

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

VLR 9/5/7
NRHP 11/1/7

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Cohen House
other names/site number VDHR No. 123-0115

2. Location

street & number 32 South Adams Street not for publication N/A
city or town Petersburg vicinity N/A
state Virginia code VA county Independent City code 730 zip code 23803

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

[Signature]
Date

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
- See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain). _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

=====

5. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Vacant Sub: Not In Use

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian/Second Empire

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

roof Slate

walls Brick

other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

8. Statement of Significance

=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance 1851- ca. 1920

Significant Dates 1851, 1897-1898

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

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

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources

=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property .2

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing									
1	18	286892E	4	122529N	2				3		
											4

 See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Ashley Neville and John Salmon
organization Ashley Neville LLC date 6/1/07
street & number 112 Thompson Street, Suite B-1 telephone 804-798-2124
city or town Ashland state VA zip code 23005

=====
Additional Documentation
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Charles H. Cuthbert, Jr.
street & number 220 North Sycamore Street telephone 804-733-3100
city or town Petersburg state VA zip code 23803

=====
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Cohen House
Petersburg, VA**

Section 7 Page 1

7. SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Cohen House stands prominently on the northwestern corner of South Adams and Wythe Streets. The tall, three-story, Second Empire-style brick dwelling evolved from an earlier dwelling that was built about 1851 for Joseph Williams. The Eastlake detailing on the windows and the tall mansard roof creating a full third story probably were added about 1897-1898 and gave the house its present appearance. The house was neglected in the last half of the twentieth century falling into disrepair. The environs of the Cohen House have evolved considerably and it is the only dwelling left in the area that as late as 1903 was largely residential except for the commercial corridor to its rear along Sycamore Street. There are no other outbuildings associated with the Cohen House.

DESCRIPTION

The Cohen House stands on the northwestern corner lot of Adams and Wythe Streets facing Adams Street. A low granite curb surrounds the small yard on the front and south side. A single magnolia tree is located in the northeastern corner of the lot. The north side of the lot is bounded by a paved parking lot for the adjacent office building. Adams Street forms the east boundary and Wythe Street, a busy eastbound corridor, is located south of the house. Commercial buildings are located between the rear of the house and the alley. For the most part, Adams Street was residential at the turn of the twentieth century and houses were also located along Washington and Wythe Streets. As was typical for Petersburg, a large tobacco warehouse was located amongst the dwellings across Rose Alley (now Crimson Alley) from the Cohen House. Sycamore Street to the west of the house continues to be a major commercial district. During the twentieth century, this area has evolved from mostly residential to commercial with business located on all sides of the house, leaving the house a remnant of the former residential area. The area now is largely devoted to commercial and transportation businesses. A car dealership and a funeral home are located across Adams and Wythe Streets respectively, and an office building stands on the adjacent lot to the north.

The Cohen House, built about 1851, is a tall, three-story, three-bay brick dwelling on a raised foundation. The builder of the house was conscious of its corner location and chose to have the front and south side, which faces the adjacent streets, laid in common bond to present a smooth finished appearance to the public. The less-visible north and rear (west) walls are laid in five-course American bond. It appears that the raised foundation was parged at one time but it has been removed from all but the rear. The tall mansard roof is covered with decorative slate shingles and is pierced on the front and rear by three windows while each side has a paired central window. The house has a deep cornice with wide frieze boards. There are four interior-side brick chimneys: two on each side. The first-floor façade has tripartite windows, while the remaining windows on the original block are one-over-one-light double-hung sash. Most windows, except for the rear north side and basement windows, have pointed lintels with Eastlake-style decoration. The basement windows have plain lintels and have three-over-three-light sash. The existing front porch replaces an earlier replacement porch and is more appropriate to the style of the building. The doorway features sidelights and a transom with the same pointed and decorated lintel as the windows.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Cohen House
Petersburg, VA**

Section 7 Page 2

The Cohen House underwent a major remodeling campaign in 1897-1898.¹ The most notable change was the addition of a full third story with the tall mansard roof. Remnants of the earlier hipped roof and its standing-seam-metal covering are visible in the eaves of the existing mansard roof. The Eastlake-style window lintels probably were added at the same time. It is possible that the windows were also changed during this renovation. There is evidence of a reworking of the brick around the two tripartite first floor façade windows and they may have replaced two windows on either side of the doorway that would replicate the fenestration of the second floor. In addition, the window sash in a house built in the early 1850s most likely would have had multiple lights rather than the existing one-over-one-light sash. These changes were no doubt made to give the house a more fashionable appearance in the latest style of the time by a successful Petersburg merchant.

