Baltimore City
Commission for Historical and
Architectural Preservation

Landmark Designation Report
March 12, 2013

C.J. Youse Building

235 Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland
COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

KATHLEEN KOTARBA, Executive Director

Charles L. Benton, Jr. Building  417 East Fayette Street  Eighth Floor  Baltimore, MD 21202-3416

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Significance Summary

This commercial factory building was constructed in 1915 as a paper box factory for the C.J. Youse Company. Established in 1869, the C.J. Youse Company manufactured paper boxes for 106 years. The company was a nationally prominent firm, specializing in confectionary and candy boxes used by candy companies across the country. This building is significant for its association with the C. J. Youse Company. Baltimore was a national leader in paper box and confectionary manufacturing from the late-19th century through the mid-20th century, and the Youse Company played an important role in the both of these industries on a national scale. The candy box itself was in many ways more important that the sweets found inside. Candy boxes epitomized the practice of packaging as a marketing tool in the early 20th century, and the Youse Company was a leader in this practice.

Property History

The C. J. Youse Building is located at the southeast corner of E. Saratoga and Holliday Streets. From 1847 to 1908, a bell foundry and brass works, and later plumbing supplies factory was located on the site. Originally known as Clampitt & Regester, it was later known by Regester and Webb, Joshua Regester, and finally, J. Regester Sons Co.¹ The factory suffered a devastating fire in 1908, which killed three firemen.² The building ruins remained, the walls standing “menacingly” for another seven years.³ In 1915, the property was subdivided into two lots, and C.J. Youse Company purchased the northern lot at the intersection of Saratoga and Holliday Streets. The company constructed a three story brick factory that was considered to be a great improvement.⁴ The American Contractor reported on June 26, 1915 that the C.J. Youse Co. was constructing a three story factory and office building made of brick or concrete, steel and iron at Holliday and Saratoga Streets, but it was too early for details. The firm Archer & Allen were identified as the architects.⁵ The building was completed in less than six months, as a January 1916 Sun classified ad called for “Experienced Hands” in their “New Daylight, Fireproof Paper Box Factory.”⁶

The factory building was designed by the prominent Baltimore firm Archer & Allen. George Archer was one of the early members of the Baltimore AIA, active in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He was a prolific designer of Baltimore’s architecture, ranging from civic, religious, commercial, residential, and industrial buildings.⁷ Some of his most prominent works include Walter’s Bath House #2, designated as a Baltimore City Landmark, several buildings on the Johns Hopkins Hospital campus, Pratt Library Branch #11, and the Schloss Building.⁸ Raymond Allen joined George Archer in his firm in 1904.⁹ Although this firm is prominent, this building does not represent an architecturally significant work.

When it was constructed, the factory was located on the southern edge of a dense manufacturing area loosely bound by the Jones Falls to the east, Calvert Street to the west, Saratoga Street to the south, and Centre Street to the north. Sanborn Fire Insurance
maps show that this area was filled with tanneries, factories, ice houses, and related businesses. These businesses benefitted from their immediate proximity to the Northern Central Railroad’s Calvert Station (where the Baltimore Sun building is located today), as well as the proximity to the Jones Falls, and to the harbor just a few blocks south. These businesses could efficiently distribute their goods across the nation via rail and ship due to their location. Today, this former industrial area is mainly covered in parking lots, with only a few buildings remaining that speak to the area’s historic industrial nature, such as the Terminal Warehouse Building, designated as a Baltimore City Landmark in 2012 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the North Central Railroad Baltimore Freight Shed, now home to the Merritt Athletic Club, or the Saratoga Street Municipal Building, now home to Saratoga Lofts. The latter two buildings are listed on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties.

In 1950, the Youse Company made improvements to the building, repairing the elevator sash and replacing brick sills with limestone, for a cost of $3,500. In 1975, the company closed after 106 years in business, and the building was sold to Phillip and Mildred Nochumowitz. For approximately 25 years, until 2004, the building was a clothing distribution hub for Diane Fashions. Between 2004 and 2012, the property changed hands several times. In 2012, the building was sold to Son of Quitiplas. The building is slated to be rehabbed (along with the adjacent Brink’s Building at 231 Holliday Street) and used for retail on the first floor and a media center on the upper stories by the Real News Network, which has selected Baltimore as its US headquarters.

The building is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and is just outside the boundaries of the Business and Government National Register Historic District.

The legislation for designating this building as a Baltimore City Landmark is being sponsored by Councilman William Cole IV.

**Contextual History**

Baltimore was a national center of manufacturing in the 19th and early 20th centuries. While Baltimore is famous for its steel and canning industries, two other industries for which Baltimore was known are directly related to the C.J. Youse Company: Confectionery and Paper Box Manufacturing. Of additional importance is the role that candy boxes played in courtship rituals in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The history of the firm and its role in business both in Baltimore and nationally is also presented.

