

OMB NO. 1024-0018
EXP. 10/31/84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received MAY 18 1983
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Allied Kid or New Castle Leather Raw Stock Warehouse

and/or common Kaumagraph Building

2. Location

street & number 14th and Poplar Streets, not for publication

city, town Wilmington vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state Delaware code 10 county New Castle code 003

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial
	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Kaumagraph Corporation, Raymond G. Burke, President

street & number 14th and Poplar Streets, P.O. Box 388

city, town Wilmington vicinity of state Delaware

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. New Castle County Registry of Deeds

street & number 800 French Street

city, town Wilmington state Delaware

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Project R.O.W. has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981 (CRS# N-3652) federal state county local

depository for survey records Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs

city, town Dover state Delaware

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

7

1

The New Castle Leather Warehouse or Kaumagraph Building was constructed in 1917 to store goatskins for a Wilmington kid leather manufacturer. The building has undergone very few alterations and today houses the plant and offices of a specialty printing firm. The one-time warehouse at 14th and Poplar Streets was one of the city's first fireproof buildings. This utilitarian structure of steel, concrete, and brick with curtain walls has a design which fits nearly all criteria of the Commercial Style which was popular in Philadelphia and Chicago; it is symmetrical, rectangular, has a projecting roof cornice, flat roof, and large window areas.

The rectangular 100' wide x 200' deep Kaumagraph Building faces west near the southeast corner of Poplar and 14th Streets in Wilmington. The building has reinforced concrete roof, floors, and frame with brick curtain walls. The five-bay facade is three stories high. Glass entry doors top a short flight of concrete steps in the two end bays on the first floor, and the words "Kaumagraph Co." above the

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/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1917 **Builder/Architect** Unk. for original construction
G.Morris Whiteside for improvements

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

8

1

The Kaumagraph Building or Allied Kid Warehouse is architecturally significant in accordance with Criterion C because it is a fireproof industrial building in the commercial style of the early 1900's; it is probably the only one of its type in Wilmington, has undergone few alterations, and has been in continuous use since 1917. In accordance with criterion A the building is historically significant because of its association with two local industries, kid leather and specialty printing, which have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The building has more architectural significance than any of the city's other extant leather-associated structures, most of which are empty, radically altered, or slated for demolition. Although it was a warehouse rather than a manufacturing building, the warehouse's distinctive design was directed toward the kid industry's need to store very heavy piles of partially-cured goatskins. At the beginning of the 20th century, as Carol E. Hoffecker has pointed out in Wilmington, Delaware, Portrait of An Industrial City, there were 40 leather manufacturers in the

9. Major Bibliographical References

Wilmington City Directories; Atlases and maps of Wilmington by Sanborn, Baist, and Franklin; "The Mediator" published by the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce in 1921; Bulletin of the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce, July 1958; Journal Every Evening Dec.22, 1938, Mar.22, 1951, and Feb. 26, 1964; Interview with Sophie Kaye, 40 year employee of Kaumagraph; History of

10. Geographical Data

Allied Kid by Leo B. Mulhearn and other standard references.

Acreeage of nominated property 1.6 Acres

Quadrangle name Wilmington South

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 18 453580 4399600
 Zone Easting Northing

B
 Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property occupies a lot with 169 foot frontage on the east side of Poplar Street, extending for 350 feet along the south side of 14th Street to Brandywine Creek, then along the Creek for 220 Feet, then 494 feet in a westerly direction back to Poplar St

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 Priscilla M. Thompson

organization The History Store

date January 5, 1983

street & number 418 N. Union St.

telephone 302-654-1727

city or town Wilmington

state Delaware 19805

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Deputy
 State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Daniel P. Griffith

title

date April 27, 1983

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

J. Allen Byrum
 Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
 National Register

date 6/16/83

Attest:
 Chief of Registration

date

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doors identify the present occupant. The three first floor central bays form a loading dock over which an awning-type roof projects. Just above the roof the lettering which once identified this as the property of the New Castle Leather Company is still faintly visible.