The mansard roof, a double-pitched roof with a steep lower slope, was a hallmark of the Second Empire style. By increasing the headroom in the attic, it provided a usable additional floor. The lower roof slope was almost always pierced by dormers to allow light into the space. The mansard roof could be applied to most any domestic building to create a contemporary look without changing the plan or ornamentation of the house. Several other houses in Petersburg, mostly frame, underwent similar changes with the addition of a mansard roof during this same period.

The Second Empire style gained in popularity in this country during the 1860s and 1870s. Borrowed from France, it is named for the reign of Napoleon III (1852-1870) who undertook a major building campaign that transformed Paris into a city of wide boulevards and monumental buildings that were copied throughout Europe and the United States. One of his most famous undertakings, the enlargement of the Louvre, popularized a roof form developed by seventeenth-century French Renaissance architect Francois Mansart. In this country, the first major building in this style was the Corcoran Gallery (1859-1861) (now known as the Renwick Gallery), which was confiscated for military use during the Civil War. It set the style that became closely associated with public buildings erected during the prosperous administration of Ulysses S Grant, so much so that it is sometimes called the General Grant style – an ironic appellation for a Petersburg building remodeled in that style.

Additional changes occurred to the house after 1903. The Sanborn map of that date shows three-story, brick dwelling with a one-story, full-width front porch that was replaced about 1995 with a lightly-built, gable-roof porch that framed only the entry. Also in 1903, there were three frame additions across the rear with one-story sections flanking a two-story center section and a one-story brick section off the southwestern corner of the house. All of the frame and brick sections were removed after 1915 and replaced by the current two-story rear ell on the northwest corner and the one-story, frame sun room on the southwestern corner of the house probably about 1920. The foundation of the ell consists of roughly laid brick and is mostly parged implying that it was intended to be parged. This suggests that the remainder of the foundation, which had not been originally parged, may have been parged at the same time the rear ell was added. On the first floor, this two-story addition enlarged the kitchen and created a pantry with an inset porch on the northwestern corner. The second floor of the two-story ell is one room with tripartite windows on each wall. The original two window openings, now covered by the ell addition, are visible on the second floor and have plain stone lintels. The windows themselves were removed and the openings were covered with plaster.²

The second rear addition is a one-story sun porch on the southwestern corner of the first floor. Craftsman-style in appearance, it features paired ten-light banks of windows above a paneled wall of vertical boards with the corners of the addition expressed as posts. The foundation for the sun room, like the ell addition, is roughly laid and probably was

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET****Cohen House
Petersburg, VA**Section 7, Page 3

at one time. This entire composition is topped by a hip roof with deep flaring eaves supported by brackets to provide shade for the room.

The house features a slightly modified central-passage, double-pile plan with a later two-story, one-room rear ell and one-story sunroom. The center passage widens in the center of the building to provide additional room for the spacious stair. The half-turn stair has a molded handrail with slender turned balusters, two per tread, which ends on the first floor in a volute. Intermediate newels are also turned. The stair brackets are simple applied strips that create a rectangle beneath the end of each step.³

Wide cased openings provided access to the front rooms flanking the central passage. There appears to have been a double parlor on the south side of the first floor with a single large room on the front of the north side and service rooms to its rear. Access to the sunroom was through the rear room on the south side. The original rear exterior wall that is now covered by the sun room was parged and has the same Eastlake-style lintel above the doorway into the sun room as found on the windows. Due to neglect and remodeling, the interior of the Cohen House has suffered and most mantels and some trim are missing. The wall between the double parlors on the south side has been removed, creating one large room.

The only early mantel that survives is located in the north front room. It features paneled pilasters and a five-part frieze with a plain center panel. The edge of the mantelshelf is reeded. The windows and doors have plain architrave trim and it is being replicated where it was missing. Surviving doors are four-panel doors. Most of the major rooms on the first two floors have beaded picture rail.

