

Capsule Summary: Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers (B-5077-5)

1225 North Regester Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21213

Constructed: 1902; expanded 1914

Private access

Prepared by: Molly Lester, Architectural Historian; Julia Claypool, Historian; Jess Neubelt, Research Assistant
History Matters, LLC
1502 21st Street NW, 2nd Floor
Washington, DC 20036

The two-story Roberts Brothers Fruit Packers building occupies an irregularly-shaped site on the east side of North Regester Street in Baltimore, Maryland. It originally featured a timber-frame structure with a red-brick exterior; today it exists as a ruin with only the brick walls and limited timber members remaining. The building is characteristic of early twentieth-century industrial architecture, with limited ornamentation expressed primarily through shallow brick corbelling at the cornice and minimal metalwork detailing.

The building has five elevations; its southern edge is divided into two angled elevations that face southwest (primary elevation) and southeast. The building's secondary elevations—the west, north, and east facades—meet at right angles; the west and east elevations are parallel to North Regester Street, while the north elevation is perpendicular to North Regester Street, extending along the rear property lines of the houses along E. Preston Street. The southwest elevation features the original commercial entrance for the building at the first story, and the southeast elevation features limited fenestration. Several windows and pedestrian entrances in the building have been sealed or infilled. The roof has collapsed, exposing the interior of the building. The interior of the Roberts Brothers Fruit Packers Building is overgrown with brush and trees, and is inaccessible.

In Baltimore, Chesapeake Bay oysters and fruit from nearby counties “gave birth to one of the nation’s major canned foods industries.” Many of these industries were located in small-scale industrial buildings in the Gay Street corridor in East Baltimore. Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers exemplified one such small-scale industry. In the early 20th century, the property owner demolished a stables on the property and replaced it with a small, brick building which was then used for fruit packing operations. By 1914, the Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers expanded the building to the north and began using it to operate a facility for cooking, canning, storing, and shipping fruit. By 1951, the building was converted to a garage.

The Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers building stands in the Baltimore East/South Clifton Park Historic District (B-5077) in Baltimore and is a contributing resource to the district.

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. B-5077-5

1. Name of Property

historic Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers (preferred)
other

2. Location

street and number 1225 North Regester Street not for publication
city, town City of Baltimore vicinity
county

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

name 1225 N. Regester Street, LLC
street and number 300 N. Warwick Avenue telephone n/a
city, town Baltimore state MD zip code 21223

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clarence Mitchell Courthouse liber FMC 6604 folio 0602
city, town Baltimore, MD tax map n/a tax parcel 081001529086 tax ID number n/a

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District
 Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
 Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Recorded by HABS/HAER
 Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
 Other: Maryland Room Archives, Enoch Pratt Central Library

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	1	
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social		
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	1	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:		
				Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory	
				0	

7. Description

Inventory No. B-5077-5

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair altered

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

Summary: The two-story Roberts Brothers Fruit Packers building occupies an irregularly-shaped site on the east side of North Regester Street in Baltimore, Maryland. It originally featured a timber-frame structure with a red-brick exterior; today it exists as a ruin with only the brick walls and limited timber members remaining. The building is characteristic of early twentieth-century industrial architecture, with limited ornamentation expressed primarily through shallow brick corbelling at the cornice and minimal metalwork detailing.

The building has five elevations; its southern edge is divided into two angled elevations that face southwest (primary elevation) and southeast. The building's secondary elevations—the west, north, and east facades—meet at right angles; the west and east elevations are parallel to North Regester Street, while the north elevation is perpendicular to North Regester Street, extending along the rear property lines of the houses along E. Preston Street. The southwest elevation features the original commercial entrance for the building at the first story, and the southeast elevation features limited fenestration. Several windows and pedestrian entrances in the building have been sealed or infilled. The roof has collapsed, exposing the interior of the building.

The interior of the Roberts Brothers Fruit Packers Building is overgrown with brush and trees, and is inaccessible.

Setting: The Roberts Brothers Fruit Packers building is located along North Regester Street, a small alley in a residential and commercial district of East Baltimore. It is a contributing resource within the Baltimore East/South Clifton Park Historic District (B-5077). The site is located at the center of a roughly triangular city block, encompassed by E. Preston Street (to the north); North Broadway (to the west); a brief stretch of E. Biddle Street (to the south); and North Gay Street (to the east. Attached rowhouses comprise the perimeter of the block, fronting E. Preston Street, North Broadway, and North Gay Street; their rear property lines about the triangular parcel of land that encompasses the Roberts Brothers Fruit Packers Building's structure and site.

