

B-1019

Bethlehem Steel Key Highway Shipyard, (Skinner Shipyard)

Architectural Survey File

This is the architectural survey file for this MIHP record. The survey file is organized reverse-chronological (that is, with the latest material on top). It contains all MIHP inventory forms, National Register nomination forms, determinations of eligibility (DOE) forms, and accompanying documentation such as photographs and maps.

Users should be aware that additional undigitized material about this property may be found in on-site architectural reports, copies of HABS/HAER or other documentation, drawings, and the “vertical files” at the MHT Library in Crownsville. The vertical files may include newspaper clippings, field notes, draft versions of forms and architectural reports, photographs, maps, and drawings. Researchers who need a thorough understanding of this property should plan to visit the MHT Library as part of their research project; look at the MHT web site (mht.maryland.gov) for details about how to make an appointment.

All material is property of the Maryland Historical Trust.

Last Updated: 03-10-2011

B-1019
Bethlehem Steel Key Highway Shipyard
Baltimore City
Private

As Baltimore and its harbor expanded during the nineteenth century so did the industries that centered around the harbor and trade. Shipbuilding and repairs became an important aspect of the city's economic development. Beginning with the small Skinner shipyards in the 1840's to the present Bethlehem Steel yards, the Locust Point and Federal Hill areas have been associated with ship repair for many years. Through reorganization, the early Skinner yards and later the Baltimore Drydock Company have expanded to the 35 acre Key Highway yard which make it, along with the Fort McHenry yard, the largest shipbuilding facility in the United States.

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. B-1019

Magi No. 0410195716

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Skinner Shipyard

and/or common Bethlehem Steel Key Highway Shipyard

2. Location

street & number 1201 Key Highway ☐ not for publication

city, town Baltimore ☐ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Bethlehem Steel Corporation

street & number telephone no.:

city, town Bethlehem, Pennsylvania state and zip code 18016

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Courthouse liber JFC 1310

street & number Fayette and Calvert Streets folio 418

city, town Baltimore state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title none

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. B-1019

Condition

☒ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Because of the high volume of work done in the 20th century there is almost nothing remaining of the early 19th century shipyards that originally occupied the Bethlehem Steel Key Highway site. In 1896 three such shipbuilding and repair facilities, a lumber yard and at least three canneries were located there. The site of the modern warehouse structure which is located at the northern boundary of the property was then an oyster cannery, a lumber yard occupied the open lot to the south and a second cannery, the Moore & Brady Oyster Packing Company was also located in this lot. The important Booz Brothers Shipyard occupied the site of the present blacksmith shop. The timbers of its marine railway, demolished during World War II expansion, is the only remnant of this once active yard. South of Booz Brothers was the Baltimore Ship repair Co. and the J.S. Beacham & Brother Shipyard which operated a second railway. This was apparently a small boat yard since it was the most limited in area for storage. South of Beacham's was an adjunct to the Reeder Shipyard. This company's main yard was north of Federal Hill and was once of the most significant early steamship builders. The auxiliary yard was a lumber storage area. A large cannery, the Houghton Packing Company, separated Reeder's from the William Skinner and Sons Shipyard, the largest and most important of the period. In 1896 Skinner operated a marine railway and by 1906 the firm also operated a drydock, once of the first in the city. About 1910 the company built a large graving dock on the site of the present graving dock. The present one was slightly altered after Bethlehem Steel's acquisition of the company in the 1920's. As ships grew larger they superceded the limits of the railway for hauling.

The oldest structures on the site are the present machine shop and fabricating shop, the office building and its wing and the powerhouse. All were built in the 1920's as part of Bethlehem Steel's move into shipbuilding. The machine shop and fabricating shop are of steel frame construction with truss roof. They are excellent examples of the new factory architecture which capitalized on the advantages of the curtain wall to bring maximum light into the workspace. A short brick wall section at ground level supports a glass window wall which reaches the roof level. The machinery for fabricating parts is inside, including a large lathe for turning propeller shafts. South of the machine shop is the fabricating shop where the pieces were assembled prior to being moved outside. This building is similarly built with large doors opening to an outdoor staging area. East of the south half is an addition containing a sheet metal shop and a furnace for heating and bending plates.

