

Straus Malt House
Baltimore City, Maryland
B-1100
private, 1866

Statement of Significance

The Solomon Straus Company opened the Central Avenue Malt House on Central and Fawn Streets in 1866. The seven story brick building housed a malt operation that produced malt for many of the breweries in the city in the nineteenth century. The Straus family was very influential in the brewing business in Baltimore. The building was later used as a bottling plant for the Gottlieb-Bauernschmidt-Straus Brewing Company.

Survey No. B-1100

Magi No. 0411005514

DOE yes no

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Straus Malt House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 302 S. Central Avenue not for publication

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 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"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name George H. Pappas

street & number 6310 Mossway telephone no.: 377-8130

city, town Baltimore state and zip code Maryland 21212

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Courthouse liber RHB 2895

street & number Fayette and Calvert Streets folio 831

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-1100

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date of move _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

The Straus Malt House is an unusual building from a structural point of view. Although the exterior appears to have three floors, the original interior was said to have seven. Unfortunately, a fire at the turn of the century destroyed the interior timber framing. A six story plus basement building in 1866 was unusually high since there were no elevators. We must presume that the grain and malt was moved from floor to floor by bucket conveyors and chutes.

The incoming barley was taken to the sixth floor where it was stored until needed in bins. The third, fourth and fifth floors contained screens and tanks for malting. The barley was wet and allowed to germinate. This produced the enzymes necessary to break down starch to sugar for the fermentation process. It was then dried and packed ready for shipment to the breweries. Drying took place on the second floor. Large kilns for drying were located at the rear of the building on the first four floors. A steam engine was also at the rear and powered the bucket conveyors and probably other equipment as well. Because of its proximity to local slaughterhouses, the boiler and perhaps the kilns too were equipped to burn "light lard oil" or coal.

On the ground floor Straus also had a hops storage facility. Hops were generally stored in a cool place so the malthouse had a deep cellar. (Refrigeration may have been added later.)

In 1904 a fire destroyed the interior of the building and the floor system was replaced by reinforced concrete. The Gottlieb-Bauernschmidt-Straus Brewing Company converted the plant to a bottling facility for their breweries. The original six floors were replaced by three high stories. The bottling lines probably were located on the second floor with the first reserved for shipping and the third for bottle storage. The present elevator was added at that time. The front bays of the first two floor housed the offices of the bottling plant. These are furnished with elaborate dark stained mahogany panelling. A central staircase with decorative railing connects the floors.

During the 1904 reconstruction some exterior changes were made. While most of the windows on the Fawn Street facade appear to be original, some on the Central Avenue side were altered. This facade is extremely unusual to begin with. The top floor has four regular bays of sash windows but the fourth and fifth floors shared large windows. The end bays of this level have extremely wide openings which probably had a pair of sash while the interior two bays had a single tall, narrow sash. The entrance is off center in the left center bay. It is of neo-classical design, crowned by a circular vaulted lintel. A split pediment on two columns frames the entrance portico which also has a coffered ceiling over the door. This attempt at grandeur was carried across the first floor facade by stuccoing and striking the mortar to simulate stone.

8. Significance

Survey No. B-1100

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> 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.

The Soloman Straus Company opened the Central Avenue Malt House on Central and Fawn in 1866. The seven story brick structure housed a malt operation that produced malt for many of the breweries in the city in the nineteenth century. The Straus family was very influential in the brewing business in Baltimore. The building was later used as a bottling plant.

Solomon Straus, manager of the Central Avenue Malt House, was part of a family that appears to have had its finger in almost every brewing pie in nineteenth century Baltimore. Solomon was the son of Levi Straus, who, along with his brother Henry and Alexander Bell (owner of the North Street Malt House built in 1858) operated Straus Brothers and Bell, a malt house at Guilford and Saratoga. Because brewers tended to owe the malt houses large sums of money, and sometimes could not meet their payments, the Straus family took over a number of breweries. For example, they foreclosed on the Darley Park Brewery in 1877, and Alexander Straus (son of Levi, Solomon's brother) and Joseph Straus (son of Henry) became its new managers. And in the 1890's, Alexander, who had been managing the Erie Malting Company in Pennsylvania for the family, became manager of the Eigenbrot Brewery in West Baltimore. In 1901, the Gottleib-Bauernschmidt-Straus Brewing Company, a conglomerate of the powerful brewing families, bought out a number of Baltimore breweries.

