

B-1094

Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company

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.

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Last Updated: 03-10-2011

Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company
Baltimore City, Maryland
B-1094
private, 1916

Statement of Significance

The Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company, founded in 1896, was the nation's largest manufacturer of porcelain enamel signs in the 1930's. Originally located in Locust Point, the company moved to a newly-constructed 250,000 square feet plant in Mt. Winans in 1919. This brick complex is a good example of "suburban" industrial plants of this period.

Maryland Historical Trust

State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 2121/2125 Wicomico Street ☐ not for publication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: UNOCCUPIED

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

name National Can Company

street & number 1915 Aliceanna Street telephone no.: 563-7000

city, town Baltimore state and zip code Maryland 21231

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Courthouse liber CWM 4082

street & number Fayette and Calvert Streets folio 82

city, town Baltimore state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

☐ None

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. B-1094

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.

Constructed in 1916, the Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company illustrates a marked tendency in the early twentieth century to separate administrative from manufacturing functions in shop complexes. This structure is divided into an office building on the east and manufacturing space adjacent on the west. Despite this separation, the functional requirements dictated that the two be integrated.

The office structure is a two-story brick masonry building fourteen bays wide and two bays deep. Most bays have three double hung sash windows except for the end bays and those where shipping needs required changes. The structure faces the tracks of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad spur and the second floor is level with a loading platform along the track. Consequently the second floor contained the offices and facilities of the shipping department. A bridge from the loading dock enters the shipping room in the northern end at this level. The shipping room is connected to the shipping department offices at the south end of the building and to the warehouse by a fire door in the western wall. The first floor was occupied by other corporate offices.

The manufacturing building consists of a central, two-story structure flanked by one story wings, the three being the same width as the office. This structure is of brick construction with steel column and beam support. The roof of the center portion is a low gable supported by three rows of timber posts and beams.

Manufacturing operations were concentrated on the first level, a departure from the multi-story plants of the nineteenth century. The plant was located in a somewhat unsettled area where land was relatively inexpensive and the advantage of single story production could be developed. The second floor of the central portion was used as a warehouse only.

The process began in the Press Room, which occupied the northern wing. Large stamping presses formed the sheets of timplite to the desired shape for signs, utensils, and other company products. After cleaning in caustic and then in acid, the objects were taken to the Dipping Department in the central portion of the building. Like all machine-based plants, the company relied on its own machinists to keep the large presses and other machines in operation. The machine shop was located in the east end of the north wing, near the presses. The machine shop also produced the large dies for the presses, a cornerstone of the company's success.

(continued)

8. Significance

Survey No. B-1094

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 1916

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.

The Baltimore Enameling and Novelty Company, founded in 1896, was the nation's largest manufacturer of porcelain enamel signs in the 1930's. Originally located in Locust Point, the company moved to this newly-constructed 250,000 feet plant in Mt. Winans in 1919. This two and one-story brick complex is a good example of "surburban" industrial plants of this period.

The Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company was founded as the Baltimore Enameling Company in 1896 by Rudolph Drinhaus, a malt salesman and Theodore Zivermann, an employee at Matthai Ingram and Company (which was later absorbed by the National Enamel and Stamping Company). The capital for the venture was provided by Henry Brehm, a brewery owner. The company, originally located at Woodall and Clement Streets in Locust Point, manufactured enameled cooking utensils and enameled signs by applying a form of glass to sheet metal. Their enamel signs were the first such product made in the U.S. In 1901, the company was reorganized and the name changed to the Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company.

By 1916, the company was ready to expand its operations in Locust Point, but a dispute with the city over taxes led to the purchase of land in Mt. Winans, just over the city line in Baltimore County, near the Maryland Glass Company. The new plant was built in 1917 and 1918, though by the time it was ready to be occupied in 1919 Mt. Winans had become a part of Baltimore City. By 1939, Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company was the largest manufacturer of porcelain enamel signs in the country. The company employed between 350 - 400 workers in their 250,000 square feet producing a fine line of enameled signs as well as storefronts which were promoted for their beauty, cleanliness and permanence. The Company noted that after the Great Fire of 1904, a large Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company sign of the Seaboard Air Line Railway which was in the heart of the fire district was found undamaged.

(continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. B-1094

Baltimore magazine January 1939

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

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F

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G

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H

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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 Leslie Barr, Ann Steele, Dennis Zembala

organization Baltimore Museum of Industry date July 1983

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

Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company
Baltimore City, Maryland
B-1094

7.1

The Dipping Department consisted of large vats and tables where the glass frit was applied to the metal. This was done either by spraying, stenciling, or screen printing. The dried signs were then baked in ovens to fuse the glass particles.

The Furnace Room occupied the south wing of the building. This structure has a metal roof supported on steel trusses consistent with the presence of an increased fire hazard. A raised monitor runs in the center of the clear span for ventilation. Several individual furnaces along the south wall were used for small ware. A continuous baffle furnace was later installed to handle signs as wide as six feet.

East of the office building and adjacent to the railroad tracks is the former powerhouse. This is a high one-story brick masonry building with a roof supported on riveted steel trusses. Inside, a brick wall divides it into a boiler room and an engine room. Three original boilers still remain, manufactured in 1917 by the Casey-Hedges Company of Chatanooga, Tennessee. In the engine room, a set of generators and the switch panel still remain although the dynamo engines have been removed. A duplex steam powered water pump still remains.

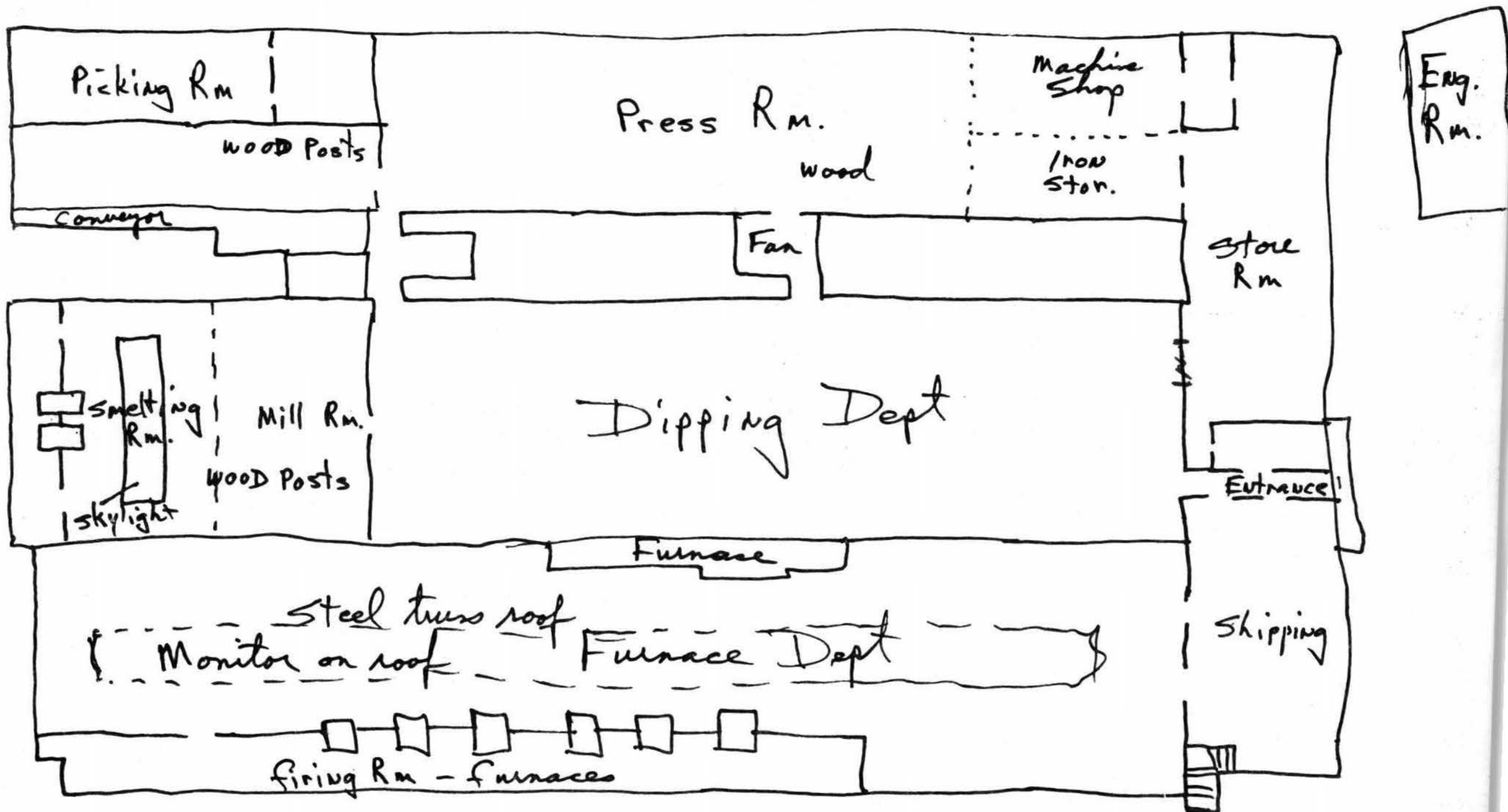
The entire complex ceased operations several years ago and is in very deteriorated condition.

Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company
B-1094
Baltimore City, Maryland

8.1

Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company purchased sheet metal from a number of area rolling mills, and sent the sheets through their cutting department to be machine cut into various shapes. Many of them were then stamped into a special design on large punch presses. The firm had a major die making department to produce the dies for the stamping presses. Other areas of the plant included a welding shop, pickling shop and enameling shop. The firm's special enamel was made at the plant from a mixture of clay, coloring, water and "frit" (fine bits of white glass). The coats of enamel were fired to the metal in the burning department, where sheets were sent through a giant continuous furnace and heated to a temperature of 1500° F - 1600° F. In 1939 the company had a 2,000 square feet per hour firing capacity. This furnace, erected in 1925, was one of the first continuous furnaces in the country and the first in the sign industry. The Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company also built the first furnace in the country large enough to enamel signs six feet in height. They also developed a permanent red color enamel.

The Baltimore Enamel and Novelty Company was bought out by the Baltimore Porcelain Steel Corporation in 1946. In 1956, the property was sold to the Continental Milling and Feed Company, who owned it until 1961, when it was bought by R & R Realty Company. The Maryland Glass Company bought it in 1970, the Kelly Glass Company in 1978, and the National Can Company, its present owners, bought the property in 1981.



1. SITE NO B-1094		HAER INVENTORY		Historic American Engineering Record Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240	
2. INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION manufacture		3. PRIORITY	4. DANGER OF DEMOLITION? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ UNKNOWN		
		5. DATE 1917	6. GOVT SOURCE OF THREAT OWNER: ADMIN: 		
		7. OWNER/ADMIN National Can Company			
8. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE Baltimore Enamel + Novelty Company			9. OWNER'S ADDRESS 1915 Aliceanna Street		
10. STATE COUNTY	M D	COUNTY NAME	CITY/VICINITY	CONG DIST	
			Baltimore	03	
11. SITE ADDRESS (STREET & NO) 2121 / 2125 Wicomico Street			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	QUAD NAME
18	358380	4348350		☒ 1:24 ☐ 1:62.5	Balto West
				☐ OTHER	
15. CONDITION	70 ☐ EXCELLENT	71 ☐ GOOD	72 ☐ FAIR	73 ☒ DETERIORATED	74 ☐ RUINS
					75 ☐ UNEXPOSED
					76 ☐ ALTERED
					82 ☐ DESTROYED
					85 ☐ DEMOLISHED
16. INVENTORIED BY Leslie Barr, Dennis Zembala			AFFILIATION Baltimore Museum of Industry		DATE 7/83
17. DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND HISTORY, INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION DATE(S), HISTORICAL DATE(S), PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS, MATERIALS, EXTANT EQUIPMENT, AND IMPORTANT BUILDERS/ENGINEERS, ETC.					