Site: The building occupies nearly the entire site, which is part of a triangular plot of land that is bounded by North Regester Street (to the west) and narrow concrete-paved alleys to the north and east. The alley along the east edge of the plot of land extends southwest-northeast, running parallel to North Gay Street. The Roberts Brothers' quadrilateral-shaped parcel occupies the west end of that triangular lot, bound by North Regester Street to the west and the alleys at the north and south edges of the building. The east edge of the parcel runs north-south (parallel to North Regester Street) along the east elevation of the building. The site is enclosed with a chain-link fence along the building's southwest, west, north, and east elevations. The ground level slopes upward from the south toward the north, reaching the bottom sills of the first-story window openings on the north elevation and portions of the east and west elevations. A low retaining wall along the southeast edge of the site mitigates the change in site level between the east and southeast elevations of the building.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. B-5077-5

Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 2

Structure: The Roberts Brothers Fruit Packers building was originally constructed with a timber-frame structure and red-brick perimeter walls. Most of the structure and roof have collapsed, leaving only the red-brick exterior walls in fair to poor condition.

Exterior: The Roberts Brothers Fruit Packers building is two stories in height with red-brick exterior walls. It assumes an irregular five-sided footprint on the quadrilateral site. The building's primary commercial entrance is on its southwest elevation; its southeast, east, north, and west elevations are secondary facades with additional entrances (primarily pedestrian) and fenestration. The building's minimal ornamentation includes shallow-relief dentilled brick cornice below the low parapet. With the exception of the southwest elevation, each elevation is marked by extensive graffiti.

The primary (southwest) elevation, the building's narrowest façade, faces North Regester Street. It features a wide entrance at the first story that spans the width of this elevation. The first story opening on the southwest elevation is sealed with a metal-frame and wood-plank door, with a projecting steel lintel above. The lintel features a rosette-form bolt at one end; no other ornamentation is evident on this elevation. At the second story, the window openings feature brick sills and arched-brick lintels. Remnants of wood sash are present, but the windowpanes in each of the two window openings are missing. A steel tie-rod is centered between the window openings.

The west elevation extends the depth of the lot along North Regester Street. Large sections of this elevation are obscured by invasive vine growth. At the first story, it features a pedestrian entrance at the southern end, as well as several window openings with arched-brick lintels. All openings at the first story have been sealed or infilled with concrete block. At the second story, the west elevation features two loading entrances that are located in the northern half of this elevation. The southern opening features a brick sill, an arched brick lintel, and a projecting wood hoist beam and pulley above; this opening has been infilled with concrete block. The northern loading entrance features double-leaf steel doors. The remaining bays at the second story on this elevation feature fenestration with brick sills, arched brick lintels, and sash in poor condition.

The north elevation features five bays of window and door openings; the westernmost bay is obscured by heavy vine growth. The central bay features a pedestrian entrance at the first story and a loft entrance at the second story, with a projecting hoist beam above the second story. Both the first story and second story entrances have been infilled with concrete block. The other four bays contain window openings with brick sills and arched brick lintels. The first story windows have been infilled with concrete block, while the second story openings feature wood-frame windows in poor condition.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. B-5077-5

Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 3

The east elevation features several bays of irregularly-spaced window and door openings at the first and second stories (although many openings are obscured or inaccessible due to invasive vine growth). On the first story, a pedestrian entrance near the southern end of the elevation features a wood-plank door (obscured by growth) and arched brick lintel. The remaining first story bays feature window openings with arched brick lintels; they are flush with the ground, without sills, and have been infilled with concrete block. At the second story, a loading entrance near the north end of this elevation features a brick sill and arched brick lintel; it has been infilled with concrete block. The remaining bays at the second story on the east elevation feature fenestration with brick sills, arched brick lintels, and sash in poor condition.

The southeast elevation features five bays of window openings at the first and second stories. On the first story, the window openings feature brick sills and arched brick lintels, and have been infilled with concrete block. On the second story, the windows feature brick sills, arched brick lintels, and sash in poor condition.