Solomon Straus opened the Central Avenue malt house in 1866, along with his brother or cousin William. It was an excellent business for Baltimore, partly because there were so many breweries, and partly because grain was readily available due to the railroads. They constructed a seven story building about 50 by 200 feet with a 40 hp steam engine and the "latest" appliances and kilns. The company employed about 35 people, and produced about 200,000 bushels annually. They did extremely well, and Straus became an influential member of the Jewish community in Baltimore.

31 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 266-2428

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. B-1100

Brewing in Baltimore William Kelley, 1964

Baltimore City Directories

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

Zone	Easting			Northing							

B

Zone	Easting			Northing							

C

Zone	Easting			Northing							

D

Zone	Easting			Northing							

E

Zone	Easting			Northing							

F

Zone	Easting			Northing							

G

Zone	Easting			Northing							

H

Zone	Easting			Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Leslie Barr, Dennis Zembala

organization Baltimore Museum of Industry

date 9/83

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

1. SITE I.D. NO. B-1100

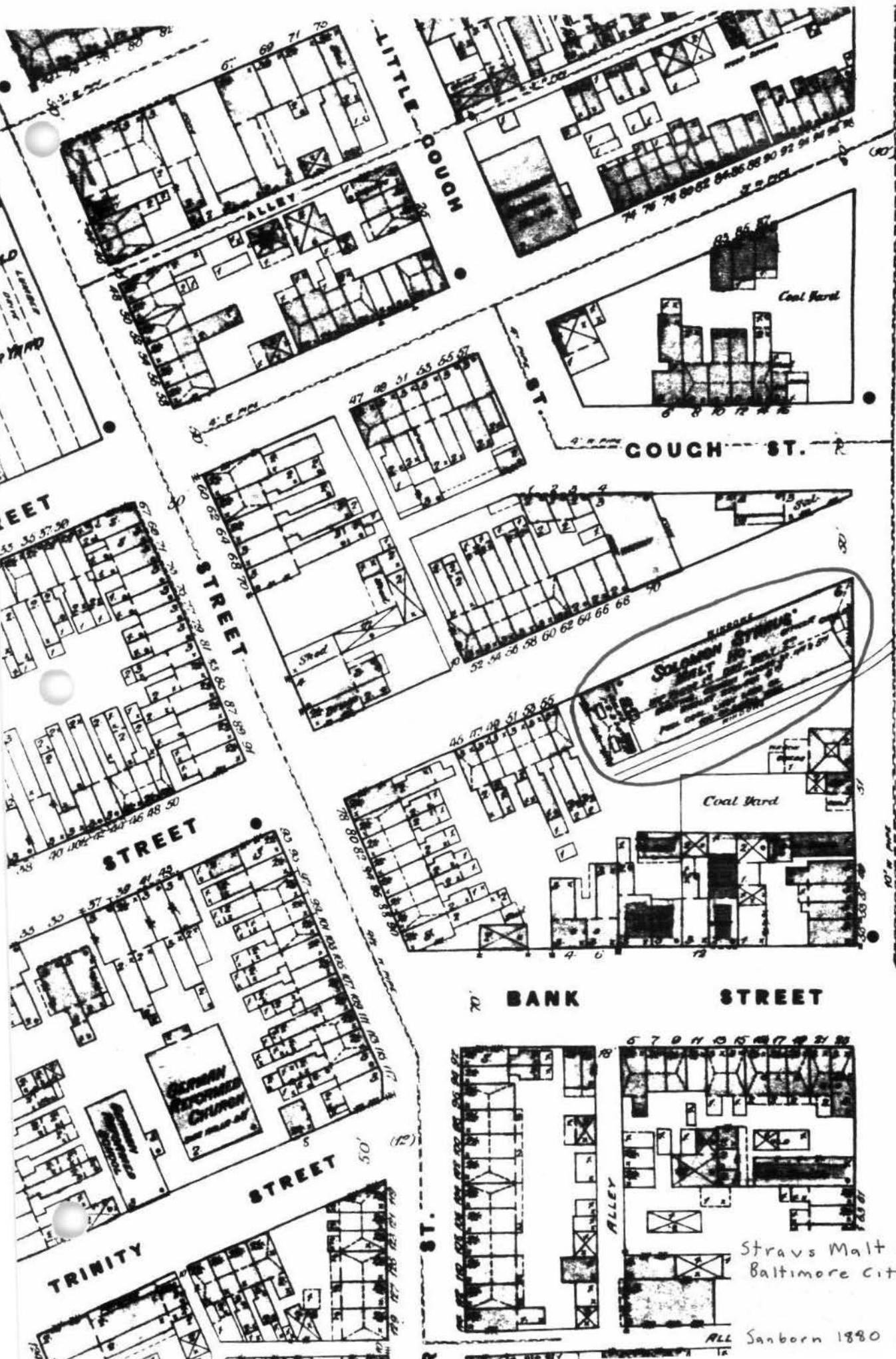
HAER INVENTORY

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

2. INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION manufacture		3. PRIORITY		4. DANGER OF DEMOLITION? (SPECIFY THREAT) <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN	
		5. DATE 1866		6. GOVT SOURCE OF THREAT OWNER ADMIN	
				7. OWNER/ADMIN George H. Pappas	
8. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE STRAUSS MALT HOUSE				9. OWNER'S ADDRESS 6310 Mossway	
10. STATE COUNTY MD		COUNTY NAME BALTIMORE		CITY/VICINITY BALTIMORE	
11. SITE ADDRESS (STREET & NO) 302 S. Central Avenue		12. EXISTING SURVEYS <input type="checkbox"/> NR <input type="checkbox"/> NHL <input type="checkbox"/> HABS <input type="checkbox"/> HAER-I <input type="checkbox"/> HAER <input type="checkbox"/> NPS <input type="checkbox"/> CL6 <input type="checkbox"/> CONF <input type="checkbox"/> STATE <input type="checkbox"/> COUNTY <input type="checkbox"/> LOCAL <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER		13. SPECIAL FEATURES (DESCRIBE BELOW) <input type="checkbox"/> INTERIOR INTACT <input type="checkbox"/> EXTERIOR INTACT <input type="checkbox"/> ENVIRONS INTACT	
