B-996

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name The National Brewing Company

other names (B-996)

2. Location

street & number 3601-3901 Dillon Street ☐ not for publication

city or town Baltimore ☐ vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Baltimore City code 510 zip code 21224

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☑ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☑ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☑ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date 11-14-02

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby, certify that this property is:
- ☐ entered in the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ Determined not eligible for the National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

The National Brewing Company (B-996)
Name of Property

Baltimore City, Maryland
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
- ☐ public-local
- ☐ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
- ☐ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
10	2	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
10	2	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: processing
COMMERCE/TRADE: business
TRANSPORTATION: road-related (vehicular)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/industrial storage
VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque Revival
MODERN MOVEMENT/Moderne
OTHER/industrial vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick, concrete, granite
walls Brick, concrete block, corrugated metal, concrete panels
roof Asphalt
other Limestone, glass, steel, copper

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.
- ☐ B Property associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☒ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Area of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY

Period of Significance

1885-1954

Significant Dates

1885: Property acquired by Strauss family
1899: Maryland Brewing Company formed
1920: Prohibition begins
1933: Prohibition ends; new incorporation of National Brewing Company
1954: National Brewing Company completes major building campaign
National Brewing Company becomes highest producing brewery in Maryland

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Otto Wolf: architect, 1899 Beer Cellar
Paul W. Backhus: draftsman/engineer, 1933 buildings

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on files (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository:
Baltimore Museum of Industry Research Center

The National Brewing Company (B-996)
Name of Property

Baltimore City, Maryland
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 8.5 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

BALTIMORE EAST QUAD

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	365030	4348900	3			
2				4			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Betty Bird, Julie Darsie

Organization Betty Bird & Associates date January 2002

street & number 2607 24th Street NW, Suite 3 telephone (202) 588-9033

city or town Washington, District of Columbia state N/A zip code 20008

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO)

name See Continuation Sheet

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

Paperwork Reduction Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et. seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The National Brewing Company complex occupies a large rectangular site immediately east of the Canton Historic District in Baltimore City, Maryland. The numerous buildings on the site were constructed from 1885 to 1966. There are 11 masonry buildings and one corrugated metal building that are in poor to good condition. No machinery or other equipment associated with brewing remains. Nevertheless, the continual modernization of buildings on the site reflects the history of brewing over more than 100 years. The period of significance for the National Brewing Company extends from 1885 to 1954. By 1954, the National Brewing Company had largely achieved its current form and had become the highest producing brewery in Maryland.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The National Brewing Company is situated in a mixed residential/industrial neighborhood typical of the Canton Historic District immediately west of the site. Gunther's Brewing Company (B-998) is located across O'Donnell Street to the south of the National Brewing Company. Rowhouses occupy the blocks north and west of the site, while a tank farm and railroad tracks are located to the east.

The National Brewing Company complex occupies 5 city blocks bounded by Dillon Street on the north, Haven Street on the east, O'Donnell Street on the south, and Conkling Street on the west. City streets such as Dean, Eaton, Fagley, and Grundy that once extended through the complex have been closed.

The National Brewing Company contains 12 buildings owned by three different parties. Ten of the buildings contribute to the significance of the resource; the 1960 Annex and the 1966 Warehouse do not contribute. The tripartite organization of the site set forth below corresponds to the ownership parcels as well as the geographic distribution of buildings on the site.

Western Section

- Stock House (1948-50)
- Grain Storage Building (1892-93)
- Oil Tank Building (ca. 1950)
- 1885-89 Beer Cellar
- 1899 Beer Cellar
- 1933 Beer Cellar
- 1933 Bottling Plant

Central Section

- Case Storage Building (1951-1953)
- Annex (1960)
- 1939 Bottling Plant

Eastern Section

- Garage (1942)
- Warehouse (1966)

In general, this description has developed an analytical framework based on visual distinction to help the reader understand this complicated resource. Photographs provide general views of the complex as well as views of the individual components.

Stock House (1948-50)

The Stock House, constructed from 1948 to 1950, dominates the National Brewing Company complex. The brick building faces west into Conkling Street and has a 9-story center tower flanked by 7-story wings. The primary (west) façade of the Stock House features limestone detail that includes full-height piers topped by roundels, a molded cornice over the second story of the tower, and belt courses above the top stories. The first and second stories of the 7-story wings have large window openings, now bricked in. Otherwise, the building has largely blind walls punctuated by a few small window openings. The east wall is severely damaged due to demolition of the adjacent 1933 Brewhouse. An eighth story has been added to the north wing.

A 6-story Brewhouse and 8-story Malt Mill, both constructed in 1950, extend east from and are structurally integrated into the Stock House. The Brewhouse and Malt Mill have large window openings with steel-sash windows, most of which are missing. The north wall of the Malt Mill is severely damaged due to the demolition of the adjacent 1933 Brewhouse. The rest of the building is in fair condition. The interiors of the Stock House, Brewhouse, and Malt Mill have exposed steel frames and brick and ceramic tile walls.

Grain Storage Building (1893-93)

The Grain Storage Building, constructed from 1892 to 1893, is located immediately east of the Brewhouse and Malt Mill and faces south onto O'Donnell Street. The Romanesque Revival building is constructed of brick with a granite foundation. It has a 4-story west end with a flat roof and a 5-story east end with a front-gable roof. The west end has narrow window openings with jack, segmental and round arches filled with louvers. The east end has large window openings with steel lintels and steel-sash windows. Decorative brickwork includes pilasters on the upper stories, beltcourses, and recessed panels. Copper letters in the front gable spell "The National Brewing Comp'y." A ca. 1950s corrugated-metal shed addition stands on the roof. The building is in poor condition. The interior was not accessible at the time of this nomination.

Oil Tank Building (ca. 1950)

The Oil Tank Building, constructed circa 1950, is located immediately east of the Grain Storage Building and faces south onto O'Donnell Street. The 1-story, 1-bay building is a hodgepodge of brick and concrete block construction and encloses a large oil tank that is completely encased in asbestos. A concrete-block shed stands on the roof. The building is in poor condition.

1885-89 Beer Cellar

The 1885-89 Beer Cellar is located immediately north of the Stock House and faces west onto Conkling Street. The 2-bay, 3-story, Romanesque Revival building is constructed of brick with a granite foundation and a flat roof. The tall, narrow window openings have stone lintels and sills. All are bricked in; a few have recent casement windows punched into the brick infill. Decorative details include granite beltcourses, brick pilasters, and a corbelled brick cornice with drop pendants. Copper numbers between the 2nd and 3rd stories read "1885" and "1889." The interior has round steel posts, a barrel vault ceiling, and plaster walls. The building is in fair condition.[1]

1899 Beer Cellar

The 1899 Beer Cellar is located immediately north of the 1885-89 Beer Cellar and faces west onto Conkling Street. The building is identical to the 1885-89 Beer Cellar in massing, materials, and style. The 1899 Beer Cellar, however, has an integral fifth story over its east end. The building is in fair condition.