Interior: The interior of the Roberts Brothers Fruit Packers building is inaccessible due to the building's collapsed roof structure, poor condition, and invasive vegetation.

Alterations: Building alterations include the infill of window and door openings on the first story, as well as extensive graffiti that obscures significant portions of the building.

Integrity: Retains integrity from the period of significance. Of the seven aspects of integrity, the building retains characteristics of five aspects.

Location: Retains integrity with regard to location. The building remains in its original location.

Design: Does not retain integrity with regards to design. The building's poor condition has resulted in the loss and deterioration of physical fabric, detracting from the original design of the building.

Setting: Retains its siting and other physical features of its setting, including its boundary with North Register Street and the residential and commercial context that surrounds the site.

Materials: Does not retain integrity of materials, though its exterior does retain the materials associated with the period of significance, including the exterior brickwork and the metal and timber features associated with its original industrial use. The interior of the building does not retain material integrity, due to the building's collapsed roof and frame structure.

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. B-5077-5

Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 4

Workmanship: Building's workmanship relates to its modern use and alterations as an industrial site for food processing and packing. It retains the features associated with its historic function, including the loading entrances at the second story (although they have been infilled), hoist beams, and minimal ornamentation.

Feeling: Retains its industrial feeling, with minimal alterations that affect its original industrial character.

Association: Retains integrity of association with its original industrial use. The loading entrances and hoist beams at the second story remain evident and are characteristic of its use as a processing center.

8. Significance

Inventory No. B-5077-5

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____	

Specific dates 1902, 1914 **Architect/Builder** unknown

Construction dates 1902, expanded 1914

Evaluation for:

National Register Maryland Register not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Summary: In Baltimore, Chesapeake Bay oysters and fruit from nearby counties “gave birth to one of the nation’s major canned foods industries.”¹ Many of these industries were located in small-scale industrial buildings in the Gay Street corridor in East Baltimore. Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers exemplified one such small-scale industry.

The two-story, brick Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers building located at 1225 North Regester Street stands along the western edge of a triangular shaped property formed by North Regester Street and two alleys. The parcel lies in the center of a triangular block that is located between East Preston Street on the north, North Broadway on the west, and North Gay Street where it extends southwest to northeast. In the early 20th century, the property owner demolished a stable on the property and replaced it with a small, brick building which was then used for fruit packing operations.

By 1914, the Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers expanded the building to the north and began using it to operate a facility for cooking, canning, storing, and shipping fruit. By 1951, the building was converted to a garage.

The Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers building stands in the Baltimore East/South Clifton Park Historic District (B-5077) in Baltimore and is a contributing resource to the district.

Narrative: In 1870, developers began to build out the East Baltimore area as a neighborhood of rowhouses constructed for working people. The rowhouses built during this time often included stables in the rear of the property. The horses stabled on properties in East Baltimore most likely were working horses belonging to draymen, carters, and others whose products required horse-drawn delivery wagons. The Baltimore 1890 Sanborn map shows that the triangular-shaped parcel on North Regester Street contained a private stable.²

¹ Dennis M. Zembala, *Baltimore: Industrial Gateway on the Chesapeake Bay* (Baltimore, MD: The Baltimore Museum of Industry, 1995), p. 9.

² D.A. Sanborn, “Baltimore,” *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1890), vol. 2, plate 63a,

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. B-5077-5

Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 2

According to the 1902 Sanborn map of the neighborhood, the private stables building was replaced with a two-story building shaped to fit the tip of the parcel and used for fruit packing.³

Circa 1910, Oliver Roberts started the Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers for canning fruit and packing oysters on the site.⁴ By 1914, they had expanded the small, triangular-shaped building with a rectangular-shaped addition that extended to the alley on the north of the parcel. The basement was used for cooking and canning and the first floor for storage and shipping.⁵ In 1918, the Roberts Brothers expanded their operations to the northeast corner of North Wolfe and East Preston Streets.⁶ Research was inconclusive whether Roberts Bros. continued to operate from the North Register building after completing the larger facility on North Wolfe Street.

By 1951, the building was being used as a garage.⁷ With gas heat, electric lights, and a concrete floor, the sizeable building may have been just storage for autos or may have been occupied by a business relating to cars.

Currently owned by 1225 N. Register Street, LLC, the building is in poor repair and missing its roof.⁸

³ D.A. Sanborn, "Baltimore," *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1902), vol. 3, plate 302.