During the late 1930's Bethlehem Steel acquired the small shipyards at the northern end of the site and demolished all the old buildings, erecting in their place the concrete structure which dominates the site. This structure is three stories high with one level below the grade of Key Highway. This building houses the storage and

8. Significance

Survey No. B-1019

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	☐ architecture	☐ education	☐ military	☐ social/
☐ 1700–1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☒ 1800–1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☒ 1900–	☐ communications	☒ industry	☐ politics/government	☒ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

As Baltimore and its harbor expanded during the nineteenth century so did the industries that centered around the harbor and trade. Shipbuilding and repairs became an important aspect in the economic development of the city. Beginning with the small Skinner shipyards in the 1840's to the present Bethlehem Steel yards, the Locust Point and Federal Hill area have been associated with ship repair for many years. Through reorganization, the early Skinneryards and later the Baltimore Drydock Company have expanded to the 35 acre Key Highway yard which make it, along with the Fort McHenry yard, the largest shipbuilding facility in the United States.

In 1827, William Skinner acquired a shipyard on Henry Street at the foot of Federal Hill. The yard was used for the construction of small vessels until the 1840's. (In 1832, the first attempt at construction of a steam powered vessel by the Skinners met with failure when the boilers of the Experiment exploded.) In 1845, the Skinner yard was expanded and moved to Cross Street. This move was made to facilitate the growing business of steamboat construction. Many boats built by the Skinners at this time were used in the coffee trade with South America.

Repairs constituted a major part of the business throughout the history of the Skinner shipyard. To increase the capacity

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. B-1019

Vertical File, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland Department

Rukert, Norman: Federal Hill and The Port: Pride of Baltimore

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kevin Dolan, Intern

organization Baltimore Museum of Industry

date 2/83

street & number 1415 Key Highway

telephone 727-4808

city or town Baltimore

state Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

B-1019

Bethlehem Steel Key Highway Shipyard

Baltimore City, Maryland

7.1

workshops of the outside workforce. Beginning at the south end is the riggers shop, the outside machine shop, and the blacksmith shop, which supplied necessary support to the men working on the ships and in the yard. Other service areas like the compressor room, firefighting room and maintenance shop occupied the yard level and second story. The third story contained extensive locker rooms and eating facilities for the force which numbered several thousand during periods of peak employment.

The last major structures are the woodworking shop and electrical shop at the south end of the yard. Wooden patterns and ship carpentry for staging and other construction were done in the carpenter shop on the ground level. The second story was devoted to the joiner shop where mold patterns for castings and more skilled woodworking was done. The electrical shop is a similar structure to the south where welding equipment was stored and repair of electrical instruments was performed. Both the woodworking and electrical shops date to World War II.

for repairs, in 1853 the Skinners built a 550 foot long marine railway, capable of lifting 800 tons. This railway was one of the largest in the United States. In 1899 the Skinners constructed a graving dock, 628' by 125', that was the largest south of New York. This new construction reflected the growth of the repair industry for the yards.

In 1906, Skinner acquired the Locust Point yard of the Baltimore Drydock Company. Both yards were operated until 1913 when the Skinner Shipyard went into receivership. The yards were reorganized in 1916 as the Baltimore Shipbuilding and Drydock Company which was taken over by Bethlehem Steel in 1921.

Bethlehem Steel reorganized its departments in 1923 by moving all its shipbuilding to Sparrow's Point and its repair facilities to Baltimore's Key Highway yard (the Skinner yard with additional newly purchased acreage). In order to improve the Key Highway facilities, two floating drydocks, one of 6000 tons and another of 20,000 tons were moved to Key Highway. The shops in the yard were modernized to handle all types of repairs and ship conversions. During World War II, the facilities repaired over 2500 ships. The Baltimore yards of Bethlehem Steel constituted the largest ship repair operation in the United States.