14. UTM ZONE EASTING NORTHING SIGN 18 362090 4349600		SCALE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1:24 <input type="checkbox"/> 1:62.5 <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER		QUAD NAME BALTO. EAST	
15. CONDITION 70 <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT 71 <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD 72 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR 73 <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED 74 <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS 75 <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED 76 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED 82 <input type="checkbox"/> DESTROYED 85 <input type="checkbox"/> DEMOLISHED		16. INVENTORIED BY Leslie Barr		AFFILIATION Balto. Museum of Industry	
17. DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND HISTORY, INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION DATE(S), HISTORICAL DATE(S), PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS, MATERIALS, EXTANT EQUIPMENT, AND IMPORTANT BUILDERS, ENGINEERS, ETC. see attached				DATE 9/83	
18. ORIGINAL USE		PRESENT USE		ADAPTIVE USE	
19. REFERENCES—HISTORICAL REFERENCES, PERSONAL CONTACTS, AND/OR OTHER <u>A Half Century of Progress</u> 1886					
20. URBAN AREA 50,000 POP. OR MORE? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		21. NPS REGION		22. PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES, LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> YES, UNLIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN	
23. EDITOR INDEXER		24. LOCATED IN AN HISTORIC DISTRICT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO		NAME	
				DISTRICT I.D. NO.	

(CONT OVER)

(CONT OVER)



AVENUE
 SOUTH CENTRAL

Straws Malt House
 Baltimore City Md

Sanborn 1880 vol 2

43

43

B-1100



STRAUSS MALT Co. B-1100
 BALTIMORE CITY, MD.
 USGS 7.5' BALTO. EAST
 18° 62090 43 49600

BAR CHANNEL (EAST SECTION)