⁴ "Oliver P. Roberts Dies; Headed Packing Concern," *Baltimore Sun*, 26 December 1935, p. 11, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. Born in 1860, Oliver P. Roberts moved from the family farm in Dorchester County to Baltimore in 1880 to enter his brother's ship chandlery business. With brothers Samuel and William, Oliver formed a home development company. Oliver Roberts continued to build homes after starting Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers. "To Build at Forest Park," *Baltimore Sun*, 14 March, 1913, p. 13, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁵ D.A. Sanborn, "Baltimore," *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1914), vol. 3, plate 281. There is no note on the use of the 2nd floor; however, the notes are most likely mislabeled as there is no basement to the building.

⁶ "Real Estate," *Baltimore Sun*, 17 March 1918, p. CA5, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁷ D.A. Sanborn, "Baltimore," *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1951), vol. 3, plate 281.

⁸ Baltimore City Department of Finance, *Real Property Assessment*, accessed 11/7/2013, <http://cityservices.baltimorecity.gov/realproperty/default.aspx>.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. B-5077-5

- Baltimore City Department of Finance, *Real Property Assessment*, accessed November 7, 2013, <http://cityservices.baltimorecity.gov/realproperty/default.aspx>.
- "Oliver P. Roberts Dies; Headed Packing Concern," *Baltimore Sun*, 26 December 1935, p. 11, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.
- "Real Estate," *Baltimore Sun*, 17 March 1918, p. CA5, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.
- Sanborn, D. A. "Baltimore," *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1890, 1902, 1914, 1951).
- "To Build at Forest Park," *Baltimore Sun*, 14 March, 1913, p. 13, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.
- Zembala, Dennis M. *Baltimore: Industrial Gateway on the Chesapeake Bay* (Baltimore, MD: The Baltimore Museum of Industry, 1995), p. 9.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property	<u>0.26</u>	
Acreage of historical setting	<u>0.26</u>	
Quadrangle name	<u>Baltimore East, MD</u>	Quadrangle scale: <u>1:24,000</u>

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers occupies Block 1529, Lot 053 in the City of Baltimore. The property is located on the east side of North Register Street between alleys on its north and southeast sides. The interior lot is part of an irregularly shaped block bounded by East Preston Street on the north, North Broadway on the west, East Biddle Street on the south, and North Gay Street on the southeast.

