

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

LISTED ON:  
VLR 06/18/2009  
NRHP 08/27/2009

**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 Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Commercial and Industrial Historic District  
other names/site number VDHR No. 123-5424

**2. Location**

street & number 200-300 W. Washington, 4-42 S. Market, 100-100 Perry, 200-300 blk W Wythe, 300 block Brown Streets not for publication N/A  
city or town Petersburg vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state VA 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] \_\_\_\_\_ July 6, 2009 \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

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)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
X district
site
structure
object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows: buildings (15, 1), sites (0, 0), structures (1, 1), objects (1, 0), Total (17, 2).

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

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: INDUSTRY Sub: Manufacturing Facility
INDUSTRY Industrial Storage
COMMERCE Specialty Store
TRANSPORTATION Rail-Related

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: INDUSTRY Sub: Industrial Storage
EDUCATION Research Facility
VACANT Not In Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Art Deco
Commercial
Italian Renaissance

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
roof Not Visible
walls Brick
other Concrete

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)

- X 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.
X 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)

- Industry
Architecture
Transportation

Period of Significance 1879-1962

Significant Dates 1879

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** 24

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

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing								
1	18	286270	4	122540	2	18	286470	4	122770	3	18	286530	4	122470	4	18	286260	4	122270

     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, Anne Barrett, John Salmon & Kimberly M. Chen  
 organization Ashley Neville LLC date March 9, 2009  
 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 Various  
 street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**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.

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**Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Commercial & Industrial Historic District  
Petersburg, Virginia**

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**SUMMARY DESCRIPTION**

The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Commercial and Industrial Historic District encompasses a collection of large industrial and smaller commercial buildings that housed some of Petersburg's important industries – tobacco and wholesale grocery and confectioner. This industrial and commercial area is located on the south side of West Washington Street several blocks southwest of Petersburg's historic commercial and governmental center along Sycamore Street. The area began to take on its present industrial character beginning in the late nineteenth century with the construction of the Cameron Tobacco Company building about 1879 at the corner of Brown and Perry Streets as well as several lumber yards that no longer exist. The location of the Atlantic Coastline Railroad (ACL), which cut through the district en route to its terminal at Washington and Union Streets not only promoted industrial growth with spurs that provided rail access to the industrial buildings but also created an open swath through the district.

The oldest building in the proposed historic district is the four-story, painted brick and stucco Cameron Building (VDHR #123-5424-0008) that stands on the northeast corner of Brown and Perry Streets. It was built about 1879 to replace an earlier factory that burned. In 1913, the Export Leaf Tobacco Company (VDHR #123-5424-0008) began building its complex of tobacco processing buildings immediately north and west of the Cameron Building. Both Cameron Tobacco and Export Leaf Tobacco became part of the Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation. The H. P. Harrison Company (VDHR #123-5036) built a three-story, Italian Renaissance Revival-style factory and warehouse in 1912 on the east side of South Market Street near the corner of West Washington Street. It replaced an earlier building for Harrison in the same location and was adjacent to the ACL tracks. Smaller commercial buildings were constructed on the periphery of the block bounded by West Washington and West Wythe Streets while a large Brown & Williamson warehouse was built in the center of the block with a B&W machine shop on west side of South Market Street (VDHR #123-5424-0006). All of the tobacco-related buildings were built immediately adjacent to the railroad tracks and were served by rail. The commercial buildings were built in the 1940s and first half of the 1950s and housed automobile-related businesses including auto sales and services, auto parts and tires. Continuing the automobile-related theme is the Gibson Drive-in (VDHR #123-5424-0003), which is located on West Washington Street. Its steeply-pitched, bright red, tile roof and yellow steeple were obviously designed to bring it to the attention of the motoring public. These commercial enterprises may have located here to take advantage of the large labor force that worked at Brown & Williamson. The buildings included in the proposed district formed a large part of the industrial and economic backbone of the city for decades and are representative of turn-of-the-twentieth-century and early-twentieth-century industrial and commercial architecture in Petersburg.

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

The historic district is bounded on the north by West Washington Street, on the south by Brown and Farmer Streets, on the east by South Market Street and on the west by Guarantee Street and the ACL railroad bed. The South Market Street Historic District lies immediately to the east and the Folly Castle Historic District is located to the west. Both of those historic districts are largely residential. It was not uncommon to place industrial buildings among residential areas in Petersburg.