1. SITE NO.

8-1019

HAER INVENTORY

Historic American Engineering Record
Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240

2. INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION

Manufacture

3. PRIORITY

4. DANGER OF DEMOLITION?
(SPECIFY THREAT)☒ YES☐ NO☐ UNKNOWN

5. DATE

6. GOVT SOURCE OF THREAT

OWNER

ADMIN

7. OWNER ADMIN

Bethlehem Steel Corp.

8. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE

Bethlehem Steel Key Highway Shipyard

9. OWNER'S ADDRESS

B

10. STATE
COUNTY

MD

COUNTY NAME

CITY/VICINITY

Baltimore

CONG
DISTSTATE
COUNTY

PA

COUNTY NAME

CITY/VICINITY

Bethlehem

CONG
DIST

11. SITE ADDRESS: STREET & NO.

1201 Key Highway

12. EXISTING
SURVEYS☐ NR☐ NHL☐ HABS☐ HAER-I☐ HAER☐ NPS☐ CL6☐ CONF☐ STATE☐ COUNTY☐ LOCAL☐ OTHER

13. SPECIAL FEATURES: DESCRIBE BELOW:

☐ INTERIOR INTACT☐ EXTERIOR INTACT☐ ENVIRONS INTACT

14. UTM ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

SIGN

SCALE

☒ 1:24☐ 1:62.5QUAD
NAME

Baltimore East

UTM ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

SIGN

SCALE

☐ 1:24☐ 1:62.5QUAD
NAME

15. CONDITION

70 ☐ EXCELLENT71 ☒ GOOD72 ☐ FAIR73 ☐ DETERIORATED74 ☐ RUINS75 ☐ UNEXPOSED76 ☒ ALTERED82 ☐ DESTROYED85 ☐ DEMOLISHED

16. INVENTORIED BY

Kevin Dolan

AFFILIATION

Baltimore Museum of Industry

DATE

5/83

17. DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND HISTORY, INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION DATE(S), HISTORICAL DATE(S), PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS,
MATERIALS, EXISTANT EQUIPMENT, AND IMPORTANT BUILDERS, ENGINEERS, ETC.

See attached

(CONT OVER)

18. ORIGINAL USE

manufacture

PRESENT USE

vacant

ADAPTIVE USE

19. REFERENCES—HISTORICAL REFERENCES, PERSONAL CONTACTS, AND/OR OTHER

vertical file Enoch Pratt Library, main branch

(CONT OVER)

20. URBAN AREA 50,000
POP. OR MORE?☒ YES ☐ NO

21. NPS REGION

22. PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY

☐ YES, LIMITED☐ YES, UNLIMITED☒ NO☐ UNKNOWN

23. EDITOR

INDEXER

24. LOCATED IN AN HISTORIC DISTRICT?

☐ YES☒ NO

NAME

DISTRICT ID NO

R I V E R

PIERCE

PIERCE

Nº : DEVDOC

№ 2 ДРЪ БОСН

GRAVING DOCK

NEW HP 4 DRYDOF
(4400CLT)
SEASIDE 172"
KISS 804
OVERALL 878

MONTGOMERY ST.