1933 Beer Cellar

The 1933 Beer Cellar is located immediately north of the 1899 Beer Cellar at the corner of Conkling and Dillon. The 4-story building is constructed of brick with a granite foundation and a flat roof. Decorative brickwork includes tapered full-height buttresses and

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[1] This building first appears on the 1890 Sanborn map. However, the west elevations of the 1885-89 Beer Cellar and the 1899 Beer Cellar are identical with no seam between the two buildings. The interiors are identical but separated by a bearing wall with punched openings. The east elevations are not alike, and a seam is cleary visible. This evidence suggests that the 1885-89 Beer Cellar was reworked about 1899. It is possible that the building was damaged in a fire that occurred in 1892, occasioning the need for major repairs.

corbelled belt courses at each floor level. The west and north walls are blind with the exception of recent small casement windows punched into the west façade and two iron-shuttered openings on the north façade. The east wall is damaged due to demolition the 1933 Wash House and Beer Cellar, while the south wall features large window openings with steel sash windows. The interior of the 1933 Beer Cellar has an exposed steel frame and plaster walls. The building is in fair condition.

1933 Bottling Plant

The 1933 Bottling Plant is located approximately ½ block east of the 1933 Beer Cellar along Dillon Street. The west end of the building was constructed in 1933. In 1940, an addition was constructed on the east end of the building, the interior was remodeled, and an elevator was added. The Bottling Plant is a simple, 2-story brick building. The large window openings house steel sash windows. Several loading bays, one with wood doors, are located on the north and west elevations. The building has a stepped parapet wall on the west elevation, a 1940 elevator overrun at the northwest corner, and a sawtooth roof with clerestories. The interior has an exposed steel frame, a mezzanine around the 2nd story perimeter, and ceramic tile walls. The building is in good condition.

Case Storage Building (1951-1953)

The Case Storage Building, constructed between 1951 and 1953, is located immediately east of the 1933 Bottling Plant along Dillon Street. The 1-story building has a corrugated-metal skin and an asphalt-shingle gable roof. The interior has an exposed steel frame supporting roof trusses. The building is in good condition.

Annex (1960)

The Annex, constructed in 1960 as storage space, is located immediately south of the 1933 Bottling Plant in the center of the site. The 2-story building is constructed of concrete block with a flat roof. The building has a large loading bay on its west façade and small window openings with steel sash windows on the second story of its north façade. The interior has exposed clear span steel trusses. The building is in good condition. The Annex is a non-contributing building.

1939 Bottling Plant

The 1939 Bottling Plant is located immediately south of the Annex along O'Donnell Street. The 2-story building is constructed of brick with a low stepped parapet and a flat roof. The building has large, square window openings that originally contained steel sash windows. Many of the window openings have been bricked in, but some retain original windows. Two loading bays are located along O'Donnell Street. A 2-story 1959 brick addition with a loading dock extends south of the building. The interior has an exposed steel frame. Recent partitions divide the building into multiple storage spaces.. The building is in fair condition.

Garage (1942)

The Garage, constructed in 1942, is located across a driveway to the east of the Case Storage Building along Dillon Street. The simple, 1-story brick building has a flat roof with a suspended canopy over the south elevation. The large window openings have steel sash windows. Loading bays are located on the north elevation along Dillon Street and on the south elevation facing a paved courtyard. The interior has an exposed reinforced concrete frame and brick walls. The building is in good condition.

Warehouse (1966)

The Warehouse, constructed in 1966, fills the east end of the block bounded by Dillon, Haven, and O'Donnell Streets. This massive, 2-story building has a brick first story, a second story covered in precast concrete panels, and a flat roof. There is no fenestration other than loading bays on the east elevation and a few ventilation panels. The interior has an exposed

reinforced concrete frame and concrete block walls. The building is in good condition. The Warehouse is a non-contributing building.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The National Brewing Company, a complex bounded on the north by Dillon Street, on the east by Haven Street, on the south by O'Donnell Street, and on the west by Conkling Street, is located immediately east of the Canton Historic District. Comprised of buildings constructed from 1885 to 1966, the site has been associated with the storage and production of beer since the mid-19th century. The National Brewing Company complex represents the long evolution of a once major Baltimore industry that was closely linked with the city's dominant German population. The complex illustrates how the brewing industry evolved through the changing technologies that characterized both the pre-Prohibition and post-Prohibition eras. One of many local breweries before Prohibition, the National Brewing Company grew to dominate Baltimore's brewing industry after end of World War II with its best-selling "National Bohemian" brand. By 1954, National was the largest brewery in Maryland and one of the 20 largest in the nation.[2] The National Brewing Company therefore meets National Register Criterion A because of its long association with and importance to the brewing industry in Baltimore and Maryland. Its period of significance extends from 1885 to 1954. By 1954, the National Brewing Company had largely achieved its current form and had become the largest brewery in Maryland.

[2]William J. Kelley, *Brewing in Maryland* (Baltimore, 1965), 610, 615.

RESOURCE HISTORY AND HISTORIC CONTEXT

This resource history and historic context is organized into two sections: a general history of the brewing industry in Baltimore, and a specific history of the National Brewing Company.

THE BREWING INDUSTRY IN BALTIMORE

Brewing in Baltimore During the 19th Century

The long history of brewing in Baltimore provides a backdrop for the National Brewing Company, which occupies a site that has been dedicated to brewing since the mid 19th century. Baltimore's growing German-born population fueled the development of breweries in the 19th century.[3] Baltimore served as a major point of German entry into the United States, and by the 1850s Baltimore's German community was well established, encompassing all social classes and occupations. The German community brought new ideas regarding public schools, music, religion, and politics, and introduced the brewing and enjoyment of lager beer.[4] Lager beer, a traditionally German drink that gradually became America's national beer style, had to be laid away or lagered at near-freezing temperatures for several weeks after primary fermentation. Thus lager beer could be made only in winter months. To extend the production season, brewers dug cellars that could be lined with ice and kept cool to extend the lagering further.

Baltimore's first commercial brewery seems to have been the 1748 establishment of John and Elias Barnitz, German immigrants from York, Pennsylvania. By the 1860s there were 22 breweries in the city,[5] many of which were located near the wharves at Fells Point. A number of Fells Point brewers dug lagering cellars in Highlandtown, especially around O'Donnell and Conkling Streets, prompted both by the increasing demand for lager as well as the impossibility of digging cellars at sea-level Fells Point.[6] The area around Conkling and O'Donnell became known as Lager Beer Hill and is the site of the present National Brewing Company.
Lager Beer Hill had the advantage of lying outside the city limits. Before Baltimore annexed the area in 1918, the city had no jurisdiction over restricted land uses such as cemeteries and slaughterhouses that clustered at the city limits.[7] Taverns also located in the area, serving families that came out from the city to enjoy the beer gardens on Sundays when drinking was forbidden in town.

Refrigeration and the Evolution of Brewing Practice

The advent of refrigeration transformed brewing practices. Prior to refrigeration, the brewers of Lager Beer Hill constructed icehouses for ice imported from New England. In the 1880s, however, brewers began constructing their own artificial ice plants to refine control of the lagering process. The Wiessner Brewery became the first in Baltimore to make its own ice when it installed 50- and 100-ton ice machines in 1887.[8] The National Brewing Company installed ice machines shortly thereafter.[9] With an abundant ice supply, lagering cellars no longer had to be built underground, and multi-story insulated buildings, still called cellars, accommodated ice hoisted into the top floor where it could cool the lagering below.

