

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

DRAFT

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Kingston Barrel Factory

other names/site number _____

name of related multiple property listing NA

2. Location

street & number 35 Bruyn Avenue not for publication

city or town Kingston vicinity

state New York code NY county Ulster code 111 zip code 12401

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide x local

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

NA

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

INDUSTRY/industrial storage

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

No style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: _____

walls: BRICK

VINYL

CONCRETE

roof: ASPHALT

other: _____

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Kingston Barrel Factory is a ca. 1914 brick industrial building located at 35 Bruyn Avenue in Kingston, New York. The resource is situated in an industrial neighborhood composed of one-and two-story industrial buildings, which were constructed near to the West Shore Railroad tracks, which follow the east boundary of the nominated property. The two-story factory is constructed of brick, completed in two stages, ca. 1914 and ca. 1950. The building features a simple utilitarian design, typical of early twentieth century industrial factories and warehouses. Common industrial features at the building include tall windows throughout and modest ornamentation limited to brick arched window lintels. On the interior, the factory further conveys the industrial use of the site, displaying utilitarian features and finishes, such as open floor plans, concrete and wood flooring, and exposed structure. The building was connected to a historically unrelated building to the south ca. 1987; however, the two-story wood-frame connector was removed in 2023, leaving the nominated resource an independent building once again. Because the formerly attached building was never related to the function of the barrel company and is now on a separate parcel, it has been excluded from the boundary. There is a non-historic garage just west of the factory. This was built on land originally associated with the barrel factory but after the period of significance. Because the garage is also unrelated to the barrel factory and is now also on a separate parcel, it too has also been excluded from the nomination boundary.

Narrative Description

Setting:

The Kingston Barrel Factory is located in the Midtown neighborhood of Kingston, less than one mile north of the center of Kingston and is situated on the west side of the West Shore Railroad. The surrounding neighborhood is generally composed of one-and two-story industrial and commercial buildings interspersed with blocks of two-story, single-family, and multi-family residential homes. A four-story former factory building is located one block to the northwest. Immediately to the north and west of the site are one-story commercial and industrial buildings.

Site:

The Kingston Barrel Factory site is a rectangular-shaped parcel that closely aligns with the property's historic 1914 boundary (see Figure E) and contains only the subject building itself (see Figure A). The Kingston Barrel Factory site is bound by Bruyn Avenue to the north, lawn space and the Consolidated Rail Corporation railroad to the east, an asphalt paved parking lot to the west, and a narrow alley between the subject building and the historically unrelated F.B. Matthews & Co. Warehouse to the south. The site is generally characterized by hardscaping and lawn space.

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Exterior:

The Kingston Barrel Factory is a two-story, brick industrial building constructed ca. 1914 composed of a long, rectangular segment to the east; an ell extending just south of the center, to the west, a one-story boiler house

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and a roughly fifty-foot-tall, square, brick smokestack at the southwest corner. A ca. 1950 two-story, brick addition fills in the northwest corner of the original building. (See Figure D)

North Elevation

The factory building is two stories tall, and divided into five structural bays along the primary, Bruyn Avenue, façade (Photo 1). A shallow M-shaped roof faces the street and reflects the factory building's two main construction phases: the ca. 1914 building is to the left (east) and the ca. 1950 addition is to the right (west). The ca. 1914 ell is set back from the Bruyn Avenue elevation and projects to the west. Fenestration consists of a non-historic overhead garage door in the first bay, furthest east, on the first story and a painted wood infilled garage door with a stone lintel, directly above on the second story. The remainder of the north elevation features two non-historic, flush painted metal doors located on the first story, set within brick arched lintels, and windows infilled with painted masonry set within brick arched lintels, except for one glazed, one-over-one window. Set back four bays from the primary, north, elevation, the ell extends for two additional bays to the west. The first story of the ell includes double leaf, painted flush metal doors with a small, shed roof overhead, and the second story includes two brick arched windows, infilled with masonry. An overhanging eave featuring a non-historic vinyl soffit spans the elevation.

West Elevation

The west elevation (Photo 2) extends for eight structural bays. The elevation is composed of the two-story gable facing ca. 1914 ell just south of the center, flanked by the ca. 1950 infill to the left (north) and the ca. 1914 building to the right, visible only at the second floor, as the first floor is blocked by the ca. 1914 one-story boiler house (Photo 3). Fenestration at the first floor includes a wood infilled garage door with a flat roof canopy, a non-historic overhead garage door, a masonry infilled garage door, and a single, painted flush metal door. Windows are non-historic, one-over-one replacement windows with brick arched lintels on the first story. The second story includes a wood infilled garage door, non-historic one-over-one replacement windows with brick arched lintels, and painted masonry infilled windows with brick arched lintels. An overhanging eave featuring a non-historic vinyl soffit spans the elevation.

East Elevation

The east elevation (Photo 4) faces the railroad tracks and is two-stories tall and nineteen window bays wide, displaying the simple utilitarian brick exterior of the remainder of the building. This elevation features regularly spaced windows, infilled with painted masonry with brick arched lintels on the first and second floors. On the first floor, to the far left (south) is a non-historic painted flush metal door that drops below grade and a metal stair that leads to a non-historic flush metal door on the second floor. An overhanging eave featuring a non-historic vinyl soffit spans the elevation.

South Elevation

The east segment of the south elevation previously abutted a ca. 1987 connector that was removed in 2023. The east side of the south elevation is constructed of brick and is four bays wide. The east end of the elevation features an overhead door on the first and second floor. The west end of elevation features two infilled arched window openings. At the center of the segment is a wood panel. A former passthrough opening is located at grade on the west end of the east segment. The west portion is composed of the ell, visible for five bays at the second story and only two bays at the first story, as it abuts the one-story boiler house. The first story of the ell (Photo 5) includes two masonry infilled brick arched windows, and the second story includes five masonry infilled windows. The boiler house features a single painted masonry infill window with a brick arched lintel, consistent with the rest of the building. Engaged at the south elevation of the boiler house is the brick, square smokestack (Photo 6). A lower, one-story brick addition is located east of the smokestack (Photo 7).

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Roof

The building features shallow slope gable roofs on the two-story ca. 1914 section and the ca. 1950 addition and a shed roof on the one-story section at the rear, each covered with rubber membrane. The roof features a non-historic, vinyl overhanging eave throughout (Photo 8).

Interior:

The factory interior (Photo 9) generally features an open floor plan with exposed structure. In limited locations former open spaces have been subdivided for offices and storage and finishes have been updated to include painted gypsum walls, non-historic carpet and vinyl flooring, and dropped acoustic panel ceilings (Photo 10). A notable feature is the brick wall that bisects the interior of both the first and second floors, running in a north-south direction (Photo 11). This wall served as the exterior north wall of the original building, prior to the addition that enclosed the northwest corner of the building before 1950.