On both the second and third floors a set of three windows occupies the space between pilasters which define each bay; each window is four lights wide and five lights high with an awning type opening in its central section. A large percentage of the original lights remain; the wire encased within their panes easily identifies them. There is a very simple diamond shaped design at the top of the pilasters on the corner sections of the building. Old photographs reveal that the design was once more elaborate, containing either colored tiles or paint in the art-deco style. A simple cornice projects slightly at the corner sections of the roof line and accents these designs. The roof itself is flat, except where the two elevator shafts extend above the roof's surface. The exterior surface of the building is now painted a cream color with the exception of the horizontal brick panels under most of the windows.

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The rear, or east end of the building overlooks the Brandywine River and is very similar to the front except that it is four stories high because the basement on this side is above ground. There is also an enclosed waste chute on the south bay and a one story storage room at the northeast corner. This was added in the 1960's when Kaumagraph purchased gravure printing machinery from Scott Paper in Detroit. Kaumagraph did the printing in the basement and needed a place to store large rolls of paper used for making Christmas wrappings and other products. The north and south sides of the building are each ten bays wide with a design very similar to the front and rear. The basement, however, is below ground level on the front, and the ground slopes away toward the river so that the the basement level is above ground at the rear. Utility stacks from the basement boiler are on the exterior north wall.

There are two flagpoles on the roof of the Kaumagraph building, and a parking lot now occupies most of the ground on its off-street sides. However, a war memorial once occupied the area just north of the building. An old photograph shows that this was a landscaped plot with a

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large flag-pole in the center. A long-time employee recalls a memorial honoring Kaumagraph employees who served in World War II for whom the company held a service on Memorial Day. The memorial and its landscaping were apparently removed when the area was made into a parking lot.

The view from the back of the building includes a large junkyard on the opposite bank of the Brandywine River. As old photographs and maps reveal, the river was at one time much wider at this point, with a heavy growth of plants and trees on its banks. The Kaumagraph Building itself is on partially filled land, and at the time it was built, the other river bank was more attractive than it is today. The visitors' entrance to the building is through the glass door on the north end of the facade. Just inside the door is a reception area through which one passes to reach the company offices which occupy the northeast section of the first floor.

This building, which was designed to hold two million goat skins, is unique in its construction and has been described as the only building of its kind in the United States south of Philadelphia. There is not a particle of combustible material in this building, each floor contains 20,000

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square feet and is sub-divided into fireproof compartments and thoroughly equipped with all modern fire fighting devices.

This is the way the New Castle Leather Manufacturing Co. described its raw stock warehouse in 1921, five years after its construction. Today we know it as the Kaumagraph Building, but after sixty-five years of industrial use, the original description is still nearly accurate, a tribute to the original design and construction of the building.

Because the building was originally a kidskin warehouse for a company with offices elsewhere in the city, the present offices were undoubtedly created in 1938 when Kaumagraph purchased the building and moved to Wilmington from New York. Kaumagraph hired the Wilmington architect, G. Morris Whiteside, to plan building alterations which included elevators, heating plant, electrical power, and certainly the office area. Although a newspaper article of the time states that Whiteside was to plan these alterations, a map of 1927 indicates that elevators, heat, and electricity already existed in the building.

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Today the offices are on both sides of a corridor which extends behind the receptionist's desk toward the rear of the building. The offices on the north side of the corridor have been in place since Kaumagraph acquired the building while the ones on the south side are less than ten years old. Before 1960, the plant extended into the section south of the corridor and one large open office occupied the floor space toward the rear of the building. Modern partitions divide the offices, new surfaces cover the floors, and dropped ceilings mask utilities, but a row of massive concrete piers along the north side of the corridor capture the eye and reveal the structure of the building. Leaving the office and reception area which takes up about one quarter of the first floor, the corridor leads to the finishing area at the rear. The shipping area is in the front of the building, just behind the exterior loading dock, and an employees lunchroom occupies the southwest corner where there is a door to the outside front.

