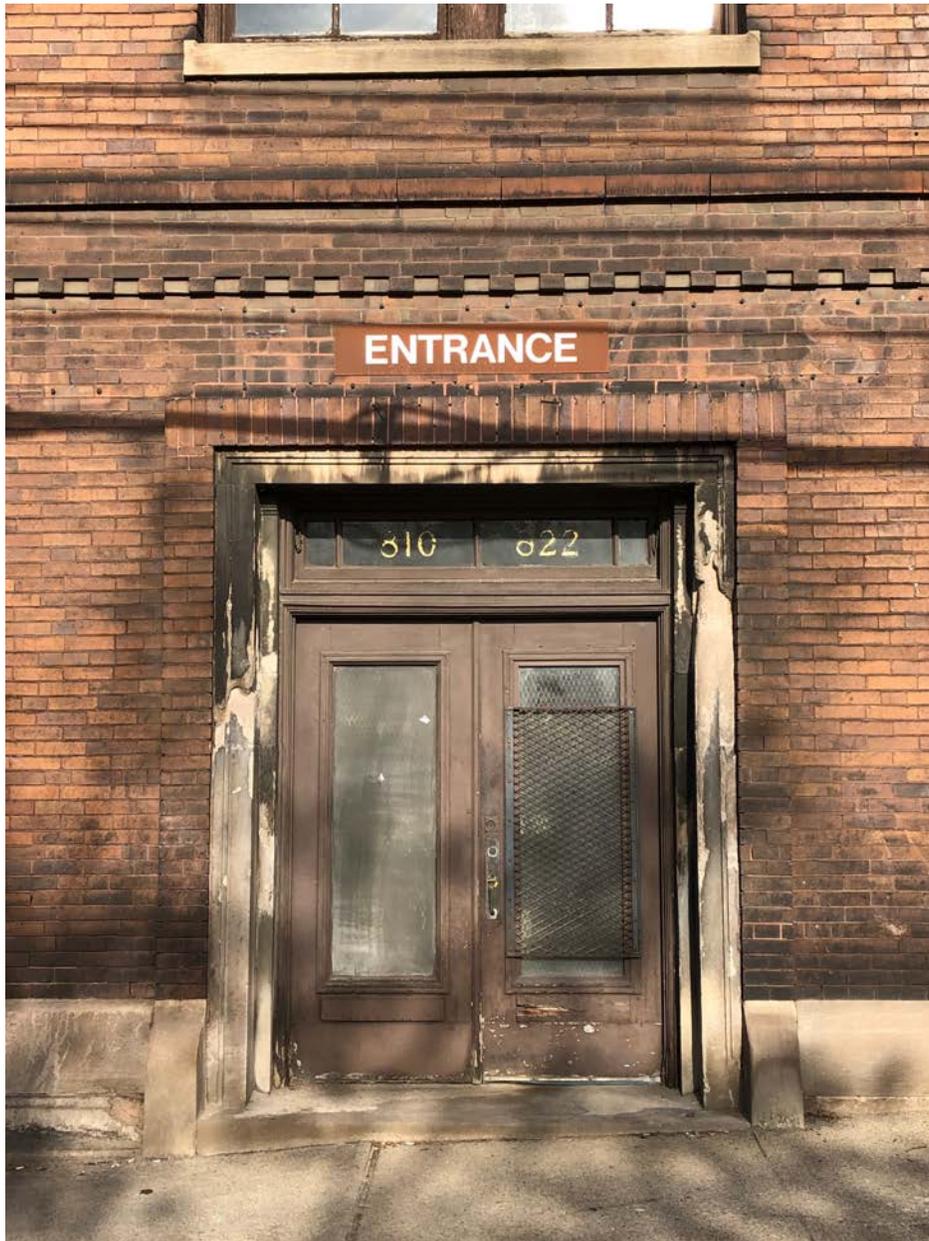


Photo 10. Detail of front entrance, looking north. The "Entrance" sign hangs over the letters "HARVES" from an earlier painted International Harvester sign.



Photo 11. Basement, looking east in the older section of the building, showing the brick wall in the background that contained openings onto the loading dock prior to the 1912-13 renovations.

