### **United States Department of the Interior**

National Park Service

# **National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

1. Name of Property Historic name: _Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory & Wareho Other names/site number: (JFL-2665) [Owned by] Peaslee-Gaulbert (1 (1928-64), Celanese (1964-76), Grow Group (1976-82) / J.H. Ball Mo Name of related multiple property listing: West Louisville MRA	902-28), Devoe & Raynolds
2. Location Street & number:1416-1426 Lytle St. City or town:Louisville	
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation A	ct, as amended,
I hereby certify that this <u>X</u> nomination <u>request for determination documentation standards for registering properties in the National Registers the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR</u>	ister of Historic Places and
In my opinion, the property _X meets does not meet the National recommend that this property be considered significant at the following	
nationalstatewide _X _local Applicable National Register Criter	ria: <b>X A B C D</b>
Signature of certifying official Craig Potts, SHPO Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation C  Title / State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	Date Office
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the Nati	ional 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

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form NPS Form 10-900 OMB Control No. 1024-0018

NPS Form 10-900	OMB Control No. 1024-0018	
Louisville Lead & Color Co. Pa	int Factory & Warehouse	Jefferson County, KY County and State
5. Classification		
Ownership of Property		
Private:	X	
Public – Local		
Public – State		
Public – Federal		
<b>Category of Property</b>		
Building(s)	X	
District		
Site		
Structure		
Object		
Number of Resources within		
Contributing	Noncontributing	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total
Number of contributing re-	sources previously listed in the National Register	r <u>0</u>
6. Function or Use		
Historic Functions: INDUSTRY/PROCESSIN INDUSTRY / industrial ste	G: manufacturing facility (paint) orage, warehouse	
Current Functions: INDUSTRY / warehouse COMMERCE / specialty		
7. Description		
Architectural Classificati Late 19th and Early 20th Ce	ion: entury American Movements – Other: Industrial	
<b>Materials:</b> Principal exterior materials	s of the property: <u>Brick, Stone</u>	

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#### **Narrative Description**

### Summary Paragraph

The former Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory and Warehouse (JFL-2665) is a single building consisting of a circa 1905 four-story brick building with a circa 1911 five-story brick addition, the two portions connected by a permanent structure incorporating the original boiler room along the southern facade. The building was one of several buildings owned and operated under Peaslee-Gaulbert Co., and various other names as companies merged and came under new ownership. The overall building is U-shaped with a stone foundation and flat roof and is located at the southeast corner of Fifteenth and Lytle streets in the Portland neighborhood on the west side of Louisville. This early twentieth-century, industrial style factory and warehouse building occupies most of its nearly one-acre site, with the north and west facades meeting the sidewalk boundaries. This nomination proposes the listing of one contributing building on 1.04 acres, which includes no non-contributing features.



Louisville Lead & Color Company Paint Factory and Warehouse, Lat. 38.260398° Long. -85.773831°

#### **Site Description**

The Louisville Lead and Color Co. Paint Factory and Warehouse is located in an industrial area of Louisville dominated by factory and warehouse buildings. Large warehouse buildings of

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similar massing, materials, age, and previous use stand at the other three corners of the intersection of Lytle and N. 15<sup>th</sup> Streets. The subject property occupies almost 100% of its site. The two main sections form a U-shape, attached via a permanent structure incorporating the original boiler room along the southern facade. A railroad spur previously came from the north, crossed Lytle Street, and stopped in-between the two building sections for loading and unloading.

On the east is an alley and land surrounding the former Monon Railroad freight depot building, and to the south, another industrial building is immediately adjacent with no gap. This adjacent building is not part of the parcel and no connection is present through the building. Early Sanborn fire insurance maps show this road along the southern facade as a former through-street called Columbia Avenue.





(Left) Louisville Lead and Color Co. Paint Factory and Warehouse highlighted in red; (Right) Looking SE from the middle of the Fifteenth and Lytle Streets intersection (via Google)

The lot of the subject building was sold by Peaslee-Gaulbert to Louisville Lead & Color for \$1 in October 1902, and a month later, permission was granted to build a railroad switch across Lytle Street from the other warehouses. The current factory location appears in the city directory in either 1904 or 1905 (might be an error in 1904); this is confirmed on the 1905 Sanborn fire insurance map. The factory used the 223 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Street address instead of a Lytle St. address by 1910.

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Subject property. The four-story factory building stands in foreground, at the SE corner of Lytle and Fifteenth Streets. The five-story warehouse addition is beyond it to the east. This drone shot is looking east towards downtown Louisville (Anthony Seitz/Falls City Photography)

#### **Exterior Description**

#### 1426 Lytle St., westernmost structure, ca. 1905 original factory building

The four-story brick building maintains its industrial factory appearance with its long west façade running parallel to Fifteenth Street. Construction likely took place between 1902-05. A large fire destroyed the previous Louisville Lead & Color paint factory and Peaslee-Gaulbert warehouses immediately to the north across Lytle Street in April 1902; these buildings were rebuilt to a similar footprint, according to newspaper reports and maps. The company history, including the fire, will be discussed in the Statement of Significance.



West façade of ca. 1905 factory building (Anthony Seitz/Falls City Photography)

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West Façade: The long western façade of the original factory building is unadorned except for narrow, segmental- arched window openings, stone sills, and painted ghost sign bands between the upper stories. Stone foundation blocks are visible, as well as small basement windows that are irregularly spaced. There are sixteen window openings, most boarded with plywood, although the bays are not otherwise delineated with decoration. The brick runs in a common or American bond with a course of headers every fifth course.

On the first floor, some of the bays contain narrow doors (closer to the Lytle-Fifteenth intersection) or a cargo door (in the middle of the block face), and many of the openings have been modified to be rectangular instead of arched with some windows replaced. An historical photo from 1928 show these same rectangular window openings on the lower level. The lower level on the south, west, and north facades has been painted orange - historical photos from the 1970s and 1980s show this as previously painted white – but the brick on the upper floors remains mostly unpainted. In between the second and third story is a white band of a former painted sign. A similar banded sign is in between the third and fourth story, with layered portions visible of both "Louisville Lead & Color Co." and "Peaslee Gaulbert Paint & Varnish Co." See below for past painted signs on the building.