On the second and third floors, rooms open from the center stair hall. The second floor, like the first, has plain architrave trim on windows and doors and picture rail. The gypsum wallboard or plaster covering has been removed from the third floor walls but the walls survive in their original location. Because the wall coverings have been removed, the remnants of the original hip roof are visible in the eaves.

The Cohen House is a survivor of a past era in Petersburg. Begun as a two-story, hipped-roof house about 1851, it evolved into a Second Empire-style house by the end of the nineteenth century with the addition of a full third story under a mansard roof and decorative Eastlake-style window and door lintels. More recently, the area in which it is located has become commercial and the house fell into disuse and disrepair. The house is now being renovated and will be returned to a useful purpose.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Cohen House
Petersburg, VA**

Section 8 Page 4

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Charles Cohen House, located at 32 South Adams Street on the northwestern corner of Wythe Street in Petersburg, Virginia, was constructed about 1851 for Joseph Williams. The house is named for Charles Cohen, the fourth owner and a prominent local merchant, who occupied it from about 1891 to about 1900. Cohen modified the house about 1898 in the Second Empire style by remodeling the interior and windows and adding a third full story under a mansard roof. Several houses in Petersburg, mostly frame, appear to have been similarly remodeled and the use of a mansard-style roof was an economical way to add a significant amount of space to an existing house. Multiple additions were made to the rear of the dwelling over the years and it reached its current form probably around 1920. The house is a good example of the use of the Second Empire style to provide a fashionable appearance while increasing the amount of usable space.

JUSTIFICATION OF CRITERIA

The Charles Cohen house is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as locally significant under Criterion C as an example of an evolved Second Empire-style dwelling. Significant portions of the building's historic fabric remain largely intact and retain integrity of location, association, setting, feeling, design, and materials. The period of significance begins in 1851, when the house was constructed, and ends ca. 1920, the estimated date of the sunroom addition.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Charles Cohen House, located at 32 South Adams Street in Petersburg, Virginia, was constructed about 1851 for Joseph Williams, a Petersburg tobacco factory owner and merchant. Williams was born in Maryland about 1787 and later moved to Petersburg, where he acquired a lot at the northwestern corner of Adams and Wythe Streets in 1823. He constructed a tobacco factory there the next year. In 1829, he built and insured a wooden house next to the factory. He continued to improve the lot, until by 1858 it contained a two-story wooden dwelling with two wings, two adjoining three-story brick tobacco factories totaling 142 feet in length and 42 feet in width, a one-and-a-half wooden stable and carriage house, and a two-story wooden kitchen building. These structures occupied the northern part of the parcel abutting Rose Alley (present-day Crimson Lane); none of them survive today. On December 22, 1851, Williams insured a new brick house on the southern portion of the parcel nearest the intersection of Adams and Wythe Streets. This two-story dwelling, insured for \$5,000, was covered by a "tin" roof and measured 39 by 41.5 feet, the dimensions of the building now known as the Charles Cohen House, and it stood at least thirty feet south of the other buildings. By 1858, Williams had made an improvement to the house, perhaps on the interior as the description on the insurance declaration remained unchanged, but the insured value increased to \$5,750 on November 3, 1858.⁴

Joseph Williams died about 1861, and his will was proved on April 18 of that year. He devised all of his property to his son, John S. Williams, with whom he was living in the house at Adams and Wythe Streets. He also left detailed instructions for making investments to benefit his son and grandchildren. His personal property included household furniture appraised at \$226, twelve "servants" valued at \$5,950, and cash, stocks, and bonds appraised at \$6,003.⁵

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Cohen House
Petersburg, VA**

Section 8 Page 5

The complexity of Joseph Williams's will boded ill for his son. Other family members filed suit, and in 1865 the property was sold at auction. Charles Friend offered the high bid—\$14,000—and it was accepted. Friend received a deed for which he executed a deed of trust to Alexander Donnan and John Mann, promising to pay the amount of the bid. When Friend defaulted on the loan, Donnan and Mann foreclosed and auctioned the property again in 1872. The high bidder, George H. Davis, acquired the parcel and house for \$6,700 and executed a deed of trust for the amount to Donnan and Mann. Unlike Charles Friend, however, Davis paid off the debt and kept the house.⁶

