

B-1105  
Allied Chemical  
Baltimore City, Maryland  
private, 1845

Statement of Significance

Allied Chemical's Fells Point plant is one of Baltimore's most significant industrial sites, the former Baltimore Chrome Works. The origins of the Baltimore Chrome Works lie in the early success of Isaac Tyson in developing a world market for local chromium ores. In 1828 Tyson began a small firm to produce pigments for paints, and in 1845 erected a large processing plant at this site. In 1908 the plant was the largest chrome works in the world, a position it held until after World War II. Several interesting 19th century structures survive within the largely modernized complex.

**Maryland Historical Trust**  
**State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

Survey No. B-1105  
Magi No. 0411055414  
DOE  yes  no

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic Baltimore Chrome Works

and/or common Allied Chemical \*

**2. Location**

street & number 1000 Wills Street/ 1401-19 Philpot Street  not for publication

city, town Baltimore  vicinity of 3 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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"/> 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 Allied Chemical Company

street & number 7300 Ritchie Highway telephone no.: 301-761-9450

city, town Baltimore state and zip code Maryland

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Courthouse liberJFC 2181/

street & number Fayette & Calvert Street folio 283/9

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-1105

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<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 of move _____
<input 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 only structures on this historic site remaining from the 19th century date from the expansion of the plant after the Civil War. Two adjoining buildings at the corner of Block and Point Streets retain most of their original elements. Both present a two-story brick facade to Block Street since the first bay of each was used for offices on the second level. The 1st floor space below the offices was a machine shop and a section of line shafting still hangs from the ceiling in this area. On the second floor the remains of a charred timber roof truss next to the wall indicate that the metal truss is not original. The corner building is three bays wide with regular fenestration at both levels while the second structure is five bays wide with a drastically altered facade.

Behind the first bay both structures unite to form a large single space. They are only part of a larger space that once housed the early furnaces for roasting the chrome ore and processing it. Other structures to the east housed crystallizing tanks for potassium bichromate, more furnaces and washing tanks. A 125-foot chimney stack which provided draft for the furnaces still pierces the roof of the corner building, now used only for the heating boiler.

North and west of these buildings are a series of structures which are probably of 19th century origin as well. These are all high one-story buildings now used as warehouses. North of the corner building is a three-bay structure with heavy timber roof trusses. Its northern wall is of brick construction with two stories of double-hung sash windows, but no remains of an interior floor are present. To the west is a set of three similar structures with the same truss type which appear to have been built simultaneously. No early machinery or equipment remains.

The site also contains the remnants of one building remaining from the lumber yard of F. Bowie Smith. Although Smith moved to East Baltimore some years ago, their former planing mill still exists, a high single-story brick structure with a sloping shed roof supported on a steel truss. It is presently used for waste storage.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. B-1105

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 type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1845 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 origins of the Baltimore Chrome Works lie in the early success of Isaac Tyson in developing a world market for local chromium ores. In 1828 Tyson began a small firm to produce pigments for paints, and in 1845 erected a large processing plant at Block and Point Street in Fells Point. Now the Allied Chemical Company, the plant was at one time the largest chrome-works in the world. Several interesting 19th century structures survive within the largely modernized complex.

### Historical Background:

The origins of the Baltimore Chrome Works lie in the early success of Isaac Tyson in developing a world market for local chromium ores. In 1827 Tyson discovered the first of several ore deposits in Bare Hills north of Baltimore. The following year he erected a small plant to produce pigment but his real success came through exporting the ore to England and Scotland, where it was valued at \$100 per ton. He soon developed other sources near Rising Sun and Jarrettsville and is said to have developed a near monopoly in the world's chromium markets. In 1845 he erected a plant to process ore in close proximity to his storage yard at Block and Point Street in Fells Point.

From 1846 Tyson energetically developed the production of a variety of chromium chemicals by hiring a succession of research scientists. The plant was one of the first in the United States to hire an industrial chemist when W. P. Blake was brought in fresh out of Yale that year. After Blake's departure, Tyson hired his next two chemists from Liebig's laboratory in Giessen, Germany. These men, particularly Dr. William Simon, invented a broad range of products and applications for chrome chemicals. After 1860 production increased and the plant began to import ore from new deposits in Turkey and later from

(cont.)