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The historic district encompasses three blocks located just southwest of the historic city core. The land is relatively open in the northern part of the district and was historically open as the rear yards of houses along South Market and Lawrence Streets (now Wythe Street). In the northern part of the district, large two-and-a-half and three-story houses with spacious yards and outbuildings to the rear occupied the west side of South Market Street and north side of what is now Wythe Street. They were probably similar to the houses that survive on the east side of Market Street. Because the yards were so large much, of the interior of the block only contained a few outbuildings. This block appears never to have been densely built, especially the interior of the block where the railroad cut through. Several lumber yards occupied the south side of Wythe Street, helping to create the open character of this area that continues today.

The railroad bed of the former Atlantic Coast Line Railroad (originally the Petersburg Railroad) is still visible as it cuts diagonally across the district. Stone abutments survive where the railroad trestle crossed Guarantee Street on the western edge of the district. The railroad, or spurs from this railroad, served all of the industrial buildings in this area.

The southern portion of the district is more densely built with the Brown & Williamson buildings and work yards occupying most of the blocks on which they are located. These three-story brick buildings are situated immediately adjacent to the sidewalk with overhead passageways or bridges across Perry Street and the alley between the Cameron buildings on the south and the Export Leaf buildings on the north. The work yards on the east side of the plant along Wythe Street and to the south along Farmer Street are enclosed with tall chain-link fencing reinforcing the industrial character of this area. The former Virginia Trunk and Bag buildings (later Seward Luggage), a complex of long three and four story brick buildings, is located just west of the district further reinforcing the industrial nature of this three- or four-block area. Beyond this enclave of industrial buildings to the east, west, and south, the area becomes residential while to the northeast lies the commercial heart of the city.

A notable landscape feature of the industrial area in the southern part of the district is the wrought-and-cast-iron fence that surrounds much of the former Brown & Williamson property east of Perry Street. The portion of the fence on the west side of South Market Street is the most decorative with cast spear tips on each vertical picket with the main posts set in a granite base. The remainder of the fencing is a simplified version of this fence without the cast spear tips. The simpler fence is located along both sides of Wythe Street with the former Brown & Williamson parking lots on the north side and the factory and work yard on the south side. It continues on the north side of Brown Street in front of the tobacco warehouses and terminates at the Cameron Building with a vehicular gate composed of vertical pickets topped with flat spear tips between two ball-topped posts. A short section of fence adjacent to the gate continues with the same spear-tipped pickets set in a granite base. A third post is highly decorative with applied motifs. Earlier photographs indicate that all three posts were decorated in this fashion. Along Wythe and South Market Streets, the more typical chain link fence is set inside the decorative iron fence with plantings between the two fences. The entire fence is a contributing object in this historic district (a portion of it was also counted as a contributing object in the South Market Street Historic District).

The main part of the large Brown & Williamson complex occupies two adjacent blocks on both sides of Perry Street between Wythe and Brown Streets with the former Export Leaf Tobacco Company buildings and work yard continuing south to Farmer Street. Enclosed bridges connect many of these buildings overhead while tunnels connect

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them underground. The common characteristics of these evolved buildings are their brick construction or brick curtain walls, generally three- and four-story height, and flat roofs. The industrial buildings in this district reflect the transition from nineteenth-century industrial architecture to twentieth-century practices. The earlier buildings are narrower – only four or five bays wide – with rows of sash windows that provided light and ventilation such as in the Cameron Building, which was built in 1879. Changes in building technology and the widespread availability of artificial light and ventilation allowed twentieth-century industrial buildings to be constructed with a larger footprint with curtain walls as well as large square or rectangular-shaped windows with industrial multiple-light steel hopper or awning windows. The Export Leaf Tobacco Company's Perry Street Building (on the west side of Perry Street), built in 1913-1914, exemplifies this evolution in industrial architecture during the twentieth century. In the later twentieth century, windows were completely abandoned with earlier windows being infilled and newer industrial buildings featuring large blank walls like the New Perry Street Building.