Throughout this floor the visible support system of this fireproof building is a series of large concrete piers, distinctive (and incidentally quite pleasing

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aesthetically) because they have an extreme flare at the top. There are five rows of piers from north to south and nine rows from west to east making a total of 45 piers on each floor. In the basement and first floor, the pier diameter is about 25 inches diminishing to about 18 inches on the top two floors.

These large concrete piers with their flaring tops combined with curtain walls and a concrete dividing wall to create not only a fireproof building, but a very strong building which could sustain the weight of thousands of kid skins. Here the kidskins which arrived from abroad were stored until processing took place in other buildings. To comprehend the reasons for the construction, size, and use of the building, it is necessary to understand that Wilmington, Delaware was the nation's second largest producer of kid at the beginning of the 20th century.

There were at one time two elevators in the building, about halfway between the north and south walls. The one toward the rear of the building is now closed and contains storage space within the building and a ladies room in the portion which extends above the roof. The other

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elevator, the one nearer the front of the building, is still in operation on all floors. There are also two plain metal and concrete industrial type stairways beside the elevator shafts. All the floors in the building are concrete with a smooth finish on the floor sides and a rougher finish on the ceiling side which makes it possible to see where the concrete forms were pieced together.

The second floor is more open than the first, but there are some rather old partitions dividing the work space. The Lithograph department is in the northwest corner of this floor at the top of the rear stairway, and the plate processing room is on the middle south side.

The Kaumagraph Dry Transfer, or KDT department is in the northeast section of the third floor. Here the work is similar to that done when Kaumagraph first occupied the building: trademarks, embroidery patterns, insoles for sports shoes, and other items which Kaumagraph prints on paper to be transferred by heat to various products. The firm's machine shop, silk screening section, and lab are also on the third floor. The basement, as previously noted, is below ground level on the front of the building and is

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above ground level at the rear. The boiler room which produces steam heat for the entire building is on the north side of the basement. There are radiators throughout the building. The gravure press is in the northeast section of the basement near the warehouse addition. Beside the warehouse is the receiving dock with its large entrance doors. The ink making department for KDT and a general finishing area are also in the basement.

During World War II the basement became an air raid shelter for people who worked at other plants in the neighborhood, and there were several at that time. When the air raid alarm sounded everyone went into the basement and closed the steel doors until the all clear signal sounded. There are still some of the black and yellow civil defense signs in the basement as well as some cartons of crackers dated 1963, when the building was still a designated shelter.

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city, employing over 3,000 people. The city was then the nation's second largest producer of kid. New Castle Leather which built the warehouse, was one of the larger firms; Allied Kid, which eventually acquired the warehouse, was the last of the kid companies to operate in Wilmington. Since 1938 the building has been the home of the Kaumagraph Company which started in New York in 1902 with the production of hot-transfer or iron-on trademarks. Expansion of this line and other unusual printing work make this one of the largest companies of its kind in the world.

By the middle of the 19th century the area near 14th and Poplar Streets had become partly industrialized because the location was convenient to the city, fairly near the railroad line, and on the banks of what was then still a navigable waterway. It was necessary to fill in a part of the Brandywine to create enough land to build the kid warehouse. Although the lot may have been used for coal storage or some other marginal use, city directories and maps show that there were no significant structures on it until it

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passed into the hands of kid leather manufacturers. The first of these to own the property was Richard Patzowsky who purchased it in 1913.

Patzowsky, a native of Prague, worked in the leather business in Chicago and New York before coming to Wilmington to become Superintendent for F. Blumenthal, one of the world's largest manufacturers of kid leather. In 1900, when Wilmington was the second largest producer of kid in the nation, Patzowsky left Blumenthal to start his own independent company. Patzowsky's own company expanded with branches in many countries, and he became an internationally known expert in glazed kid who refused offers to head European companies. New Castle Leather flourished in Wilmington which was one of the world's great kid producing cities at a time when kid leather was a popular item. Those were the days when women wore kid gloves and kid shoes and when leather covered automobile seats, luggage, books, and hundreds of other items. Millions of goatskins, only partially cured, arrived in Wilmington from Asia and South America. Here they were stored and then put through the

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long, malodorous process of tanning and finishing to become the supple, brilliantly colored and elegantly smooth kid used for ladies clothing and other luxury items.

