

B-1046

L Gordon & Son Box Company

Statement of Significance

The building belonging to the L. Gordon and Son Box Company was constructed in 1900 by the Fred Bergner Company, a manufacturer of brushes, photo albums and other celluloid products which operated at this site until 1925. Gordon and Son, one of Baltimore's many ^{south} paper container companies, made mainly decorative boxes for a variety of retail products, including Milky Mak candy and Ouija boards. The fine three story brick structure, with its interesting decorative detailing and wood floors, is a good example of its class of industrial structures.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

L. Gordon and Son

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1050 S. Paca Street

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Louis Bluefeld, ETAL

Telephone #: 539-6537

STREET & NUMBER

same as above

CITY, TOWN

___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore City Courthouse

Liber #: RHB 2890

Folio #: 830

STREET & NUMBER

Calvert & Fayette Streets

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore, Maryland

MD^{STATE}

21202

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

B-1046

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The plant is composed of one U-shaped brick and reinforced concrete, three-story structure with a boiler house in the center of the "U". The closed (east) side of the "U" faces South Paca Street and the north wing is shorter than the south wing. The south facade is 18 bays wide in three sections. The central section projects slightly and has a sloping pediment with a six-point decorative star. The edges of the central section are finished with quoins. The central section is 10 bays wide with splayed brick flat lintels, granite sills, segmental arched windows, 6/6 lights, and double hung sash windows. A concrete belt course runs midway across the south facade, and a band of rusticated masonry runs along the bottom.

The brick powerhouse was damaged in a boiler explosion in the mid-1970s. It also has a truncated brick chimney.

The interior has brick load-bearing walls, wood floors and reinforced concrete post and beam construction with reinforced concrete ceilings. Posts are 12 inches square except in the basement where they are 18 inches square with 20 inch beams.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES **1900 - present** BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Between 1850 and 1870 paper bags, folding paper boxes, and rigid paper boxes began to replace paper bundles, tins and wooden crates for shipment of manufactured goods and produce. The industry originated in the midwest (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois) but Baltimore became a leading paper container center in the late 1800s.

From 1870 to 1902 the number of Baltimore paper box plants increased from 8 to 17, while from 1880 to 1902 the number of wooden box plants decreased from 19 to 16. Many large plants made their own paperboard and printed their own labels, but the manufacturers of paperboard, labels, paperboard processing machinery, and box-making machinery also became important ancillary industries. Manufacture of paper boxes for retail use was greatly stimulated by growth in local and national sales of clothing, cosmetics, food, and other goods in the post-Civil War, Depression, and post-World War II years. The development of a consumer culture also stimulated the design and manufacture of specialty boxes and decorative labels. Baltimore's output of paper boxes accounted for 5% of national production by the 1950s, but most locally made boxes were used locally until the 1940s. Paper box plants generally are divided among makers of folding boxes, rigid boxes, and folding corrugated cartons.

The single building was constructed in 1900 by the Fred Bergner Company which manufactured brushes, combs, mirrors, photo albums, and other celluloid items there from 1900 to 1925. It was designed by an architect who had designed several city schools. Louis Gordon, a Russian Jew, came to Baltimore in 1891 from Moscow where he had made boxes by hand. He and his family continued to make boxes by hand in their Front Street home and later by machine in a factory on Fallsway near Front Street. A fire destroyed the factory in 1925 and Gordon bought the Paca Street plant the following year. It had been owned by Parker Metal Decorating Company from 1925 to 1926. The box factory and printing shop occupied a portion of the building at first, later expanding into all sections.

Gordon's products have been mainly decorative, rigid boxes for retail sales of millinery, straw hats, the original Ouija board (a Baltimore invention), Milky Mak candy, Victory Racing Plates (aluminum horseshoes, since 1923), Whitman chocolates (since 1946), department store boxes, drugs, records, games, and electronic equipment. Today, L. Gordon

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Personal recollections of Betram Gordon.
Power Pictorial, Dec. 1925.

George Howard, The Monumental City, p.176.