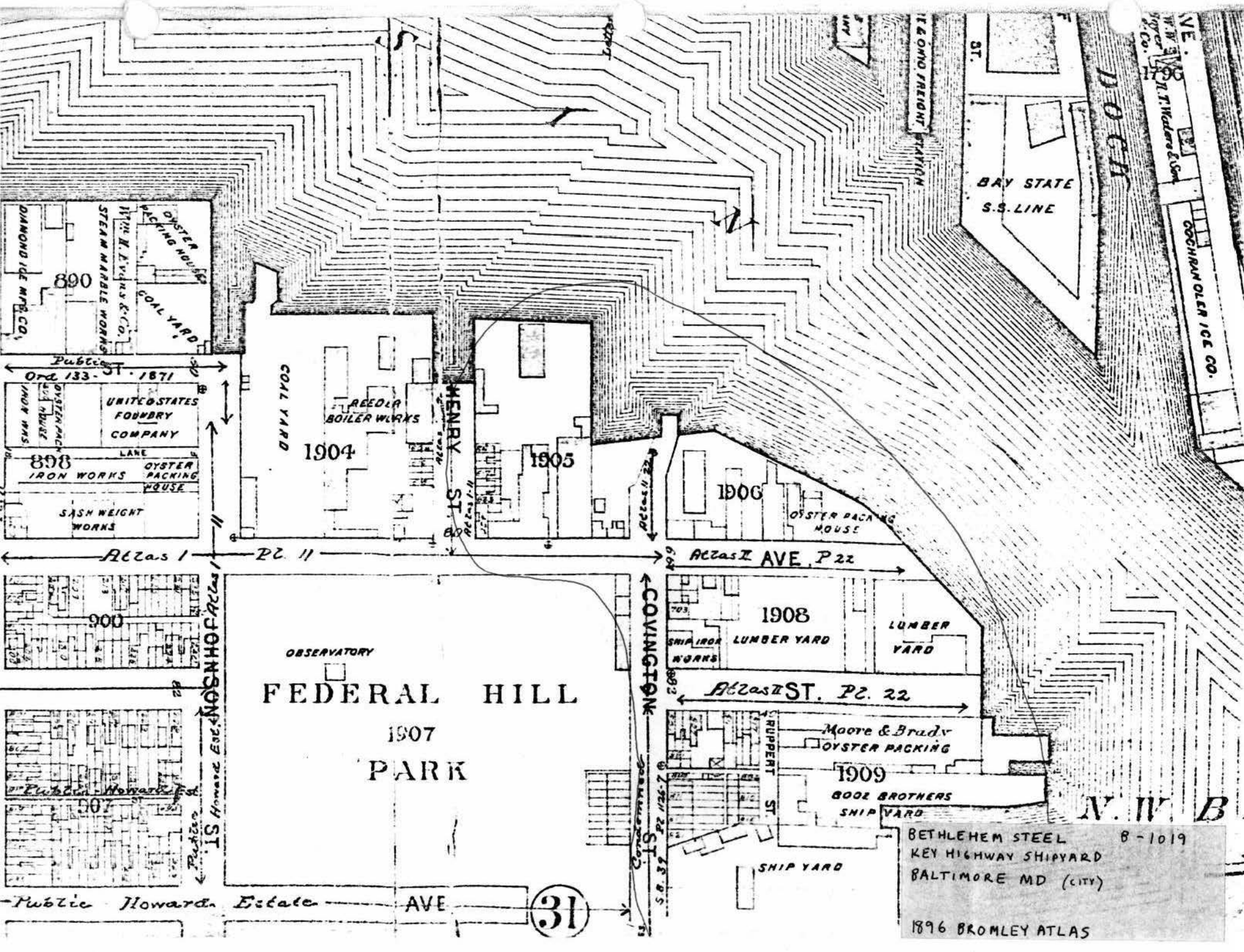
K E Y

F

H W A Y

KEY HIGHWAY YARD

SCALE 1" = 50'



DIAMOND ICE MFG. CO.
890
STEAM MARBLE WORKS
Wm. H. Evans & Co.
OYSTER PACKING HOUSES
COAL YARD

Public Ord 133 - ST. 1871
UNITED STATES FOUNDRY COMPANY
898
OYSTER PACKING HOUSE
IRON WORKS
SASH WEIGHT WORKS

900
Public Howard Estate
1907

COAL YARD
1904
REED & BOILER WORKS
HENRY ST.