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[3] Much of the following context for Baltimore Brewing has been taken from the J. F. Wiessner & Sons Brewing Company, Historic Preservation Certification Application: Part I – Evaluation of Significance by Betty Bird, 1999.
[4] Olson, Sherry H. *Baltimore: The Building of an American* City. (Baltimore, 1997),180.
[5] Kelley, 292-294.
[6] Kelley, 199.
[7] Olson, 302.
[8] Kelley, 300.
[9] Kelley, 521.

1899-1921: Consolidation and Prohibition

The consolidation of food and beverage processing operations that characterized the late 19th and early 20th centuries affected brewing as well. In March 1899, investors organized the Maryland Brewing Company to purchase local breweries with the objective of forming a monopoly that could corner the market. Seventeen Baltimore firms joined the trust, including the National Brewing Company. Only a few breweries such as the Weissner Brewery remained on their own. The Gottlieb-Bauernschmidt-Strauss Brewing Company (known as G.B.S. Brewing Company) took over the Maryland Brewing Company when it failed in 1901.

The combination of anti-German sentiment created by World War I and Prohibition soon doomed Baltimore's breweries. In a city so culturally embedded with German ethnicity, World War I posed a painful dilemma. Sherry Olson, Baltimore's pre-eminent historian, wrote that "the war put an end to the German-American era in Baltimore."[10] German Street and the German-American Bank vanished, replaced by Redwood Street and the American Bank. Viewed in the light of anti-German hysteria, Maryland's support for the prohibition of beer-drinking in 1918 can be seen as a direct attack on German culture and folkways.

Repeal and Growth

Prohibition was repealed on April 7, 1933. The post-Prohibition brewing industry was characterized by milder, less alcoholic beers brewed in larger quantities for wider geographic distribution. Only large, modern breweries were able to compete in this changed market. Prior to Prohibition, there were 35 breweries in Baltimore City and County employing approximately 450 people. After Prohibition, only 5 breweries in Baltimore City reopened. Those 5 breweries, however, grew to employ more than 1500 people by the 1950s.[11] The Post-Prohibition National Brewing Company was the highest producing brewery from 1954 to 1961.[12]

As a result of increased production requirements, brewhouses grew taller and more utilitarian after Prohibition. The post-Prohibition brewing process continued to follow the fundamental principles of brewing, but over time nearly every aspect became automated. Brewing began near the top floor of the brewhouse, where a malt mill would draw malt from the storage bins where railcars had placed it. After grinding, the malt would be mixed with water in a mash tun with an automatic mixer. To add adjunct or filler ingredients to the brew, a brewer boiled corn grits and mixed them into the mash. Straining off the solids to sell as animal feed, the brewer would send the wort that resulted to a copper brew kettle for boiling with hops. The process would take several hours to this point; the rest consisted of a long period of fermentation. Refrigerated coils cooled the hot wort, which went to tanks where the yeast was added and the mix was allowed to ferment for two weeks. The yeast was skimmed off the bottom of the tank, and the beer was sent to glass-lined lagering tanks for a number of weeks. After filtration, the beer was ready and could be stored in tanks until the bottles or kegs were ready to carry it out of the brewery.[13]

The perfection of the metal crown in the 1880s had allowed bottled beer to become the standard means of product distribution by the first quarter of the 20th century, and breweries built bottling plants in addition to kegging operations. Federal tax law did not allow bottling to take place inside a brewery; the beer had to be measured and taxed first, then bottled in a separate building. The 1933 and 1939 Bottling Plants at the National Brewing Company illustrate the effect of this mandate. By the 1930s, bottled beer was overtaking

[10] Olson, 299.
[11] Kelley, 606.
[12] Kelley, 610, 615. According to production and employment numbers provided by Kelley, the National Brewing Company was the largest brewery in Maryland by 1954. The Canadian-based Carling O'Keefe Company opened a plant in Halethorpe in 1961 that was about the same size as National.
[13] "The National Brewing Company," *Baltimore* (July 1952).

draft beer. Cans joined the beer market in 1935 and would account for more than 9% of packaged beer sales nationally by 1941.[14] In the 1940s, the National Brewing Company introduced the nation's first six-packs of beer, developed by a former German submariner employed at the plant.[15] The lightweight, portable, six-packs changed retail distribution patterns and facilitated home consumption.

Advertising, important to breweries since the 19th century, became one of the defining features of the industry beginning in the 1930s. At the time the National Association of Brewers met in Baltimore for their annual conference in 1941, there were five contending breweries in the city, all defined by their advertising. *The Brewers Digest*, the national trade journal, wrote: "So active is this competition that it is almost impossible for an outside brewer to invade the Baltimore market. On the one hand, it must do an advertising job commensurate with National, Gunther and Arrow. And that means investment of a large sum of money because these brewers are no advertising tyros. If an outsider is to come in on the basis of price, then he must run over American and Free State, brewers of very fine beer, sold with little advertising, but at a relatively low price."[16] The National Brewing Company focused its advertising on the mascot "Mr. Boh" and the slogan "the land of pleasant living." By the early 1950s, National was spending between $78,000 and $140,000 per year on advertisements.

Brewing was an established industry in Baltimore and Maryland before Prohibition. According to data compiled by the Census of Manufactures, brewing remained a significant force in the Maryland economy after Prohibition as well, particularly after World War II.[17] Eight breweries were located in Maryland after World War II. The industry was centered in Baltimore City, which had five breweries. The National Brewing Company was the largest of the Baltimore City breweries and, during the 1950s, the largest brewery in Maryland.[18] Strong as they were, Baltimore breweries would prove no match for national competition in the last quarter of the 20th century as larger breweries in Midwestern cities such as Milwaukee and St. Louis invaded the local market. Anheuser-Busch had introduced the pasteurization process to brewing in the late 19th century, which enabled beers to be stored for longer periods of time and shipped longer distances. The company had gained a toehold in the Baltimore market by the turn of the 20th century but was not a serious competitor. However, Anheuser-Busch began aggressively marketing in Baltimore during the 1950s. In addition, the Phillip Morris Company, owner of Miller Brewing, began "pouring" money into television ads for its beer after cigarette ads were banned in 1970. Due to their greater production capacity, these companies and other large, national breweries were able to price local brands out of the market.[19] Baltimore breweries began struggling in the late 1960s and had shut down by the late 1970s. The National Brewing Company plant, by then owned by Carling O'Keefe Company, closed in 1978.