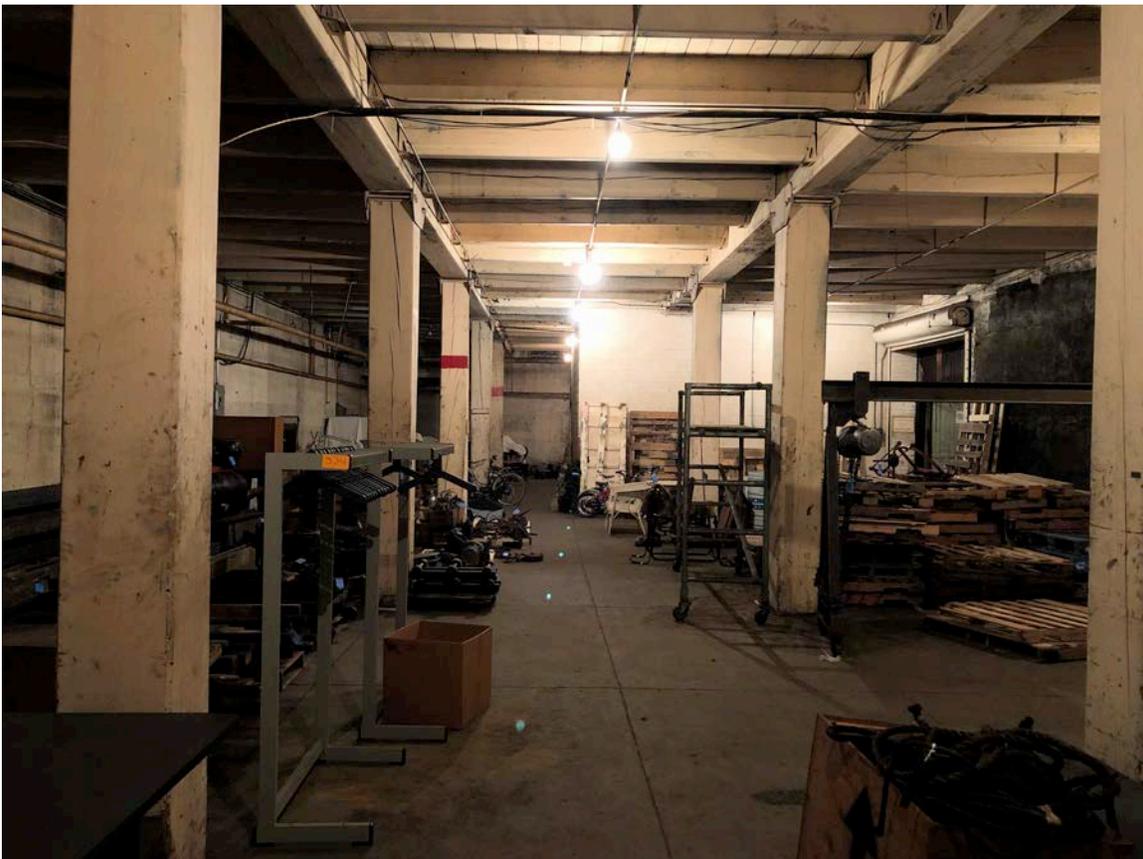


Photo 12. Basement, looking north in the 1912-13 addition.