Thomas Scharf, History of Baltimore City and County

Baltimore, Trade Queen of the South, 1902

~~CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY~~ (cont.)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Roger White

ORGANIZATION

Baltimore Industrial Museum

DATE

October, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

217 N. Charles Street

TELEPHONE

301-396-1931

CITY OR TOWN

Baltimore

STATE

Maryland 21201

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
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

L. Gordon & Son Box Company
8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE CONTINUED:

and Son sells 90% of its boxes to out-of-town customers, and 25% of its boxes are plastic. Eighty-seven employees work in the Paca Street plant. The company's current president, Bertram Gordon, is the founder's grandson.

L. Gordon & Son Box Company

9. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES CONTINUED:

"Baltimore Magazine" December 1933.

Enoch Pratt Free Library

Query File and Vertical File

U.S. Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

NAER INVENTORY

1. SITE I.D. NO

B 1 0 4 6

2. INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION

3. PRIORITY

4. DANGER OF DEMOLITION?
(SPECIFY THREAT)

YES NO UNKNOWN

5. DATE

6. GOVT SOURCE OF THREAT

OWNER

ADMIN

7. OWNER/ADMIN

L. Gordon and Son

8. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE

L. Gordon and Son

9. OWNER'S ADDRESS

1050 S. Paca Street

10. STATE
COUNTY

COUNTY NAME

CITY/VICINITY

CONG.
DIST.

3

STATE
COUNTY

COUNTY NAME

CITY/VICINITY

CONG.
DIST.

3

11. SITE ADDRESS (STREET & NO)

1050 S. Paca 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

1 8 3 5 9 6 2 0 4 3 4 8 8 7 5

SCALE

1:24 1:62.5

QUAD NAME

Baltimore West

UTM ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

SIGN

SCALE

1:24 1:62.5

QUAD NAME

15. CONDITION

70 EXCELLENT

71 GOOD

72 FAIR

73 DETERIORATED

74 RUINS

75 UNEXPOSED

76 ALTERED

82 DESTROYED

85 DEMOLISHED

16. INVENTORIED BY

Roger White

AFFILIATION

Baltimore Industrial Museum

DATE

October 1980

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

The single U-shaped three story brick and reinforced concrete building was constructed in 1900 by the Fred Bergner Company which manufactured brushes, combs, mirrors, photo albums, and other celluloid items there from 1900 to 1925. It was designed by an architect who had designed several city schools. Louis Gordon, a Russian Jew, came to Baltimore in 1891 from Moscow where he had made boxes by hand. He and his family continued to make boxes by hand in their Front Street home and later by machine in a factory on Fallsway near Front Street. A fire destroyed the factory in 1925 and Gordon bought the Paca Street plant the following year. It had been owned by Parker Metal Decorating Company from 1925 to 1926. The box factory and printing shop occupied a portion of the building at first, later expanding into all sections.

(CONT OVER)

18. ORIGINAL USE

Industrial (Celluloid products factory)

PRESENT USE

Industrial (Box manufac.)

ADAPTIVE USE

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

"Baltimore Magazine" December 1933.
Enoch Pratt Free Library
Query File and Vertical File
Personal Recollections of Bertram Gordon

(CONT OVER)

20. URBAN AREA 50,000 POP. OR MORE?

YES NO

21.

22. PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY

YES, LIMITED

YES, UNLIMITED

NO

UNKNOWN

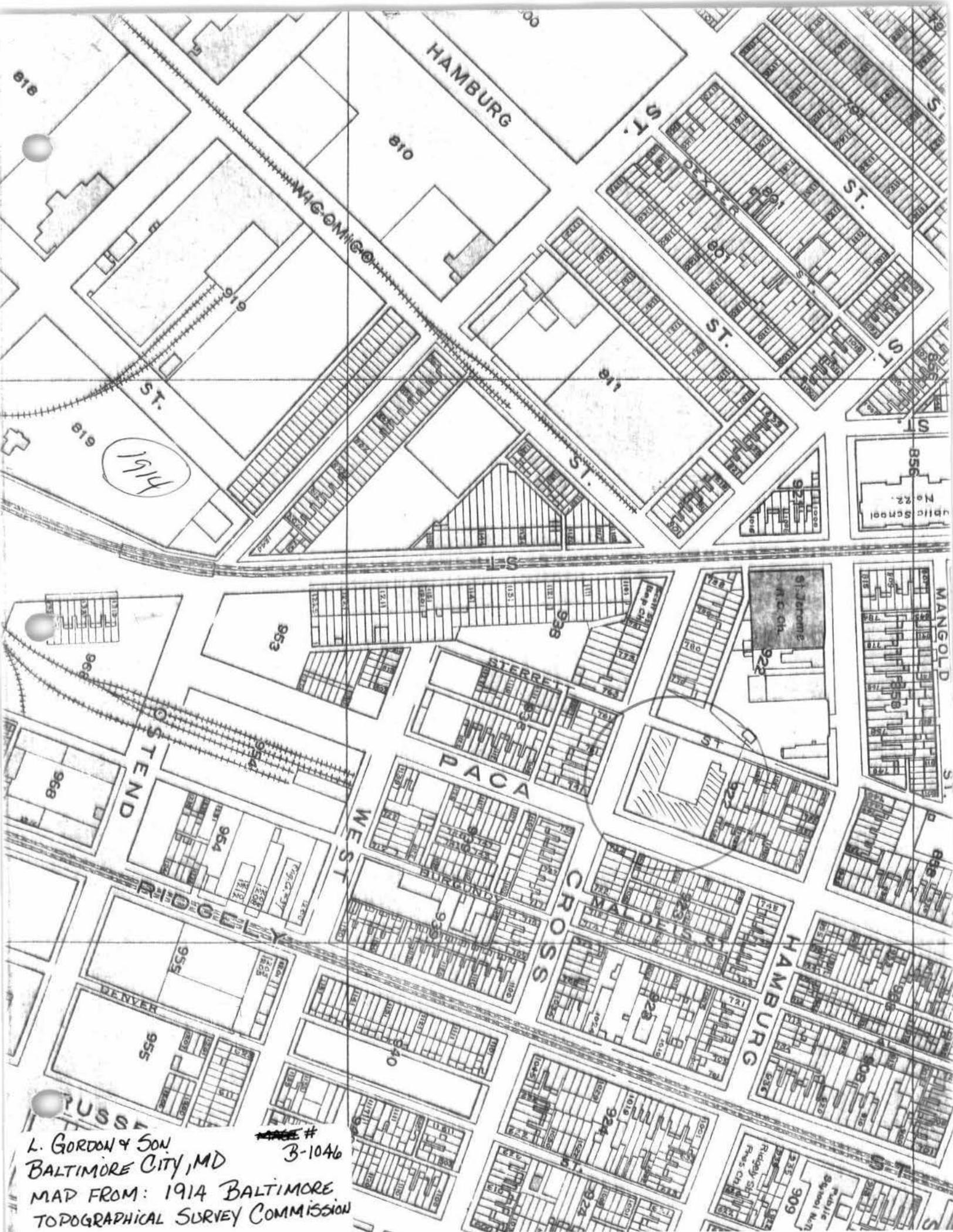
24. LOCATED IN AN HISTORIC DISTRICT?

YES

NO

NAME

DISTRICT I.D. NO



1914

L. GORDON & SON
BALTIMORE CITY, MD
MAP FROM: 1914 BALTIMORE
TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY COMMISSION

FILE #
B-1046



L. GORDON & SONS
U.S.G.S. 7.5# Balto.W. Quad
183596204348875

B1046

L. GORDON & SONS
U.S.G.S. 7.5# Balto.W. Quad

183596204348875



L. GORDON + SON B-1046
BALTIMORE CITY, MARYLAND
PHOTO, ROGER WHITE
NEG. LOC. BALTIMORE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM
AUG. 1980

South (Cross St.) facade:

ROGER WHITE