1905

1906
OYSTER PACKING HOUSE

1908
SHIP IRON WORKS
LUMBER YARD

1909
MOORE & BRADY OYSTER PACKING
BOOE BROTHERS SHIP YARD
SHIP YARD

FEDERAL HILL
OBSERVATORY
1907
PARK
Public Howard Estate

ST.
BAY STATE S.S. LINE
DOCK
W. H. T. M. & Co.
OCHMAN OLER ICE CO.
ALCOHOL FREIGHT STATION
N. W. B.
BETHLEHEM STEEL 8-1019
KEY HIGHWAY SHIPYARD
BALTIMORE MD (CITY)
1896 BROMLEY ATLAS

31

BROMLEY ATLAS 1896



15 AVE.

P A R K

1000

1913

1944

☐ SHIP YARD

Readers
1917

1916

ST

CAN
FACTORY

1922

1922
William Skinner & Sons
SHIP YARD

1921

1920

4919

AVE:

ST

ST. 1924

SSANDERS

7923

44-38861-301

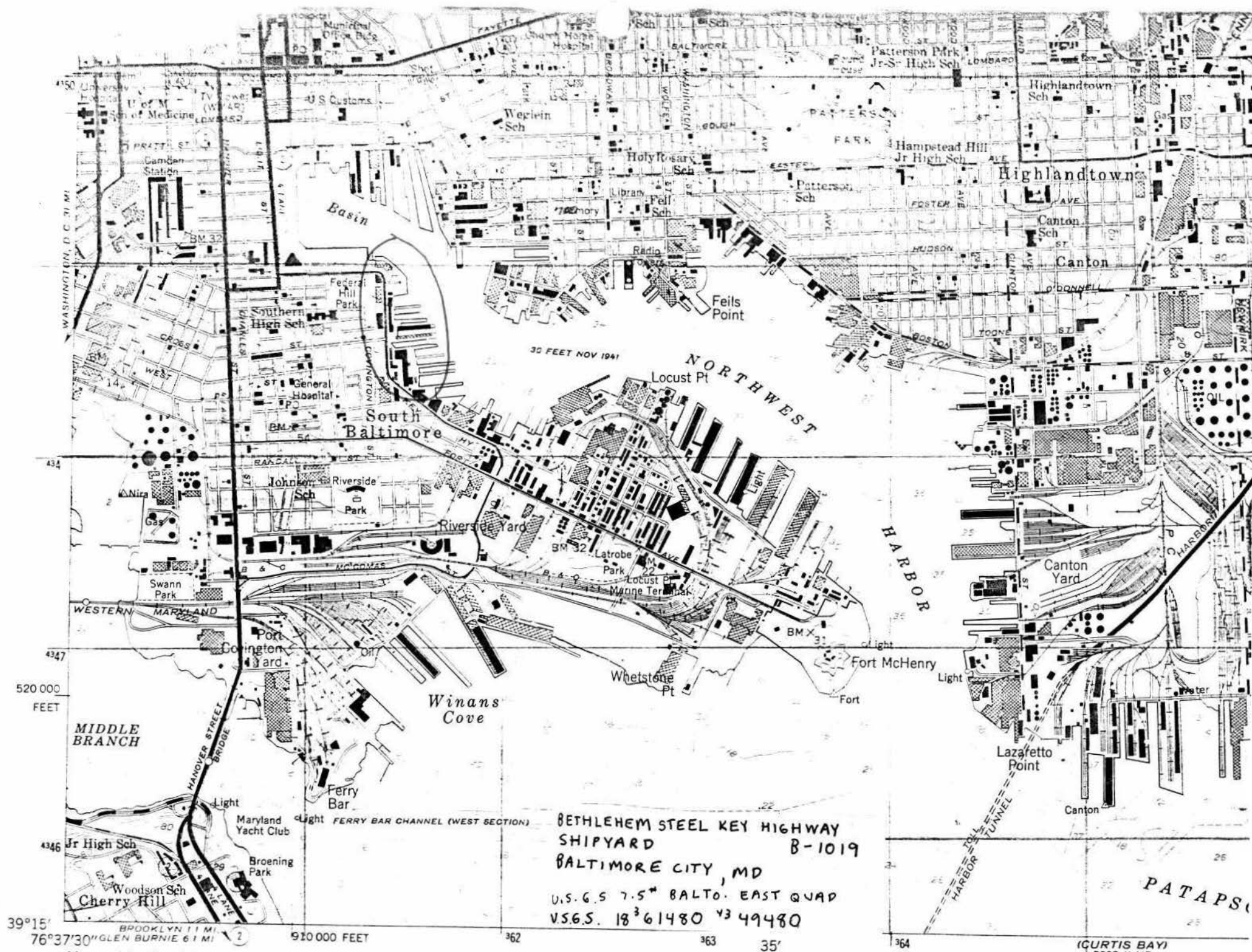
Caroline

~~BELT ST.~~

Storey & B...
OSTER-PAGE
E L L i c o t t
Small...
ICKERS

William Munse

ST-Plat 502-3





Key Highway Shipyard 8-1019

Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83

LOOKING NORTH EAST
FROM KEY HIGHWAY.



Key Highway Shipyard
Baltimore City Md

8-1019

Peter Liebhold 4/83

LOOKING EAST FROM

KEY HIGHWAY.



Key Highway Shipyard B-1019
Baltimore City Md
Peter Liebhold

MAIN GATE
LOOKING EAST



Key Highway Shipyard B-1019

Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83

LOOKING SW, ALONG WATERFRONT



Key Highway Shipyard 0-1019
Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83
LOOKING N.W. FROM KEY MOUNT,
DINNER SHOP; MULO ROOM