First Floor

The first floor of the ca. 1914 portion of the building is generally open in plan in both the east span and the ell to the west. These large open spaces feature exposed square painted wood and round steel columns supporting wood beams. Finishes include concrete floors, painted brick and painted gypsum board walls, and painted gypsum board ceilings (Photo 12). The southwest corner of the first floor, the one-story section of the building, features a small room with a round-arched door opening (Photo 13). Finishes within this room include concrete floors, unpainted brick walls, and an exposed unpainted wood structure ceiling. Another small room is located to the south and features a flush painted metal door, dirt floor, painted brick walls, and painted gypsum board ceiling (Photo 14). The first floor of the ca. 1950 addition, located to the northwest corner of the first floor, includes a garage space and a small office and features exposed square, painted wood columns (Photo 15). Finishes in this space include non-historic tile flooring and concrete; painted brick and painted gypsum walls; and painted gypsum board and the remnant grid of a former acoustic panel ceiling.

Second Floor

Like the first floor, the second floor of the ca. 1914 portion of the building is generally open in plan in both the east span and the ell to the west. The east span features a row of exposed north-south running, regularly spaced, square, painted wood columns supporting a wood beam (Photo 16). Finishes in this space include wood plank floors, painted brick and painted gypsum walls, and painted gypsum board and exposed painted structure ceilings. The ell features two rows of exposed north-south running, square, painted wood columns supporting wood beams. Finishes in this space include wood floors, painted brick and painted gypsum walls, painted gypsum board, and exposed painted wood structure ceilings. The northwest corner of the second floor, the ca. 1950 addition, was updated for office and storage space ca. 1987 and subsequently (Photo 17). Finishes in these spaces exist in various stages of completion and feature wood, vinyl tile, and carpet floors; painted gypsum, stained vertical paneling, and painted brick walls; and painted gypsum board, acoustic tile, and exposed structure ceilings.

Vertical Access

Vertical access throughout the building is provided by wooden stairs at the north elevation and a freight elevator in the northwest corner of the ell. The enclosed stairs feature simple painted wood stairs and a painted wood handrail (Photo 18). The elevator features a non-historic painted metal door on a metal track. The shaft features painted brick walls and unfinished wood walls (Photo 19).

Integrity Analysis: The Kingston Barrel Factory retains integrity to convey its historic use as a cooperage. The period of significance extends from ca. 1914, the approximate year the building was constructed, to 1954, when the plant closed and ceased operations as a barrel factory.

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Specific to the seven aspects of integrity:

Location: The Kingston Barrel Factory is in its original location. As such, the building retains integrity of location.

Setting: When constructed, 35 Bruyn Avenue was in an undeveloped area; however, it was located directly adjacent to the railroad for the easy transportation of goods and materials throughout the region and to the large market in New York City. This proved important to its development as a major regional industry. The area around the subject site was subsequently built up with many other businesses and factories because of the benefits of the railroad, and the area is now known as Midtown. The surrounding properties now include single-family and multi-family residences and businesses, but the Kingston Barrel Factory retains its industrial setting directly next to the railroad.

Design: The original design of the Kingston Barrel Factory is still highly evident today. The simple brick elevations and roof line have been retained and reflect the original form of the building, which was intended to highlight the plant's functionalism and efficiency. The windows have been covered, but the openings remain. The interior layout remains largely unchanged, and the open layout of the building has been retained, reflecting the circulation pattern and needs of a factory setting.

Workmanship and Materials: These two qualities are less applicable; however, the Kingston Barrel Factory retains materials that were typical for industrial buildings and generally effective and durable to withstand plant operations. All of the exterior brick has been retained, and the exterior brick features a pattern of single brick arched window openings. Though many of the windows have been covered, the pattern is still visible, an excellent example of the repetitive fenestration common in factories because it lowered costs while still providing uniform light.

Feeling and Association: The plant at 35 Bruyn Avenue retains its documented association with one of Kingston's important early twentieth century industries. Although minor alterations to the building have occurred since the cooperage closed in the mid-1950s, the building continues to convey its historic industrial use with its simple unadorned brick exterior.

Overall, the Kingston Barrel Factory retains integrity and remains an important example of industrial development and architecture in Kingston.

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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 patterns of our history.
- B Property is 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

ca. 1917 – 1954

Significant Dates

ca. 1917, ca. 1932; ca1950

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

unknown

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance extends from ca. 1917, the year the building became a barrel factory, to ca. 1954, when the plant closed and ceased operation as a barrel factory.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Kingston Barrel Factory is a two-story brick industrial building located at 35 Bruyn Avenue in Kingston, New York that was built ca. 1914 as a box manufacturing factory and transitioned to use as a barrel manufacturing facility in 1917. The factory is locally significant under Criterion A in the category of INDUSTRY as a plant central to the industrial development of Kingston. While in operation as the Kingston Barrel Factory, the building served a large New York market and employed as many as fifty to seventy skilled workers, even during the economic downturn of the Depression years. The barrel plant functioned as a tight cooperage, meaning the barrels manufactured there were designed to hold liquids instead of solids. Tight barrels were in demand and required more skill to make; thus, the factory brought a successful and lucrative business to the city at a time when the United States was the top cooperage producer in the world. The plant trained new skilled craftsmen to produce tight cooperage, which needed to be expertly finished to avoid leaks. There were few tight cooperages on the East Coast when the Kingston Barrel Factory opened, and its strategic location in Kingston in proximity to the railroad and the Hudson River allowed it to directly compete for the New York City market with the other large tight cooperages from places such as Newark, New Jersey. By pivoting away from producing barrels for ale and liquor during Prohibition, the plant was able to continue operation during these years, which also coincided with the Depression, maintaining jobs for local workers and contributing to the local economy. Despite its official turn from doing business related to the liquor industry, the Kingston Barrel Factory is also significant under criterion A in the area of SOCIAL HISTORY for its association with an illegal bootlegging operation during prohibition. The factory maintained a link to Legs Diamond, a notorious gangster and bootlegger who bottled and stored ale at the site until federal agents seized one million dollars' worth of alcohol and equipment during a raid here in 1931. The Kingston Barrel Factory is one of few resources in New York with a documented association to Prohibition, which had numerous financial and social impacts on American life. The period of significance begins ca. 1917, when it became a barrel factory, and ends in 1954, when the barrel factory closed, and the building transitioned to use as a warehouse.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Developmental History

The building at 35 Bruyn Avenue was first built ca. 1914 and appeared on that year's Codwise Map of Kingston. The site was originally owned by the First National Bank and operated by Frank D. Dewey as the Dewey Plant, manufacturing boxes.¹

In October 1917, Hugh Talbot of Cincinnati, Ohio, purchased the subject building, planning to use it as a barrel factory.² Talbot was looking to expand his business eastward, since he already owned cooperage plants in the Midwest and the South.³ He planned to install new machinery and then open the factory in February 1918, employing between 100 to 150 men.⁴ At the time, the demands of the First World War meant that many men were working to manufacture wartime necessities in Kingston rather than barrels. Talbot was industrious, however, and he also bought the acreage behind the plant to use for stacking lumber and planned to build new

¹ "Cooperage Concern Locates in City," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), October 2, 1917.