See attached

18. ORIGINAL USE Manufacture		PRESENT USE Unoccupied		ADAPTIVE USE	
19. REFERENCES—HISTORICAL REFERENCES, PERSONAL CONTACTS, AND/OR OTHER Vertical file, Enoch Pratt Public Library Maryland Room Baltimore magazine January 1939					
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 I.D. NO	

B-1094

C I T Y
G W Y N N S

MARYLAND
GLASS CO.

MARYLAND

MANOKIN

KENT

W

E

S

HOLLINS FERRY

Mt Winans
Station

B & O.
R.R.

P O N D

SITE OF
BALTIMORE ENAMEL
AND NOVELTY CO.
BALTIMORE CITY, MD

1914 BROMLEY ATLAS
BALTIMORE COUNTY

Baltimore

Sarah A.
Russell

SUSQUEHANNA
ICE CO.

ST. PAUL'S
CHURCH

RUSSELL

WARNER

TIDEWATER

MARYLAND

MANOKIN

KENT

W

E

S

HOLLINS FERRY

Mt Winans
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SUSQUEHANNA
ICE CO.

ST. PAUL'S
CHURCH

RUSSELL

WARNER

TIDEWATER



5.5 MI TO MD. 7
HAVRE DE GRACE 37

17'30"

28 MI TO U.S. 40

4349

13 MI TO U.S. 40

4348

4347

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BALTIMORE ENAMEL & NOVELTY CO.
BALTIMORE CITY, MD. 8-1094
U.S. 7.5 BALTO. WEST
18³ 58380 43 48350

WASHINGTON, D.C. 29 MI. GLEN BURNIE 6.2 MI

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy duty ——— Light duty ———
- Medium duty - - - - - Unimproved dirt - - - - -
- () Interstate Route () U.S. Route () State Route

(CURTIS BAY)
5662 II NE

BALTIMORE WEST, MD.