NATIONAL BREWING COMPANY

The Wunder Family and Forerunners to the National Brewing Company (ca. 1850-85)

[14] Warren Persons, *Beer and Brewing in America: An Economic Study* (New York: United Brewers Industrial Foundation, 1941), 38.
[15] Jensen, Brennen. "A Beer to Call Your Own" *City Paper* (16 January, 2002).
[16] *The Brewers Digest* 16, no. 9 (August 1941), 58.
[17] U.S. Bureau of Census. *Census of Manufactures*. 1947, 1954, 1958, 1963, 1967, 1972. Census data for the state of Maryland were chosen because data aggregated for the state are more specific than those aggregated for Baltimore City. Between 1947 and 1972, industries within Baltimore City accounted for 39% to 59% of the state's industrial revenues. Within the Food and Kindred Products industrial category, manufactures in Baltimore City accounted for 53% to 63% of the revenue.
[18] The other Baltimore breweries were the American Brewing Company, the Free State Brewing Company, the Globe Brewing Company, and Gunther's Brewing Company. Breweries outside Baltimore City included the Carling Brewing Company in Halethorpe and the Cumberland and Queen City Brewing Companies in Cumberland. While the Canadian-based Carling Brewing Company was comparable in size to the National Brewing Company, the other Maryland breweries were smaller.
[19] Jensen.

Beginning about 1850, the Fells Point brewer Johann Baier leased the northeast corner of O'Donnell and Conkling Streets.[20] In 1863, Baier added the adjacent land at the northeast corner of O'Donnell and Dillon Streets.[21] Baier and others dug cellars on these sites, and Baier's operation, which moved from Fells Point to Canton in the 1850s, stored its beer at Lager Beer Hill as it became one of the larger breweries in the city.[22] In 1872, Baier's widow, Anna, and her second husband, Frederick Wunder, began operating a brewery on the site of the current National Brewing Company. Their brewery was the first to have all its operations on Lager Beer Hill and included a beer garden and tavern, now gone, for visitors from the city.[23] No buildings survive from this period, however, parged brick remnants of an early cellar remain in the foundation of the 1885-89 Beer Cellar.

The Strauss Family and Formation of the National Brewing Company (1885-1920)

The earliest surviving buildings of the National Brewing Company complex date to the time of the Strauss brothers, who foreclosed on the Wunder Brewery in 1885.[24] Part of a family of maltsters, the Strausses founded the National Brewery out of the earlier firm and added to the plant, constructing the surviving 1885-1889 Beer Cellar on Conkling Street.[25] The company was renamed the National Brewing Company in 1889.[26] A fire of 1892 occasioned more rebuilding,[27] including the Grain Storage Building on O'Donnell Street. Further expansions at the turn of the century, including the 1899 Beer Cellar, were designed by Philadelphia brewery architect Otto Wolf.[28] Four steam boilers totaling 500 H. P. powered the plant.[29] All of the buildings constructed by the Strauss family were located in what is now the western section of the site along Conkling Street.

When the National Brewing Company joined Baltimore's beer trust in 1899, it was one of the largest of the 17 breweries in the Maryland Brewing Company. Nevertheless, the Maryland Brewing Company underutilized the National Brewing Company complex: for a year the buildings housed equipment brought across the street from the former Gunther Brewery, which was also part of the trust.[30] After Gottlieb-Bauernschmidt-Strauss (G.B.S.) took over the Maryland Brewing Company in 1901, the firm used the site as its National Brewing Company Branch.[31] No buildings were constructed during the Maryland Brewing Company/G.B.S. period (1899-1920).

Prohibition (1920-1933)

Operations continued until World War I and Prohibition put an end to National and many other breweries. On January 16, 1920 the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment effectively outlawed the business of the National Brewing Company. Although some other breweries converted their plants to the production of ice or non-alcoholic malt drinks, National closed altogether. In 1925 the company sold its property to the Linthicum Realty Co., which gutted the buildings and leased them to small-scale industrial operations.[32]

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[20] Kelley, 199-200.
[21] Kelley, 200.
[22] Kelley, 200.
[23] Kelley, 202-203.
[24] Kelley, 519.
[25] Kelley, 521.
[26] Kelley, 521.
[27] Kelley, 521.
[28] Kelley, 523.
[29] Kelley, 521.
[30] Kelley, 525.
[31] Kelley, 525-526.
[32] Kelley, 527.

The New National Brewing Company (1933 – World War II)

When Prohibition ended on April 7, 1933, the buildings of the old National Brewing Company suddenly regained value as a site for beer production. A group of entrepreneurs led by Saul C. Hoffberger decided to re-open the brewery. The new National Brewing Company, with its entirely new staff and Board of Directors, incorporated on May 17, 1933 and began to remodel the gutted buildings.[33] The firm built several new buildings, including the 1933 Beer Cellar and the 1933 Bottling Plant in the current western and central sections of the property. Like most major Baltimore breweries reopening at the time, National replaced its old steam system with purchased electricity and reached a capacity of 800 H. P.[34] (The Hoffberger family, co-founders of the new National Brewing Company, also operated Crown Petroleum in Baltimore.) Other than the name, the new company did not preserve a good deal of the old brewery: the firm demolished the existing brewhouse and replaced it with a modern one, now gone.[35] The new National Brewing Company also started using Carlsburg yeast,[36] the classic lager yeast introduced by the Carlsburg Brewery in Denmark in the 19th century. The "National Bohemian" and "National Premium" brands introduced by the National Brewing Company in 1933 quickly became popular, and the brewery reached a capacity of 438,000 barrels per year within six months of opening.[37] National Bohemian became the best-selling brand in Maryland and remained so until 1970.[38]

Regular cycles of expansion and modernization would characterize the National Brewing Company for the next thirty years. In 1940 the firm expanded its 1933 Bottling Plant.[39] In 1941 the brewery added 3 floors to its stockhouses (now gone) along with new equipment that reportedly increased production capacity by 20%.[40] During World War II, the company acquired the mostly-vacant land to the east (now the eastern section of the property) and constructed the 1942 Garage.[41]

Modernization (World War II – 1960s)

After World War II, the National Brewing Company expanded to dominate the Baltimore brewing industry. With mechanization and standardized brewing operations ensuring a uniform quality, capacity became the most important factor in a brewery's success. The National Brewing Company built to stay ahead of competitors. At the top of Lager Beer Hill, the brewery erected a neighborhood industrial landmark. Between 1948 and 1950, National built its blind-walled 9-story Stock House on Conkling Street.[42] Inside this building, National installed new equipment for refrigeration, along with a new 600-hp boiler and fifteen 1,000-barrel tanks for lagering.[43] National also installed a new high-tension substation and reached a 1,800 H.P. capacity, approximately double what it had before improvements.[44] The Stock House originally had an office on its lower floors. In 1954, the pressure to expand caused the brewery to install thirty lagering tanks in that space, adding another 10% to the brewery's capacity.[45] By the end of 1954, National was the largest brewery in Maryland and one of the 20 largest in the country.[46] National remained the largest brewery in Maryland until Carling O'Keefe's Halethorpe plant opened in 1961.

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[33] Kelley, 605.
[34] "Purchased Power Aids to Allay a 12-Year Drought," *Power Pictorial* 26 (September 1933), 9, 12.
[35] Kelley, 605.
[36] "The National Brewing Company."
[37] Kelley, 606.
[38] Jensen.
[39] Kelley, 608.
[40] Kelley, 608.
[41] "The National Brewing Company;" Baltimore City Building Permits
[42] "The National Brewing Company;" Sanborn Maps 1951.
[43] "Enlargement At National Brewing Co. Embodies New Departures In Operating Methods," *Power Pictorial* 66 (May 1951), 36.
[44] "Enlargement At National Brewing Co. Embodies New Departures In Operating Methods."
[45] Kelley, 610.
[46] Kelley, 610

National's later expansions consisted mostly of new warehouse, bottling, and canning space, including the 1959 Loading Dock, the 1960 Annex, and the 1966 Warehouse. New automatic palletizers and mechanized conveyors enabled the large operations that production of bottled and canned beer required.