² "Cooperage Concern Locates in City," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), October 2, 1917.

³ "Cooperage Concern Locates in City," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), October 2, 1917.

⁴ "Cooperage Concern Locates in City," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), October 2, 1917.

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structures on site as the company grew. In 1925, the fire department responded to calls at the cooperage after some paraffine used in coating was ignited, but there was no significant damage to the building.⁵

Talbot's cooperage business was successful for many years before it was purchased by the Proctor Bros & Co. in 1927, which continued to manufacture oak barrels and kegs.⁶ The site changed ownership frequently during the 1930s and 1940s, but it continued to function as a barrel factory.

In May 1933, the Kingston Barrel Corporation was incorporated for the purpose of manufacturing, buying, and selling of barrels.⁷ Later that year, Kingston Barrel took over the Bruyn Avenue plant from the Proctor Bros & Co. and used the space to manufacture beer barrels from white oak timbers grown in Tennessee, employing between forty and fifty men.⁸ The new owners brought in updated equipment for the factory.⁹

The Kingston Barrel Corporation was reorganized in June 1935, and the Bruyn Avenue site was taken over by American Tight Cooperage, Inc, which also operated the Michigan Cooperage Company of Detroit.¹⁰

A few years later, in 1939, the Bruyn plant was purchased by the Seaboard Cooperage Corp, which intended to revive the factory as its principal office and employ between forty-five and fifty men.¹¹ The new owners, who had cooperage experience in Kentucky and Delaware, hoped to expand the market of the local factory and send shipments not only across the United States but also internationally.¹² To achieve these goals, one of the directors noted that the company spent between \$5,000 and \$6,000 on new equipment for the plant.¹³

In 1940, the plant was purchased by the American Cooperage Company, which placed new roofs on parts of the building and updated the machinery in need of repairs so they could start operations at the plant.¹⁴ Period advertisements highlighted the fact that the barrels were made of oak and ash and could be used to store cider, fruit juices, and other liquids.

The plant employed over forty men in Kingston during the 1940s. In 1947, picketing occurred for over a week at the barrel factory as the union and the management were engaged in a deadlock over negotiations. Forty-two employees walked out after their contract expired on April 1st, seeking increased wages.¹⁵

After nearly a decade, the American Cooperage Company sold the factory in 1949 to Henleeds Realty Corporation, a New York City company.¹⁶ Henry Leeds, the president and owner of Henleeds Realty, continued to operate the factory under the American Cooperage Company name.

⁵ "Fire Department Called out on Several Fires," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), June 4, 1925.

⁶ "New Cooperage Plant Revives Old Enterprise on Bruyn Avenue," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), March 23, 1939.

⁷ "Barrel Corporation is Formed in Kingston," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), May 29, 1933.

⁸ "New Cooperage Concern Will Begin Operations Here July," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), June 10, 1933.

⁹ "New Cooperage Concern Will Begin Operations Here July," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), June 10, 1933.

¹⁰ "Barrel Factory is Again Operating," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), June 6, 1935.

¹¹ "New Cooperage Plant Revives Old Enterprise on Bruyn Avenue," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), March 23, 1939.

¹² "New Cooperage Plant Revives Old Enterprise on Bruyn Avenue," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), March 23, 1939.

¹³ "New Cooperage Plant Revives Old Enterprise on Bruyn Avenue," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), March 23, 1939.

¹⁴ "Workmen Busy at Barrel Plant," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), May 14, 1940.

¹⁵ "Picketing Goes on at Local Plants," *Daily Freeman*, (Kingston, NY), April 10, 1947.

¹⁶ "Cooperage Plant is Transferred to Henleeds Realty," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), May 2, 1949.

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A two-story, brick addition was constructed ca. 1950, filling in the northwest corner of the original factory building. Additionally, the complex at 35 Bruyn Avenue had expanded by 1950 and encompassed the original parcel and that to the west. That year's Sanborn Map showed a large wood-frame stock shed built directly to the west of the subject building. The shed and the factory were separated by a siding from the West Shore Railroad that extended from the main tracks onto the property to service the cooperage. Another rectangular brick building was shown north of the stock shed on the 1950 Sanborn Map (See Figure F).¹⁷

In January 1951, Leeds began selling capital stock to an organization in New York, which had plans to expand the plants and start manufacturing whiskey barrels.¹⁸ At the time, Leeds explained that although there was an increasing demand for barrels to age whiskey, he was not interested in expanding the business in this way, so he decided to sell it.¹⁹ The factory retained the American Cooperage Company name.

In 1954, the plant at 35 Bruyn was again sold, this time to the Rupp Trucking Company, and, for the first time, it was no longer used for barrel manufacturing. Instead, the trucking concern planned to use the site as a terminal in Kingston, allowing the trucking company to provide more efficient pickup and delivery service in the area.²⁰ The trucking concern did not plan to use the former barrel factory as part of its terminal, and instead planned to use other buildings on site, such as the storage shed. Alterations were planned in the terminal facilities by Augustus Schrowang and Novig to provide housing. By 1956, as shown in historic aerial images, the large stock shed had been demolished and a smaller, brick and concrete storage structure had been erected to the west of the factory. On the 1957 Sanborn Map, the West Shore Railroad track that extended on the property had also been removed.²¹ (See Figure G)

While Rupp Trucking Company owned and used the land at 35 Bruyn Avenue, they were not using the Kingston Barrel Factory as part of their terminal facilities. Therefore, the company decided to lease the original 22,000 square foot, two-story brick building for manufacturing purposes, while Rupp occupied other buildings on site.²² In 1954, the International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) decided to build a new plant just north of Kingston. The company also planned to have additional warehouse locations in the city center, and in 1955 they applied for a lease on the former barrel factory on Bruyn Avenue.²³ Local periodicals indicated that the plant would be used for storage purposes over a period of five years, but the 1987 Sanborn map, the last year they were produced, still labels the plant as an IBM warehouse.²⁴ IBM closed its plant north of Kingston in 1995 and likely vacated the central warehouse at around the same time.²⁵

The trucking company put the Bruyn site up for sale in 1972. Advertisements for the sale boasted that the two-story former barrel factory would be an "excellent warehouse or manufacturing" facility.²⁶ Advertisements also stated that the 2,800-square-foot truck terminal that Rupp had occupied featured "33-ft wide, electrically operated overhead doors."²⁷

¹⁷ 1950 Sanborn Map.