**Confectionery Manufacturing**

Today, Baltimore still has several historic famous candy companies, including Goetze’s, Wockenfuss, Rheb’s, and Mary Sue. Even before these companies, Baltimore was home to pioneers in the candy manufacturing, such as John F. Birkmeyer and Sons, established in 1860. Baltimore played an important role in helping the candy industry “grow from a ‘pindling’ business to one of the great industries of our country,” due to the early
innovative confectioners in Baltimore. The period between the Civil War and World War I saw an explosion in sugar consumption, matched by a rise in industrialization and profound shifts in population from rural to urban areas. In 1881, Baltimore enjoyed “an enviable reputation” in the confectionary trade nationally, in part because the firms used pure sugar for their candies, thanks to their access to sugar through the Port of Baltimore. After 1922, the candy manufacturing businesses in Baltimore greatly benefitted from the sugar refinery in Locust Point built by the American Sugar Refining Company, which owned Domino Sugar. The refinery was “one of the largest and most modern can sugar refinery in the world” when it opened, and received its high quality raw sugar directly from Cuba, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and the Philippines. This access to raw sugar ensured a superior product. It was a common problem that candy manufacturers to add minerals such as gypsum and barites to their candies, or sometimes even dangerous acids. The confectionary industry in Baltimore remained strong through the mid-20th century. Competition from national firms, rises in shipping costs and costs of sugar, cocoa, and other products made it increasingly difficult for these local firms to survive in the second half of the 20th century. In 1974, there were still 20 confectioners based in Baltimore City, but many were struggling. There are still several firms in Baltimore today, but the city’s heyday in confectionary manufacturing has passed.

Paper Box Manufacturing
Another industry in which Baltimore was a leader was paper box manufacturing. By the mid-1800s, paper bags and boxes began replacing wooden shipping crates, tins, and paper parcels in the shipping industry. The paper box industry originated in the Midwest, but by the late 19th century, Baltimore was a leader in this field. The Raffel Building in Federal Hill is designated as a Baltimore City Landmark for the Raffel Company’s innovative role in the development of paper box manufacturing, which played a key role in Baltimore’s industrial success in the early 20th century.

C. J. Youse Company was the one of the oldest and longest-surviving firms producing paper boxes in Baltimore, and in the early-20th century specialized in paper candy boxes to meet the needs of the many candy manufacturers in the city and nationally, serving as a leader in the field as described below in History of the Firm. There were a handful of other firms that produced candy boxes in Baltimore, but none survived nearly as long as Youse, and apparently did not achieve the same level of success. The paper candy box industry did have competition in the tin manufacturing industry. One metal company that dominated in candy packaging was Baltimore’s Tin Decorating Company, known by its trade name, Tindec, which produced decorated tins for candy companies such as Whitmans. The Tindec building contributes to the Canton National Register Historic District.

Candy Boxes in the Victorian Era
Candy and chocolates played an important role in courtship rituals during the Victorian era, and the decorative boxes were as important, if not more important, than the sweets that were found inside. As quoted in Michael Krondl’s Sweet Invention: A History of Dessert, a young man seemed “to know by instinct that his surest weapon as a suitor is a box of candy,” and that beautifully wrapped boxes of chocolates was comparable to
jewelry or perfume as “intimate gifts that signified romantic intent.” In fact, in the socially-stymied, over-dressed Victorian era, these candy boxes served as symbols of sexual intention by the suitor. As Krondl explains “There was an intriguing similarity between the elaborately enrobed boxes of candy and the layers of lace, crinoline, and silk that concealed the wooer’s prize,” and the unwrapping of the decorated boxes was also imbued with sexual symbolism.

As the Youse Company proclaimed in an advertisement to candy manufacturers, “First impressions are important. Those who do not know the merits of your candy judge if first by the box,” further claiming that their boxes feature “individuality and a quality that reflects the tempting sweets within.” (See Image 5) Marketing through packaging is ubiquitous today, but no less important than it was in the early-industrial era. The Youse Company advertised that its boxes were “created by master craftsmen, artists, designers, who revel in their ability to imbue each box with a beauty all its own.” Some of their boxes were even hand-painted. While the Youse Company industrially manufactured their boxes, these hand-made touches set them apart from competing products.