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Allied Chemical, Baltimore City, Maryland

8.1

Significance (cont.)

New Caledonia. It was on its way to becoming, in 1908, the largest bichromate plant in the world.

The birth and growth of the Baltimore Chrome Works is a key to understanding the prosperity of at least two other of Baltimore's industries, tanning and paint manufacture. Because of Baltimore's flourishing meatpacking industry, the city was home to numerous tanneries which, in turn, formed a market for chromic acid. Chrome tanning produced a more supple, durable leather than tanning done with oak bark, and a good supply of chrome chemicals helped the city's tanneries flourish. Likewise, chrome was an important source of pigments for local paint factories. The compounds of bichromate "range in color from bright Chinese red through deep and light orange; yellows from golden to palest lemon; to green of all shades from a bright emerald to a dull olive." Such pigments were also used in porcelain glazes and in dyes. During the last half of the 19th century several paint manufacturers appeared in the Fells Point area around the plant. Tyson's chemists kept busy supplying them with pigments based on chrome.

The plant also supplied chrome for plating and alloy purposes. Local steel mills use chrome to produce a tough corrosion-resistant stainless steel, while plating shops cover hardware, auto bumpers and other products with a hard mirror-like patina. Recent uses include chemicals for pressure treating wood.

In 1908 the Baltimore Chrome Works was purchased by Mutual Chemical Company of New York. Mutual expanded the plant to make it the largest in the world at that time. A second expansion in 1940, with the erection of a number of new buildings and the modernization of others, helped it maintain that position. In 1960 a completely new process building was built to the south on land formerly the site of a shipyard and lumber yard. The firm was later bought by Allied Chemical Company, currently headquartered in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Officially the Allied Chemical Corporation I.C.D. Baltimore Works, the plant is still one of Baltimore's leading industrial concerns today.

1. SITE I.D. NO

B-1105

## HAER INVENTORY

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

2. INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION

MANUFACTURE

3. PRIORITY

DANGER OF DEMOLITION?  
(SPECIFY THREAT) YES NO UNKNOWN

5. DATE

1845

6. GOVT SOURCE OF THREAT

OWNER

ADMIN

7. OWNER/ADMIN

Allied Chemical Co.

8. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE

ALLIED CHEMICAL

9. OWNER'S ADDRESS

7300 Ritchie Highway

10. STATE

MD

COUNTY NAME

CITY/VICINITY

BALTIMORE

CONG

DIST.

STATE

MD

COUNTY NAME

CITY/VICINITY

Baltimore

CONG.

DIST.

11. SITE ADDRESS (STREET &amp; NO)

1000 Wills Street / 1401-19 Philpot St

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 OTHER

QUAD NAME

BALTO. EAST

UTM ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

SIGN

SCALE

 1:24 1:62.5 OTHER

QUAD NAME

15. CONDITION

70  EXCELLENT71  GOOD72  FAIR73  DETERIORATED74  RUINS75  UNEXPOSED76  ALTERED82  DESTROYED85  DEMOLISHED

16. INVENTORIED BY

Ann Steele

AFFILIATION

Balto Museum of Industry

DATE

9/83

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

See attached

(CONT OVER)

18. ORIGINAL USE

manuf.

PRESENT USE

manuf

ADAPTIVE USE

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

vertical files, Maryland Room, Enoch Pratt Public Library

(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

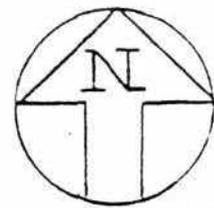
NAME

DISTRICT I.D. NO

ALLIED CHEMICAL CORP.