¹⁸ "Cooperage Firm Sells Some Stock," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), January 18, 1951.

¹⁹ "Cooperage Firm Sells Some Stock," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), January 18, 1951.

²⁰ "Trucking Concern Buys Barrel Plant," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), February 19, 1954.

²¹ 1957 Sanborn Map.

²² "Trucking Concern Buys Barrel Plant," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), February 19, 1954.

²³ "Indications IBM Will Take Over Two Places," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), December 15, 1955.

²⁴ "Indications IBM Will Take Over Two Places," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), December 15, 1955; 1987 Sanborn Map.

²⁵ "Company News; IBM to Close Kingston, NY Plant; and Shift Jobs," *New York Times*, July 18, 1994.

²⁶ *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), March 2, 1972.

²⁷ *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), March 2, 1972.

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In 1984, the subject parcel and the adjacent parcel at 104 Smith Avenue were combined. The Smith Avenue building first appeared on maps in 1950 as a wood-frame, metal-clad warehouse. On the 1950 and 1957 Sanborn Maps, the warehouse is labeled as owned by F.B. Matthews & Co, a wholesale grocer (See Figures F & G). Also on the Smith Avenue parcel were two freestanding truck terminals and a freestanding storage structure. In 1957, the storage structure and one of the truck terminals were demolished, while the other remained. At the same time, a new storage building that connected to the warehouse was built (See Figure G).

In 1987, the Smith warehouse was connected to the building at 35 Bruyn. At the same time, permits were issued to renovate the interior of the plant to add offices and storage. During these renovations, the interior was covered with sheet rock and exterior windows were infilled. The Smith warehouse and the former barrel factory were disconnected in 2023.

The site has had various owners since the 1970s and has been primarily vacant for the past fifteen years.

Criterion A: INDUSTRY

The Kingston Barrel Factory was one of only a handful of tight cooperages in the Northeast when it opened in 1917, since most tight barrels before that were produced in the south and west.²⁸ Hugh Talbot brought his experience with high-grade cooperages to Kingston, eager to expand his reach to serve the New York market, the largest in the country.²⁹ Over its thirty-seven years of operation, the plant employed dozens of men, creating new cooperage experts in the city. The factory was successful and remained open during the Depression years and the Prohibition era. Barrels were used to transport everything from ale to oil to apples, so the plant was able to generally redirect its production away from alcohol during Prohibition, but it still had connections to a notorious bootlegger, Legs Diamond, who secretly bottled and stored liquor on site until it was raided by federal agents. The Kingston Barrel Factory established a new industry in the region, and it was significant to the city's economy for decades.

Industry in Kingston

Once an agricultural hub, Kingston became a center of industry in the early nineteenth century, producing materials like cement, bricks, and bluestone. Bluestone quarries dominated the city's industry throughout the nineteenth century, providing raw materials to build roads and millstones to grind grains into the twentieth century.³⁰ During the first half of the nineteenth century, imports and exports in Kingston relied on the Delaware & Hudson (D&H) Canal, a more than 108-mile canal that transported coal from northeastern Pennsylvania to markets and consumers along the Hudson River.³¹ Eventually, the D&H Canal was abandoned in favor of railroads, which were faster and could be used all-year-long.³²

The most significant development in Kingston's industrial history during the nineteenth century was the arrival of the West Shore Railroad in 1883, which ran through the city center and made the location attractive for new

²⁸ Franklin H. Smith and Albert H. Pierson, *Tight and Slack Cooperage Stock Production in 1918* (n.p.: United States Forest Service, 1918), 5.

²⁹ "Kingston's New Industry Brings Big Manufactures," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), January 25, 1918.

³⁰ Susan B. Wick and Karl R. Wick, *Kingston and Ulster Townships* (n.p.: Arcadia Publishing, 2009), 22-23.

³¹ "D&H Canal," National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/upde/learn/historyculture/dhcanal.htm>. Accessed October 13, 2022.

³² "D&H Canal," National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/upde/learn/historyculture/dhcanal.htm>. Accessed October 13, 2022.

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industries since their goods could be transported to the large East Coast markets.³³ Thus, enticed by the West Shore Railroad, new industries came to Kingston, including the cooperage at 35 Bruyn Avenue, which became a central part of Kingston's commercial growth during the first half of the twentieth century.³⁴ However, also in the early 1900s, the industrial city began to falter as highways and railroads expanded nationally, allowing consumers to import goods and materials from other sources.³⁵

Early Twentieth Century Cooperages in the United States

In the United States, cooperages are as old as the country itself. In 1620, European settlers filled the Mayflower with barrels that carried everything they needed for their journey across the ocean, including flour, beans, meats, and liquors. The first American coopers assembled barrels by hand with simple tools, such as axes and knives.³⁶ Early machinery was developed around the turn of the nineteenth century, but true barrel making equipment was not invented until the mid-1800s.³⁷ The industry only grew as more businesses found themselves in need of barrels, so cooperage equipment was constantly being updated and refined.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the nation had the largest cooperage business in the world, with 300 million barrels and circular packages manufactured yearly, and demand was only growing.³⁸ With improved technology, barrels became relatively cheap, convenient packaging and were used to transport everything from cement to sugar to liquor. In 1915, the Associated Cooperage Industries of America was founded when several associations consolidated with the goal of improving the quality of American cooperage, especially as the need for barrels became more and more widespread.³⁹ An article in the *Daily People* emphasized the significance of the barrel industry, "To the average man a barrel is simply a barrel, and he seldom thinks of the important part it plays in many American industries. He never stops to think how seriously trade would be handicapped if the barrel supply were suddenly to give out."⁴⁰

Generally, two types of barrels were produced in the United States: slack and tight. Slack barrels held anything non-liquid, and thus did not have to be as tightly sealed, whereas tight barrels had to be impeccably made to avoid leakage. The pieces of wood, or staves, had to be squeezed tightly together with a metal hoop, thereby giving the barrel its shape, and then tightened to be able to hold liquid. After forming, each barrel was given a specific coating depending on which liquid they would contain and extensively tested to ensure quality.

The Kingston Barrel Factory

When Hugh Talbot bought the factory at 35 Bruyn in 1917, he established the first tight cooperage in Kingston, and one of the first on the East Coast, since most earlier tight cooperages were located in the western and

³³ William Bartholet Rhoads, *Kingston, New York: The Architectural Guide* (n.p.: Black Dome Pr, 2003), 18.

³⁴ "Kingston's New Industry Brings Big Manufactures," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), January 25, 1918.

³⁵ "A Little History," City of Kingston, <https://www.kingston-ny.gov/content/11648/11089/11091/default.aspx>. Accessed October 5, 2022.

