

HAGERSTOWN LANDMARKS RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties # WA-HAG-167

Property Name/Address: Digby Products Building [Hagerstown Silk Mill], Park Driveway at Key St., Hagerstown, Maryland

Description/Significance: ca. 1900 brick textile mill, reflecting the industrial growth of Hagerstown during the period; also historically significant as one of the catalysts for the residential development of the surrounding area. The building comprises two sections: the south section is the earlier of the two, and stands four stories high, 13 bays wide. A five-story addition, 16 bays wide, was constructed against the north end of this section before 1910. The facade bays are defined by large sash windows (generally 12/12) set in segmental-arched openings, grouped in pairs between pilasters. The north elevation is five bays wide; two groups of two bays each are set off by pilasters, flanking a blank bay.

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

- I. Geographic Organization: Western Maryland
- II. Chronological/Developmental Period(s):
Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
- III. Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):
Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Community Planning
- IV. Resource Type
Category: Building
Historic Environment: Urban
Historic Function(s) and Use(s):
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/textile mill
Known Design Source: Unknown

Form Prepared by: Peter E. Kurtze
109 Brandon Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21212
June 30, 1992

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at Key St., Hagerstown, Maryland

Description/Significance: ca. 1900 brick textile mill, reflecting the industrial growth of Hagerstown during the period; also historically significant as one of the catalysts for the residential development of the surrounding area. The building comprises two sections: the front stands four stories high above a stone basement. The north facade is five bays wide; two groups of two bays each are set off by pilasters, flanking a blank bay. The east elevation is sixteen bays wide, divided by pilasters into two-bay groups. Windows throughout are 12/12 sash, set in segmental-arched openings. A three-story addition, 13 bays wide, extends from the south end.

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Form Prepared by: Peter E. Kurtze
109 Brandon Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21212
August 15, 1991

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Hagerstown Silk Company

and/or common Digby Products Building

2. Location

street & number Key Street and Park Driveway n/a not for publication

city, town Hagerstown ___ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Washington

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

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

name

street & number telephone no.:

city, town state and zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washington County Courthouse liber

street & number 95 West Washington Street folio

city, town Hagerstown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title n/a

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. WA-HIG-167

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.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE COUNT: 1

The Digby Products building (originally the Hagerstown Silk Company) is a large brick and stone industrial structure built ca. 1900, located at the intersection of Key Street and Park Driveway in City Park. The principal elevation faces southeast (called east), overlooking the driveway at the northwest corner of the park.

The building is constructed of brick above a first story of stone, and comprises two principal sections. The two sections correspond closely in the character of their masonry and detailing, suggesting that they were built nearly contemporaneously. The 13-bay-wide, gable-roofed southern section is the earlier of the two; it has a total height of four stories. Before 1910, a five-story shed-roofed addition was constructed against the former north gable end of this section; the north portion is 16 bays wide by five bays deep. The facade bays are defined by large sash windows, grouped in pairs between pilasters; sash are generally 12/12, except on the top floor of the southern section where they are 12/8. Openings are headed with a segmental arch formed from a double course of rowlock bricks. At the ground-floor level, a single large opening is centered between each pair of pilasters. The northernmost bay of the southern section has a transomed entrance with a bronze door at basement level; the upper stories are blank. An evident construction seam marks the transition between the two sections at this point. The first story is constructed of uncoursed limestone rubble masonry, roughly dressed at the openings.

The north elevation is five bays wide; two groups of two bays each are set off by pilasters, flanking a blank bay. A two-story, two-bay, flat-roofed cinderblock addition projects from the northwest corner.

The interior was unavailable for inspection; Sanborn maps provide evidence of the historic plan and use of space in the building (see Section 8).

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates ca. 1900 **Builder/Architect** unknown

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 Digby Products Building [Hagerstown Silk Company] is significant under criterion A for its association with the industrial development of Hagerstown around the turn of the 20th century. The resource derives additional significance under criterion C as an example of a type of industrial facility constructed and expanded for the manufacture of silk thread, textiles, and finished products.

A description of Hagerstown in 1890 noted that "the city has 95 manufacturing establishments, with a capacity aggregating nearly \$5,000,000. Among the products are . . . silk ribbons, gloves, and hosiery . . ."¹

In 1911, the Hagerstown Silk Company was described as among the industrial establishments that have won their way to great success . . . this company manufactures all kinds of ribbon and the product is sold throughout the United States. The plant is finely appointed throughout and the immense building which is five stories high has dimensions of 50 x 212 feet. Employment is given to an average force of 200 skilled operatives. This is but another evidence of Hagerstown's wonderful advantages as a manufacturing center.²

The Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of July 1910 depicts the functional organization of the building. Both major sections of the building were in place by that date.

The northern section had office space in the northeast corner of the first floor, and a stair tower in the northwest corner; the remainder of the ground floor space in this section was taken up by a stock and shipping room and an area where blocking was carried out. The second floor was occupied by storage. Weaving was done on the

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. WA-HIC-167

See Notes, Section 8, Page 3

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property approx. 1 acre

Quadrangle name Hagerstown, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Peter E. Kurtze

organization

date June 30, 1992

street & number 109 Brandon Road

telephone (410) 296-7538

city or town Baltimore

state MD 21212

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

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

WA-HAG-167
Digby Products Building
[Hagerstown Silk Company]

third floor, winding and quilling on the fourth, and warping on the fifth. An elevator, centrally located at the south end of this section, provided vertical communication. A one-story addition projecting from the northwest corner of the building, framed with studs sheathed in corrugated iron, provided storage.