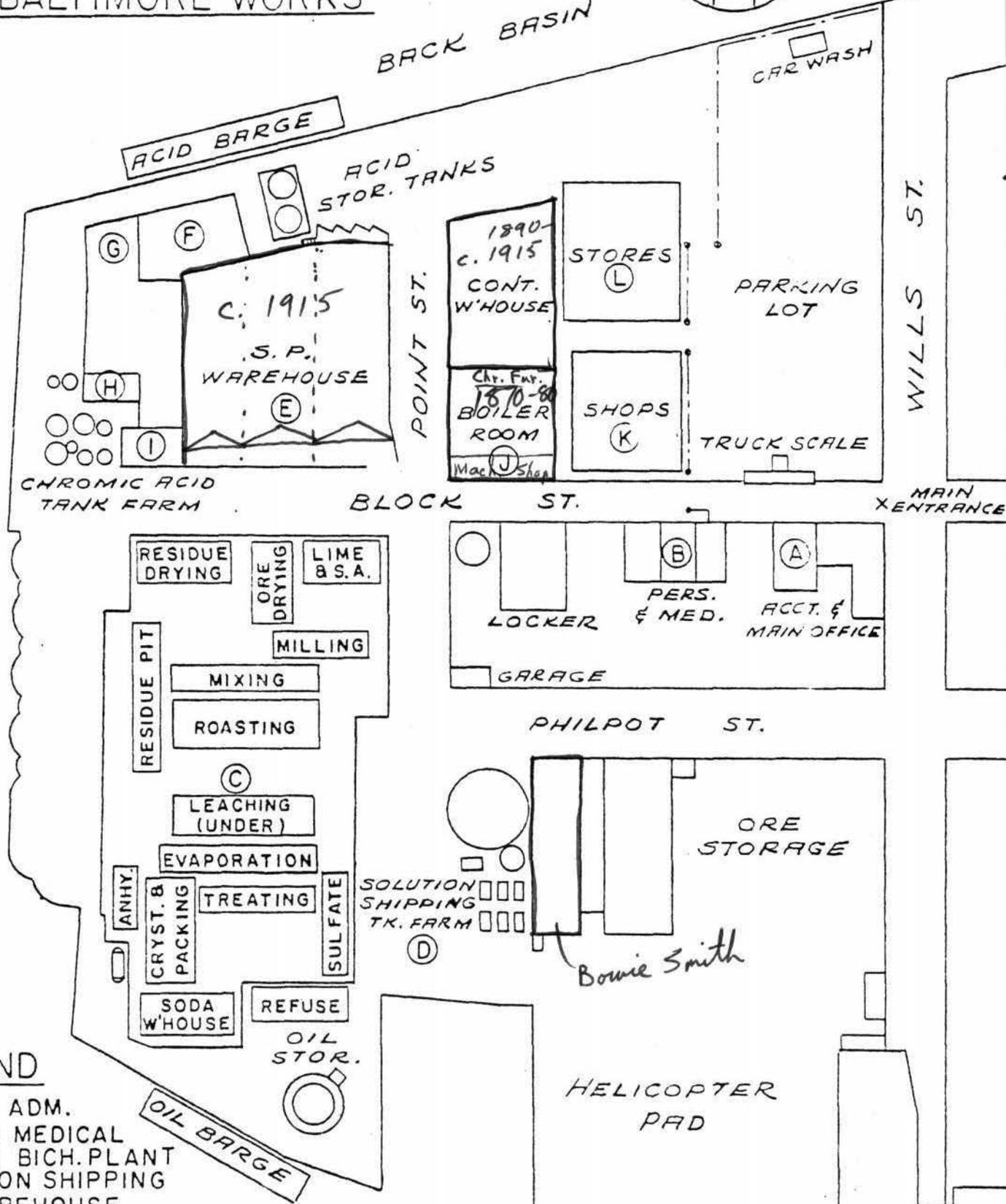
I.C.D.

BALTIMORE WORKS



INNER HARBOR

BACK BASIN



LEGEND

- A-PLANT ADM.
- B-PERS. & MEDICAL
- C-SODIUM BICH. PLANT
- D-SOLUTION SHIPPING
- E S.P. WAREHOUSE
- F MULTI-PURPOSE PLANT
- G-KOREON PLANT
- H-SOD. CHROMATE PLANT
- I-CHROMIC ACID PLANT
- J-BOILER ROOM
- K-SHOPS

Allied Chemical  
Baltimore City Md

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Company map



Allied Chemical  
Baltimore City Md.  
1896 Bromley Atlas

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ALLIED CHEMICAL  
 BALTIMORE CITY, MD  
 USGS 7.5' BALTO. EAST  
 18° 62070<sup>43</sup> 48890

B-1105 4R CHANNEL (EAST SECTION)

HARBOR TUNNEL