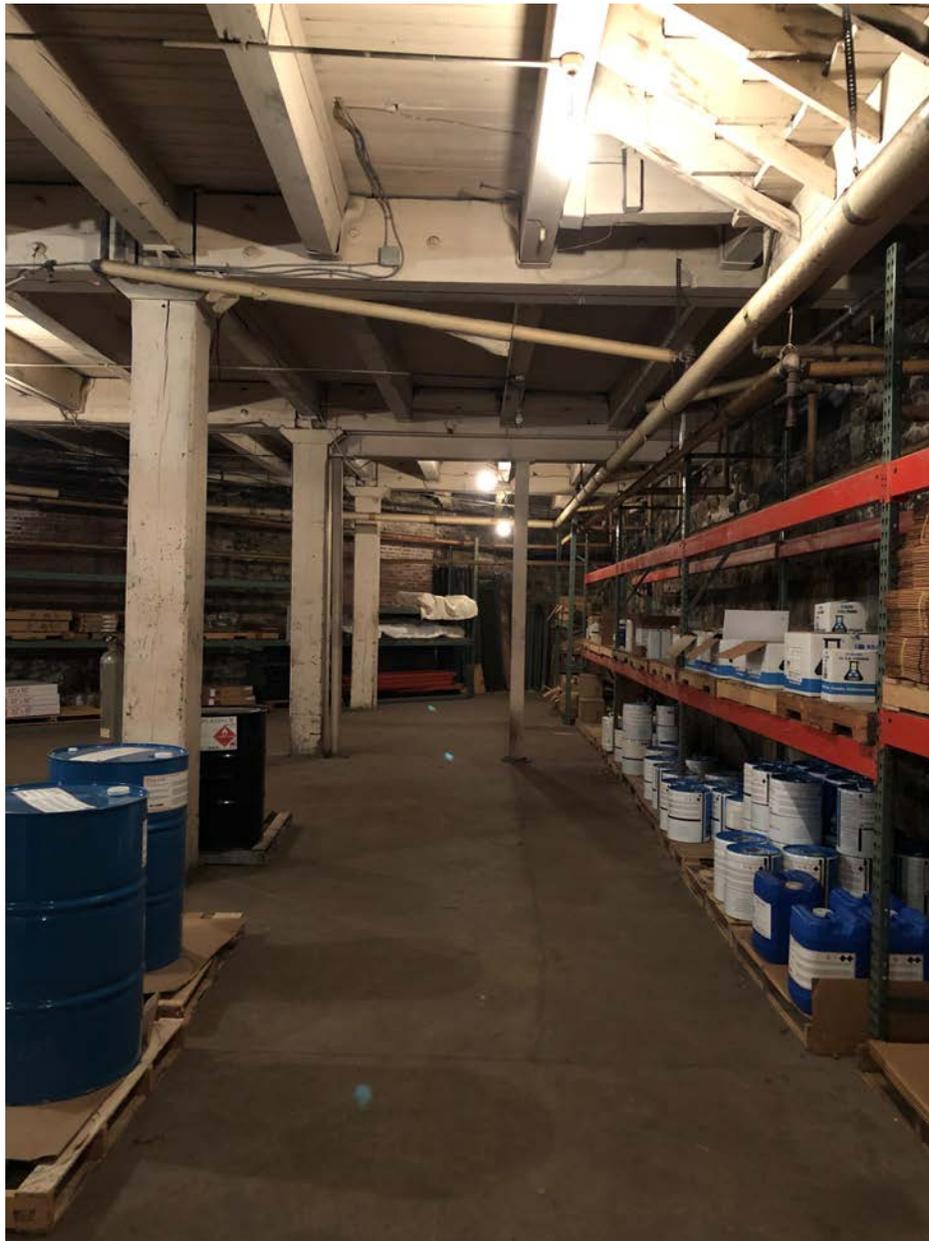


Photo 13. Basement, looking east in the older section of the building, showing the underside of stairs in the upper right corner, which existed inside the main entrance prior to the elevation of the street c. 1929.



Photo 14. First floor, looking northwest in the older section of the building, showing the door from the entrance vestibule (far left) and the underside of the stairs to the former IHC show room and offices (upper right).



Photo 15. First floor, entrance vestibule, looking southwest.

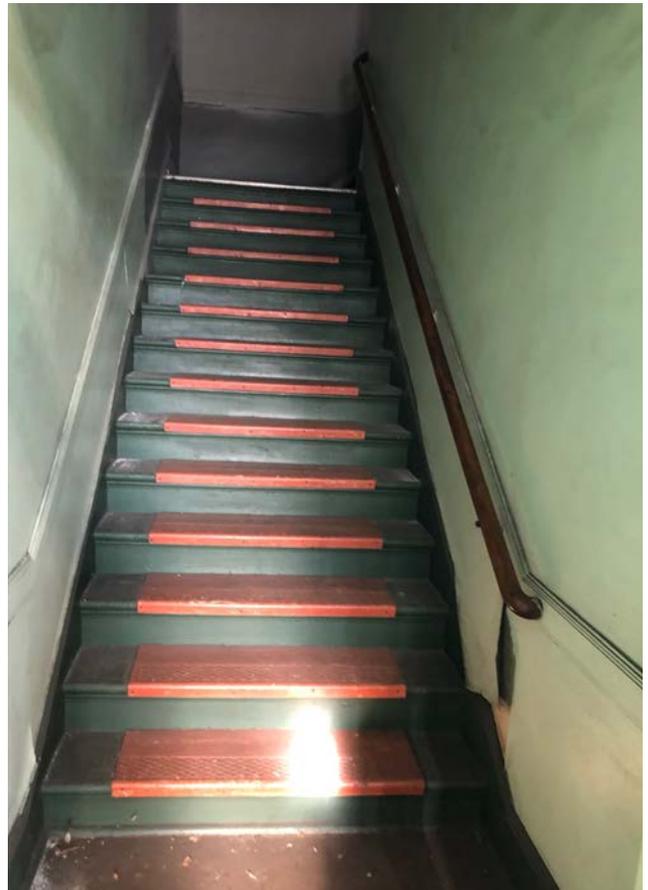


Photo 16. First floor, entrance vestibule, looking north, showing the stairs to the former IHC show room and offices.