B-1094

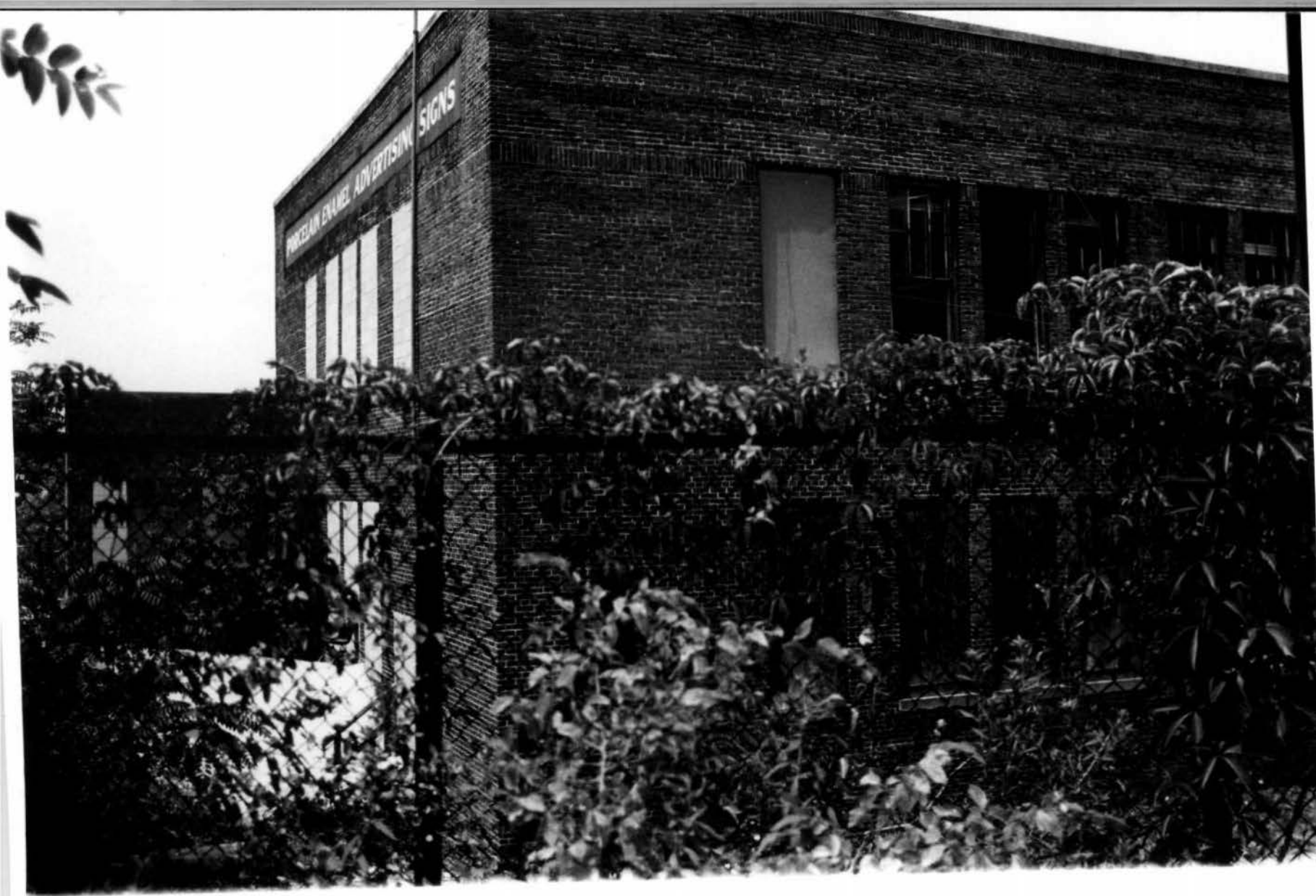
B-1

Balto. Enamel + Novelty Co.

Balto. City MD.

Peter Liebhold 7/83

East facade



B-1094

B-109

Balto. Enamel & Novelty Co.

Balto. City MD.

Peter Liebhold 7/83

Looking west at south

facade



B-1094

B-10

Balto. Enamel + Novelty Co.

Balto. City mp.

Peter Liebhold 7/83

Office - North facade



B-1094

B

Balto. Enamel & Novelty Co.

Balto. City MD.

Peter Liebhold 7/83

Office building - Shipping R.
Room Looking south



B-1094

Balto. Enamel & Novelty Co.

Balto. City M.D.

Peter Liebhold 7/83

Loading dock-looking north



B-1094

B-

Balto. Enamel & Novelty Co.

Balto. City MD.

Peter Liebhold 7/83

Powerhouse - looking north

THIS PART
MANUFACTURED
BY KODAK



B-1094

Balto. Enamel & Novelty Co.

Balto. City, MD.

Peter Liebhold 7/83

North wall of center sect

Section



B-1094

Balto. Enamel & Novelty Co.

Balto. City MD.

