

B1056

Chesapeake Gas Company Generator and Retort House

Statement of Significance

The building is significant as one of the few remaining 19th century gas generating buildings in the city. The Bayard Street gas works was constructed c. 1885-6 by the Chesapeake Gas Company. The company merged in 1888 with Consolidated Gas Company, forerunner of Baltimore Gas & Electric Company. Among the organizers of the Chesapeake Gas Company was Oliver Reeder, who manufactured marine steam engines in Baltimore. A stunning example of the Germanic/picturesque style of the late 19th century, the one story brick gas works produced carbureted water gas. In 1912 the building was leased by the Baltimore Gas Appliance Company which manufactured Oriole gas ranges and water heaters.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC Chesapeake Gas Company Generator and Retort House
 AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Wicomico Street between Bayard Street and Ostend Street
 CITY, TOWN Baltimore CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
 VICINITY OF
 STATE Maryland 21230 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 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 Sheet Metal Coating & Litho. Co. Telephone #: (301) 837-6800
 STREET & NUMBER 1301 W. Hamburg Street
 CITY, TOWN Baltimore VICINITY OF STATE, zip code Maryland 21230

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Baltimore City Courthouse Liber #: RHB 3445
 Folio #: 31
 STREET & NUMBER Calvert & Fayette Sts.
 CITY, TOWN Baltimore STATE Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
 DATE
 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
 DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
 CITY, TOWN STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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 building is fairly intact but has been joined to newer buildings on either side. The east (Wicomico St.) facade is a highly decorative example of the picturesque style. It is of brick and is nine bays wide. The first level windows are rectangular and have been filled with glass blocks. A stone base is below the first level. The entrance has been filled with cinder blocks. A vertical brick belt course separates the first and second levels. The second level has two arched windows on either side and three arched windows within a decorative center arch. there are decorative brick pilasters with arched recesses between several of the bays. There are wood braces supporting the eaves. A square two-bay tower on the left (south) end has the same window treatment as the main portion of the facade. It has a pyramidal roof with a decorative wood finial.

The interior is one story only and is an open space without supports. It has brick walls and a concrete floor, previously dirt. (as late as 1950) A corrugated metal false ceiling has been installed among the original steel beams. The walls have been painted white and green. Numerous new openings on the left and right sides lead to new wings. There is a series of small arched windows along the upper level of the interior (previously exterior) walls, with several large arched openings in between. There is a small wooden balcony midway along the south side. There is also a small cast iron furnace vent opening approximately eight feet up the south wall marked "Hayward, Bartlett & Co., Light St., Baltimore." The room is filled with modern metal sheet printing machinery.

The east half of the building was originally a generator house, while the west portion was a retort house.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

B-1056

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input 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 1885-6

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The building is significant as one of the few remaining 19th century gas generating buildings in the city.

Historical Significance

The Bayard Street gas works was constructed c. 1885-6 by the Chesapeake Gas Company. The company merged in 1888 with Consolidated Gas Company, forerunner of Baltimore Gas and Electric Company. Among the incorporators of Chesapeake Gas Company was Oliver Reeder, who manufactured marine steam engines in Baltimore. The gas works produced carbureted water gas and included, in addition to the retort and generating house, an office and meter house (extant), four gasometers, purifier, coal house, lime shed, condenser, engine house and blacksmith's shop (see attached map and 1911 Sanborn map). After the merger of the two gas companies, the Bayard Street works became a substation for the Spring Gardens gas works and the retort and generator house went out of service. In 1912 the building was leased by the Baltimore Gas Appliance Company which manufactured Oriole gas ranges and water heaters.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Thomson King, Consolidated of Baltimore p. 84-6; 198

Sherry Olson, Baltimore--The Building of an American City, p. 222

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

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

November, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

217 N. Charles St.

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

NAER INVENTORY

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

1. SITE I.D. NO

B	1	0	5	6					
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2. INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION

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 3. PRIORITY

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

Utilities

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 5. DATE

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 6. GOVT SOURCE OF THREAT

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 OWNER ADMIN

7. OWNER/ADMIN
Sheet Metal Coating & Litho. Co.

8. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE
Chesapeake Gas Company
Generator and Retort House

9. OWNER'S ADDRESS
1301 West Hamburg Street

10. STATE COUNTY

M	D
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 COUNTY NAME CITY/VICINITY CONG. DIST.

