

COLGATE & COMPANY JERSEY CITY PLANT: B-6  
(Colgate-Palmolive Company Jersey City Plant: B-6)  
35-37 York Street  
Jersey City  
Hudson County  
New Jersey

HAER No. NJ-71-I

HAER  
NJ  
9-JERC,  
18I-

PHOTOGRPAHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD  
Northeast Area Office  
National Park Service  
U.S. Custom House  
200 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

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NJ  
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181-

- Location:** 35-37 York Street, Jersey City, Hudson County, New Jersey
- Significance:** B-6 was one of the earliest factories built by Colgate & Company during the firm's large early 20th-century expansion, and was used at various times for finishing of laundry soap, soap flakes, and liquid detergents c1903-87. Although not an individually significant structure, B-6 was significant as a component of the Colgate Jersey City plant.
- Description:** B-6 was a five-story-plus-basement, 47-by-100-foot, brick-bearing building with pile-supported concrete-footing foundations, and a slightly sloped roof punctured by five skylights. The brick walls, 12 to 20 inches thick, originally included interior piers on at least the east side of the fifth floor. The original wood framing, with some cast-iron columns, was reinforced and in places concrete-encased, but retained the original arrangement of two five-column rows (see HAER NO. NJ-71-D, Figure 2). The dark brown, six-bay north facade was ornamented with cast iron star washers, a Romanesque-Revival-influenced corbelled brick cornice with stone coping, 15/15 segmentally-arched wooden double-hung windows. Three horizontal I-beams spanned the ground floor openings, each held by six patera-shaped bolts. Access to the structure was through a truck bay in the westernmost bay of the ground floor, or through the interior of B Block. The rear facade had terracotta coping above an undecorated wall, and windows similar in shape and original array to those in front. Modifications to the rear facade included replacement of original sash with obscure glass block and hoppers, and infill of the two easternmost windows on each floor when a freight elevator was added to B-7 and B-8 in 1962. Original windows on the east side of B-6 were soon infilled for the construction of B-7 c1907-08 (HAER No. NJ-71, B-7 (LEFT), B-6, AND PART OF B-5 NORTH ELEVATIONS; EAST HALF OF B BLOCK, VIEW EAST; see HAER NO. NJ-71-J).

The interior of the building featured three structural bays, open floor plans, painted brick walls, no interior stairways or elevators, and wood floors selectively reinforced with metal plates to accommodate heavy machinery. The basement floor was concrete-covered. Original cast-iron columns from the basement through the second story were encased in concrete; the upper

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\* Capitalized references are photographs included with this documentation, or with other documentation packages for HAER No. NJ-71 and associated structures.

floor retained reinforced original yellow pine posts. The second through fourth floors included an unusual addition of east-west wood beams between columns, using an inverted queen-post arrangement of steel beam supports suspended by metal rods and turn-buckles anchored to the north-south girders (SECOND FLOOR TO SOUTHWEST). Fire-door-protected brick openings in the east and west wall gave access to B-5 and B-7 (HAER Nos. NJ-71-H and NJ-71-J), while a man-door in the rear of the first floor led to an alley and B-9 (HAER No. NJ-71-K). Interior partitions in 1988 were limited to a cinder-block enclosure near the first floor southeast corner, and a cinder-block-enclosed maintenance shop in the rear two bays of the third floor. Surviving industrial equipment in 1988 was limited to a mixer for soap flakes on the first floor, and a large tank for storage of purchased glycerine on the east side of the basement (GLYCERINE STORAGE TANK IN BASEMENT, VIEW SOUTHEAST).

**History:** Colgate & Company purchased the site of B-6 in 1858 and 1883, using this area for several undocumented, low frame structures. The firm built B-6 in 1903, probably to plans of William P. Field, C.E., who designed most of the new Colgate structures erected c1903-10. B-6 served as part of Colgate's laundry soap department, for finish processing, packaging, and storage of bars and flakes until c1980, when OCTACON soap production was discontinued at Jersey City. By the late 1970s, B-6 was also used for liquid detergent manufacture (on the upper two floors), with the structure devoted almost entirely to this purpose c1980-87. B-6 was demolished in early 1989.

**Sources:**

**Plans and Drawings**

Colgate-Palmolive Company retains linen or blueprint copies of most, though not necessarily all, plans and drawings made for B-6. Those listed below pertain to the structure and major equipment elements; some other plans of operating hardware and minor repairs are not listed. As of late 1989, these documents are maintained by the engineering department in the plant's L Block (HAER No. NJ-71-SS). Future researchers should contact the company's Office of Corporate Communications at 300 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022, for access.

**Anonymous [probably William P. Field]**

1903      Factory Building for Colgate & Company (5 drawings)  
            Pile Plan. Dwg. No. 2-1029  
            Basement Plan. Dwg. No. 2-1030.  
            Longitudinal Cross Section. Dwg. No. 2-1034.  
            5th Floor Plan. Dwg. No. 2-1035.  
            Cross Section. Dwg. No. 1037.