George H. Davis was born in February 1837 into Petersburg's thriving Jewish mercantile community. By 1859, he was operating his own dry goods store on Sycamore Street, which, with nearby Old Street, formed the heart of the Jewish business district. In 1870, Davis and his wife, Rose, were recorded in the census as age thirty-five and thirty, respectively. They had three children—Corene, age ten, George H. Davis, Jr., age two, and Fanny, eight months—and a nurse, Polly Reams, age fifty-eight, to care for them. Rosa Davis, age twenty-three, and Anna Williams, a servant, age twenty, also lived in the household (Reams, Williams, and Rosa Davis were all African American). George Davis continued to prosper, and by 1879, besides owning the house at Adams and Wythe Streets, he was president of Swift Creek Manufacturing Company, which made cotton goods. The company office was located at 65 North Sycamore Street. Davis also was a proprietor, with Michael M. Davis and John C. Drake, of Davis, Drake, and Company, which sold dry goods and notions and was located at 3 Iron Front on North Sycamore Street. In addition, Davis was a director of the Life Insurance Company of Virginia and of the Petersburg Gas-Light Company, and vice president of Petersburg Savings and Insurance Company. By 1880, Rose Davis had died and George H. Davis was remarried, to Rebecca S. Davis, age twenty-six. Corene and George H. Davis, Jr., were living in the household (Fanny was not listed; perhaps she had died), together with their siblings, Rose, age two, and Cecil, age one. In addition, Mary and Rebecca Davis, the forty-year-old twin sisters of George H. Davis, lived in the house.⁷

George H. Davis left Petersburg (first for Norfolk and then for New York) about 1890. In the 1900 census, he is shown living on West 84th Street in New York City with his wife, Rebecca, his daughter, Rose Yates, age twenty-four, and his son, Cecil, age twenty-one. George Davis's occupation is given as "Insurance," as is Cecil Davis's. Rebecca Davis is not listed in the household in the 1910 census, but Cecil Davis and Rose Yates are listed, as well as her husband, J. P. Yates. George H. Davis was reported as having his "own income," while Cecil Davis was listed as the auditor of an insurance company and J. P. Yates as the company manager. George Davis's date of death is not known.⁸

When George H. Davis vacated his house at Adams and Wythe Streets, Charles Cohen and his wife, Florence, moved in. Charles Cohen was the son of Marx Cohen, who was born in Bavaria on July 10, 1836. A tailor by trade, Marx Cohen immigrated to the United States in February 1857 from London aboard the ship *Amazon*. At first he lived at 70 Oliver Street in New York City, where he was naturalized on October 23, 1866, before moving to Petersburg. There, he operated a dry goods store under his own name at 213 North Sycamore Street; once his son Charles joined the firm, the name was changed to M. Cohen and Son. Marx Cohen died in Petersburg and is buried in the Jewish cemetery there, together with his wife, Sophie, and Charles Cohen.⁹

Charles Cohen was born in Petersburg on December 29, 1860. Until he was a young man, he lived with his parents over the Sycamore Street store, where he was a clerk in his father's firm. He married Flora (Florence) Feibelman on May 31, 1882. By 1886, when he had become a director of the National Bank of Petersburg—a position he retained for the rest of his life—he was residing at 121 High Street. Cohen took over M. Cohen and Son, which had relocated to 40 North

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Cohen House
Petersburg, VA**

Section 8 Page 6

Sycamore Street, in 1891, after his father died. At the same time, he was president of I. Eigenbrun Co., a clothing manufacturing company, located at 29 North Sycamore Street. He also had moved into George H. Davis's house at Adams and Wythe Streets.¹⁰