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 STATE COUNTY

M	D
---	---

 COUNTY NAME CITY/VICINITY CONG. DIST.

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 Baltimore Baltimore

11. SITE ADDRESS (STREET & NO)
Wicomico Street between Bayard Street and Osteno 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 1:24 1:62.5

1	8	3	5	9	1	0	0	4	3	4	8	7	3	0
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 QUAD NAME

UTM ZONE EASTING NORTHING SIGN SCALE 1:24 1:62.5

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 QUAD NAME Baltimore West

15. CONDITION 70 EXCELLENT 71 GOOD 72 FAIR 73 DETERIORATED 74 RUINS 75 UNEXPOSED 76 ALTERED 77 DESTROYED 85 DEMOLISHED

16. INVENTORIED BY AFFILIATION DATE
Roger White Baltimore Industrial Museum Nov., 1980

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

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(CONT OVER)

18. ORIGINAL USE PRESENT USE ADAPTIVE USE
Gas works Vacant

19. REFERENCES—HISTORICAL REFERENCES, PERSONAL CONTACTS, AND/OR OTHER
Thomson King, Consolidated of Baltimore, p. 84-6, 198
Sherry Olson, Baltimore - The Building of an American City, p. 222

(CONT OVER)

20. URBAN AREA 50,000 POP OR MORE? YES NO 21.

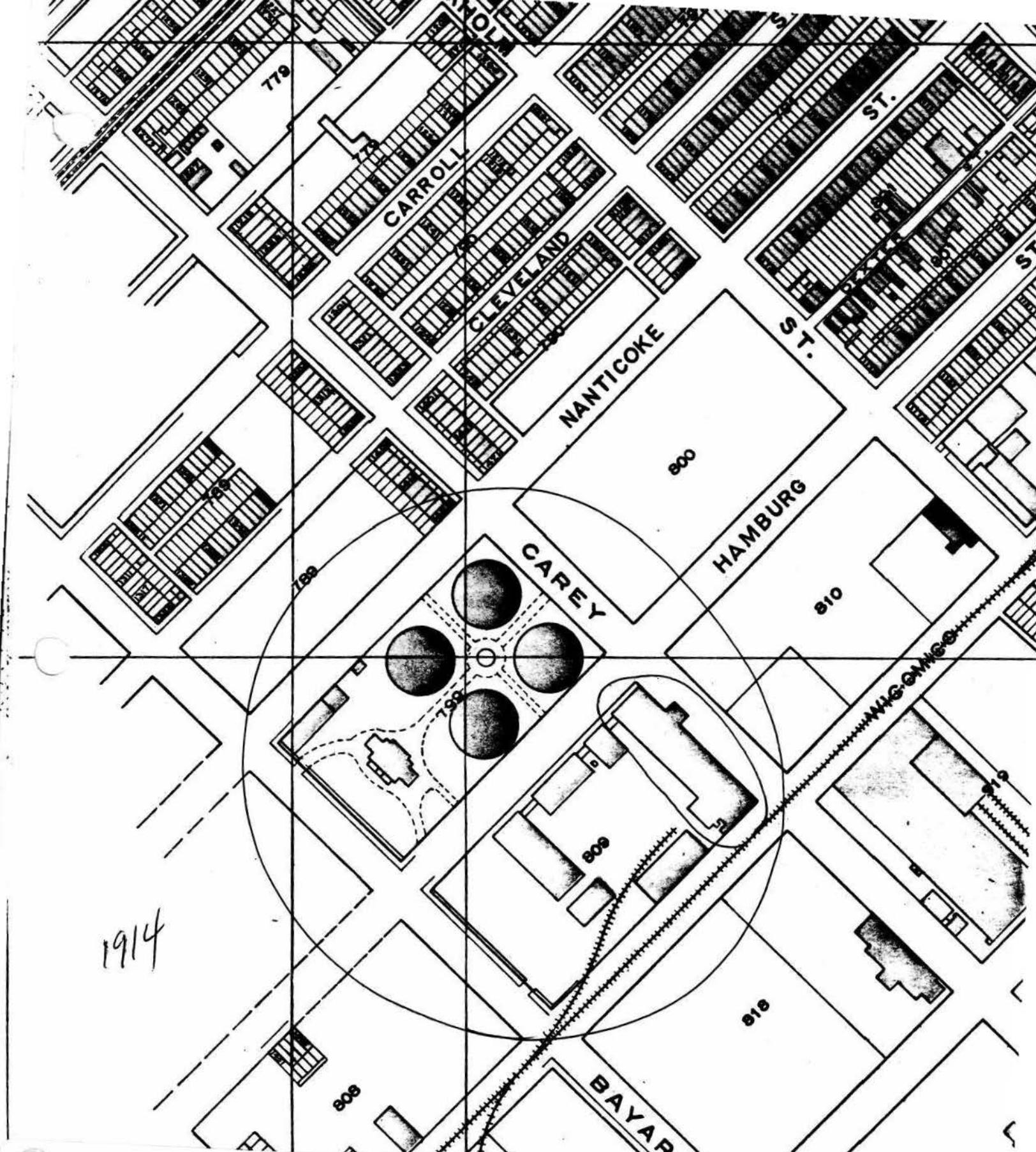
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 22. PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY YES, LIMITED YES, UNLIMITED NO UNKNOWN 23. EDITOR INDEXER