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Colgate & Company/Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Company/Colgate-Palmolive Company  
1909a 5th Floor Plan - Building B-6. Dwg. No. 2-1149.  
1909b 1st Floor Plan - Building B-6. Dwg. No. 2-1150.  
1909c 4th Floor Plan - Building B-6. Dwg. No. 2-1151.  
1915 Storage Tank B6 Basement. Dwg. No. 2-2146.  
1941 Doorway & Ramp between B6-B7 Basements. Dwg. No. 2-2388.  
1969 New Store Room in B-6-3. Dwg. No. 2-5026.  
1974 New Glycerine Can Filling Room B-6-1. Dwg. No. 2-7170.  
1980 Replace Crude Glycerine Pump, L-23 Tank/New Concrete  
Foundation, Pump & Pipe Installation. Dwg. No. 2-6669.

Field, William P., C.E.  
1904 Proposed Alterations - Building G 4th & 5th Floors. Dwg. No.  
1-0194

**Interview:**

Colgate-Palmolive Company plant engineer Theodore Mrowzinski provided some information on 20th century changes to B-6.

**Bibliography:**

Factory Mutual Engineering Association - Factory Mutual System.  
1962-79 Colgate-Palmolive Company. "Jersey City Plant." Serial No.  
70516-B, Index 29368.

Hudson County Deed Books  
1858 Vol. 70, p. 175.  
1883 Vol. 378, p. 518.

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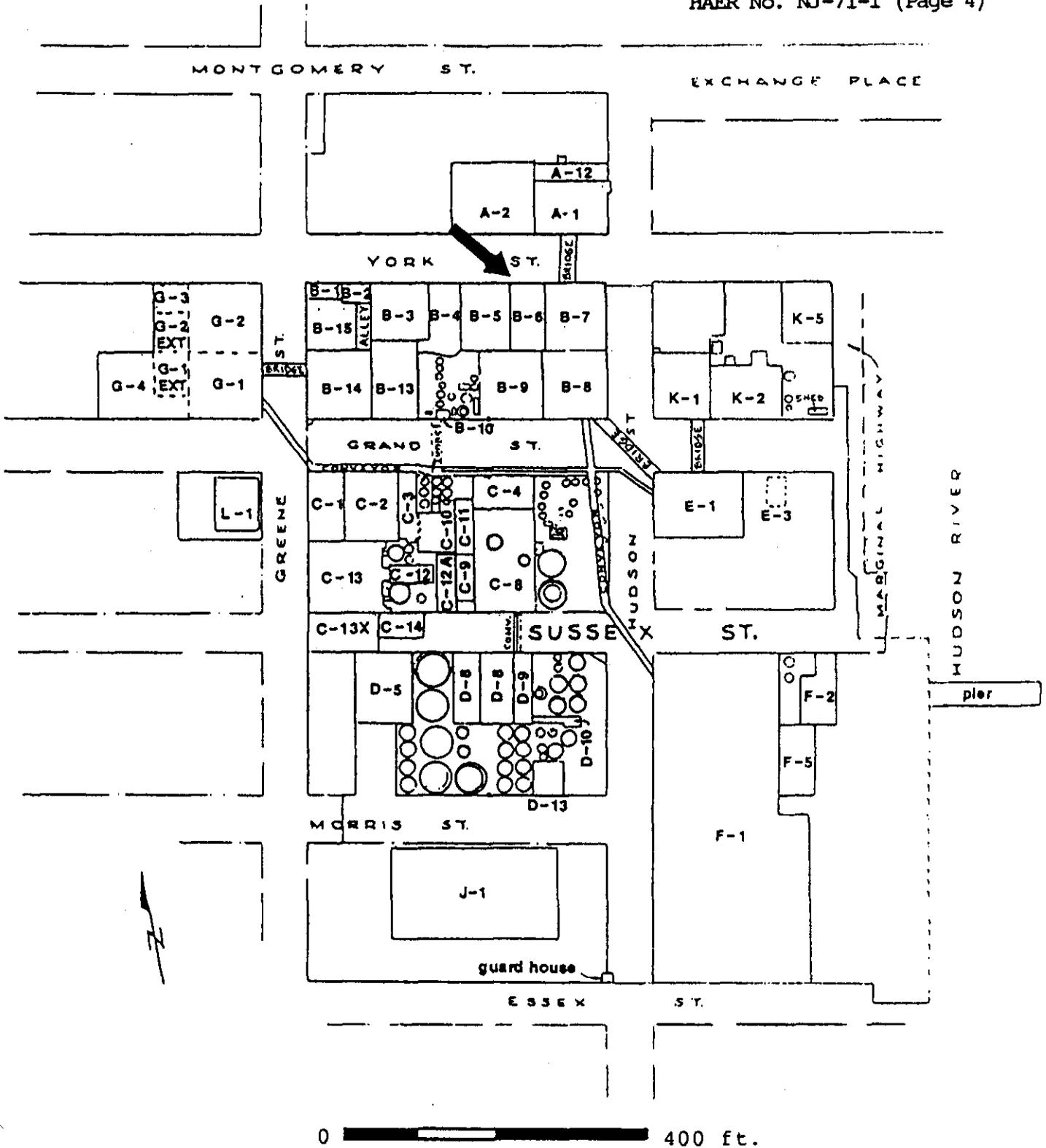


Figure 1. LOCATION OF B-6 AT COLGATE JERSEY CITY PLANT