Photo 17. First floor, looking east from the entrance vestibule in the older section of the building, showing the offices of the Guckert Company.



Photo 18. First floor, looking south in the older section of the building.



Photo 19. First floor, looking southeast from the loading dock entrance in the older section of the building, showing the large service counter of the Guckert Company on the right.



Photo 20. First floor, looking west from the service counter in the older section of the building, showing one of the entries into the 1912-13 addition along with its fire protection door.



Photo 21. First floor, looking north in the 1912-13 addition, showing the former vehicle entrance into what would have been the IHC service department.



Photo 22. First floor, looking east, showing the inside of the loading dock entrance into the older section of the building.

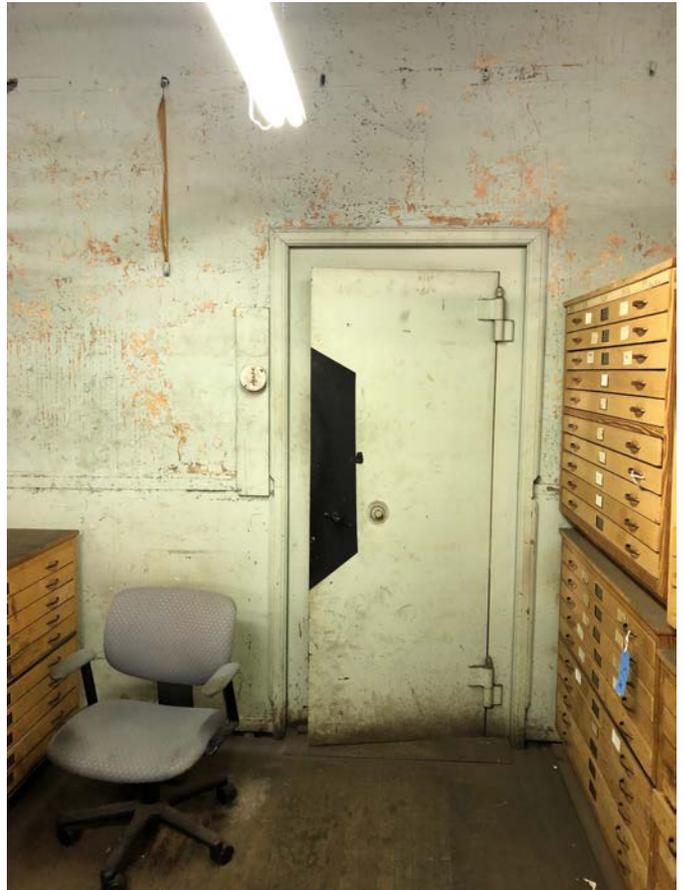


Photo 23. First floor, looking west, showing the door to a large walk-in vault.



Photo 24. Second floor, looking east from the main elevator in the older section of the building, showing the ornate tin ceiling and decorative wood column covers of the former IHC show room.



Photo 25. Second floor, looking southeast in the older section of the building, showing more of the ornate tin ceiling and decorative wood column covers of the former IHC show room.



Photo 26. Second floor, looking east in the older section of the building, showing a detail of the ornate tin ceiling of the former IHC show room.



Photo 27. Second floor, looking west in the older section of the building, showing the stairs down to the front entry and up to the third floor, along with the interconnected offices (on the left).



Photo 28. Second floor, looking west in the older section of the building, showing the inter-connected offices and their windowed partitions.



Photo 29. Second floor, looking north in the older section of the building, showing the entrance to the vault (left) and advertising storage (center).



Photo 30. Second floor, looking north in the older section of the building, showing the interior of the storeroom for advertising materials.



Photo 31. Second floor, looking south in the older section of the building, showing an example of the unusual six-over-two muntin pattern used on windows throughout the building.