The southern section of the building had a small silk room on the first floor; most of the ground floor area was occupied by a machine shop and storage. The second and third floors were given over to weaving operations, and the fourth floor, lighted by twelve small skylights, served for warping.

A series of lower, one- to two-story extensions projecting to the south and southwest housed mechanical equipment and storage. Tanks for water, softener, and dye were located to the south and southwest. A free-standing, one-story garage was located to the northwest of the building.

By 1918, the one-story southern projections had been removed, as had the iron-clad frame addition at the northwest corner; the use of space within the building remained as in 1910. The 1926 Sanborn Map shows a new masonry addition against the west wall of the southern portion of the mill, and other construction wrapping around the south end to encompass the area formerly occupied by the demolished structures.

A ban on the use of silk to manufacture of consumer goods during World War II affected the silk industry in Hagerstown. At the beginning of this era, the Victor Silk Hosiery Company remained in operation in the city, employing 190 workers.

By the mid-1960s, the property had come to house Hagerstown Leather Goods and the Hagerstown Rubber Company. In the 1970s, it was occupied by Digby Products, Inc., manufacturer of attache cases, schoolbags, and totes; this was apparently a subsidiary of Hagerstown Leather Goods, as Harold N. Taylor was president of both companies. The Digby firm employed 50 workers in 1971, and 29 in 1987; Hagerstown Leather Goods had 100 employees in 1971 and 130 in 1978.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

WA-HAG-167
Digby Products Building
[Hagerstown Silk Company]

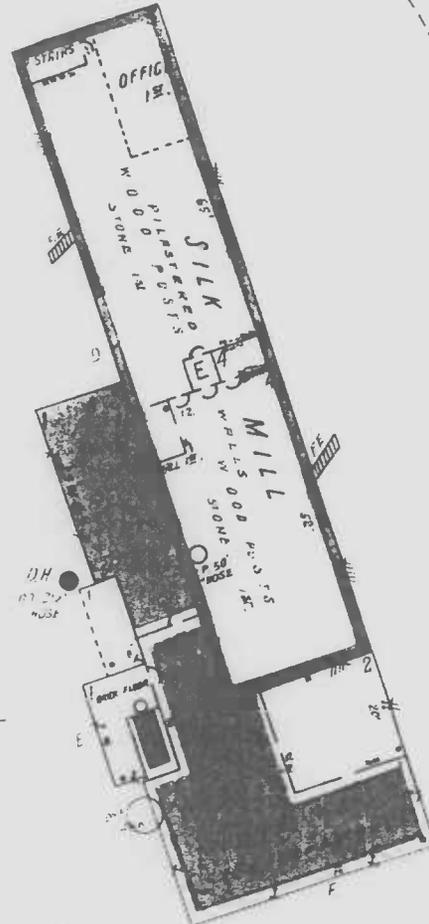
Notes:

1. "Views Along the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad -- 1. Hagerstown, Maryland. The First City of the Famous Cumberland Valley -- Shenandoah's Pride," Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, November 22, 1890, p. 293.

2. Clarence E. Weaver, Story of Hagerstown, Maryland. Hagerstown: Mail Publishing Co., 1911, p. 4.

KEY

(383)



W.T. HAGERSTOWN SILK CO.