Key Highway Shipyard B-1019

Baltimore City Md

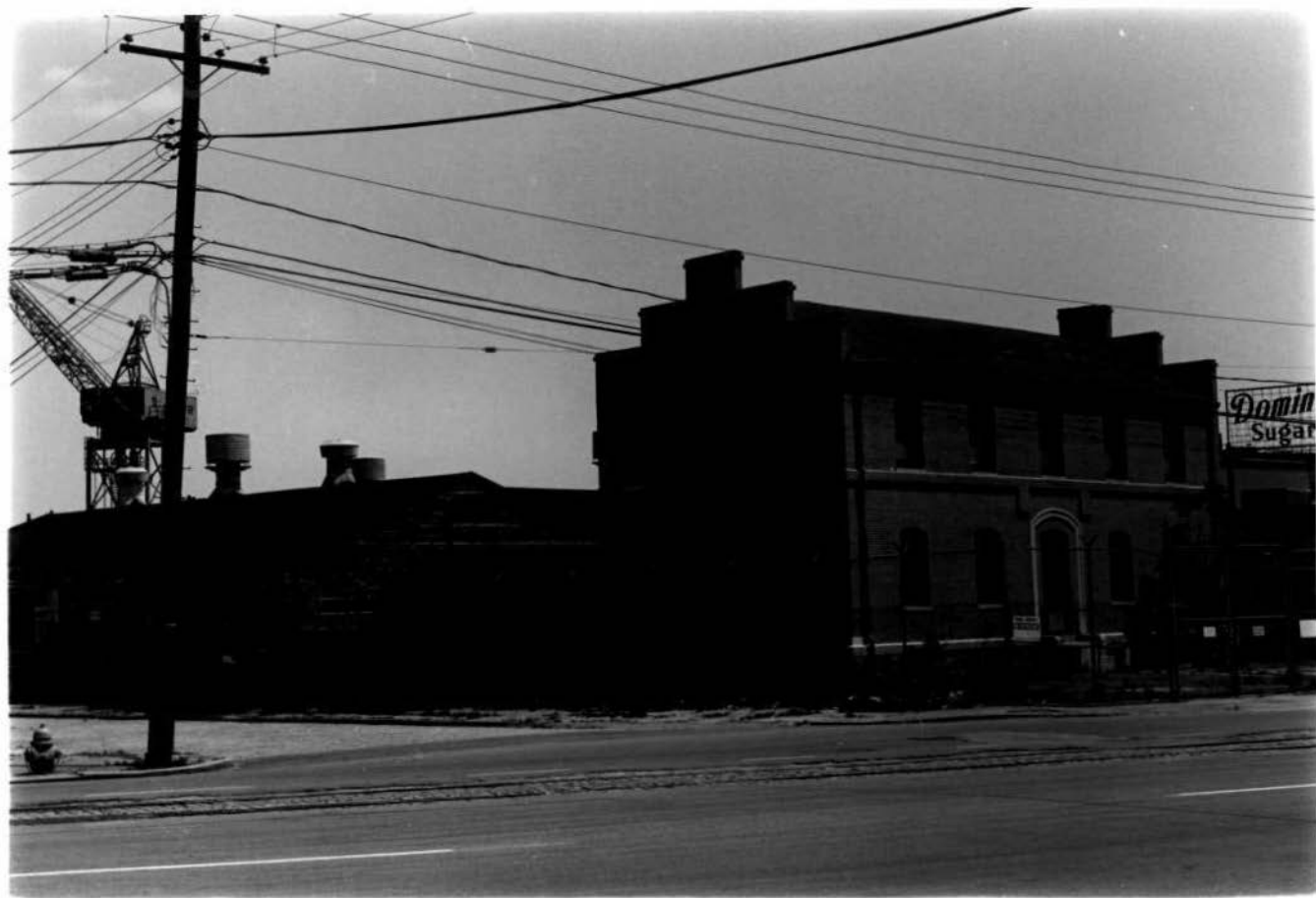
Peter Liebhold 4/83

LOOKING N.W. FROM HIGHWAY



Key Highway Shipyard 8-1019
Baltimore City Md
Peter Liebhold 4/83

Looking N.W. FROM
GRAVING DOCK.



Key Highway Shipyard 0-1019
Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83

LOOKING SEE FROM KEY HIGHWAY, OFFICE

BLDG. TEMPORARIES



Key Highway Shipyard B-1019
Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83

LOOKING S.W. AT CORNER of
Machine Shop.



Key Highway Shipyard B-1019
Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83

LOOKING N.W. AT MACHINE SHOP.



Key Highway Shipyard B-1019

Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83

Pipe Shop Looking North.



Key Highway Shipyard 8-1019

Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83

LOOKING N.E. AT GRAVING DOCK PUMP
House.



Key Highway Shipyard 8-1019

Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83

LOOKING NORTH AT REMAINS OF MARINE
RAILWAY ON NORTH SIDE OF SITE.