(Left) Caulfield & Shook photo from 1928; (Right) Royal Studio photo from 1946 (University of Louisville)

**North Façade**: The north façade fronts Lytle Street and is four bays wide with paired windows in segmental-arched openings; these have all been boarded up on the upper stories. There are no painted ghost signs on this façade, but the orange paint on the lower level wraps around from the west façade. There are two raised loading docks with cargo doors and a metal fire escape that reaches the upper level and roof. Brick pavers on Lytle Street are visible in the roadway. The roof is flat on this section of the building, and it slopes gently towards Fifteenth Street.

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(Left) North façade of paint factory (Anthony Seitz/Falls City Photography); (Middle) Brick pavers present in Lytle Street; (Right) Railroad spur alley looking towards connector between buildings (J. McCarron)

**East Façade**: The east façade of the original factory building faces the west façade of the ca. 1911 addition with an alley in between. Two railroad spurs historically met the building, and part of the rails are visible through the asphalt in this area; the loading dock was added after 1982. There are three elevated cargo doors on this façade, and a simple shed roof awning is present over one of the cargo doors. The orange paint also continues on this façade, with many of the cargo doors and window boards painted red. Most of the segmental-arched windows on this façade are covered with corrugated metal panels. A partial ghost sign is present at the top of this facade in between the fourth story windows and the roof line: "(Louisv)ille Lead and Color Co." The placement of the ghost sign is a good indicator that the building originally stood alone and the four-story connector was added when the ca. 1911 warehouse addition was constructed.



Eastern façade of ca. 1905 paint factory (Anthony Seitz/Falls City Photography)

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**South Façade**: The south façade is partially covered by an adjacent building for much of the first floor. Viewing the composite drone image shows how the ca. 1905 factory and the ca. 1911 warehouse addition were connected over what was originally a one-story boiler and sprinkler room (indicated on the 1905 Sanborn). The original factory portion closest to Fifteenth Street had four bays with paired, arched window openings like the northern façade. Portions of the historic metal windows are visible where the plywood is missing and a partial metal fire escape is present. The concrete loading dock extending from the second bay cargo door towards the adjacent southern building first appeared on the 1951 Sanborn map; the buildings to the immediate south were also operated as warehouses by Devoe & Raynolds by 1951.



Southern façade of ca. 1905 paint factory with permanent connection to ca. 1911 warehouse addition (Anthony Seitz/Falls City Photography)

#### Exterior: 1416 Lytle St, easternmost structure, ca. 1911 warehouse addition

On July 22, 1911, the *Courier-Journal* reported that Louisville Lead & Color applied for a building permit for a "four-story warehouse and office building... as an addition to the company's main plant and office structure." On the 1941 Sanborn fire insurance map (at that time operated by Devoe & Raynolds), this five-story addition to the original factory building was indicated as the "finished product warehouse."

**South Façade**: Partially discussed in the previous section, the southern façade of the five-story warehouse addition clearly delineates the change in window size and shape. Many of these three-over-three metal windows are visible in various states of repair. The stair tower providing roof access and elevator housing extend over the roof line. The warehouse addition is six bays wide with two bays in the connector.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Courier-Journal, "Lead and Color Company to Erect New Building," July 22, 1911.

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**West Façade**: The west façade of the ca. 1911 addition faces the east façade of the original factory building with the railroad spur alley in between. There are three cargo doors on the lower level and ten window openings across the façade; the windows on the lower level have been painted over. Most windows are three-over-three lite with metal sash, but some window openings have paired or single two-over-two metal windows in various states of repair.



(Left) North and east facades of ca. 1911 warehouse addition; (Right) Detail of former loading dock now porch with shed-roof metal awning (J. McCarron)

**North Façade**: The northern façade is six bays wide, fronts Lytle Street, and has a full-width porch (former loading dock) with a shed-roofed metal awning attached via cables. The non-historic decorative brick and metal railings were likely added later, but the level of the loading dock is historic due to the door and window placement on this façade. The loading dock appears in the 1928 Caulfield & Shook photograph, and the shed-roof awning appears in the 1946 Royal Studio photograph. The windows have been replaced on the first and second stories, but some of the original wooden windows are visible, with the rest covered by metal panels. There are no painted ghost signs on this façade, but there is evidence of tuckpointing repair at the upper corner; historical photographs show a large water tower previously on this corner of the roof, so it's possible the tuckpointing was needed due to previous water damage.

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(Left) East façade of ca. 1911 warehouse addition; (Right) Facing west along Lytle Street (J. McCarron)

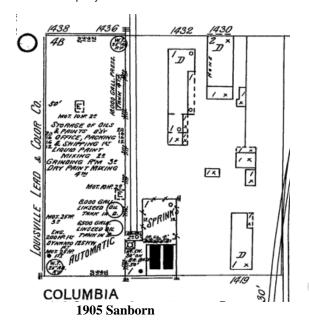
**East Façade**: The metal awning from the north façade wraps around to about halfway down the eastern façade. According to the Sanborn fire insurance maps, a rail line previously existed and the warehouse addition was built to nearly abut it at the southeastern corner of the building. There are fifteen window openings on this façade, although the placement of the bays is uneven near the elevator shaft that extends over the roof line. There are four large cargo doors on the first level. A partial metal fire escape is to the right of the painted "Home of Pee Gee Paints & Varnishes" ghost sign.

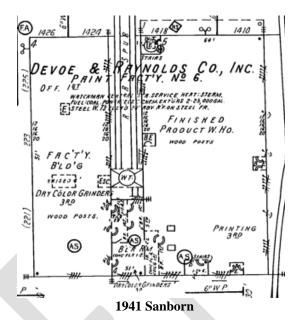
#### Interior

The building has not been used for paint production since the 1960s, though it may still have been used for paint storage until it was purchased by J.H. Ball Moving & Storage in 1982. Since that time, the ca. 1905 factory portion of the building has been used for long-term storage of furniture and household goods. The ca. 1911 warehouse portion of the building is also used for storage on upper floors, with a small-batch, personal care products company (mixing and distributing) operating on a portion of the first floor in recent years. This office space was added in the 1980s. The former Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory and Warehouse is in fair condition, with mothballing efforts such as boarding windows and placing metal plates over wood floors that have helped to protect the building over time and retain its historic characteristics.

Sanborn fire insurance maps provide information on the operations of the four-story Louisville Lead and Color Co. Paint Factory in 1905: storage of oils and paints (basement); office, packing, and shipping (first floor); liquid paint mixing (second floor); grinding room (third floor); and dry paint mixing (fourth floor). There were two elevators for the building, two water towers, and large linseed oil tanks were present in the basement; it also had automatic sprinklers and a large boiler room. The 1941 map indicates that printing took place somewhere on the third floor of the finished product warehouse addition, now operated by Devoe & Raynolds as Paint Factory No. 6.