The Cohen family acquired the Davis house in 1890. Davis had mortgaged the property on December 10, 1889, but his wife, Rebecca S. Davis, "did not unite in the said deed" of trust, and so the note holder, William R. McKenny, auctioned the lot and house on February 21, 1890. Marx Cohen, Charles Cohen's father, was the high bidder, acquiring the parcel for \$5,450. When Marx Cohen died on August 6, 1890, his will specified that his wife would inherit most of his estate including the house unless she predeceased him. In fact, she had done so, dying on January 30 of the same year. According to the provisions of the will, Marx Cohen's property then went to Charles Cohen, who began paying taxes on it in 1893. In 1897-1898, Cohen remodeled the interior, altered the windows, and replaced the original hipped roof with the slate mansard roof that covers the house today, thereby transforming the house into the still-popular Second Empire style.¹¹

The Second Empire style first became popular in the United States during the 1860s and 1870s. Napoleon III (1852-1870) of France, who undertook a major building campaign in Paris that included the enlargement of the Louvre, frequently utilized a roof form developed by seventeenth-century French Renaissance architect Francois Mansart. The Corcoran (present-day Renwick) Gallery (1859-1861) was the first building in the United States constructed in that style, which later was closely associated with public buildings erected during the Gilded Age of the later nineteenth century. The mansard roof, a hallmark of the Second Empire style, increased headroom in the attic story to provide a usable additional floor. It could be applied to most any domestic building to create a contemporary look without necessarily changing the plan of the house. It was the style that Cohen chose for his dwelling, although he also altered the windows and remodeled the interior. The result was a house that reflected his status as a prosperous merchant.

Charles Cohen's business interests extended well beyond Petersburg. On August 18, 1890, Cohen, Thomas L. Emry, and William M. Habliston, formed the Great Falls Water Power, Manufacturing and Improvement Company to construct dams, a canal, and mills on the Roanoke River in North Carolina, at the site of present-day Roanoke Rapids. In March 1897, a cotton mill began operating there, and the company began to supply power to it. However, the failures of related mills, coupled with poor profits, soon forced the company to the brink of bankruptcy. In 1905, a paper mill was constructed, and its power demands at first seemed to supply the company with needed income; by 1910, however, it was obvious that a complete reorganization was needed. On December 29, 1910, Charles Cohen was elected president of what had been renamed the Roanoke Rapids Power Company, because of his managerial skills. He sold property, reorganized the company, and then repurchased the paper mill. He was elected president of the new entity, called the Halifax Paper Corporation, in 1911. Cohen's organizational and management skills enabled the company to begin turning a profit the next year despite a near-disastrous flood. Having accomplished his objectives, Cohen resigned as president on February 17, 1913.¹²

While he was engaged in this undertaking, Cohen moved from Petersburg to Richmond about 1900, and by 1905 had acquired a house at 1620 West Franklin Street. He and his family, including his son, Milton, age 20, were listed there in the 1900 census. Cohen had moved to Richmond to establish the Richmond Dry Goods Company in the city as a branch of M. Cohen and Son. The firm manufactured and sold clothing throughout the South. Cohen moved to New York City about 1911, where he and Jacob Coleman formed a textile factoring business, Coleman, Cohen and Company.¹³

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Cohen House
Petersburg, VA**

Section 8 Page 7

Charles Cohen died in New York on January 10, 1915, at his home in the Hotel Majestic at Central Park West and 72nd Street. His obituary, which appeared in the New York Times the next day, summed up his career:

He was born in Petersburg [Va.], and while still a young man succeeded his father as owner of the firm of M. Cohen, Son & Co. Under his control the business grew rapidly, and after a few years was removed to Richmond, Va. Mr. Cohen retired from the active control four years ago, and came to this city to live, making his home at the Hotel Majestic.

Mr. Cohen was the senior member of the banking firm of Coleman, Cohen & Co. of 1133 Broadway, and Vice President of the Richmond Dry Goods Company of Richmond, Va. He was also a former President of the Halifax Paper Company and President of the Patterson Mills, both of Roanoke Rapids, N.C., which grew from a small village to a city through the establishment of his factories.