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24. LOCATED IN AN HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES NO NAME DISTRICT I.D. NO

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1914

B-1056

Chesapeake Gas Co.
Baltimore City, MD
Map From: 1914 Topographical Survey
Commission Baltimore



B-1056

Chesapeake Gas Co.
U.S.G.S. 7.5#Balto. W. Quad.

18³591004348730

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
GEOGRAPHIC NAMES SECTION
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
7.5-MINUTE QUAD
B-1056



Chesapeake Gas Co.

B-1056

Baltimore City, MD.

Photo: Roger White

Neg. Loc.: MD. Historical Trust

Dec. 1980

West (Hamburg St.) facade, looking
south



B-1056
Chesapeake Gas Co. Generator
and Retort House
Baltimore, MD
Photo: Roger White
Neg. Loc.: MD. Historic Trust
Dec. 1980 / Looking North (Wicomico St.)

AS G. GENERATOR HOUSE

BALTO CITY

NOV 1980

ROGER WHITE

LOOKING ~~W~~N



Chesapeake Gas Co.
Baltimore City, MD.

B-1056

Photo: Roger White

Neg. Loc.: MD. Historic Trust

Dec. 1980

Monitor, north facade looking S/W



B-1056
Chesapeake Gas Co. Generator
and Retort House
Baltimore, MD.
Photo: Roger White
Neg. Loc.: MD Historic Trust
Dec. 1980 / Interior-wall openings



Chesapeake Gas Co.

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Baltimore City, MD.

Photo: Roger White

Neg. Loc.: MD. Historic Trust

Dec. 1980

Interior



Chesapeake Gas Co.