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The interior spaces of both buildings have many similarities, including heavy timber columns ("wood posts" indicated on the Sanborn maps), wood and metal beams, wood floors, exposed wood ceiling rafters, and metal factory windows. The floors are largely open in plan with walls and cabinets added in a few places, mostly near the exterior walls for offices, storage areas, or restrooms. Some of the exterior brick perimeter walls have been painted, along with many of the wood columns, beams, and rafters. Many of the factory windows are still intact in various states of repair.





First floor, 1905 factory

### Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory & Warehouse

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Name of Property





1911 addition

#### **Changes to the Building Since the Period of Significance**

As a whole, the factory and warehouse appear similar to the original construction as well as early sketch renderings from a company letterhead in the late 1920s. The metal roof was added to the former loading dock on the warehouse building sometime in the 1920s, and the raised loading dock in between the factory and warehouse was added in the 1980s. Parts of the exterior brick have been painted, including banded company signs and much of the first floor, but most of the brick remains unpainted. The interior remains consistent with its historical appearance.

The windows are in various states of repair; many have been modified, either replaced, boarded or bricked up, or painted over. Some window openings on the first floor have been replaced with doorways. On the first floor of the warehouse addition, a small batch personal care products company operates out of an office space, which was updated in the 1980s.









(L to R): SW corner of ca. 1905 factory; building sketch of "paint factory" from 1928 Peaslee-Gaulbert letterhead; S and E facades of ca. 1911 warehouse; building sketch of "paint factory section 2" from 1928 letterhead

Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory & Warehouse

Name of Property

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8. Statement of Significance		
Applicable National Register Criteria		
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		
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: INDUSTRY		
Period of Significance: 1905 –1964		
Significant Dates: 1905 (factory); 1911 (warehouse)		
Significant Person: n/a		
Cultural Affiliation: n/a		
Architect/Builder: 1905: McDonald, Kenneth (attribution) 1911 addition: McDonald & Dodd		

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#### **Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

The former Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory and Warehouse (JFL-2665) meets National Register Criterion A. It is significant in the Area of Industry as part of a major local paint manufacturing company that operated in the industrial district of West Louisville during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Its significance is evaluated within the context "Development of the Paint Industry in Louisville, Kentucky, 1867-1964." At its peak, the parent company, Peaslee-Gaulbert and its first successor, Devoe & Raynolds, occupied several blocks in the area with its other warehouses, general offices, production facilities, and affiliated businesses, but the company also operated regional branches in several other states. The Louisville Lead and Color Co. Paint Factory and Warehouse manufactured the paint products for Peaslee-Gaulbert and its successor. It is being nominated individually because it was incorporated and run as a separate business entity. The factory and warehouse was locally significant to the Portland neighborhood as a place of employment and important to consumers for its many products.

The period of significance begins in 1905, when the original factory building was completed (addition constructed in 1911) and ends in 1964. Celanese bought out Devoe & Raynolds in 1964 and while they may have continued to use the building for storage, they operated out of a new headquarters built in a new East End office park.

#### Historic Context: Development of the Paint Industry in Louisville, Kentucky, 1867-1964

In 1778, George Rogers Clark founded the town of Louisville, which consisted of lots on Main Street between Third and Twelfth with Fort Nelson constructed to protect the settlement. "The Falls of the Ohio is the only natural obstruction to river travel between Pittsburg and New Orleans and dictated the settlement of a town at that point on the river. Louisville prospered from the necessity of river cargo being unloaded above the Falls of the Ohio and portaged overland to below the Falls for the better part of the year."<sup>2</sup>

River transportation and the city's advantageous location gave Louisville industries a boost, and this continued with the railroad. The Louisville & Nashville Railroad was completed to Nashville in 1859, and by 1884 the system – headquartered in Louisville – included "over 3,600 miles of Southern roads, penetrating nearly every portion of the South and particularly the Gulf States." This total did not include the mileage from other railroad lines that radiated from Louisville.

With the penetration of the L&N, branded products could be marketed outside the area in which they were produced. After the Civil War, Louisville entered an economic boom period with "heavy commercial growth [that] resulted in a building frenzy, with entrepreneurs scrambling to expand their operations by adding onto their facilities or building new ones."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Courier-Journal, "A Look at Louisville," Sept. 17, 1884

West Louisville MRA

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> "West Main Street Preservation District," Louisville Landmarks Commission Design Guidelines

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Louisville became a business hub for many industries, including paint. White lead works companies often preceded paint manufacturing. "Because of its proximity to raw materials such as oils, lead, and colors; its river and railroad facilities; and its centralized location with respect to the South, the West, and the Northeast; the Louisville area was important in the development of the paint and coatings industry in the mid-nineteenth century... Many of the early firms imported their paint... and sold other items such as linseed and lubricating oils, pigments, and glass."<sup>5</sup>

One of these early Louisville dealers was the H. Marcus Co., which in 1853 was reported to be the "first paint supply house in town." However, 1860s city directories show this company as a house and sign painting company, not as a wholesaler or manufacturer. By 1870, Hermann Marcus also appeared in the "Paints, Oils, and Glass" dealer category along with Peaslee-Gaulbert and a few other companies. [As an aside, Louisville-based Marcus Paint is still in existence as of 2023, providing "industrial coating project services." ]

By the end of the nineteenth century, several other companies had entered the paint manufacturing business (date in parentheses is date of founding)<sup>8</sup>:

- (1867) Peaslee-Gaulbert Co.
- (1870) Blatz Paint Co.
- (1883) Louisville Varnish Co. (founded as Louisville Asphalt Mining & Importing Co.)
- (1889) Bridges, Smith & Co. (founded as Bridges-McDowell Co.)
- (1893) Lampton, Crane & Ramey Co. (closed 1931)
- (1897) Charles R. Long, Jr. Co.
- (1897) Kurfees Coatings (founded as Kurfees Paint Co.)

A few additional firms would continue to enter the market after 1900. The upcoming turn of the century also led to professional organization, with the forming of the Louisville Paint, Varnish, and Lacquer Manufacturers Club in 1898 – this was the predecessor to the current Louisville Paint and Coatings Association.