Mr. Cohen is survived by his widow, one son, and two daughters.¹⁴

Charles Cohen was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Petersburg. Flora Cohen returned to Richmond, where she died on October 1, 1933. The house in Petersburg, which she inherited from her husband, was leased to tenants after the Cohens moved to Richmond about 1900. The 1924 and 1931 Petersburg city directories, for example, list as the occupant Moses E. Lavenstein, president of Lavenstein Realty Company and The Lavenstein Corporation (a department store located at 114 North Sycamore Street). Sometime during her ownership, perhaps in the 1920s, a sunroom was added to the rear of the Petersburg house—the last major architectural change. The house was sold out of the family in 1939, when C. Hall Davis occupied it. It declined thereafter, at one point becoming a night spot called the Fishermen's Club. It changed hands several times thereafter. The current owner purchased it in 1998 from Olde Petersburg Construction and has expended a great deal of time, energy, and resources in stabilizing the house.¹⁵

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Cohen House
Petersburg, VA**

Section 9 Page 8

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ancestry.com. Accessed June 5, 2007.

Auditor of Public Accounts. Land Tax Books. Petersburg. 1850–1899. Library of Virginia (LVA). Richmond, Va.

Chataigne's Petersburg Directory, 1879–1880; 1886–1887; 1891–1892; 1924; 1931; 1939. Petersburg, Va.: Webb and Fitzgerald, 1880, 1887, 1892, 1924, 1931, 1939.

Cuthbert, Charles H., Jr. Personal communication to John S. Salmon. June 6, 2007.

Ginsberg, Louis. *History of the Jews of Petersburg, 1789–1950.* Richmond, Va.: Williams Printing Co., 1954.

Hill's Richmond City Directory, 1905. Richmond, Va.: John Maddox, 1905.

Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia. Declarations. Reel 10, Vol. 78; Reel 7, Vol. 59; Reel 12, Vol. 86; Reel 23, Vol. 135. LVA.

New York Times. January 11, 1915. LVA.

Petersburg. Hustings Court Deed Books 7 (1821–1826), 29 (1866–1867), 34 (1871–1872). Reels 4, 74, 78. LVA.

Petersburg. Hustings Court Will Books 5 (1860–1871), 7 (1884–1892). Reels 20, 122. LVA.

Petersburg. Marriage Register 1. 1854–1890. Reel 41. LVA.

Schwarzschild, Stuart. "History of Roanoke Rapids Paper Mill. Unpublished typescript. N.d. Letter of donation, January 28, 1997. Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Richmond, Va.

Schwarzschild, Stuart, Atlanta, Ga., letter, January 28, 1997, to "Dear Bev," n.p. Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Richmond, Va.

U.S. Census. Schedule of Inhabitants. 1850; 1860; 1870; 1880. Virginia. Dinwiddie County. LVA.

U.S. Census. Schedule of Inhabitants. 1900. Virginia. Henrico County. LVA.

U.S. Census. Schedule of Inhabitants. 1900, 1910. New York. Ancestry.com. Accessed June 5, 2007.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Cohen House
Petersburg, VA**

Section 10, Photo List Page 9

10. GEOGRAPHIC DATA

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property includes the entire tax parcel 022070006 that was historically associated with this house. This is the same parcel referenced in the City of Petersburg Deed Book 610, Page 839, March 1999.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

Tax parcel 022070006 is all that land historically associated with this house that it continues to retain. This is the same parcel referenced in the City of Petersburg Deed Book 610, Page 839, March 1999.

PHOTOGRAPHIC DATA

The photographs for the Cohen House, Petersburg, Virginia were taken by Ashley Neville on April 23, 2007. The negatives are on file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia. The negative number for all photographs is 23471.

1. Façade, view to the west
2. South elevation, view to the north
3. Stairs, first floor, view to the east
4. Original mantel, first floor, front north room, view to the north
5. Second floor stairs and hall, view to the southeast
6. Third floor with evidence of former room in eaves. View to the northeast.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Cohen House
Petersburg, VA**

Section ENDNOTES Page 10

NOTES, SECTION 7:

¹ The 1897 Sanborn Map shows this house as a two-story brick dwelling with a hipped roof and a full-width front porch. The tax records for 1898 show a value increased by \$1,000 for improvements. See Note 11 below for additional information. Sanborn Maps beginning in 1903 show a three-story dwelling.

² The changes noted in this paragraph are documented on the Sanborn Maps of 1897, 1903, 1908, 1915, and 1919-1950 but date stamped March 19, 1945.