History of the Firm

The C.J. Youse Company, a paper box manufacturing company, was founded in 1869 by Christian J. Youse, who immigrated to Baltimore from Germany with his parents when he was 3 years old. The company existed for over 100 years, and was run by three generations of the Youse family. The company achieved early and lasting national success manufacturing paper boxes and other related goods. After only 18 years of business, the company was honored in its inclusion in the 1888 Half-century’s Progress in the City of Baltimore: The City’s Leading Manufacturers and Merchants. C. J. Youse was lauded for “building up a valuable business connection with every section of the Union,” the “neatness, novelty, and tasteful design” of his products, and the “promptitude, liberality, and integrity” in his business transactions. The company manufactured “plain and fancy Boxes, Paper Lanterns, Cornucopias, Favors for the German, Masquerade Goods, Christmas-Tree Ornaments, etc.” Mr. Youse was also acknowledged as being very popular and a prominent member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. When Christian J. Youse died in 1901 at age 54, he was noted as being a prominent businessman and manufacturer of paper boxes and novelties. A month prior to his death, his sons Christian J. Youse Jr., John Edward Youse, and Louis A. Youse were admitted as partners in the C. J. Youse Company.

Christian J. Youse, Jr. who went by C. Jacob Youse, became president of the company in 1901 at age 19 following his father’s death, and remained president of the company for over fifty years. During his tenure, the company grew and incorporated, narrowed its production focus, and constructed and moved into its building at 235 N. Holliday Street. The company lost their factory on Liberty Street in the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904, but bounced back quickly from that loss. In 1906, the company incorporated, with capital stock of $60,000 offered for $100 per share. It was incorporated by C. Jacob Youse, J. Edward Youse, Louise A. Youse, William E. Messersmith and Charles E. Hill. The company advertised that it made “paper boxes, fancy wrappers for merchandise, paper goods and novelties.” Charles E. Hill, one of the incorporators, was a prominent
Baltimore attorney as the head of the firm Hill, Ross & Hill, honored in the 1919 *Genealogical and Memorial Encyclopedia of the State of Maryland*. He served as a director of the C. J. Youse Company, and also was president of the Maryland Color Printing Company. William E. Messersmith was a constable of the 13th Ward. Between 1906 and 1907, the company moved to 23-25 S. Gay Street, where they remained until constructing their factory at Holliday and Saratoga Streets in 1915.

By the late 1910s, the C.J. Youse Company specialized in confectionary and candy boxes. The company published ads in the nationally-distributed *Confectioner’s Journal*, enticing candy manufacturers to choose Youse candy boxes, which “attract the eye of the buyer and increase the sales of the retailer.” (See Image 5) In addition to their beauty, one ad continues, "Youse boxes are not just manufactured. They are the product of fifty-two years of loving care and study. They are created by master craftsmen, artists, designers, who revel in their ability to imbue each box with a beauty all its own." (See Image 5) Other candy-box manufacturers existed in Baltimore by the 1920s, but none appear to have lasted as long or been as nationally-recognized as the Youse Company. By 1940, the company’s success necessitated that it rent additional space in a two-story factory nearby on S. Frederick Street.

The company was very active in local and national business associations. Ed Youse (who also went by J. Edward Youse) served as an officer of the Central Division of the National Paper Box Manufacturers’ Association in 1919, the firm was a member of the Baltimore Merchants and Manufacturer’s Association, and active with the National Confectioners’ Association. In 1907, the C.J. Youse Co. was one of only seven firms that represented Baltimore at the National Confectioner’s Annual Convention. The national prominence of the Youse Company is confirmed throughout the early 20th century in national (and in one case international) directories focusing on paper box manufacturing. In these directories, the Youse Company was one of the few firms listed representing Baltimore City.

C. Jacob Youse also had shares in Baltimore’s Headley Chocolate Company, which was purportedly the first chocolate manufacturing company in Baltimore, established in 1900. Headley’s building on S. Frederick Street was listed on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, but was demolished in the 1980s. It is possible that the Youse Company manufactured Headley’s boxes, but there is no direct evidence of this.

C. Jacob Youse retired from his presidency in 1954, a year before his death at age 78. C. Jacob’s son, Harry Lee Youse II, was the third and final president of the firm. In 1969, on the anniversary of its 100 years of existence, the company was inducted into the Century Honor Roll of the Chamber of Commerce of metropolitan Baltimore. In 1969, 161 organizations had been so honored since the Chamber of Commerce started the program in 1940. When one considers that Baltimore was home to what likely amounts to tens of thousands of businesses between 1840 and 1969, this is a small and elite group of centennial companies. By 1969, the company had shifted to manufacturing paper, card, and letter file boxes and rigid paper boxes. The company closed in 1975 after 106 years as a leader in Baltimore’s paper-box business, and a provider of candy boxes nationally.
Architectural Description

This brick three story factory building has two primary facades on W. Saratoga Street and Holliday Street. These two facades are very similar in form. Both facades are five bays wide, and the corner bays are marked by slightly projecting pilasters that rise the full height of the building, topped with a decorative parapet roofline and a cornice decorated with two linear motifs created by projecting brickwork. On the Holliday Street (west) façade, there are paired wooden doors in the end bays, and modern replacement fixed windows fill the remaining bays on all three stories. There are simple limestone sills below all of the windows. The Saratoga Street (north) façade almost matches, except that there is only one doorway, in the second bay from the left, which retains historic doors, sidelights, and transom lights. The windows in the left bay (in the elevator shaft) are original historic multipaned windows, but the windows in the remaining bays are all replacement modern fixed windows. The south elevation of the building abuts the Brink’s Building at 231 Holliday Street. The rear (east) elevation is adjacent to Watchhouse Alley, and is composed of a lighter, less decorative brick. The windows on this elevation are 3/3 or 1/1 wooden sash windows.