Louisville city directories usually differentiated painters between house, sign, ornamental, fresco, and wagons/carriages. There were also categories for (1) paints, oils and glass; and later (2) paints, oils and varnishes. In 1906, Lewis Atwood (who would become the new Peaslee-Gaulbert president after its reorganization in 1908) wrote a short piece in the *Courier-Journal* about the growth of the paint business in Louisville, which in the previous year had reached the high, "enormous total of 8,000 [train] carloads." Louisville was becoming known as a "paint and varnish manufacturing center," even though the business lines had a curious combination:

<sup>7</sup> Marcus Paint, "Consultative Services," website, see <a href="https://marcuspaint.com/">https://marcuspaint.com/</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Kleber, John E. *The Encyclopedia of Louisville*, "Paint and Coating Industry"

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Kleber, John E. The Encyclopedia of Louisville, "Paint and Coating Industry"

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OMB Control No. 1024-0018

# Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory & Warehouse Name of Property

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"The paint and oil business of this city embraces also several other lines, which may be classified under the general head of glass, and include window glass, bottles, fruit jars, lamps and table glassware, different in their uses, but kindred in their manufacture.

This combination of lines seems to be peculiar to Louisville – indeed, we do not know of any other city where all these varied articles are handled by the same concerns. All, or nearly all, of the paint and oil houses here have paint manufacturing establishments in connection with their jobbing business."

While D.R. Averill of Ohio is generally recognized as patenting the first "ready-mixed" paint in the United States in 1867, paint factories became more common in city centers as the industry responded to customer demand:

"Mechanization was making the manufacturing process accessible to a larger and less specialized group of entrepreneurs. The weight of prepared paint made it expensive to transport, so a decentralized structure of small manufacturers in discrete markets dominated the industry until the mid-1900s." <sup>10</sup>

Peaslee-Gaulbert, and likely other large paint companies at the time, diversified and then marketed their products directly to the consumer. They manufactured the paint, sold it in their own stores, and shipped it to branches in other areas of the country using the paint tagline "The Kind That Lasts". A 1905 advertisement in a North Carolina paper for Pee-Gee Carriage Paint prompted a person to "paint your own carriage" with the result to "save money and do a first-class job." The DIY or do-it-yourself trend started early, and a 1912 advertisement touting the quality of the entire line of Pee-Gee paints targeted the women of the household as well: "Now is the time that most women begin to think of touching up and redecorating the home."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Courier-Journal, "White Lead, Paints, Etc.," Jan. 1, 1906

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> American Coatings Association, "History of Paint," website

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1905 advertisement

1909 brochure advertisement

#### Development of Peaslee-Gaulbert as a Paint Manufacturing Company

The westernmost part of the nominated building first appears on the 1905 Sanborn fire insurance map as the factory of the Louisville Lead and Color Company, but this company was already intertwined with the locally prominent Peaslee-Gaulbert Company.

Peaslee, Gaulbert & Co. was founded in January 1867 by Charles R. Peaslee and George Gaulbert as a continuation of the lamp, oil, paint, and glass business of U. B. Evarts at 139 West Main Street. Gaulbert's brother, J. W. Gaulbert, and later, W.F. Booker, were also early founders. In 1864, U.B. Evarts advertised himself as a dealer in "paper hangings, looking glass plates, French window glass, and manufacturer of looking glass, portrait and picture frames, and guilt [sic] work of every description." After the co-partnership announcement, by February 1867, Peaslee, Gaulbert & Co. was advertising in the paper for these same products – in addition to paints, oils, and varnishes – on a regular basis.







GEORGE GAULBERT J. W. GAULBERT

W. F. BOOKER

Founders from the brochure "Louisville fifty years ago: a souvenir issued on the occasion of the Louisville Board of Trade luncheon on March 9<sup>th</sup>, in honor of firms that have been in business fifty years or more, 1873-1923"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Courier-Journal, 1864 advertisement

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The company was incorporated in 1884 as Peaslee-Gaulbert Co. and later moved the home office to a large building occupying several addresses on the 400 block of West Main Street (no longer extant). Paint manufacturing began at a building on Bullitt Street, which was formerly between Main Street and River Road, between Fourth and Fifth (also no longer extant).

Copartnership.

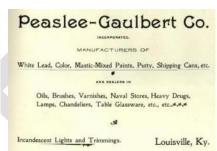
C. R. PEASLEE and GEO. ('AULto date from January 1, 1867, under the name of
PEASLEE, GAULBERT, & CO., and will continue
the LAMP, OIL, PAINT, and GLASS business of U.
B. EVARTS & CO. at the old stand, No. 139 West
Main street.
Louisville, Jan. 1, 1867. GEO. GAULBERT. B. EVARTS
Main street.
Louisville, Jan. 1, 1867.

IN retiring from business, I return thanks to our former patrons for their liberal patronage, and solicit a continuance of same to the successors and recommend them to be energetic business men and entirely worthy of confidence. Juide U. B. EVARTS.

1867 business announcement (Courier-Journal)



1867 advertisement (C-J)



1899 advertisement (brochure)

Louisville Lead and Color Works first appears in the 1890 city directory at the 415-417 West Main Street home office, listed with the proprietors Peaslee-Gaulbert. There were only two other companies listed as "paint manufacturers" in 1890, but ten listed for "paints, oils and glass." The 1892 Sanborn fire insurance map shows Peaslee-Gaulbert Co. Paint Manufacturing at the Portland Avenue – 15<sup>th</sup> Street – Lytle Street block area, but Louisville Lead and Color Works is not yet at this location according to the city directory. But in 1895 the new address for Louisville Lead and Color Works shows that they had moved to 1432 Portland Avenue (this is the Portland Avenue side of the extant 1427 Lytle Street building, which was rebuilt ca. 1902 after a fire).

An 1899 ad for Peaslee-Gaulbert Co. Inc. from the brochure "Commercial History of the State of Kentucky" stated they were "manufacturers of white lead, color, mastic-mixed paints, putty, shipping cans, etc. and dealers in oils, brushes, varnishes, naval stores, heavy drugs, lamps, chandeliers, table glassware, etc. etc." Added at the bottom of the ad was "incandescent lights and trimmings." Obviously they were not just involved in the paint manufacturing business and it was these large household lines that helped the company's fast growth and expansion.