³⁶ Fred Putnam Hankerson, *The Cooperage Handbook* (New York: Chemical Publishing Co, 1947), 14. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015006133204&view=1up&seq=10>.

³⁷ F. P. Hankerson, ed., *The Wooden Barrel Manual* (St. Louis, MO: The Associated Cooperage Industries of American, Inc., 1944), 91. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b4209717&view=1up&seq=95>

³⁸ "The Making of Barrels," *Daily People* (New York, NY), October 4, 1905.

³⁹ Hankerson, *The Cooperage Handbook*, 14.

⁴⁰ "Wood for Barrels," *Evening Star* (Newark, NJ), November 2, 1907.

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southern United States. He already had plants in Indiana, Ohio, and Alabama and was looking to expand his business and cater to the larger New York markets.⁴¹

When news of Talbot's plant was made public, periodicals noted its significant impact on the declining industrial scene in Kingston. The *Kingston Daily Freeman* noted, "The securing of this cooperage plant for Kinston marks one of the most important additions to the industrial life of the city," especially because the factory would employ mainly skilled men.⁴² Though the plant had updated machinery, there were higher expectations associated with tight cooperages. Skilled labor was an incredibly important aspect of barrel manufacturing, especially tight barrels that needed to avoid leaks. As J.B. Wagner noted in his 1910 treatise on cooperages, "The one thing, undoubtedly, that contributes more to a mill turning out an inferior quality of stock than any other is lack of properly trained and skilled labor."⁴³ Therefore, the pay at the Kingston Cooperage Company was above average for craftsmen, and Talbot brought in experts to train the new local employees.⁴⁴ The jobs created by the cooperage made a significant impact on the city. Talbot expected to employ between one hundred and one hundred fifty men by the time operations began in January 1918.

Additionally, the *Freeman* attributed some of the success of securing the new barrel factory to then-mayor Palmer Canfield, who convinced Talbot that Kingston was the right place for his East Coast cooperage.⁴⁵ The eastern market was growing, and Kingston had dependable labor. Further, the city had excellent shipping facilities and was near the New York City market, which was the largest in the country. Kingston's location allowed Talbot's cooperage to compete with the delivery speed of the few other large tight cooperages in the general area, the majority of which were located in Newark, New Jersey.⁴⁶

When the Kingston Cooperage Company first opened at Bruyn Avenue, period newspapers emphasized that new business was not a wartime enterprise. Instead, it was a permanent fixture of its industrial scene, and the factory was expected to make Kingston a large, permanent tight barrel center.⁴⁷ A few months after it opened, the cooperage factory was producing 300 barrels daily, before it was even operating at full capacity.⁴⁸ At full capacity, it was estimated that the factory had the equipment to produce 1,350 barrels per day.⁴⁹ Further, the output of the Kingston cooperage was attractive to other industries looking to relocate to the city. When the Hauck Food Products Corporation established a location in Kingston to refine edible oils, the *Daily Freeman* noted, "The fact that barrels may be obtained at first hand in Kingston is one of the advantages the corporation finds it has by being located in this city."⁵⁰

The cooperage soon became one of the largest manufacturers in Kingston. In July 1933, when the Kingston Barrel Corporation began production at 35 Bruyn Avenue, it already had rush orders under contract, exemplifying the necessity of the industry, even during the Depression years. During the economic hardships of the early 1930s, Kingston Barrel was able to continue an active business and generally employ between forty

⁴¹ "Cooperage Concern Locates in City," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), October 2, 1917.

⁴² "Cooperage Concern Locates in City," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), October 2, 1917.

⁴³ J.B. Wagner, *Cooperage: A Treatise on Modern Shop Practice and Methods; From the Tree to the Finished Article*, (Yonkers, NY: J.B. Wagner, 1910), 330. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=loc.ark:/13960/t04x64154&view=1up&seq=354&q1=new%20york>.

⁴⁴ "Tight Cooperage Factory Running," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), May 28, 1918.

⁴⁵ "Cooperage Concern Locates in City," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), October 2, 1917.

⁴⁶ "Kingston's New Industry Brings Big Manufactures," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), January 25, 1918.

⁴⁷ "Tight Cooperage Factory Running," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), May 28, 1918.

⁴⁸ "Tight Cooperage Factory Running," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), May 28, 1918.

⁴⁹ "Kingston's New Industry Brings Big Manufactures," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), January 25, 1918.

⁵⁰ "Kingston's Newest Product Makes Its Bow," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), April 19, 1919,

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and fifty skilled workers. Further, when hiring, Kingston Barrel advertised its preference for those already working or who had been employed in the factory before, emphasizing the lasting importance of the skill that Talbot brought to the region fifteen years earlier.⁵¹

For many decades, the Kingston Barrel Factory was an integral part of the city's industrial growth, providing jobs and barrels for the New York market, even during the hardships of the Depression years and throughout the Prohibition era. The site at 35 Bruyn remained a successful barrel manufacturing site until 1954, when demand for barrels became specialized and decreased overall.

Prohibition and "Legs" Diamond

Across the country, Prohibition began in January 1920 after the eighteenth amendment to the Constitution was ratified a year earlier, banning "the sale, manufacture, transportation, importation, exportation, and possession of intoxicating liquors for beverages."⁵² It was eventually repealed in 1933, but prohibition had a marked effect on the tight cooperage industry during those years. Production of beer and ale staves decreased from millions a year to hundreds of thousands.⁵³ Tight barrels were still necessary during the Prohibition years, so the industry redirected and manufactured more staves and barrels for oil rather than alcohol.⁵⁴ The Kingston Barrel Factory remained in operation during Prohibition. The Proctor Bros, who owned the manufacturing plant at the end of the 1920s, pivoted and advertised their oak barrels to be used for apples in period newspapers.⁵⁵

The Hudson Valley was home to many illegal speakeasies and distilleries during the Prohibition Era because bootleggers and mobsters found it beneficial to work close to the New York City market but outside the watchful eye of the city's law enforcement.⁵⁶ The Kingston Barrel Factory also had a storied connection to bootlegging at the time, specifically to Jack "Legs" Diamond, a notorious New York gangster. In the early twentieth century, Legs captured the public's imagination as he evaded charges and survived at least four assassination attempts. Legend says he received his nickname when he was a young package thief and his long legs allowed him to outrun the police every time; other stories say he received the name because he "ran out on his friends."⁵⁷ He was periodically charged with robbery or burglary throughout the 1920s, but he did not gain widespread notoriety until October 1927, when he was charged with homicide following the death of "Little Augie," a gangster and bootlegger for whom Legs had worked as a body guard.⁵⁸ Legs was questioned by detectives about the murder but eventually discharged. His reputation continued to grow in the late 1920s as he was accused of "practically every crime on the books"; however, he rarely spent time in jail.⁵⁹

In the early 1930s, Legs made money by bootlegging, bottling, and hiding his supply in the factory at 35 Bruyn Avenue. As his name and reputation suggest, he was successful at avoiding the police for many months until May 1931, when the federal government raided the barrel factory in what was known as the "Million Dollar

⁵¹ "New Cooperage Concern Will Begin Operations Here July," *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), June 10, 1933.