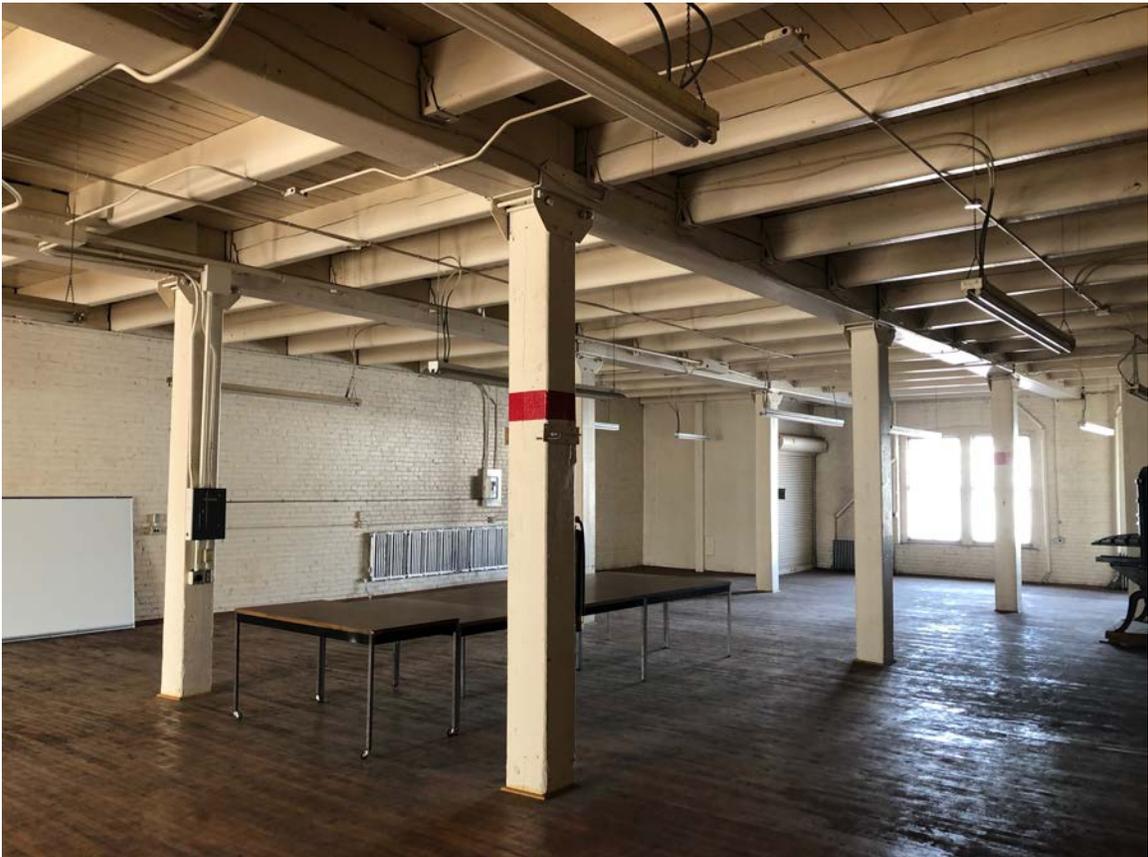


Photo 32. Second floor, looking northwest in the 1912-13 addition, showing the smaller freight elevator in the far corner.



Photo 33. Third floor, looking southeast in the older section of the building, showing the stair down to the former IHC show room and offices.



Photo 34. Third floor, looking northwest in the older section of the building toward the main elevator (left)



Photo 35. Third floor, looking east in the older section of the building, showing a store room.



Photo 36. Third floor, looking west through the fire protection door into the 1912-13 addition.



Photo 37. Third floor, looking north in the 1912-13 addition.



Photo 38. Third floor, looking northwest in the older section of the building, showing the brick fire protection enclosure around the main stairs.



Photo 39. Fourth floor (which was added in 1912-13), looking east.