On July 4, 1901, the Courier-Journal reported that the paint manufacturing department of Peaslee-Gaulbert was sold to the Louisville Lead and Color Company. Conveniently, "the stockholders of the new concern are the same persons interested in the Peaslee-Gaulbert Company." The paint department was growing, and the business felt it should be conducted separately from the other company divisions. George Gaulbert was quoted in the article as saying: "We are simply increasing our business. The paint manufacturing department grew to be a big business within itself and we want to conduct it separately from our other business."<sup>12</sup> A week after the sale, a deed was filed conveying property from Peaslee-Gaulbert Company to the

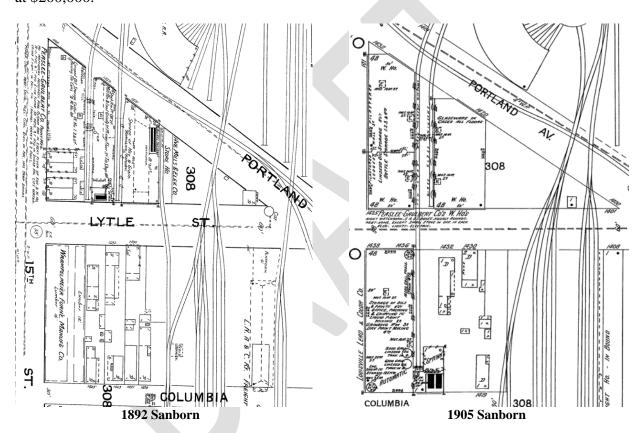
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>Courier-Journal, "Will Manufacture More Paint." July 4, 1901

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Louisville Lead and Color Company with "use of the switches on both sides of the property." This property was located on the north side of Lytle Street.

#### **Fire History**

Comparing the 1892 and 1905 Sanborn fire insurance maps for the Peaslee-Gaulbert warehouse buildings on the north side of Lytle Street, it appears that the buildings were modified and expanded. However, research in the online archives of the *Courier-Journal* uncovered a far more devastating history: a major fire on April 1, 1902 destroyed the two Peaslee-Gaulbert Company warehouse buildings and plant of the Louisville Lead and Color Company, with a loss estimated at \$200,000.



On April 1, 1902 just before noon, a fire was discovered in the lead and color plant. After an alarm was pulled and the workers evacuated and fire fighters tried valiantly to save the buildings, all three were eventually a total loss. "Included in the property lost was the factory of the Louisville Lead and Color Company, owned and controlled by the members of the Peaslee-Gaulbert Company, and the two warehouses, which were filled to the doors with paint, oil, varnish, and other [flammable] material." <sup>14</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>Courier-Journal, "Goes To the Paint Company." July 11, 1901

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Courier-Journal. "In Smoke." April 2, 1902

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
NPS Form 10-900
OMB Control No. 1024-0018

# Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory & Warehouse Name of Property

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In the aftermath of the fire, while Peaslee-Gaulbert operated temporarily out of another location according to the article, they still needed a new paint factory. The lot of the nominated building was sold by Peaslee-Gaulbert to Louisville Lead and Color Co. for \$1 in October 1902, and a month later, permission was granted to build a railroad switch across the street. Louisville Lead and Color Co. was incorporated in the state of Kentucky in December 1902.

In the cross-street city directory, between 1903 and 1905, the Louisville Lead and Color Co. address changes from 15<sup>th</sup> St, northeast corner of Lytle to 15<sup>th</sup> St, southeast corner of Lytle. This southeast corner site coincides with the 1905 Sanborn fire insurance map and the current, extant location of the factory building.

It appears on the 1905 Sanborn fire insurance map with the addresses of 1436-1438 Lytle Street. The Sanborn map provides operational details on the building activities at the time: storage of oils and paints (basement); office, packing, and shipping (first floor); liquid paint mixing (second floor); grinding room (third floor); and dry paint mixing (fourth floor). All floors had window openings with wired glass and there were automatic sprinklers.

As previously mentioned in the description section, the warehouse addition was constructed in 1911. "The main object in erecting the new building is to afford more room for manufacturing purposes. The main floor will be occupied by the office staff, while the upper floors will be reserved for warehousing." <sup>15</sup>

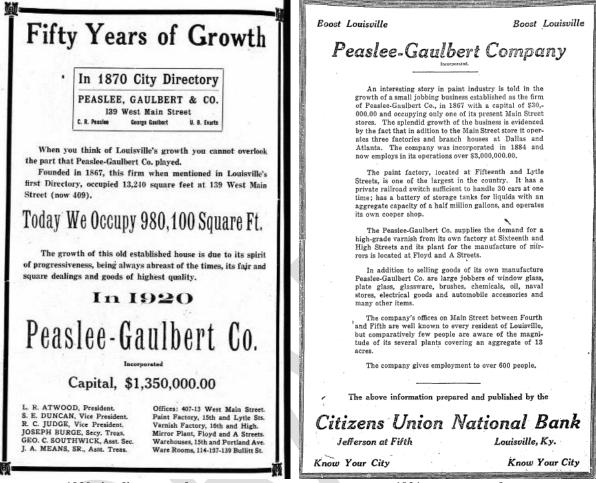
In 1914, when a history was written about the company in the *Courier-Journal*, Peaslee-Gaulbert Co. occupied two solid city blocks. However, the article would go on to state that the company "owns and operates one of the largest individual paint factories in this country, a total floor space of about twelve (12) acres being covered by the factory and adjoining buildings." <sup>16</sup>

A 1920 advertisement in the city directory stated that in over 50 years of the company's operation, Peaslee-Gaulbert grew from occupying 13,210 square feet of space to over 980,100 square feet. The growth was touted due to "its spirit of progressiveness, being always abreast of the times, its fair and square dealings and goods of highest quality."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Courier-Journal, "Lead and Color Company to Erect New Building," July 22, 1911.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Courier-Journal, "The Story of a Big Industry." Feb. 15, 1914

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1920 city directory ad

1921 newspaper ad

A 1921 advertisement for Peaslee-Gaulbert Co. says the factory "has a private railroad switch sufficient to handle 30 cars at one time; has a battery of storage tanks for liquids with an aggregate capacity of a half million gallons, and operates its own cooper shop." Peaslee-Gaulbert wasn't just a paint company in Louisville: they also sold window glass, plate glass, glassware, brushes, chemicals, oil, naval stores, electrical goods, and automobile accessories "and many other items" to customers outside the Louisville area.