When Patzowsky incorporated his leather company he adopted the name New Castle Leather and took in two partners: Robert Binger and Sidney New, leather manufacturers from New York. Richard Patzowsky profited in the kid leather business, for he owned a yacht, belonged to many clubs, and was honored with a very long obituary when he died in 1916. The New Castle Leather Corporation continued to operate after Patzowsky's death and the firm soon became the owner ^{on} of record of the lot on which the present Kaumagraph Building stands. By 1917 New Castle Leather also owned a number of other nearby buildings for the manufacture of kid leather. The firm evidently saw a need for more storage space and required a warehouse which would be dry, well-ventilated, and strong enough to hold heavy piles of goatskins. They selected a design which filled not only those requirements but also was fireproof and aesthetically pleasing.

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New Castle Leather Manufacturing Co. was evidently proud of the new building which it called its raw stock warehouse, for it used a photograph of the building in a 1921 advertisement which pointed out the building's fireproof qualities and called it the only building of its kind south of Philadelphia. The building probably served as New Castle Leather's warehouse for about fifteen years, years of some decline in the kid business.

There were a number of other kid or morocco leather companies in Wilmington, and as business declined with the advent of synthetics after World War I, there were some bankruptcies and consolidations. Standard of Delaware, the local branch of Standard Kid of New England failed financially and merged its other plants in 1929 to become Allied Kid. A few years later Allied purchased New Castle Leather and became the owner of the raw stock warehouse.

Although the deed record shows that Allied Kid became the owner of the property in 1933, there is no positive indication that they used it for a warehouse. The kid business was still declining, and it appears that the warehouse

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at 14th and Poplar Street became a beautiful and expensive piece of excess property. A 1940 history of Allied Kid states that they have a warehouse at 14th and Poplar which is rented. The tenant was the Kaumagraph Company which had been negotiating with Allied Kid and which had been planning for several years to leave its New York plant. Wilmington's Journal Every Evening announced on December 22, 1938 that the Kaumagraph firm had acquired the four story building at 14th and Poplar Streets with 80,000 square feet of floor space. The firm expected to employ about 125 people bringing 70 from New York and hiring 55 locally. Kaumagraph had worked with the Chamber of Commerce, Delaware Power and Light Company, and Allied Kid to make arrangements for the move. G. Morris Whiteside, local Wilmington architect, made the plans for the alterations and additions to the building.

Kaumagraph, whose name is taken from the Greek words meaning to write with heat, had started operations in New York in 1902 when its founder, Hugh Monore, imported a hot-melt gravure press. With this machinery the firm introduced to the United States the process by which a printed de-

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sign could be transferred with heat to fabric and other materials. This process, the KDT or Kaumagraph Dry Transfer, is still one of the company's important products, and is most familiar to the general public as the trademark on stockings, gloves, or the edges of fabric. By about 1910 the Parks & Woolson Machine Co. of Springfield, Vermont had patented the Kaumagraph Cloth Trademarking Machine which, according to their catalogue "automatically and mechanically transfers the design from paper onto the moving cloth by means of an electrically heated iron." A 1920 catalogue advertising the machines also gave a good explanation of how the transfer stamps provided by Kaumagraph Co. at 209 West 38th Street in New York worked. The Kaumagraph transfers were purchased in spools of thin paper tape from three to four inches wide and about eight inches in diameter containing several thousand impressions. The attachment held the spool of tape so that it could spring into position while rotating presses moved the cloth and paper against a hot iron. Result: a trademark or design printed on the edge of the cloth.

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In the 1920's Kaumagraph added lithography (a printing process in which the surface image is treated so that some areas retain ink while other areas repel it) to its line and began to print packaging items for its textile customers. The ladies hosiery for which Kaumagraph had printed the hot transfer trademark were packed in boxes and other wrappings, a type of packaging which almost disappeared with the development of pantyhose packed in poly bags. However, in the 1930's, a time of national economic depression, Kaumagraph was expanding and looking for a place to move. After checking sites in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, they selected Wilmington for its favorable tax situation, good transportation, and proximity to the southern textile market.