Staff Recommendations

The property meets CHAP Landmark Designation Standards:
B. A Baltimore City Landmark may be a site, structure, landscape, building (or portion thereof), place, work of art, or other object which:
   1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Baltimore history;

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Historic Maps

1902 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, depicting the location of the building, then part of J. Regester’s Sons and Co. plumbing factory. (Baltimore Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps 1901-1902, Vol. 3, 1902, Sheet 255)

1914 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, depicting the location of the building, then the ruins of a fire. (Baltimore Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps 1914-1915, Vol. 3, 1914, Sheet 223)

Images

Image 1 - View east on E. Saratoga St. of the intersection of Saratoga and Holiday Streets, taken in 1971. The C.J. Youse Building is on the right. (BGE Collection at the Baltimore Museum of Industry.)


Photos

The Saratoga Street façade. Still visible on the building are the remnants for the sign “Diane Fashions” and “Boy’s Wear Co” above the first floor windows.

Stamp found on third-floor partition in the building. Likely a stamp for shipment boxes, it states “From C. J. Youse Co. Baltimore, MD”

1 “Classified Ad 12 -- No Title”, The Sun (1837-1987); Mar 8, 1847; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 4; “Classified Ad 20 -- No Title”, The Sun (1837-1987); Oct 16, 1856; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 3; “Classified Ad 7 -- No Title”, The Sun (1837-1987); Feb 7, 1867; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 3; “Classified Ad 21 -- No Title”, The Sun (1837-1987); Jul 17, 1883; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 3; “To Marry at 85: Mr. Joshua Regester To Marry Miss Bertha Lucas She Is ...” The Sun (1837-1987); May 14, 1901; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 10
2 “Three Firemen Dead in Midnight Blaze: Chief Horton Hurt In Crash Of ...”, The Sun (1837-1987); Jan 24, 1908; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 12
3 “Real Estate Transaction 1 -- No Title”, The Sun (1837-1987); Jun 15, 1915; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 13; “Real Estate Transaction 1 -- No Title” The Sun (1837-1987); Jun 1, 1915; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987) pg. 15
4 “Real Estate Transaction 1 -- No Title”, The Sun (1837-1987); Jun 1, 1915; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 15
“Obituary”, *The Sun* (1837-1987); Oct 14, 1901; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 10

“Tomatoes At Low Prices”, *The Sun* (1837-1987); Sep 17, 1901; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 12; “Obituary” *The Sun* (1837-1987); Oct 14, 1901; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 10

“C. Jacob Youse, Box Makers, Dies”, *The Sun* (1837-1987); Sep 26, 1955; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 11; “Newman, Frederick lawyer, student of colonial history”, *The Sun* (1837-1987); Sep 12, 1984; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 4C

“Millions in a Few Blocks: A Detailed Estimate Of Loss In The Wholesale District”, *The Sun* (1837-1987); Feb 8, 1904; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 1

“Says She Did Not Mail Letters”, *The Sun* (1837-1987); Jan 4, 1906; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 9


“All Are Confirmed: The Mayor's Nominations Go Through Unanimously ...”, *The Sun* (1837-1987); Mar 25, 1902; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 12

“Plans for 20 Cottages: Mr. Calloway To Build At West Forest Park To ...”, *The Sun* (1837-1987); Dec 11, 1906; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 9; “Classified Ad 1 -- No Title”, *The Sun* (1837-1987); Apr 17, 1907; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 3


“Real Estate Transaction 1 -- No Title”, *The Sun* (1837-1987); Jul 17, 1940; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. 23


“Confectioners Going To Convention”


*Reports of Cases Argued and Adjudged in the Court of Appeals of Maryland. Volume 130* (Baltimore: King Brothers, 1917), pg. 525; “Headley Chocolate Company” Maryland Inventory of Historic Places, B-3599. Inventory form on file in CHAP office.

“C. Jacob Youse, Box Makers, Dies”

“Newman, Frederick lawyer, student of colonial history”

“Chamber To Add Two Firms To Its Century Honor Roll”, *The Sun* (1837-1987); Apr 13, 1969; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Baltimore Sun, The (1837-1987), pg. K7

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