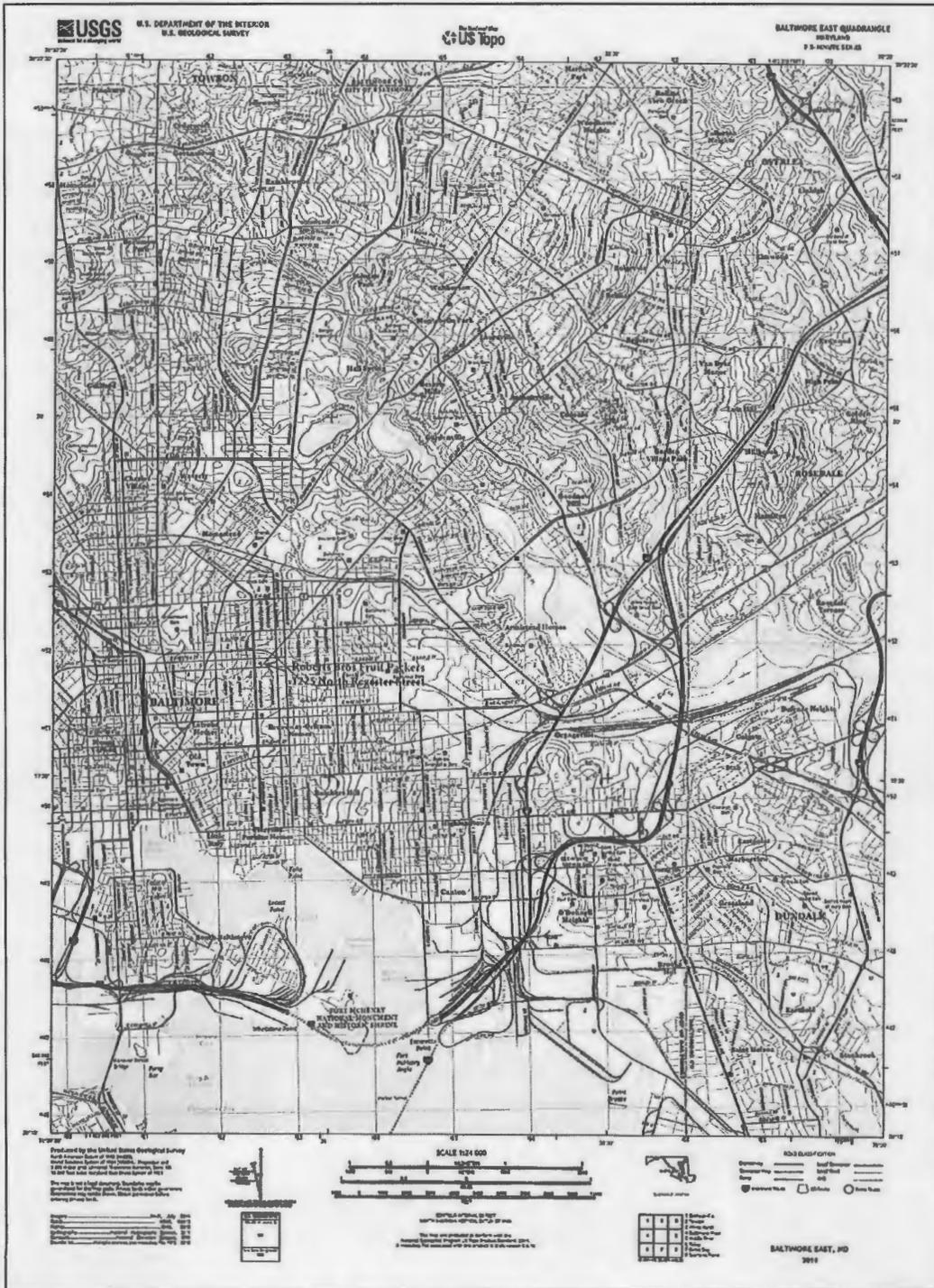
11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Julia Claypool/Historian; Molly Lester/Architectural Historian; Jess Neubelt/Researcher		
organization	History Matters, LLC	date	September 8, 2015
street & number	1502 21 st Street	telephone	202-223-8845
city or town	Washington	state	DC

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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.

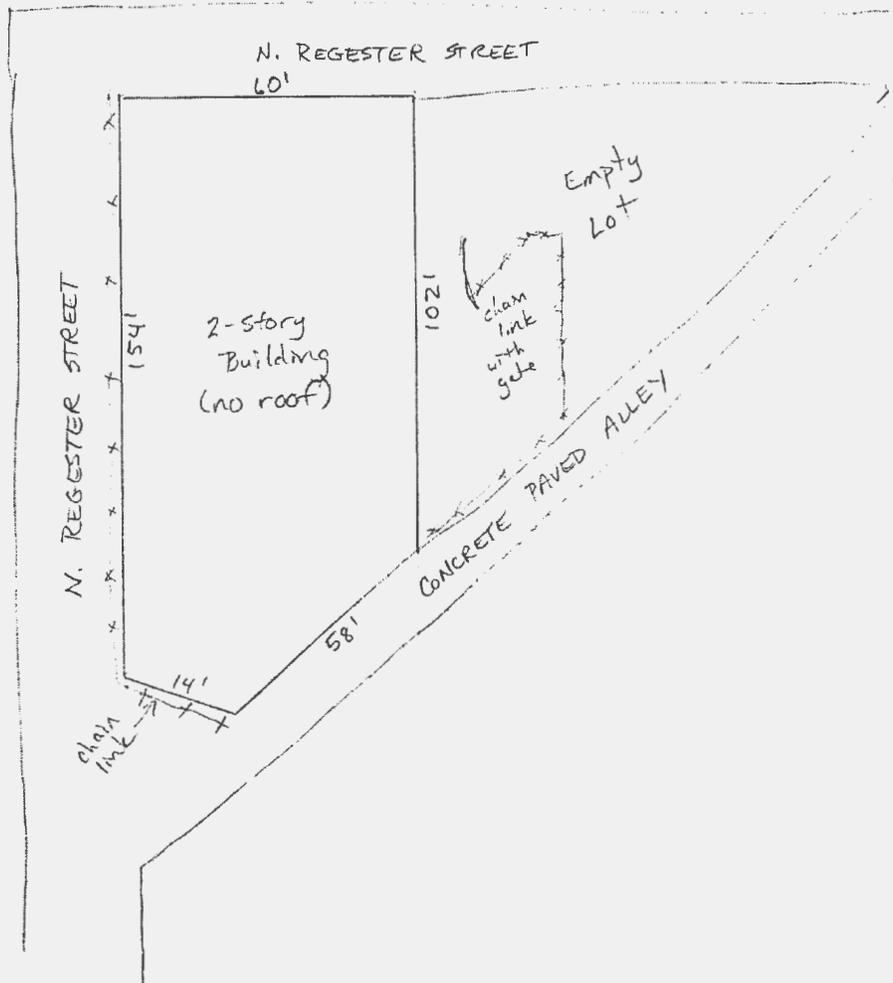
The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600