When Kaumgraph moved to Wilmington, Trowbridge Marston who had been with the company since 1909 was its President. He remained the President during the years of World War II when Kaumagraph produced several items for the military. During the war years, an important part of Kaumagraph's business was making nylon maps for the navy in

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preparation for the invasion of Japan and Europe. An employee of that time believes that Kaumagrah was the only company in the country making these maps which were printed on both sides, could be folded to a very small size, and did not disintegrate in water. The maps were secret, of course, and the plant was under government security restrictions while the maps were made. Employees were also checked to make sure they did not take any of the nylon, a new fabric at the time, home.

Many Kaumagraph people, including the President, served in the military during the war, and the building itself was a bomb shelter for people who worked in the neighborhood. When the air raid alarm sounded workers from the surrounding industries went to the basement of the Kaumagraph building and closed the steel doors until the air raid practice ended. One of the few buildings in the area with a basement, its strong concrete and steel construction made it a natural spot for shelter use.

The years following World War II were probably the busiest in the company's recent history. During the

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1950's Kaumagraph expanded its packaging products and branch-
ed out into the production of merchandising aids, booklets,
and books. It also established a research laboratory to de-
velop new inks, design machinery, and experiment with other
product improvements. In 1955 Kaumagraph purchased equip-
ment for rotogravure printing, a process in which material
is printed from an etched copper cylinder in a rotary press.
In the late 1950's more than 120 people worked at the
Kaumagraph plant in Wilmington which had nine offset presses
and twenty gravure presses. It had also been an internation-
al company for some time with its affiliates, Kaumagraph
Ltd. of Canada and British Kaumagraph Transfers, Ltd. of
Manchester, England.

The Kaumagraph Company still exists and occupies
its building at 14th and Poplar Streets in Wilmington. Like
any company of its size which has continued to operate inde-
pendently through the recent decades of merger and consolida-
tion, Kaumgraph has been innovative in product development
and sensitive to consumer demands of the moment. During the
1970's the company did printing for Melamine dishes, the

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nearly indestructable plastic tableware which was usually decorated with a floral or geometric design. The Melamine printing project might have influenced the permanent absorption of Kaumagraph by Lenox China which, for a time, owned the company.

While under the ownership of Lenox, Kaumagraph also printed foils for application of designs to Temperware, a Lenox product, which is somewhat like ironstone china. As these products became less popular in the United States, Lenox had less reason to retain Kaumagraph. Therefore, Lenox sold and Kaumagraph is once again an independent company with Raymond G. Burke as its President.

Today the Kaumagraph Company produces many items which we all know and use without thinking where they come from or who makes them. The Chuck Taylor shoe made by Converse Rubber has a blue star on the upper which is made by Kaumagraph, lots of the designs on children's lunch boxes are produced at Kaumagraph, many of the plastic inserts in automobile dashboards which tell you how fast you are going or how much gas you have are made at Kaumagraph. Chances