⁵² "Nation Voted Dry; 38 States Adopt the Amendment," *New York Times*, January 17, 1919.

⁵³ Franklin H. Smith and Albert H. Pierson, *Tight and Slack Cooperage Stock Production in 1918*, (n.p.: United States Forest Service, 1918), 3. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b3116848&view=1up&seq=7>

⁵⁴ Smith and Pierson, *Tight and Slack Cooperage Stock Production in 1918*, 4.

⁵⁵ *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, New York), October 1, 1931.

⁵⁶ "During Prohibition, these Valley establishments flourished as speakeasies, bootleg distilleries," *Poughkeepsie Journal*, August 25, 2020.

⁵⁷ Meyer Berger, "Legs Diamond Slain in Sleep at Albany by Two Assassins," *New York Times*, December 19, 1931.

⁵⁸ "Diamond Often Accused," *New York Times*, October 13, 1930.

⁵⁹ "Diamond Often Accused," *New York Times*, October 13, 1930.

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Raid,” since a million dollars’ worth of liquor, ale, and equipment were seized.⁶⁰ It was reported that 3,000 barrels and 41,000 bottles of ale were confiscated.⁶¹ The Million Dollar Raid was one of the largest raids of its kind during prohibition. By the end of the same month, Legs and his associates were arrested and charged with conspiracy and violations of prohibition law.⁶² Local hearsay claims Legs was able to keep the illicit business running for so long without notice because he had a half-mile-long rubber pipe running through the city’s sewer system that transported the goods directly from the brewery to the barrel factory.⁶³ Ultimately, Legs was assassinated on December 18, 1931 before receiving his sentence.⁶⁴ The Kingston Barrel Factory is one of few resources in New York with a documented association to Prohibition, which had numerous financial and social impacts on American life.

After the Prohibition era ended in 1933, the Kingston Barrel Factory returned to outwardly manufacturing barrels to transport alcohol. That same year, then-owners Kingston Barrel Inc. announced in local periodicals that they would be fulfilling rush orders for beer barrels.⁶⁵ The Bruyn Avenue factory continued to successfully manufacture tight cooperage for many years as a staple of Kingston’s industrial scene during the first half of the twentieth century.

Conclusion

The Kingston Barrel Factory served as a successful cooperage industry in Kingston in the first half of the twentieth century. Hugh Talbot brought the first tight cooperage to Kingston to capture the large East Coast market and, because of thoughtful location along the railroad and close to New York City, Kingston was able to directly compete with other regional manufacturers. Further, the city had a reliable source of labor, and the high output capacity of the plant meant that many employees were retained and trained in the specialized skill, bringing jobs and other new industries to the area. The factory is also a representative example of industrial architecture during an era when factories evolved during the early twentieth century, and its open layout and durable, economical materials provided enough flexibility so the building could continue to manufacture barrels even as technology advanced and owners changed. The Kingston Barrel Factory has a significant history in the city as an important industrial site, and its functional architecture still clearly embodies the cooperage’s original purpose.

⁶⁰ David Levine, “Legs Diamond: A History of Kingston’s Most Notorious Gangster,” *Hudson Valley Magazine*, <https://hvmag.com/life-style/history/legs-diamond-history/>. Accessed October 5, 2022.

⁶¹ Stephen Blauweiss and Karen Berelowitz, *The Story of Historic Kingston: Featuring 950 Images and Connections to the Catskills & New York City* (Kingston, NY: Blauweiss Films, 2022), 184.

⁶² “Gets Papers Seized at Diamond’s Home,” *New York Times*, May 27, 1931.

⁶³ Stephen Blauweiss and Karen Berelowitz, *Story of Historic Kingston: Featuring 950 Images and Connections to the Catskills & New York City* (Kingston, NY: Blauweiss Films, 2022), 185.

⁶⁴ “Legs Diamond Slain in Sleep at Albany by Two Assassins,” *New York Times*, December 19, 1931.

⁶⁵ “New Cooperage Concern Will Begin Operations Here July,” *Daily Freeman* (Kingston, NY), June 10, 1933.

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Previous documentation on file (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 # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 2.3

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(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

UTM References

1. **Latitude: 41.931725 Longitude: -73.999065**

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated parcel boundary is defined by a heavy line on the attached map with scale (see Figure A below).

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated boundary includes the parcel containing the subject building, which is the sole remaining historic resource associated with the Kingston Barrel Factory. As illustrated in the historic map (Figure E), the boundary aligns with the original parcel when the subject building and an associated shed (no longer extant) were located at the easternmost end of Bruyn Avenue. Although the company later expanded with additional buildings to the west (see Figure F), any cooperage-related buildings or structures have been demolished and the extant garage to the west of the building and the larger parking lot that extends to Cornell Street have no historic association with the building's historic use as a cooperage. The western boundary also generally coincides with the location of a former rail spur, as illustrated in the 1950 Sanborn Map (see Figure F), which separated the subject building from the former stock shed (no longer extant) to the west.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cindy Hamilton/Mariana Melin-Corcoran and Erin Ward Contact: Kathleen LaFrank, NYSHPO

organization Heritage Consulting Group date 7/3/24

street & number 15 W Highland Avenue telephone 215-248-1260

city or town Philadelphia state PA zip code 19118

e-mail chamilton@heritage-consulting.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

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A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

See enclosed Pre-Rehabilitation Photographs

Name of Property: Kingston Barrel Factory

City or Vicinity: Kingston

County: Ulster State: NY

Photographer: Heritage Consulting Group

Date Photographed: 2023

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 0001 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, North Elevation, Looking Southwest
- 0002 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, West Elevation, Looking Southeast
- 0003 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, West Elevation, Looking East
- 0004 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, East Elevation, Looking West
- 0005 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, South Elevation, Looking North
- 0006 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, West Elevation, Looking East
- 0007 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, West and South Elevation, Looking Northeast
- 0008 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, South Elevation, Looking North
- 0009 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, East Elevation, Looking West
- 0010 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, First Floor, Looking West
- 0011 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, First Floor, Looking Southwest
- 0012 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, First Floor, Looking North
- 0013 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, First Floor, Looking North
- 0014 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, First Floor, Looking South
- 0015 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, First Floor, Looking West
- 0016 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, Second Floor, Looking West
- 0017 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, Second Floor, Looking Northeast
- 0018 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, First Floor, Looking Northwest
- 0019 of 19 Kingston Barrel Factory, First Floor, Looking Southeast at Stairs