The Cameron Building is the earliest and probably the most decorative of the tobacco buildings in the historic district. Completed about 1879 to replace not only an earlier factory that burned during the Civil War, but also the first Cameron and Brother factory that burned in 1878, it is a three-story, flat-roof building with a molded cornice. The north side, which is also the façade, and the west side are covered with smooth stucco scored to resemble large blocks of stone on the first floor below the belt course with painted brick above. The rear, or south side, and the east side are painted brick. There is a corner entrance tower on the southwest corner with a recessed entry. A stone facing was added around the entry in 1963 at the same time the first floor was stuccoed. Both the entrance tower and the opposite corner have rusticated bands above the first floor. A belt course separates the first and upper floors on the façade. First floor façade and side windows on the west side are topped with stacked jackarches and have two-over-two-light sash windows. The remainder of the windows on the façade and along Perry Street are topped with label moldings and have six-over-six-light windows. Almost all of the Perry Street side and rear windows have been infilled although their label moldings survive. A two-story office addition to the west side of the Cameron Building is slightly recessed from the façade and appears to have been constructed by 1915. The Cameron Building extends north to the alley. Some time after 1975, the original fourth floor was removed, leaving the existing three-story building.

According to the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, the Cameron building housed many functions, which changed over the years. The office section, located along Brown Street and enlarged over the years, served that function throughout the history of the building. The remainder of the building was divided into three main sections when it was built. By 1908, the sections were labeled A, B, and C and each floor of the building housed different operations. According to the 1897 map, the front section (A) housed bulk bins on the third floor, and drying on the fourth floor. A small grinding room was built directly east and adjacent to Section A. The section B housed pressing on the first floor, twisting on the second floor, caseing [sic] on the third floor, and prizing on the fourth floor. Section C housed packing on the first floor, twisting on the second floor, and drying on the third and fourth floors.

By 1908, section A (called the Factory Section on the 1908 Sanborn map) housed caseing and cutting in the basement, storage on the first floor, shipping and stocking on the second floor, a cigarette machine room on the third floor, and paper box making on the fourth floor. Functions for the other two sections are not listed on the 1908 Sanborn map.

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The 1915 Sanborn map listed the functions as follows: in the front section (A), the basement housed the wood case department. The first floor housed storage and receiving. Paper box manufacturing occurred on the second floor, and casing, padding and butting were coordinated on the third floor. The fourth floor housed ordering. Section B (middle section) housed storage, grinding and splitting in the basement. The first floor was for storage, while the second floor was used for box manufacturing and storage. Stemming and flavoring occurred on the third and fourth floors respectively. The basement and first floor of Section C (rear section) were for storage, while the second floor was used for printing and storage. Blending and stemming were undertaken on the third floor, and the fourth floor was reserved for cutting and drying. A large boiler room was also housed within Section C.

By 1950, Sections A and B were reserved for storage, while Section C was used for both storage and blending. By 1956, all three sections were being used for storage.

A coal and woodshed was constructed before 1897 off the east end of section C, and was replaced by 1915 with a loading shed. This loading shed remained at least through 1956. Filling in the corner between sections B and C was a boiler room. Adjacent the boiler to the south was an engine room. By 1908 a coal house was added directly to the east and adjacent the boiler room. Other structures housing mechanical equipment filled in the space between the Cameron Building and the tobacco warehouses between 1915 and 1956. Smaller additional structures filled in to the south, and in these were located a sweat house, drying rooms, and a wash room. These were later made into a two-story section that housed engine and grinding rooms and a tin shop (1908). By 1915, this structure housed an engine room on the first floor and a storage and dressing room on the second floor. That use continued until after 1956.

An alley on the east side of the Cameron Building separates it from a series of tobacco warehouses. Immediately east of the east alley is a vehicle shed that has been given an elaborate façade to tie it stylistically to the Cameron Building. Built about 1940, the street side of the one-story shed is brick with a molded cornice and pilasters with recessed panels on each corner with a centered infilled window with label molding.

The tobacco warehouses begin immediately east of the shed and are one-story painted brick and concrete block with parapet fire walls, corbelled on the façade, separating each building. The earliest sections are brick laid in six-course American bond while the later ones are concrete block. Doors and windows, the latter topped by segmental arches, pierce the façade of the brick buildings but the concrete-block tobacco sections have blank walls along Brown Street. Windows in the first building (to the east) have been infilled. The first two buildings were standing by 1902 and by 1915, two additional units had been added on the north side (rear) of the original buildings. A third building was added by 1950 and the remaining buildings were constructed after 1956.