³ About 1995, the owner at that time enclosed the stairs within a wall of gypsum wallboard and removed the stair balustrade. The current owner removed the stair enclosure and rebuilt the balustrade based on a surviving newel and baluster.

NOTES, SECTION 8:

⁴ U.S. Census, Schedule of Inhabitants, 1850, Virginia, Dinwiddie County, p. 427; *ibid.*, 1860, p. 347; Auditor of Public Accounts, Land Tax Books, Petersburg, 1850-1851, Library of Virginia (LVA), Richmond, Va.; Petersburg, Hustings Court Deed Book 7, 1821-1826, Reel 4, pp. 165-166; for buildings on northern part of parcel, *see* Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia, Declarations, Reel 10, Vol. 78, Declaration 3515, Reel 12, Vol. 86, Declaration 6014, and Reel 23, Vol. 135, Declaration 20780; for the Charles Cohen House, *see ibid.*, Reel 7, Vol. 59, Declaration 433, and Reel 23, Vol. 135, Declaration 20781.

⁵ Petersburg Hustings Court Will Book 5, 1860-1871, Reel 20, LVA, pp. 93-95, 118-119.

⁶ Petersburg Hustings Court Deed Book 29, 1866-1867, Reel 74, LVA, pp. 465-466, 466-468; *ibid.*, Deed Book 34, 1871-1872, Reel 78, pp. 170-171, 171-172.

⁷ Louis Ginsberg, *History of the Jews of Petersburg, 1789-1950* (Richmond, Va.: Williams Printing Co., 1954), 31; U.S. Census, Schedule of Inhabitants, 1870, Virginia, Dinwiddie County, pp. 230-231; *Chataigne's Petersburg Directory*, 1879-1880, pp. 14, 16, 74, 188.

⁸ *Chataigne's Petersburg Directory*, 1891-1892, has no listing for George H. Davis; U.S. Census, Schedule of Inhabitants, 1900, New York, p. 2623; *ibid.*, 1910, p. 3801.

⁹ *Chataigne's Petersburg Directory*, 1891-1892, lists Charles Cohen as residing at the Adams and Wythe Streets address, formerly George H. Davis's house; ship manifest and naturalization record posted on Ancestry.com, accessed June 5, 2007; Ginsberg, *Jews of Petersburg*, 91-92.

¹⁰ Ginsberg, *Jews of Petersburg*, 91; Petersburg, Marriage Register 1, 1854-1890, Reel 41, p. 118, LVA; *Chataigne's Petersburg Directory*, 1886-1887, pp. 9 1/2, 93; *ibid.*, 1891-1892, pp. 17, 137, 157.

¹¹ Petersburg, Hustings Court Deed Book 54, 1891-1892, Reel 94, pp. 652-653, deed written Feb. 21, 1890, and recorded Mar. 4, 1892, LVA; Petersburg, Will Book 7, 1884-1892, Reel 122, pp. 412-413, will written Apr. 11, 1888, and proved Aug. 23, 1890; Ginsberg, *Jews of Petersburg*, 91; Auditor of Public Accounts, Land Tax Books, Petersburg, 1897-1898, LVA, show a \$1,000-increase in value for buildings on the lot between the two years, from \$4,500 to \$5,500, with the following marginal note in 1898: "Imp[rove]d \$1,000."

¹² History of Roanoke Rapids paper mill, unpublished typescript by Stuart Schwarzschild, donated to Virginia Department of Historic Resources, January 28, 1997, DHR, Richmond, Va.

¹³ *Hill's Richmond City Directory, 1905* (Richmond, Va.: John Maddox, 1905), 189; U.S. Census, Schedule of Inhabitants, 1900, Virginia, Henrico County, p. 8151; letter, Stuart Schwarzschild, Atlanta, Ga., to "Dear Bev," January 28, 1997, at Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Va.

¹⁴ *New York Times*, January 11, 1915, p. 9, col. 5, LVA.

¹⁵ Ginsberg, *Jews of Petersburg*, 91; *Chataigne's Petersburg Directory*, 1924, p. 344; *ibid.*, 1931, p. 266; *ibid.*, 1939, p. 116; personal communication, Charles H. Cuthbert, Jr., to John S. Salmon, June 6, 2007.