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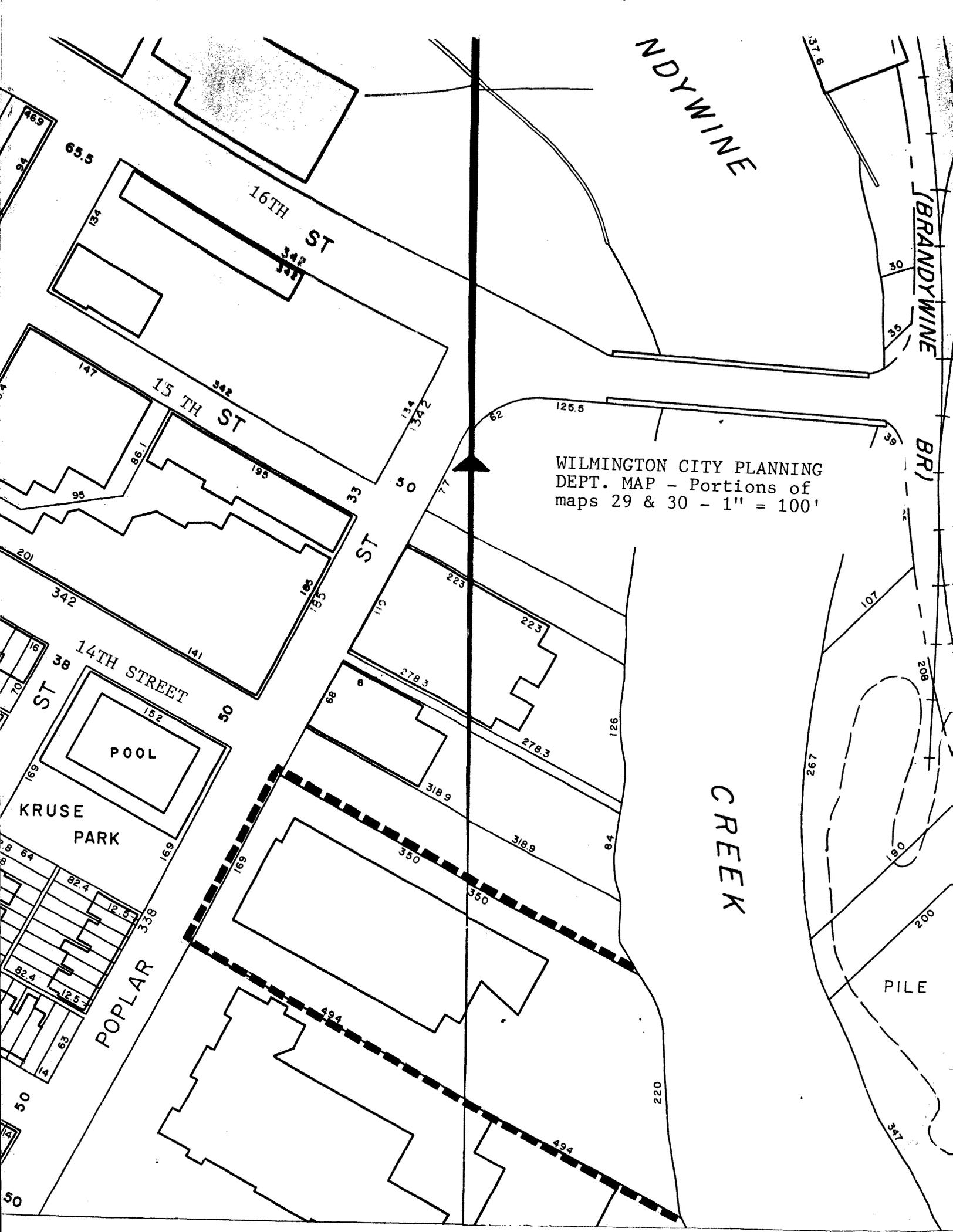
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are very good that the trademark on your tennis balls, socks, and athletic shoes were printed at Kaumagraph as well as the Smurf or Strawberry Shortcake on your T-shirt.

The Kaumagraph Building or Allied Kid Raw Stock Warehouse has a design and structural system which makes it architecturally significant. Since its construction date in 1917 to the present time it has continually housed commercial and industrial activities which have had a significant impact on thousands of individual lives in Wilmington, Delaware as well as on the local economy in general. From its early association with the kid leather business to its present use by the Kaumagraph company, the building and the industry within it have been a vital part of the community and a reflection of the vicissitudes of the larger economy. It will probably continue to be so in the future.



NDYWINE

(BRANDYWINE BR)

WILMINGTON CITY PLANNING DEPT. MAP - Portions of maps 29 & 30 - 1" = 100'

CREEK

PILE

16TH ST

15 TH ST

14TH STREET

ST

ST

POPLAR

POOL

KRUSE PARK

38

33

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