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Figure A: Site Boundary shown outlined in red.
(Source: Ulster County, New York, Maps, Parcel Viewer)

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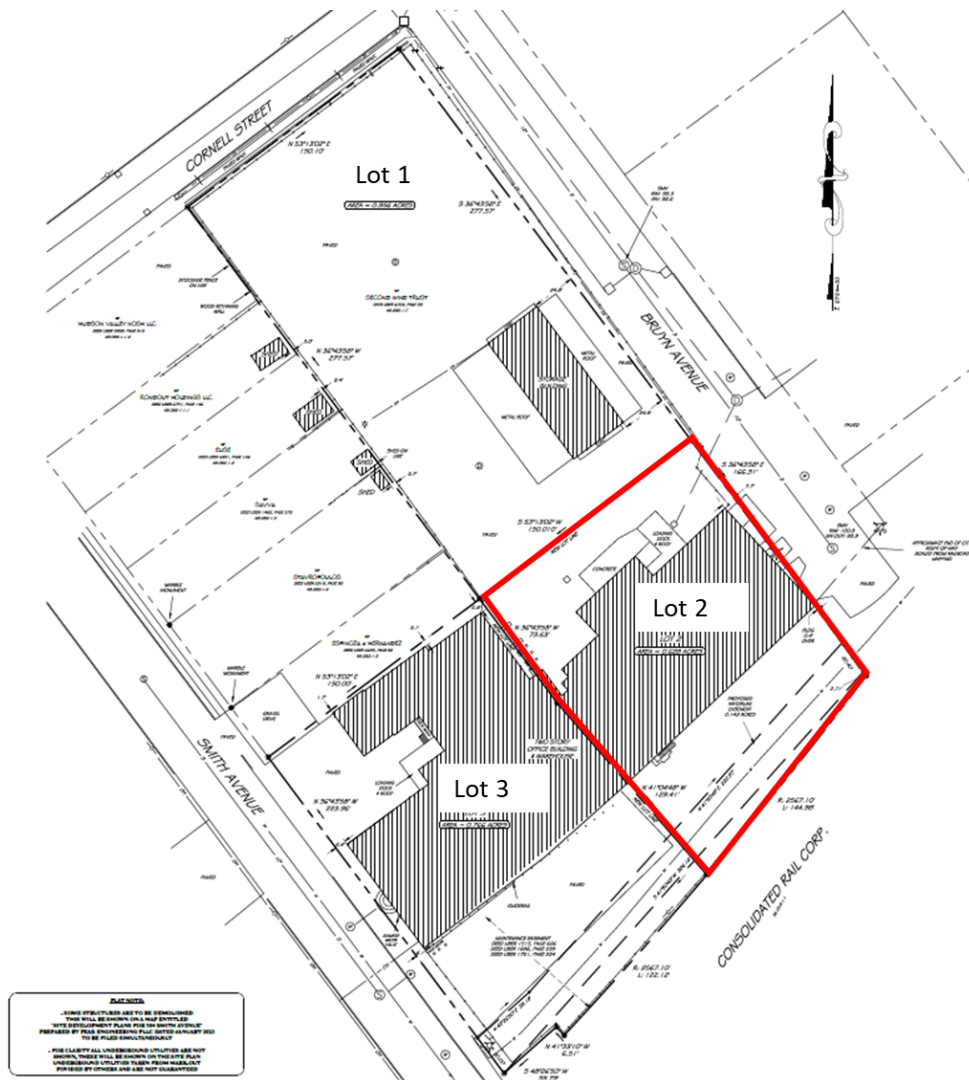


Figure B: Subdivision Plat Plan, detail. Site boundary is outlined in red.
(Source: Decker Surveying, January 18, 2023)

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Figure C: Site plan showing the Kingston Barrel Factory, Former Connector (no longer extant), Garage, and F.B. Matthews & Co. Warehouse.
(Source: Google Maps)

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Figure D: Kingston Barrel Factory building chronology plan. Note: The connector was demolished in 2023 and the Kingston Barrel Factory is no longer connected to the Warehouse.
(Source: Google Maps)

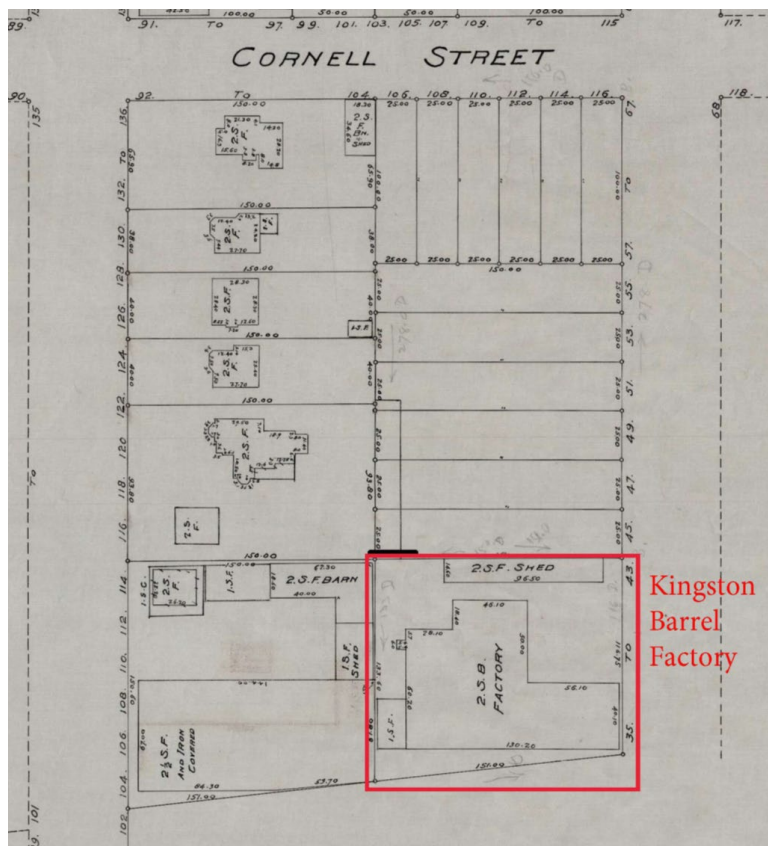
connector

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Figure E: 1914 Codwise Map showing the factory, detached shed to the west (no longer extant), and the original factory property boundary. This approximates the nominated boundary