The imperative to grow also encouraged expansion in places other than Baltimore. In 1954, the company bought the Altes Brewing Company of Detroit,[47] which it renamed the National Brewing Company of Michigan.[48] The prominent Detroit advertising firm W. B. Doner & Co. opened a branch office in Baltimore to handle National's advertising campaigns. It was Doner & Co. who developed National's "Land of Pleasant Living" slogan.[49] In 1956, National bought the Marlin Brewing Company of Orlando, Florida.[50] In 1963, National began production of its Colt 45 brand, a malt liquor that was sold throughout the country, making the firm "National" in practice as well as name.[51] By 1964, the brewery produced approximately 1,000,000 barrels per year and employed approximately 900 people in Baltimore.[52] It was the largest brewery in Baltimore and one of the two largest in Maryland. National Bohemian and National Premium were shipped as far as North Carolina and Maine; Colt 45 was distributed nationwide.[53]

It was during the period after World War II that the National Brewing Company, its advertising, and its products became part of Baltimore's folk culture. The National Brewing Company produced National Bohemian beer, National Premium beer, and Colt 45 malt liquor. National Bohemian was the best-selling brand in Maryland at the time, largely due to the efforts of a well-trained fleet of salesmen who visited every establishment in Baltimore City in person.[54] Advertising also played an important role. National Bohemian's one-eyed mascot "Mr. Boh" first appeared on bottle labels in the 1930s, then became the animated star of television commercials in the 1960s.[55] National's slogan, "The Land of Pleasant Living," became Maryland's unofficial state slogan.[56] Although "Mr. Boh" and "The Land of Pleasant Living" were replaced with new advertisements in the late 1960s,[57] remnants of their billboards and painted signs can still be found throughout Baltimore. The Hoffberger family was also a visible force in Baltimore. Under Jerold Hoffberger, who became president of National in 1947, the family acquired the Baltimore Orioles in time for their World Series-winning season in 1966. From 1966 until the team was sold in 1978, only National brands were sold at home games.[58] The well-funded Hoffberger Foundation also made substantial contributions to organizations such as the South Baltimore General Hospital.[59]

Closing of The National Brewing Company

Despite National's growth, its rank began slipping in the late 1960s.[60] Although National remained the largest brewery in Baltimore, its capacity was less than a quarter of that of the large midwestern breweries. The capacity of these larger breweries enabled them to lower production costs and price National out of the market. One advertising executive from Anheuser-Busch told a National

[47] "Baltimore Brewery Buys Detroit Firm," *Evening Sun* (17 September 1954).
[48] "National Brewing Buys Marlin Firm," *Sun* (14 January 1956).
[49] Jensen.
[50] "National Brewing Buys Marlin Firm."
[51] Jensen.
[52] Kelley, 611, 615.
[53] Jesse Glasgow, "Brewing Firm Plans Boost in Capacity," *Sun* (6 September 1964).
[54] Jensen.
[55] "Bye Bye, Mr. Boh," *Baltimore* 73, no. 8 (August 1980), 13; Jensen.
[56] Evans, Tony, "There's More About Beer Than Brewing It," *News American* (17 April 1964).
[57] Jensen.
[58] Nast, Lenora Heilig, Laurence N. Krause, and R.C. Monk eds. *Baltimore: A Living Renaissance*. 276-277; Jensen.
[59] Kelley, 614.
[60] Ralph Simpson, "Other beers find pleasant living at National's expense," *Sun* (12 September 1971).

representative: "We're going to price you out of business rather than market you out of business – we're going to hold our prices down, and other breweries are going to have to move prices up."[61] Pabst passed National Bohemian as the best-selling beer in Maryland in 1970; Budweiser continued the trend in 1975.[62] The decline continued through the 1970s as Maryland beers slipped from more than 80% to approximately 30% of the in-state market.[63] Despite signing a license with a British firm for production of Colt 45 in England in 1975,[64] National succumbed to a larger competitor. In 1975, the Carling O'Keefe company of Canada purchased National to create Carling National Brewery, the tenth largest brewery in the country.[65] In November of 1978, Carling National closed National's plant,[66] and the G. Heileman Brewing Company bought the company's brands.[67] Production of the last vivid reminder of the National Brewing Company, the National Bohemian brand, moved to Heileman's brewery at Allentown, Pennsylvania.

The National Brewing Company complex has been associated with the brewing industry, a major industry in Baltimore and Maryland, since the mid-19th century. The company grew steadily from the end of Prohibition onward, becoming the largest brewery in Maryland by 1954. With buildings dating from 1885 to 1966, the complex effectively illustrates the evolution of the National Brewing Company and of the brewing industry from the small, family-operated breweries of the late-19th century through the highly mechanized, large capacity plants of the mid-twentieth century.

[61] Jensen.
[62] Jensen.
[63] Simpson.
[64] "National Expands Brewing," *Sun* (2 June 1975).
[65] Jensen
[66] James A. Rousmaniere, Jr., "Schaefer brewery to close here," *Sun* (7 July 1978).
[67] "Bye Bye, Mr. Boh."