Cohen House, Riverview, VA. (1880115)
tax parcel 088070006



PETERSBURG QUADRANGLE
 VIRGINIA
 7.5-MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

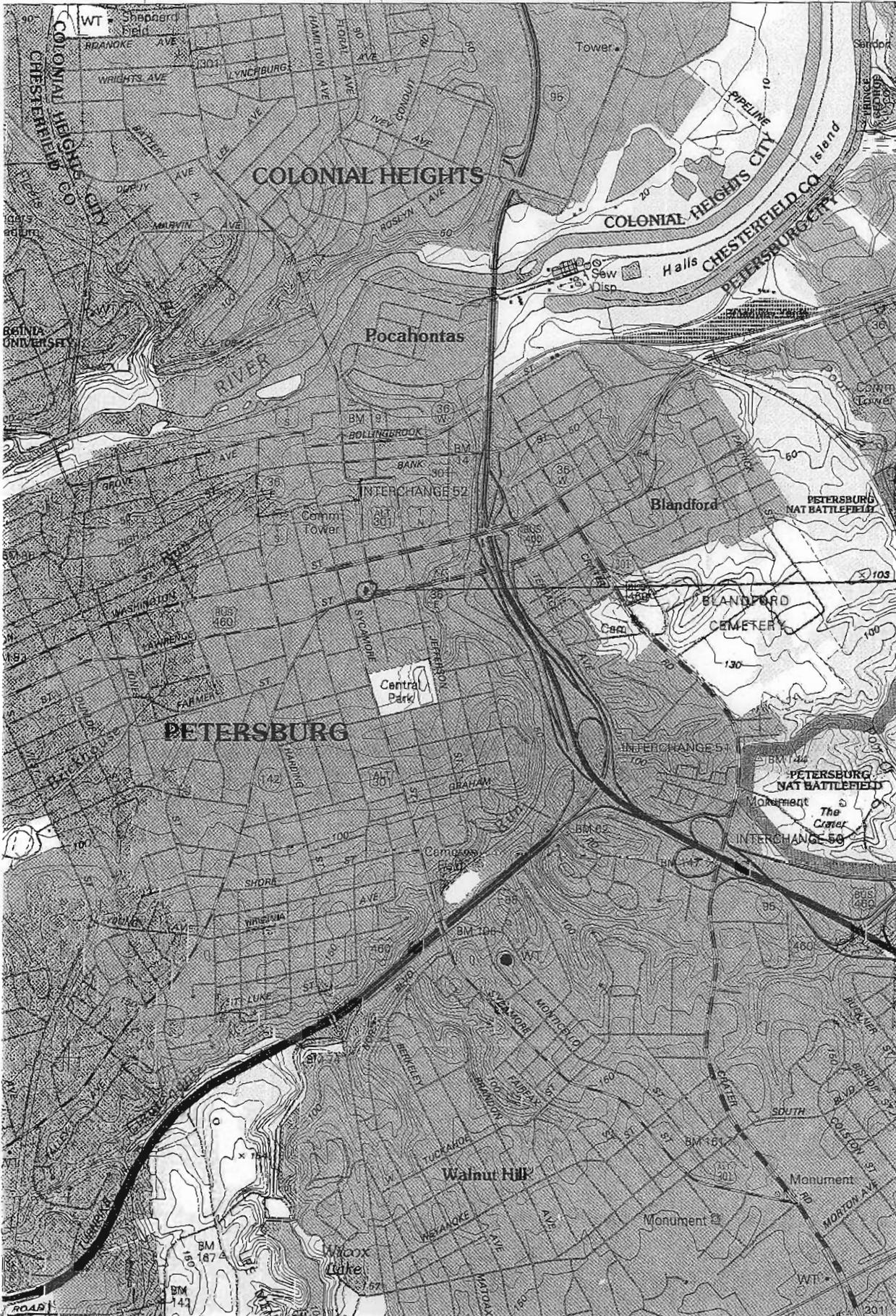
25' 00" 286

13 597 500 METERS

288

289 77' 22' 30"

37' 15' 00"



1:100 000
 METERS

*Cohen House
 Petersburg, VA
 UTM
 18 286897 E
 4122529 N*

4122

4121

12' 30"

4120