Other milestones related to the paint division, with the biggest ownership and name changes happening in 1928 and 1964:

1921: Peaslee-Gaulbert Co. opens Atlanta and Dallas branches

1928: Peaslee-Gaulbert Co. paint, varnish, and lacquer manufacturing division is bought by Devoe & Raynolds (NY); the "Peaslee-Gaulbert Paint & Varnish Co." was established with all capital stock owned by Devoe & Raynolds

1938: Devoe & Raynolds consolidation with Jones-Dabney Co. (lacquer operations)

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- 1940: Peaslee-Gaulbert Paint & Varnish Co. dissolved in Kentucky (Delaware Corporation still in operation at this time)
- 1947: Peaslee-Gaulbert Corp. lists branches as Louisville, Atlanta, Dallas, San Antonio, Houston, Oklahoma City, and Jacksonville
- 1954: Devoe & Raynolds stocks sold (principal plants at the time: Jones-Dabney; Peaslee-Gaulbert Paint & Varnish; Brush Division in Princeton, IN)
- 1964: Devoe & Raynolds sold assets to Celanese Corporation; Devoe name would continue as part of Celanese. Celanese built headquarters in the East End of Louisville in a new office park.
- 1970s: Sanborn and city directories show the building as "Devoe Paint Division of Celanese Coatings"
- 1976: Grow Group, Inc. acquired Celanese
- 1982: J.H. Ball Moving & Storage purchased the property

Devoe & Raynolds absorbed the paint, varnish, and lacquer manufacturing division of Peaslee-Gaulbert in 1928, and then subsequently established the Peaslee-Gaulbert Paint & Varnish Co. with all capital stock owned by Devoe & Raynolds. The Devoe company owned the claim of being America's oldest maker of paint, when William Post opened a paint shop in New York City in 1754. Peaslee-Gaulbert Corp. continued to operate and distribute its other product lines, but at the time of this purchase in 1928, in brief news mentions it is indicated that Peaslee-Gaulbert was "the largest manufacturer of paints, varnish and lacquer in the South." 18

It is the Devoe & Raynolds company name that appears on the 1941 and 1951 Sanborn fire insurance maps, as well as on this historic photograph of the warehouse's eastern façade – note the "Home of Pee Gee Paints & Varnishes" sign, which was a brand that continued for many years even after Peaslee-Gaulbert was acquired by Devoe & Raynolds. When Devoe & Raynolds relocated its company headquarters to Louisville in 1954, it brought "substantial attention to the long-thriving [paint] industry in town." <sup>19</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Grow Group, Inc. "History" website

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Brooklyn Daily Eagle (Brooklyn, NY), "Devoe & Raynolds Buy Big Southern Company," Apr. 18, 1928

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Kleber, John E. *The Encyclopedia of Louisville*.

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Western façade of ca. 1911 warehouse addition; note Devoe & Raynolds company sign and "Home of Pee Gee Paints" sign (Royal Studio, 1946)

In 1964, Celanese Corp. purchased the assets of Devoe & Reynolds Co., "a leading producer of paints, industrial finishes, chemicals, plastics and resins. The purchase, for \$60,394,944 and other considerations, was one of the largest cash deals in history involving a Louisville firm."<sup>20</sup> The article mentioned that at that time, research and development activities were carried out at the 15<sup>th</sup> and Lytle Peaslee-Gaulbert location and the former Jones-Dabney location at 11<sup>th</sup> and Hill.

### West Louisville MRA Context and Nearby National Register Listings

The Portland area of west Louisville was surveyed as part of the multiple property submission "West Louisville MRA [Multiple Resource Area]" in 1983, and the Louisville Lead and Color Co. Paint Factory and Warehouse can be briefly examined within this context. The West Louisville survey in the late 1970s and early 1980s covered a large section of the city: from Ninth Street west to the Ohio River with the corporate city limits at the southern boundary. At the time it was determined that West Louisville was "comprised, approximately of 10% commercial, 60% residential, 20% industrial and 10% institutional use."<sup>21</sup>

West Louisville consists of a number of distinctive Victorian and early 20th century residential neighborhoods which have developed in this flat, once fertile farmland area of the city. This area also contains some of the most interesting commercial and industrial structures from this era in the city... An extensive system of rail transportation developed in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Courier-Journal. "Celanese May Build Research Facility Here." Aug. 16, 1966

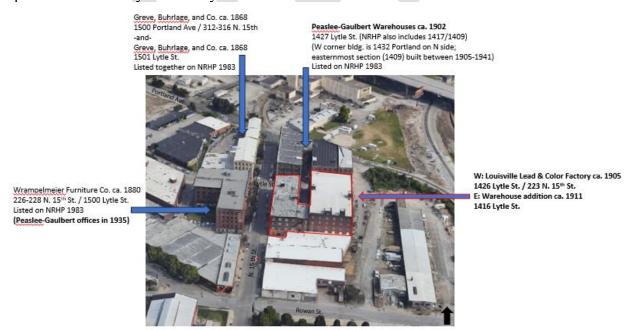
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> West Louisville MRA

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West Louisville, this and the river proximity was a major stimulus for industrial growth in the area.<sup>22</sup>

Many National Register listings were completed as a result of this survey; however, the document provides little historical insight into the many important industries in Louisville, including paint manufacture and how the larger Peaslee-Gaulbert complex fits into that context. The Louisville Lead and Color Co. Paint Factory and Warehouse was excluded from the 1983 West Louisville MRA multiple property listing for unknown reasons. It's possible that due to the change in ownership of the factory and warehouse in 1982, owner permission could not be obtained. Or perhaps the warehouse building's lack of ornamentation made it seem a weak candidate for a nomination project heavily dependent on architectural quality. With no survey form completed for the building at that time, it appears that the City of Louisville, sponsor of the MRA project, did not intend to pursue nomination. A survey form (JFL-2665) for the property was finally created in 2019 as part of a Certified Local Government grant to expand the Portland Historic District; it was determined to be a contributing resource in a good state of repair but no additional historical information was included at that time either.

The buildings to the north, west, and northwest of the subject property were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983 after the West Louisville survey mostly because of their architectural design, all of which show similar design, materials, and workmanship. These former industrial and warehouse buildings stand on all four corners of the Fifteenth and Lytle Streets intersection with varying degrees of connection to Peaslee-Gaulbert: "Several other architecturally interesting warehouses and manufacturing buildings remain in this area which represent the diversity of industry which was once located here."



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> West Louisville MRA

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North: (JFLWP-159) 1427/1417/1409 Lytle St., **Peaslee-Gaulbert Warehouses**, ca. 1902, "part of a paint company complex which once occupied 5 city blocks. It is a continuation of the types of articulation and decoration used on these massive 4 and 5 story industrial structures." Four stories, red brick.