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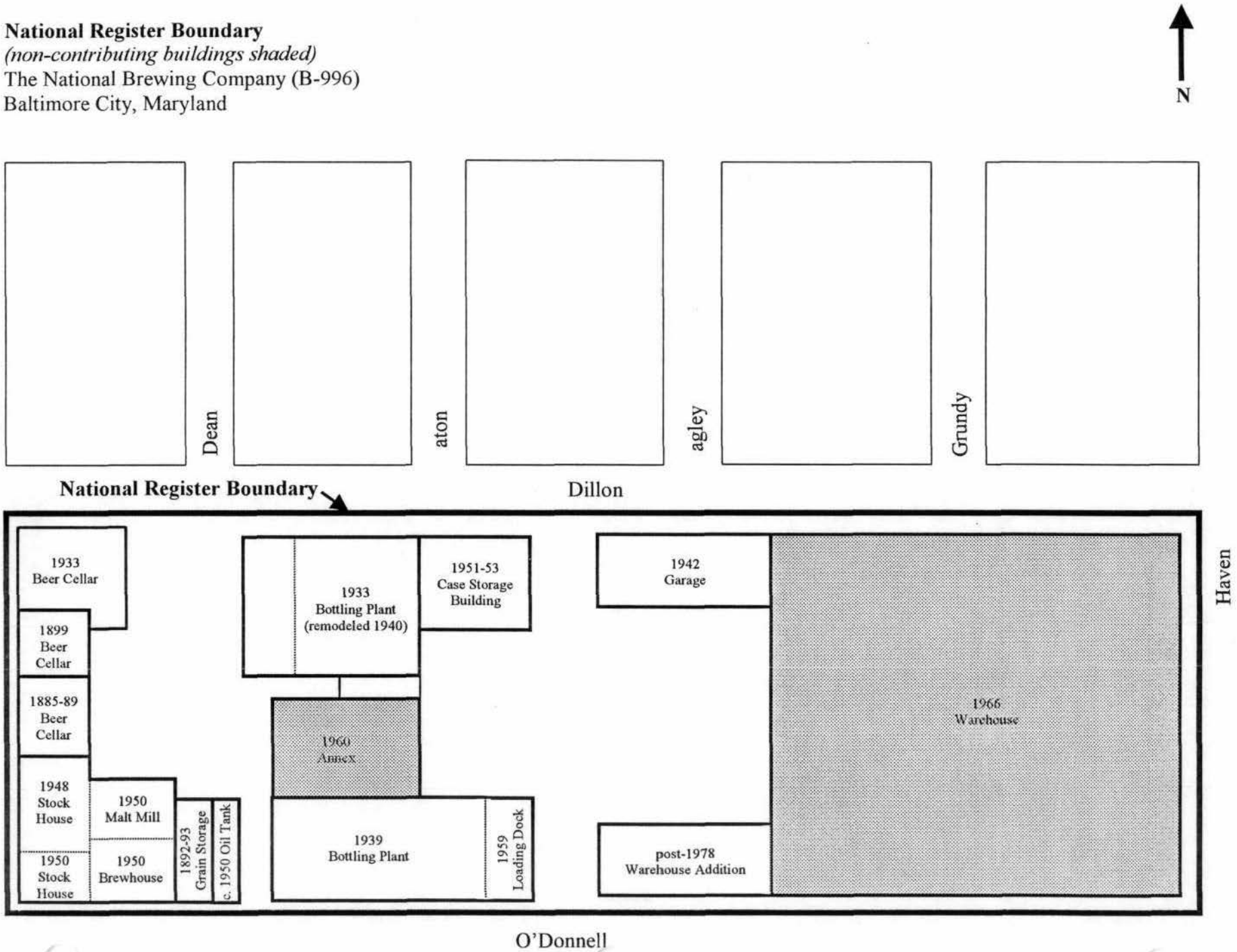
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The National Register Boundary for the National Brewing Company corresponds to the boundaries of Baltimore City Block 6474, Lots 1, 1A, and 2. The site is bounded on the north by Dillon Street, on the east by Haven Street, on the south by O'Donnell Street, and on the west by Conkling Street. The boundary encompasses approximately 8.5 acres.

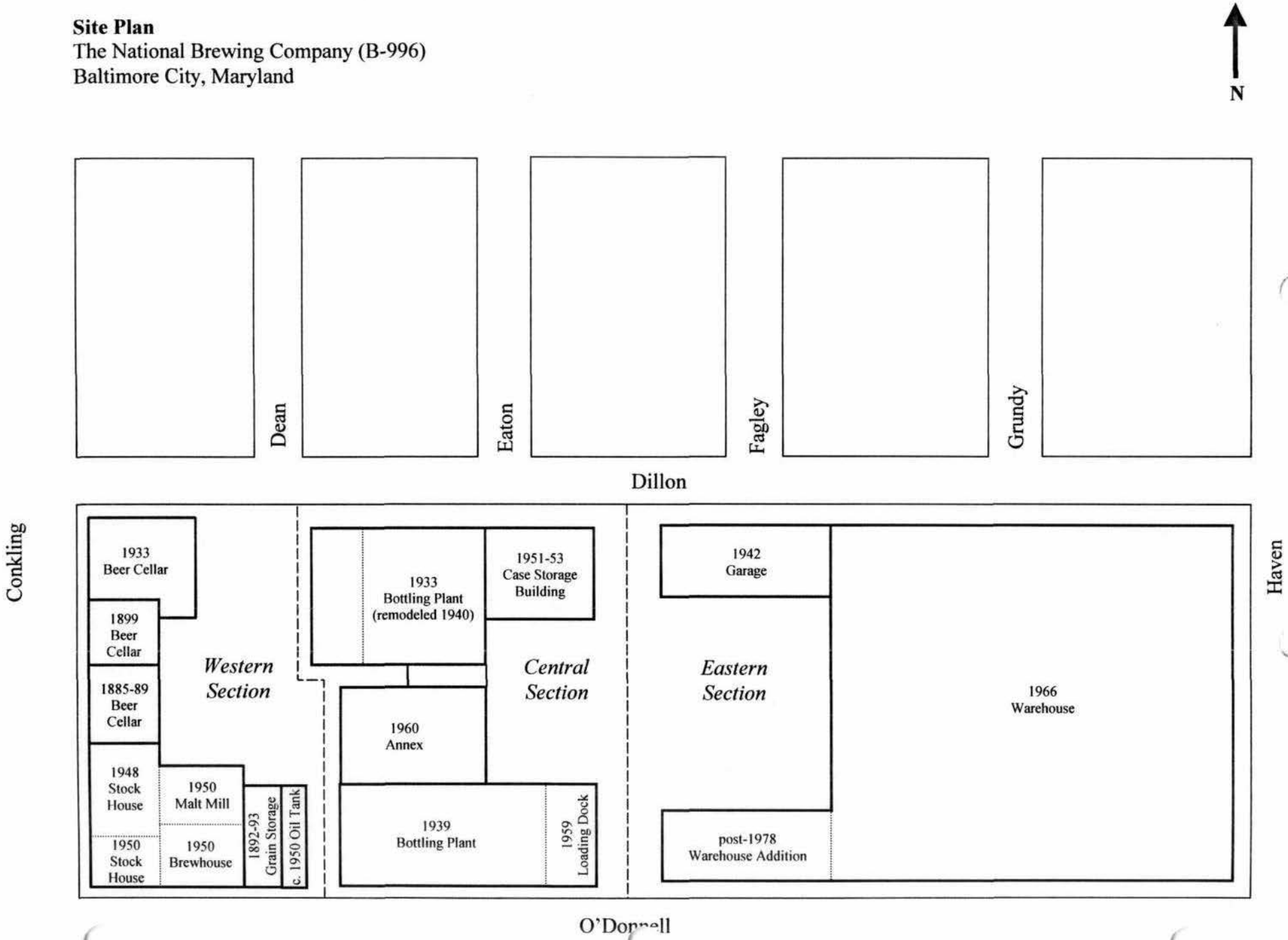
BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The National Register Boundary for the National Brewing Company includes the core of the complex, which consists of the remaining 19th century buildings, the 1933 buildings, the 1948-1950 buildings, the 1951-53 Case Storage Building, as well as some later expansions. These buildings illustrate the history of the brewery from its 1885 inception by the Strauss Brothers through the major building campaign of the early 1950s. Although the National Brewing Company had additional warehouses and an office in adjacent blocks, the National Register Boundary reflects the extent of ownership by the parties pursuing this nomination.