Peter Liebhold 7/83

Center section - looking
west



B-1094

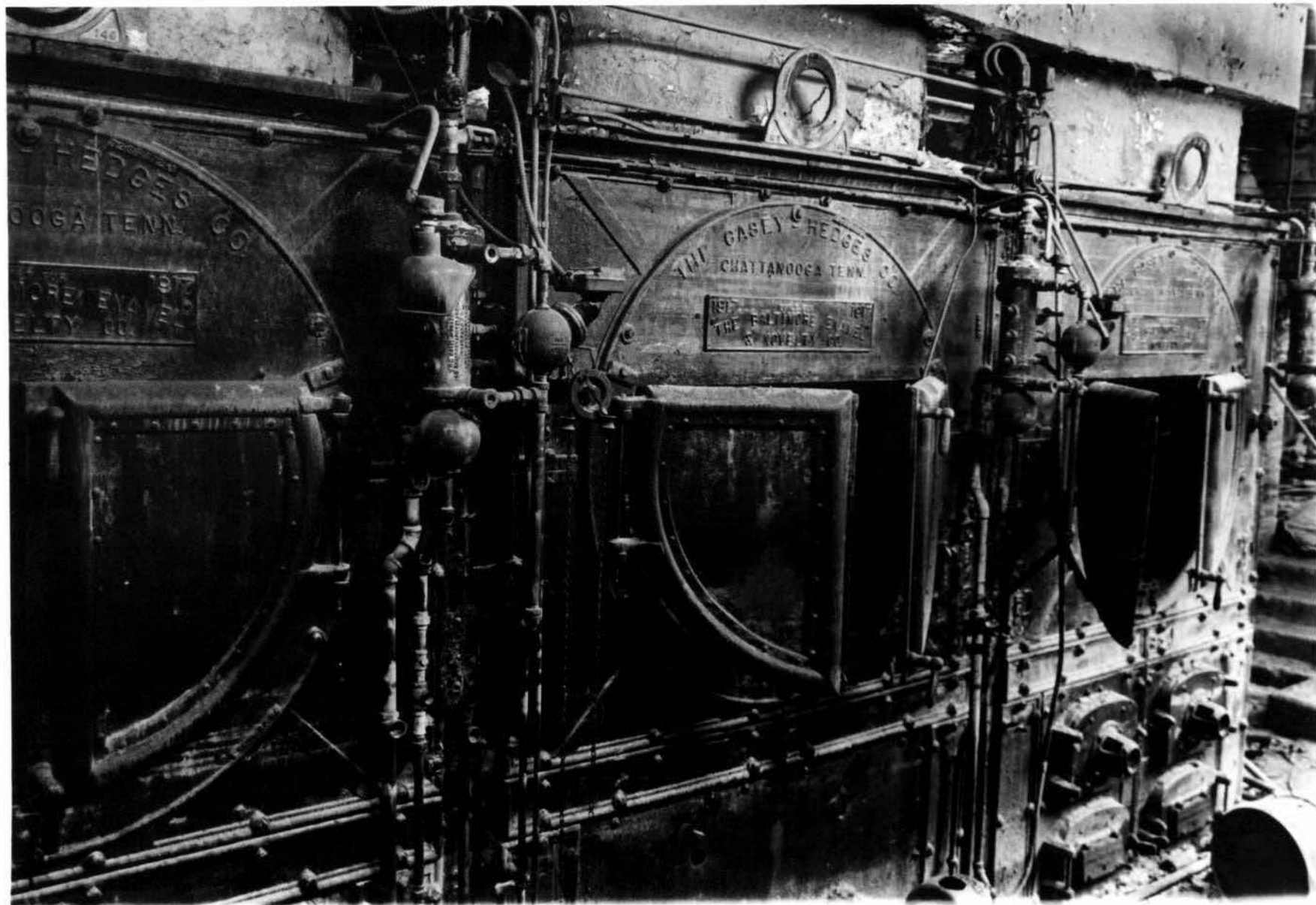
Balto. Enamel + Novelty Co.

Balto. City, Md.

Peter Liebhold 7/83

Engine Room - looking n

North



B-1094

B-10

Balto. Enamel & Novelty Co.

Balto. City MD.

Peter Liebhold 7/83

Horizontal fire tube Boilers

Boilers