Key Highway Shipyard 8-1019

Baltimore City Md

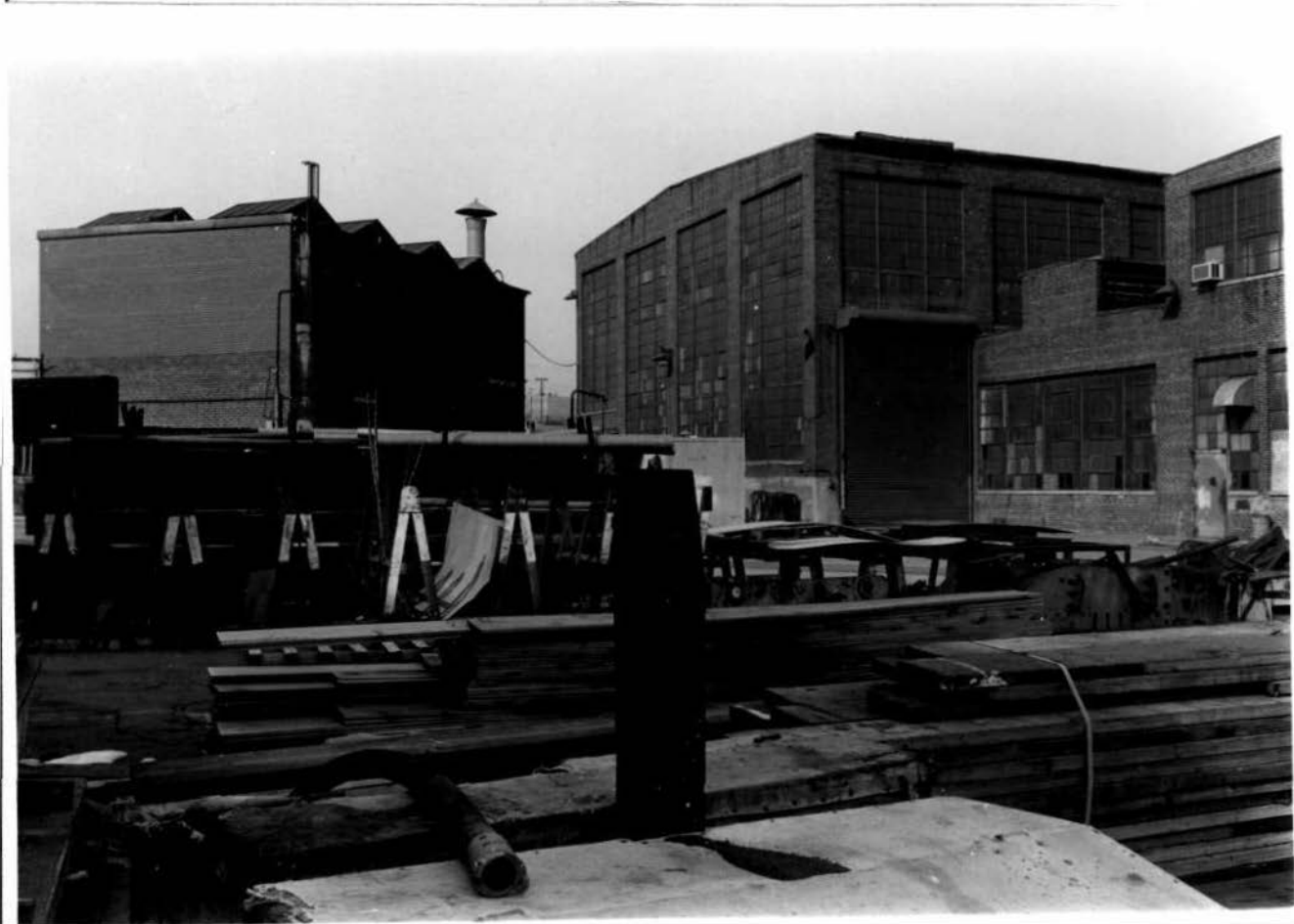
Peter Liebold 4/83

LOOKING EAST AT GRAVING DOCK.



Key Highway Shipyard 8-1019
Baltimore City Md
Peter Liebhold 4/83

Compressor Room
Looking N.W.



Key Highway Shipyard B-1019
Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83

LOOKING
Sheet

N.W. AT
METAL

ACETYLENE

generator is

SHOPS.



Key Highway Shipyard B-1019
Baltimore City Md
Peter Liebhold 4/83
MACHINE SHOP



Key Highway shipyard 8-1019
Baltimore city Md
Peter Liebold 4/83

MACHINE SHOP

LOOKING S.E.



Key Highway Shipyard 8-1019

Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83

~~Power House~~
~~COMPRESSOR Room~~

LOOKING N.E.



Key Highway Shipyard B-1019
Baltimore City Md
Peter Liebhold 4/83

OFFICE BUILDING,
LOOKING EAST



Key Highway Shipyard 8-1019

Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83

LOOKING S.W. AT DOCK CONTROL
Building



Key Highway Shipyard B-1019

Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83

LOOKING S.W. AT ~~COMPRESSOR~~ Powerhouse
BUILDING.



Key Highway Shipyard
Baltimore City Md
Peter Liebhold 4/83

B-1019

LOOKING N.W. AT MOLD SHOP & Electrical
Department.



Key Highway Shipyard
Baltimore City Md
Peter Liebhold 4/83

B-1019

FABRICATION Shop
Looking South



Key Highway Shipyard 8-1019

Baltimore City Md

Peter Liebhold 4/83

LOOKING SW. AT BLACKSMITH SHOP



Key Highway Shipyard B-1019
Baltimore City Md
Peter Liebhold 4/83

INTERIOR OF
BLACKSMITH SHOP