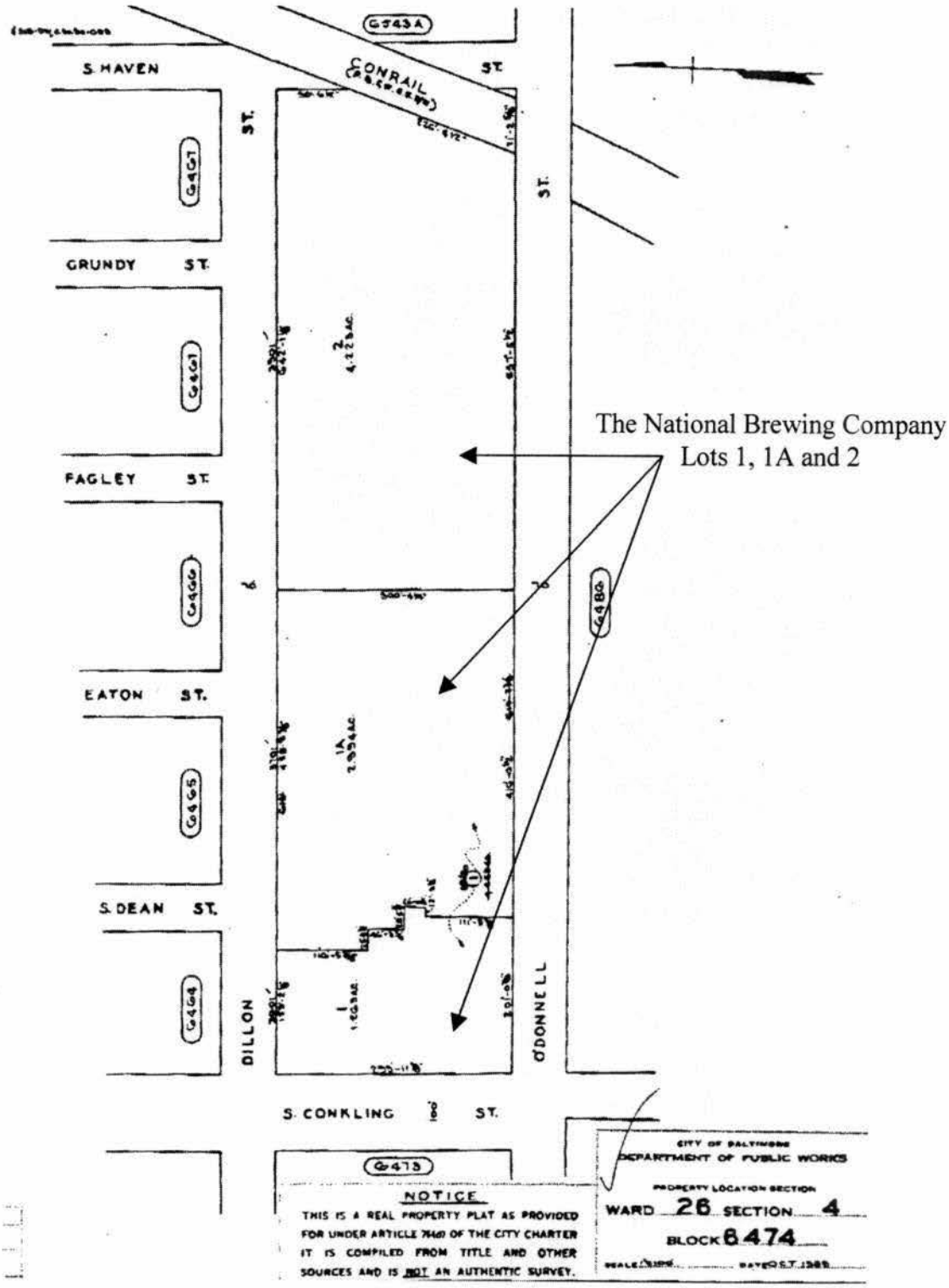
National Register Boundary
(non-contributing buildings shaded)
The National Brewing Company (B-996)
Baltimore City, Maryland



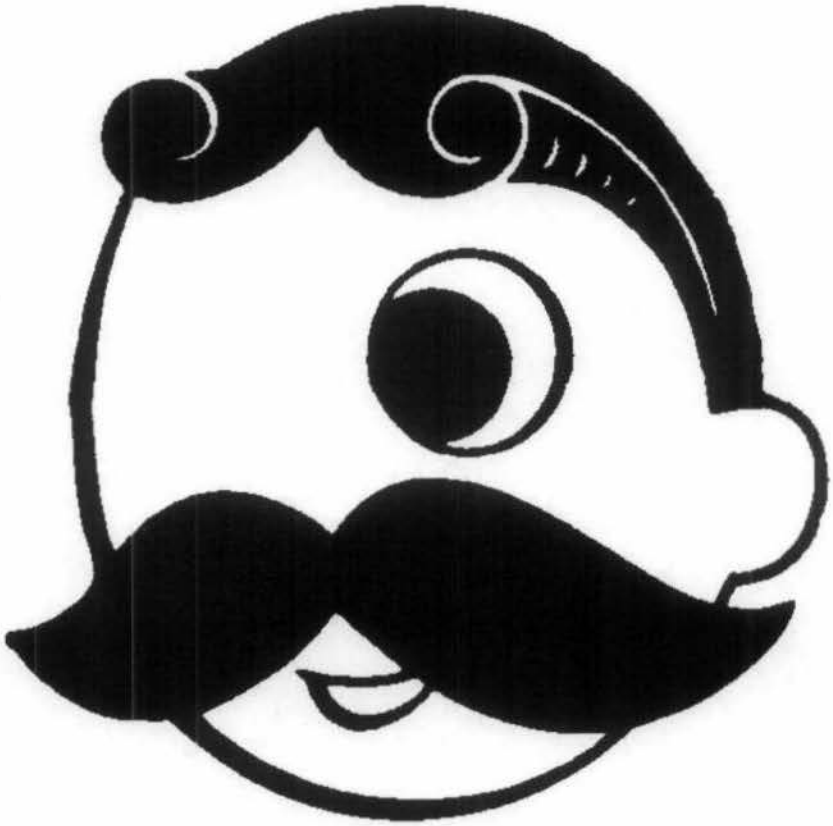
Site Plan
The National Brewing Company (B-996)
Baltimore City, Maryland