Peaslee-Gaulbert Warehouses ca. 1902, to the north

West: (JFLWP-158) 226-228 N. 15<sup>th</sup> St. or 1500 Lytle St., **Wrampelmeier Furniture Co.**, ca. 1880 (later Stratton & Terstegge, stove manufacturers). Peaslee-Gaulbert Corp. (household goods division, not paint) located their general offices here in 1935 and built a large merchandise warehouse extension out to the west in 1946 (this portion not included within National Register boundary). The five-story, L-shaped brick building "utilizes a more decorative window treatment of brick arched hoods and stops. Brick pilasters are still used to articulate the bays of windows and break the great expanse of the building."<sup>24</sup>



Wrampelmeier Furniture Co., ca. 1880, to the west



Greve, Buhrlage, and Co., ca. 1868, to the NW

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup>West Louisville MRA

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Ibid.

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N.W.: (JFLWP-160 and -161) 1501 Lytle St. and 312-316 N. 15<sup>th</sup> St./1500 Portland Ave., **Greve, Buhrlage, and Co.** (furniture company), ca. 1868. "Two other four-story structures remain which date from 1868 and were built during the city's rapid growth immediately after the Civil War. These are some of the earliest industrial buildings to survive in the city." These buildings were also briefly occupied by a paint company at one time – not connected to Peaslee-Gaulbert or related entities – and later a seed company. Four stories, painted brick.

#### **Brief Architect Discussion**

Two days after the April 1, 1902 fire on the north side of Lytle Street, a *Courier-Journal* article stated that an architect was already working on plans to rebuild for Peaslee-Gaulbert:

"When the flames were at their highest on Tuesday afternoon, Kenneth McDonald, the architect, who planned the addition which was not destroyed, visited the fire. He was joined by George Gaulbert, the president of the company, and the result of the conference was that Mr. McDonald yesterday morning began to draw plans for a new building." <sup>26</sup>

It is undetermined if McDonald also designed the Louisville Lead and Color Co. Paint Factory at the southeast corner of Lytle and Fifteenth, but it does have a similar utilitarian appearance to the extant, ca. 1902 former Peaslee-Gaulbert Warehouses at 1427/1417/1409 Lytle Street. According to the article, McDonald was already previously employed by the company. Since Peaslee-Gaulbert and Louisville Lead and Color were connected in their business dealings, it is possible that McDonald also designed the paint factory on the south side of Lytle Street which started operation in 1904 or 1905.

In 1911, when the warehouse addition was planned to the Louisville Lead and Color Co. factory, the architectural firm of McDonald & Dodd was listed in a *Courier-Journal* article about the expansion. William J. Dodd, an engineer, worked with Kenneth McDonald from about 1906 until 1913, when Dodd left Kentucky for Los Angeles, California. McDonald also later practiced in California, but in San Francico after 1914. McDonald & Dodd was a prolific local architectural firm in their brief time of working together. Many of their high-style designs are still extant in Louisville. The firm is not credited with other industrial or factory-type buildings like the Louisville Lead and Color Co. warehouse addition. "Although there are many similarities between commercial and industrial architecture, the latter tends to be more utilitarian and focused on the elements needed for successful manufacturing of goods." 27

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> West Louisville MRA.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Courier-Journal. "To Rebuild." April 3, 1902.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Brother, et. al. "Survey Update..." 319-320.

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# Evaluation of the Significance of the Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory & Warehouse within the context of the Paint Industry in Louisville

The Louisville Lead and Color Co. Paint Factory and Warehouse is significant at the local level for its association with the growth of the paint manufacturing industry in Louisville in the early twentieth century. Its significance is through its association with a larger industrial concern, Peaslee-Gaulbert Company, which owned and operated it. The building is an excellent example of an early twentieth century factory and warehouse building, built for the specific purpose to manufacture paint products and, within five years, expanded with a large addition for storage.

The Peaslee-Gaulbert Co. and its associated entities and successors became one of the largest paint manufacturers in Louisville with several blocks of warehouses and offices, as well as multiple regional branches outside of the city. The paint division in name was sold to Louisville Lead and Color Co. in 1901, but Peaslee-Gaulbert stockholders were still in charge of operations. The Pee-Gee paint brand was known regionally and the products marketed extensively through newspapers and magazines. Its growth was so substantial that the company attracted a buyout by Devoe & Raynolds in 1928, and later Celanese in 1964, two other large paint companies from outside the Louisville area.

# Evaluation of the Integrity between the significance of the Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory & Warehouse and its current physical condition

Design, Materials, and Workmanship: The early twentieth-century industrial style warehouse architectural details are mostly intact, including the use of brick with repeated bays of segmentally arched window and/or door openings, flat roof, and lack of ornamentation on the facades. These features are intact, making the paint factory and warehouse identifiable within its historic period and function. Some painted ghost signs still exist but are difficult to read due to age and exposure to the elements. Water towers that appear in historical photographs have been removed once the building was no longer used for paint production and storage. The workmanship is consistent and of good quality. No major additions or exterior alterations have occurred since the 1911 warehouse addition.

<u>Location and Setting:</u> The paint factory and warehouse are locally significant to the Portland community and have not been moved; it is integrated in its industrial setting because of its historic function as as a factory warehouse building. Many of the extant historic buildings in this section of the city are of similar massing, materials, and age, which helps to contribute to the setting and character of the industrial district that developed after the Civil War. Current adaptive reuse projects and development of these warehouse buildings into apartments and rental units with ground-floor retail seeks to revitalize the historic setting which led to the construction of this building.

<u>Feeling and Association:</u> The Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory and Warehouse retains the feeling of an industrial building in its surrounding neighborhood. It is associated with a

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series of major paint manufacturing companies with local connections, and the building remains to tell part of that industrial and commercial story that began over 100 years ago. Because the building retains integrity of location, setting, materials, and design, it also then possesses integrity of association, which is the most relevant integrity factor related to its basis for eligibility, Criterion A.

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

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1901 July 04: "Will Manufacture More Paint"

1901 July 11: "Goes To the Paint Company"

1902 Apr. 02: "In Smoke: Peaslee-Gaulbert Company's Paint Factory"

1902 Apr. 03: "To Rebuild: Architect Drawing Plans For Peaslee-Gaulbert"

1911 July 22: "Lead and Color Company to Erect New Building"

1914 Feb. 15: "The Story of a Big Industry"

1924 June 17: "City Leads U.S. In Various Commercial Fields"

1966 Aug. 16: "Celanese May Build Research Facility Here"

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Maps: Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1892, 1905, 1928-1941, 1928-1951, 1975.