B-1056

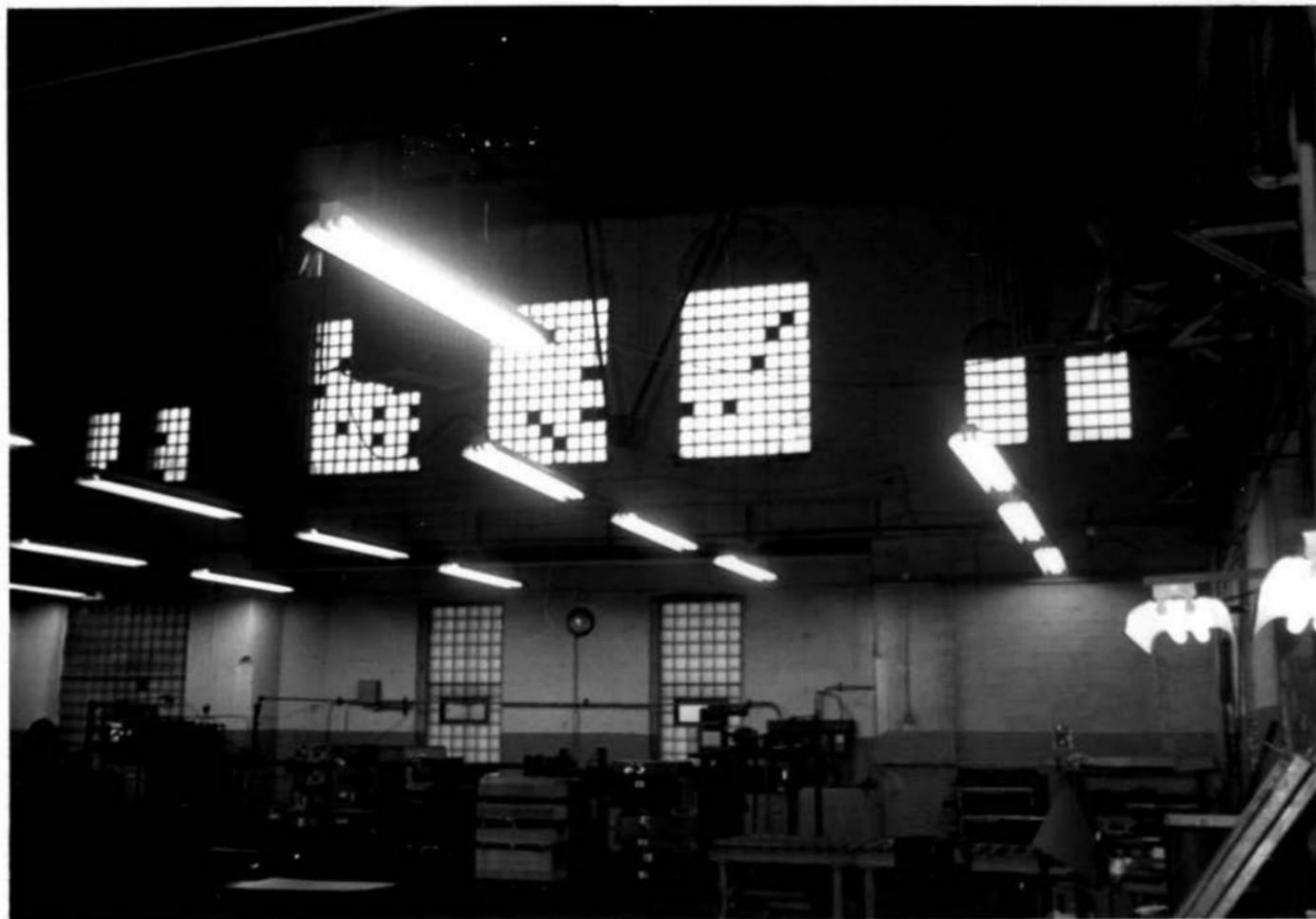
Baltimore City, MD.

Photo: Roger White

Neg. Loc. . . . MD. . . . Historic Trust

Dec. 1980

Interior



Chesapeake Gas Co.

B-1056

Baltimore City, MD.

Photo: Roger White

Neg. Loc.: MD. Historic Trust

Dec. 1980

Interior



Chesapeake Gas Co.
Baltimore City, MD.

B-1056

Photo: Roger White

Neg. Loc.: MD. Historic Trust
Dec. 1980

Detail, cast iron furnace vent marked
"Hayward, Bartlett & Company"



B-1056

Chesapeake Gas Co. Generator
and Retort House

Baltimore, MD.

Photo: Roger White

Neg. Loc.: MD Historic Trust

Dec. 1980 / Detail, roof construction



B-1056

Chesapeake Gas Co Generator
and Retort House

Baltimore, MD

Photo: Roger White 12/80

Neg.Loc.: MD Historic Trust

Ceiling construction