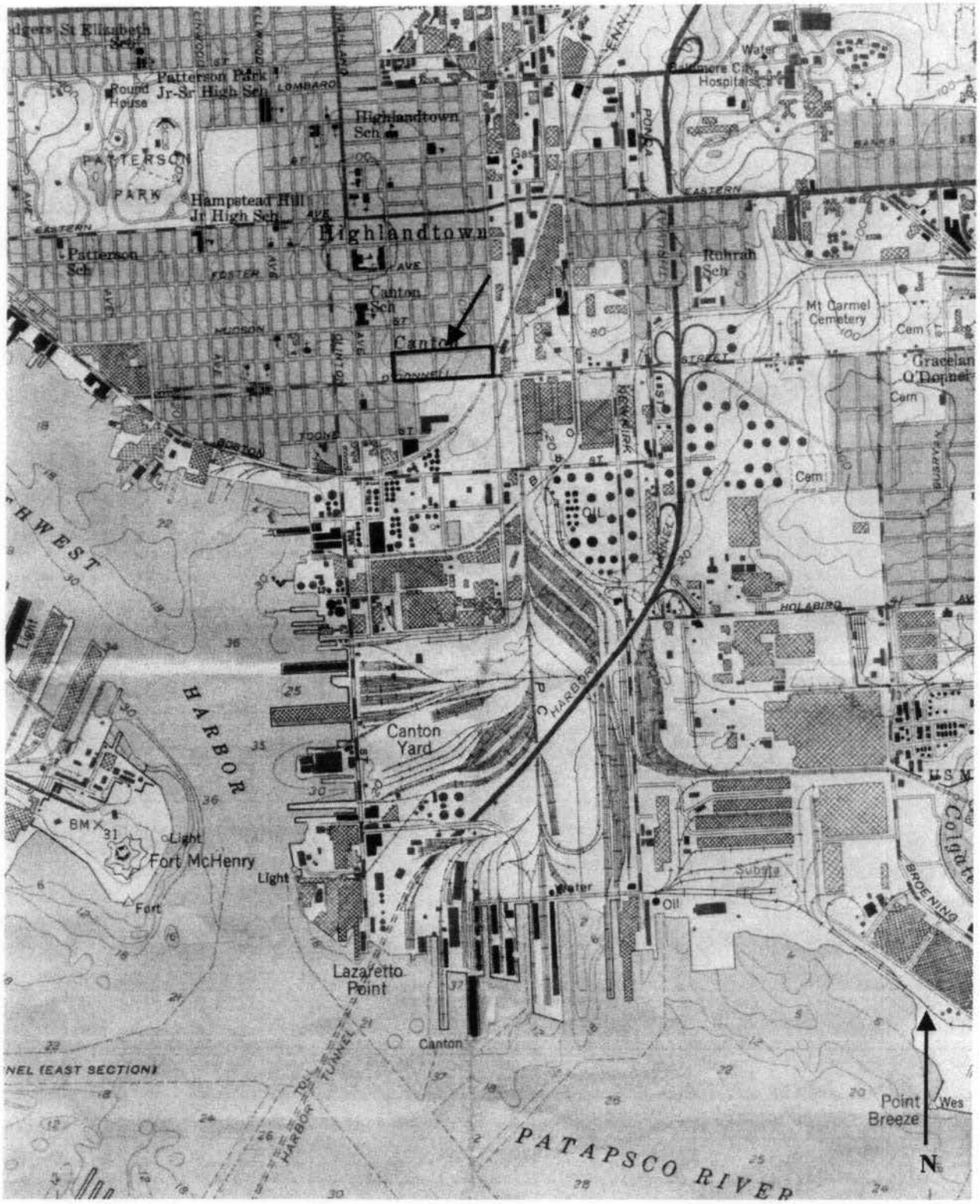


Legal Boundaries
The National Brewing Company (B-996)
Baltimore City, Maryland



Mr. Boh
The National Brewing Company (B-996)
Baltimore City, Maryland





Location Map
The National Brewing Company (B-996)
Baltimore City, Maryland
Baltimore East Quadrangle

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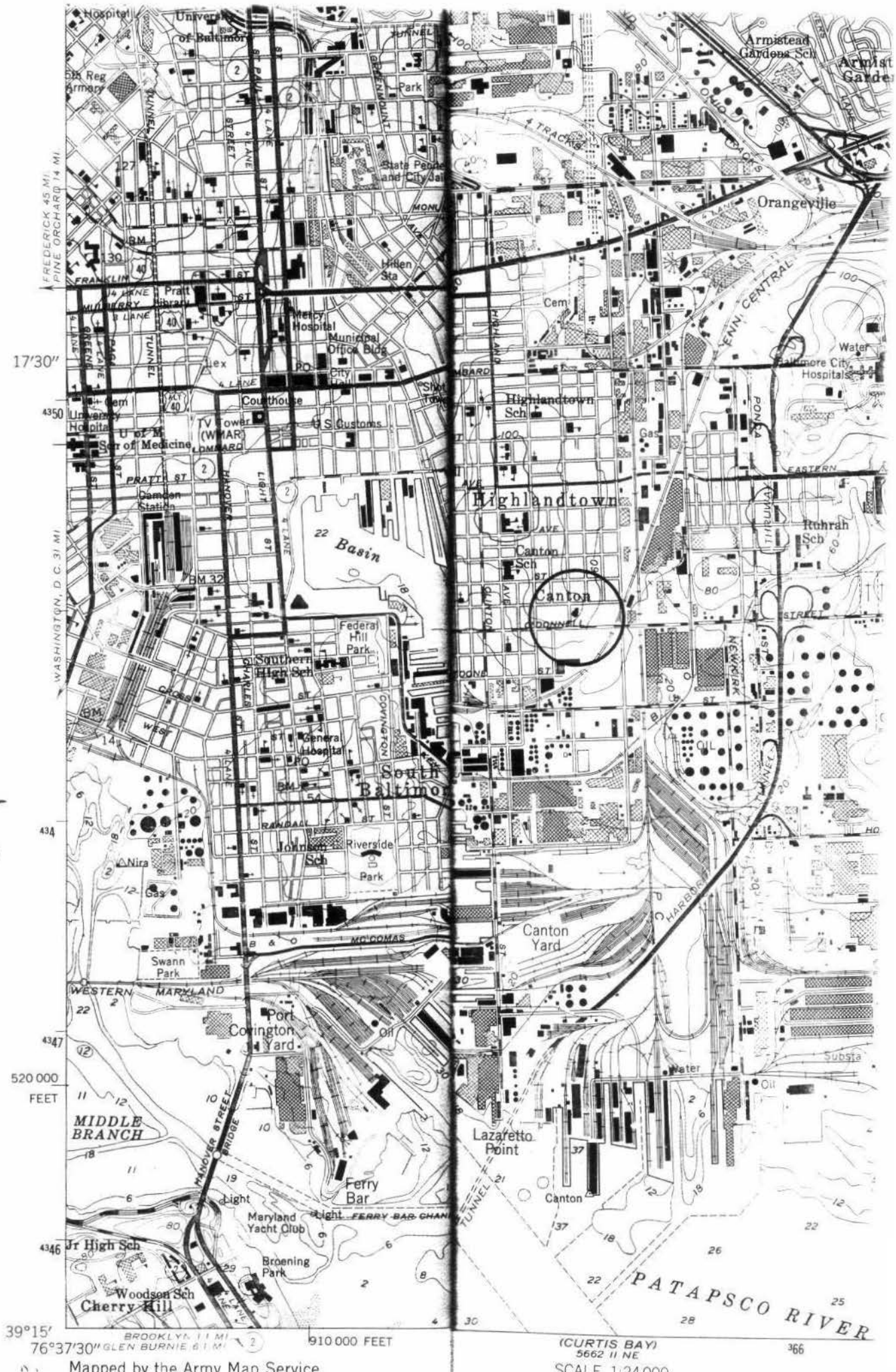
B-996

NATIONAL BREWING COMPANY

BALTIMORE CITY, MARYLAND

18-365030-4348900



Mapped by the Army Map Service