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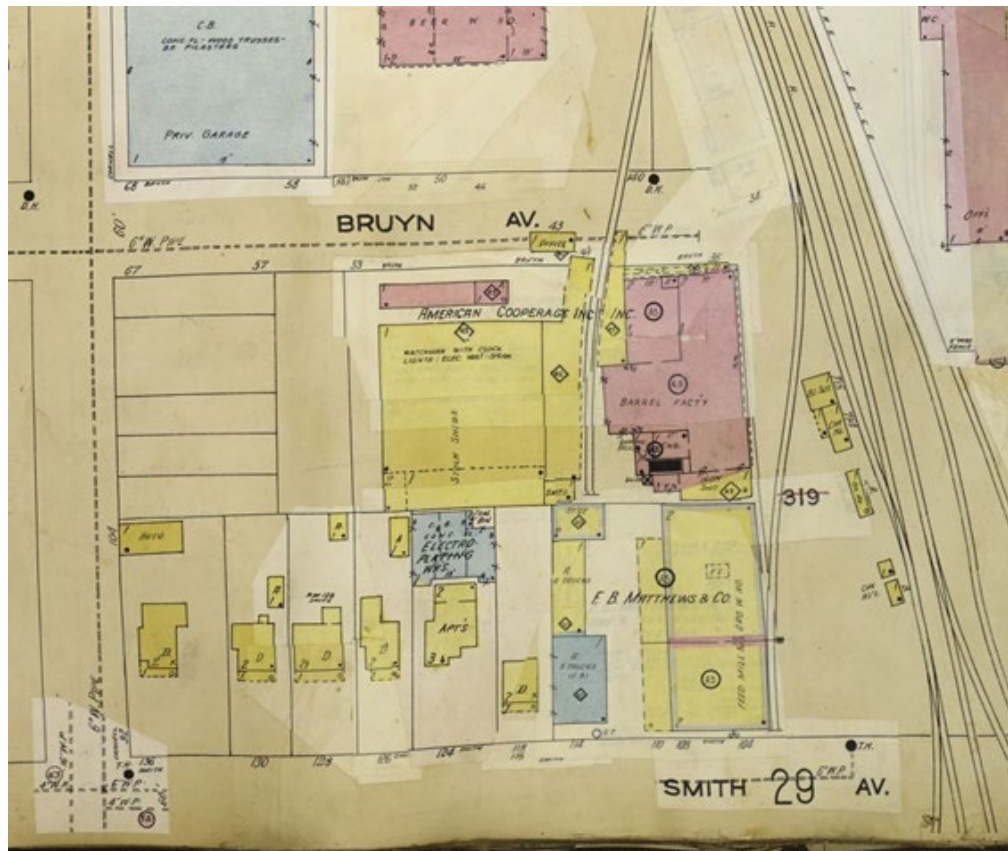


Figure F: 1950 Sanborn Map showing the factory, known as the American Cooperage at this time, with a brick addition at the northwest corner and wood shed additions at the northwest corner and to the south; a rail spur to the west of the factory; and sheds to the west of the spur (no longer extant). Also shown is the F.B. Matthews & Co. Warehouse to the south, known as F & K Hardware at this time. After the period of significance, the Matthews warehouse was connected to the cooperage; however, the connection has been demolished

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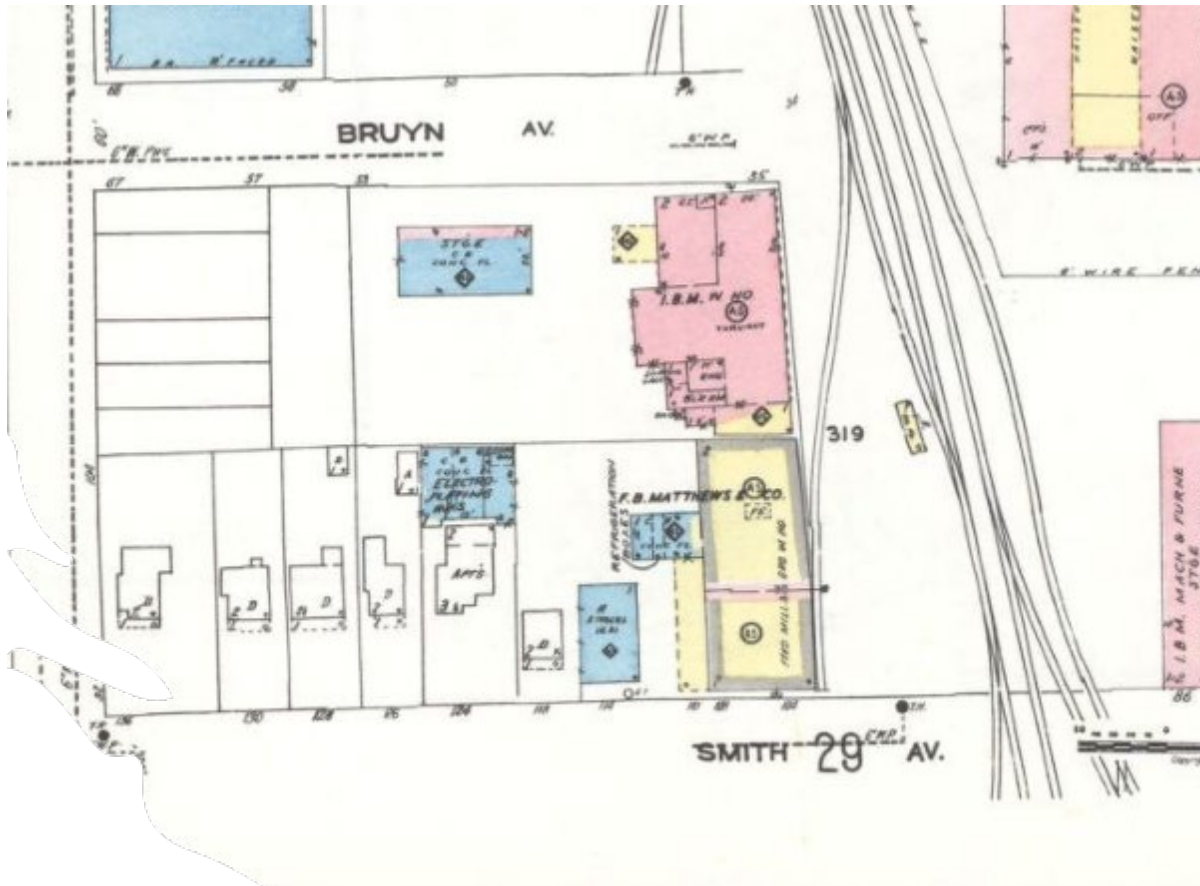


Figure G: 1957 Sanborn Map showing the concrete block and brick garage to the west of the factory.

Kingston Barrel Factory

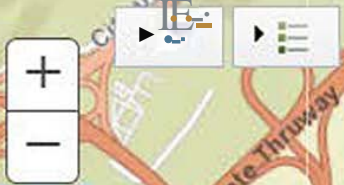
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Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



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