USGS Quad Map – Baltimore East, MD 2014
B-5077-5
Robert Brothers Fruit Packers
1225 North Regester Street
City of Baltimore





B-5077-5
Robert Brothers Fruit Packers
Site Plan
1225 North Register Street
City of Baltimore
History Matters, LLC
July 2015



Not to Scale

Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers (B-5077-5)
1225 North Regester Street
Baltimore, MD 21213

PHOTO LOG

B-5077-5_2015-07-07_01	SW (front) elevation, looking NE
B-5077-5_2015-07-07_02	Part of SW elevation looking NE along SE elevation
B-5077-5_2015-07-07_03	SE elevation looking SW
B-5077-5_2015-07-07_04	East elevation door, looking W
B-5077-5_2015-07-07_05	East elevation showing graffiti, looking SW
B-5077-5_2015-07-07_06	Northern end of east elevation, looking SW
B-5077-5_2015-07-07_07	North elevation, looking SE
B-5077-5_2015-07-07_08	North end of west elevation showing 2 nd -story loading dock, looking NE

Photos were printed by MPIX (www.mpix.com) with its "True Black & White" archival paper option which produces black continuous-tone prints, avoiding any tints of color.



B-5077-5
Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers
Baltimore, MD
History Matters, LLC
July 7, 2015
MD SH70
SW (front) elevation, looking NE
01/08

Order ID B382503 F#0106 I#106 22015 Fro

FN DSC_0135_106.jpg



B-5077-5

Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers

Baltimore, MD

History Matters, LLC

July 7, 2015

MD SHPO

Part of SW elevation looking NE
along SE elevation

02/08

Order ID B382503 F#0107 I#107 \$2015 Fro

FN DSC_0137_107.jpg



B-5077-5
Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers
Baltimore, MD
History Matters, LLC
July 7, 2015
MD SHPO
SE elevation looking SW
03/08

Order ID B382503 F#0117 I#117 42015 Fwo

FN DSC_0159_117.jpg



B-5077-5
Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers
Baltimore, MD
History Matters, LLC
July 7, 2015
MD SHPS
East elevation door, looking W
04/08

Order ID B382503 F#0116 I#116 ©2015 FPO

FN DSC_0154_116.jpg



FN DSC_0153_115.jpg

Order ID B382503 F#0115 I#115 #2015 Pro

B-5077-5
Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers
Baltimore, MD
History Matters, LLC
July 7, 2015
MD SHPS
East elevation showing graffiti,
looking SW
05/08



FN DSC_0150_113.jpg

Order ID B382503 F#0113 I#113 #2015 Pro

B-5077-5
Roberts Bros Fruit Packers
Baltimore, MD
History Matters LLC
July 7, 2015
MD SHPO
Northern end of east elevation
looking SW
06/08



B-5077-5
Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers
Baltimore, MD
History Matters, LLC
July 7, 2015
MD SH70
North elevation, looking SE
07/08

Order ID B382503 F#0112 I#112 ©2015 Pro

FN DSC_0143_112.jpg



FN DSC_0141aaa_111.jpg

Order ID B382503 F#0111 I#111 #2015 F#0

B-5077-5
Roberts Bros. Fruit Packers
Baltimore, MD
History Matters LLC
July 7, 2015
MD SHPO
North end of west elevation
showing 2nd-story loading dock
looking NE 08/08