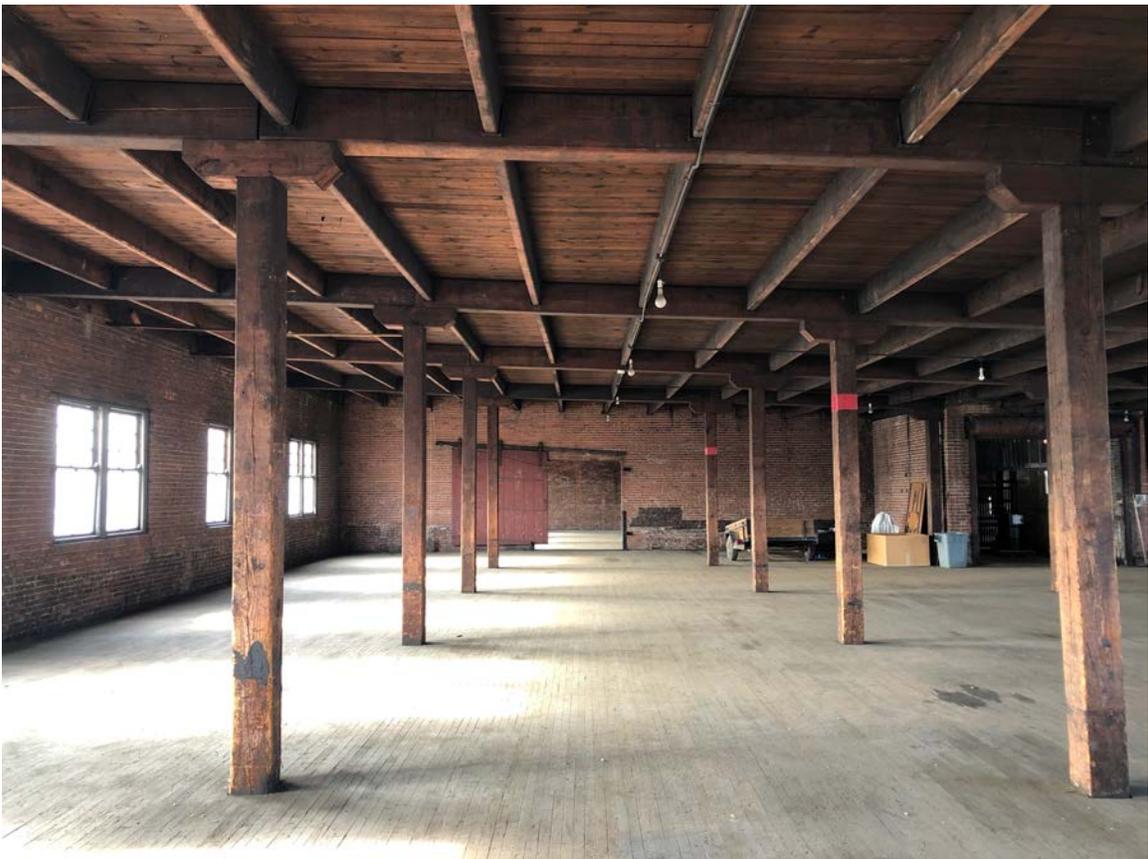


Photo 40. Fourth floor, looking west.



Photo 41. Fourth floor, looking north.



Photo 42. Fourth floor, looking northeast, showing the main elevator with its front and rear doors and roll-down fire protection door.



Photo 43. Fourth floor, looking northwest, showing the motor for the smaller elevator that served floors one through three.

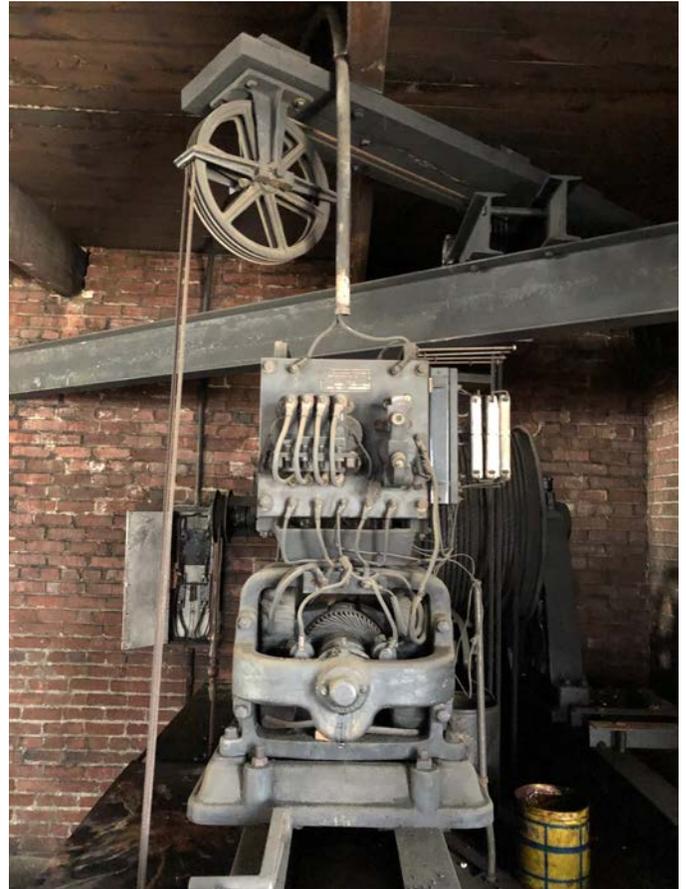


Photo 44. Fourth floor, looking west, showing a close-up of the elevator motor.