Google Maps: 2023.

United States Department of the Interior
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NPS Form 10-900
OMB Control No. 1024-0018

Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory & Warehouse
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- Crum, John E. "Dodd, William J. House." (NRIS 10000530; Jefferson County, KY). 2010
- Hedgepeth, Marty Poynter. "West Louisville MRA." (NRIS 64000262; Jefferson County, KY). 1983

*New York Times*. "Devoe & Raynolds Sold to Celanese; Paint Producer Is Acquired Despite Some Protest," Aug. 28, 1964.

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 X_ Local government University Other Name of repository:  Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): JFL-2665
10. Geographical Data
Acreage of Property 1.04 ac
Latitude/Longitude Coordinates  Datum if other than WGS84:

### Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory & Warehouse

Jefferson County, KY
County and State

Name of Property

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

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2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

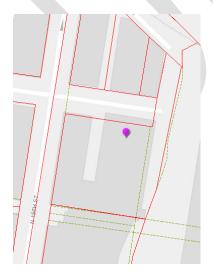
#### **Verbal Boundary Description**

The current boundary includes the building and its full area as recorded at the Jefferson County Property Valuation Administrator parcel ID 015B00740000, and under Land Record Serial Number 8001476. Those descriptions presently differ slightly from the property's historical parcel boundary (historic property line indicated by dashed lines on the parcel map). A former railroad easement was added to the parcel in recent years. The building is bounded by Lytle Street on the north and North 15<sup>th</sup> Street on the west. Another building is immediately adjacent to the south and is not included within the parcel or the boundary. It is described in the deed as:

"...[R]eal estate located at 1416 and 1426 Lytle Street formerly known as 223 North 15<sup>th</sup> Street in Louisville, Jefferson County, Kentucky, and described as follows:

Being Tract 1 as shown on Plat No. 45-95 of record in Deed Book 6564, Page 789, in the Office of the Clerk of the County Court of Jefferson County, Kentucky, having been approved by the Louisville and Jefferson County Planning Commission on February 17, 1995.

Together with appurtenant easement 165 feet in length over Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company Track No. 3 (ICC No. 1), extending from the Northesterly side of subject property to the clearance point with Tract ICC No. 9."



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### **Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the building and the parcel that has been historically associated with the property, which immediately surrounds it. The National Register boundary does not include the former railroad easement portion of the current parcel that extends to the northeast because it is not part of the historic identity of the property.

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: <u>Jessica McCarron</u>, <u>MHP / Historic Project Manager</u>

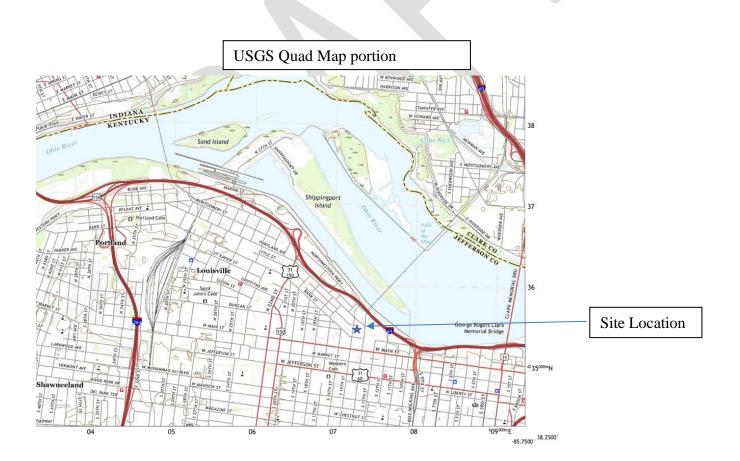
organization: Weyland Ventures

street & number: 815 W. Market St. #110

city or town: Louisville state: KY zip code: 40202

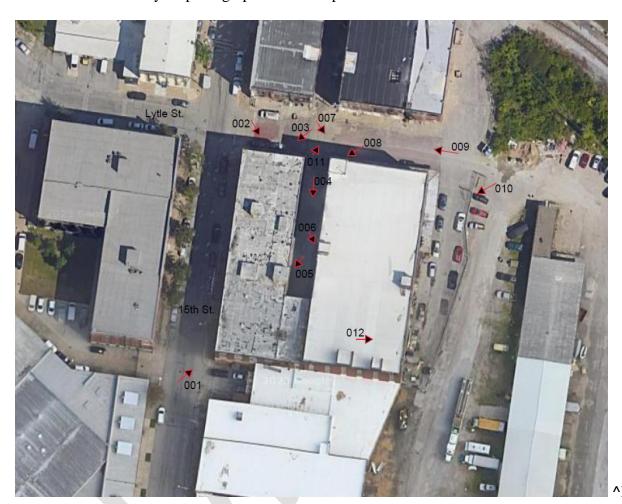
e-mail: Jessica@WeylandVentures.com

telephone: <u>502-515-2489</u> date: <u>August 2023</u>



Name of Property

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



### **Photo Log**

Name of Property: Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory & Warehouse

City or Vicinity: Louisville County: Jefferson State: Kentucky

Photographer: Jessica McCarron Date Photographed: April 13, 2023

Photo 001: Facing NE, western and southern façade of ca. 1905 factory building; western façade runs parallel to Fifteenth Street

### Louisville Lead & Color Co. Paint Factory & Warehouse

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Photo 002: Facing SE, northern façade of ca. 1905 factory building

Photo 003: Facing SW, northern façade of ca. 1905 factory building

Photo 004: Facing S, railroad spur "alley" showing connector between buildings

Photo 005: Looking up at eastern façade of ca. 1905 factory building

Photo 006: Looking up at western façade of ca. 1911 warehouse building

Photo 007: Facing SE, northern façade of ca. 1911 warehouse building

Photo 008: Facing SW, detail of raised loading dock / porch on northern façade of ca. 1911 warehouse building with northern façade of ca. 1905 factory building in background

Photo 009: Facing W looking down Lytle Street towards Fifteenth: warehouse and factory building on left, other former Peaslee-Gaulbert warehouse buildings on right

Photo 010: Facing SW, eastern façade of ca. 1911 warehouse building

Photo 011: Looking down at exposed brick pavers on Lytle Street

Photo 012: Facing E towards downtown Louisville from the roof of the ca. 1911 warehouse building