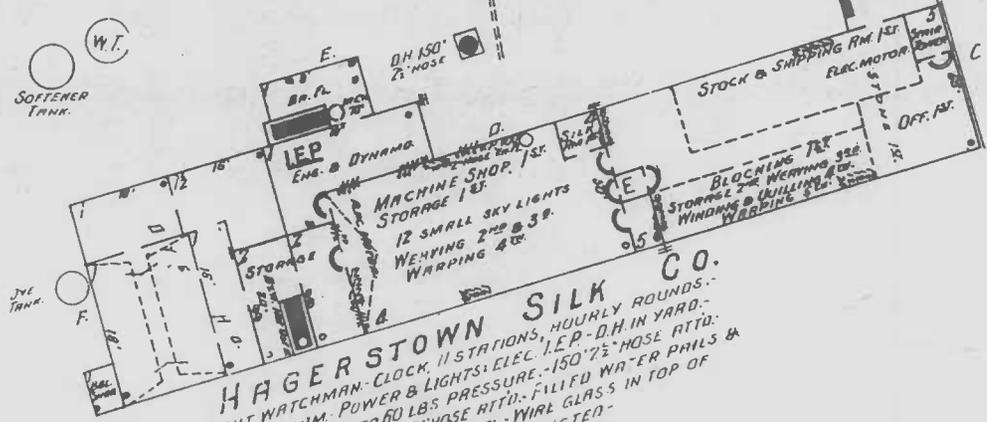
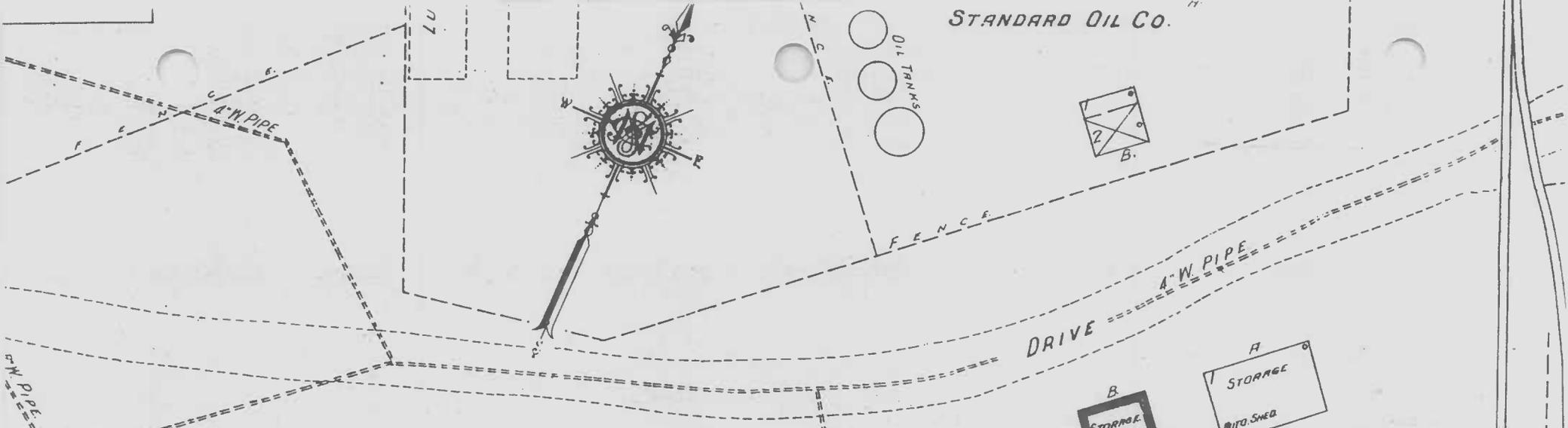
NIGHT WATCHMAN APPROVED GASKET STEAM
 POWER & LIGHTS ELECTRICAL CITY WATER NO. 127
 10 ELEVATOR SAFETY PUMPS & CHEMICAL EXTINGUISHERS.

WA-HAG-167
 Digby Products Co. [Hagerstown Silk Co.]
 Sanborn Map Company
 Fire Insurance Maps of Hagerstown, 1926

OIL CO. (N.J.)

Handwritten notes and circular stamps, including a large '24' in a circle.

STANDARD OIL CO.



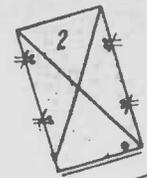
HAGERSTOWN SILK CO.
 NIGHT WATCHMAN - CLOCK, 11 STATIONS, HOURLY ROUNDS.
 HEAT STEAM. POWER & LIGHTS; ELEC. 1 E.P. - D.H. IN YARD.
 CITY WATER 50 TO 60 LB'S PRESSURE. 150' 2 1/2" HOSE ATT'D.
 Y.P. IN MILL WITH 100' 2" HOSE ATT'D. FILLED WATER PHLS &
 CHEM EXT'GNS. DISTRIB'D EA. FL. WIRE GLASS IN TOP OF
 ELEVATOR SHUT FL. OPENINGS PROTECTED.

WA-HAG-167
 Digby Products Co. [Hagerstown Silk Co.]
 Sanborn Map Company
 Fire Insurance Maps of Hagerstown, 1910

R
 H
 M
 N

LUMBER

OIL TANK

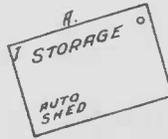


1 1/2" PIPE

1 1/2" PIPE

1 1/2" PIPE

383



WT ELEV 100' ON IRON TOWER CAPCY 40,000 GALS

D.H. 100' HOSE



HAGERSTOWN SILK CO.

2-NIGHT WATCHMAN; NEWMAN CLOCK; 11 STATION; HOURLY ROUNDS. HEAT STEAM; LIGHTS & POWER ELECTRIC; DH IN YARD; CITY WATER 50 TO 60 LBS PRESSURE; HOSE ATT'D EA FLOOR; Y P IN MILL WITH 50' HOSE EXTGRS. DISTD. FILLED WATER PAILS & CHEM. EXTGRS. SHAFTS; EA. FL. WG ON TOP OF ELEVATOR SHAFTS; FLOOR OPENINGS PROTECTED



WA-HAG-167
Digby Products Co. [Hagerstown Silk Co.]
Sanborn Map Company
Fire Insurance Maps of Hagerstown, 1918

W. M. R. P.

A D



WA-HAG-167
Digby Products Bldg.
Park Driveway at Key St.
Hagerstown, Washington Co., Md.



NA-HAG-167

DIGBY PRODUCTS BLDG

HAGERSTOWN MD

7/91 P. KURTZE

VIEW FROM NORTHEAST