The tobacco warehouses directly to the east of the Cameron building originally functioned as warehouses. By 1915, the warehouses functioned as warehouses and a sweat room. By 1950, these warehouses evolved with the added functions of a cafeteria (Warehouse A), a cooper shop (Warehouse B), an opening room (Warehouse C), and a conditioning room (Warehouse D). By 1956, the function of Warehouse D changed to a receiving and storage room.

Export Leaf Tobacco Company constructed their buildings between 1913 and 1914 immediately to the north and west across Perry Street from the Cameron Building. The building immediately north of the Cameron Building, known as

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A-B Building, consists of two parallel rectangular blocks. Always considered one building, bridges and later additions connect these two blocks. A Building (on the west) was the Leaf Drying Building with a cooper shop (barrel shop) in the basement, receiving on the first floor, and hanging on the second. The third floor housed two large Philadelphia dryers. B Building was originally two stories with the third floor not added until 1939. Also known as the Wrapper Building, it had storage in the basement, receiving on the first floor and drying on the second floor. A two-story building was constructed in the open area between A and B in 1963 and the A Building Annex was constructed on the west side of the A building along Perry Street after 1967 on the site of the north/south railroad spur that served this building. An east/west rail spur was located in the alley between this building and the Cameron Building and was in use as late as 1975. The rail lines survive in the alley today.

The three-story, brick A-B Building is painted on the north and east elevations but remains unpainted red brick on the rear, the walls facing the center open area, and the west addition. Each block has a belt course between the second and third floors and a corbelled cornice. The beltcourse for B Building is slightly different from A, perhaps owing to its later construction; however, it is obvious that care was taken when the upper floor was added to B so that it would be sympathetic to the third floor of A Building. Double and triple segmental arched window openings are located on all but the modern west addition. The A Building Annex is also three stories, one-bay wide with an angled north end.

Across Perry Streets stands the other original Export Leaf building now known as the Old Perry Building. Constructed in 1913-1914, it began as a four-story rectangular-shaped building and has evolved with several large additions. This building housed cutting and drying in the basement, shipping on the first floor, storage on the second and third floors, and cigarette making on the fourth. The A and B Building prepared the tobacco while the cigarettes were actually made in the Perry Street Building. The first addition, the Perry Street West Annex was a perpendicular section added in 1917 to the west side at the south end creating an L-shaped footprint. Both of these sections share the same exterior characteristics with full-height pilasters separating each window bay. The windows on the east and north elevations are large horizontal openings with concrete sills in a contrasting color and have been infilled with glass block. The original large window openings on the west side of the original section and west annex have been infilled with small square windows punched into the infill. The corner stair towers have vertical windows with concrete sills. The cornice is trimmed with concrete.

Shortly after this building was constructed, Export Leaf Tobacco Company erected a tobacco factory on Lombardy Street in Richmond, Virginia, in 1915. The similarities between the Richmond and Petersburg buildings include the brick construction and corner stair towers with sash-sized windows. However, the architecture of the Richmond factory had more in common with the traditional factory and warehouse plans. It is a five-story, six-bay building with row upon row of sash windows – a departure from the large industrial-sized windows in the Petersburg building.

A large, almost square, five-story brick addition was built by 1966 on the southern end of the L-shaped building almost doubling the size of the plant. Known as the New Perry Building, the main façade of this addition, facing Perry Street, is blank except for the centered entry and vertical bands of black louvers that break up the massive red-brick façade. The south end has vertical bands of windows, reinforcing the vertical bands on the façade, while the rear (west side) had small square windows. By the time this addition was constructed mechanical sources of light and ventilation eliminated the need for windows.

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A long two-story brick addition, known as the Edens Building, extends from the west side of the New Perry Building south to Farmer Street. Although its name implies a separate building, it originally was attached to a machine shop addition on the south end of the Old Perry Building. The machine shop was demolished for the construction of the New Perry Building, which connected Old Perry, New Perry, and the Edens Building. The original Edens Building was constructed in 1954 with a two-story addition to the south end in 1956. In 1965 a loading dock sheltered by a corrugated-metal shed roof was constructed along the east side. There are numerous loading openings along this dock. The second floor windows are multiple-light steel sash. A long railroad platform was built along the west side of the Edens Building in 1957 and was enclosed with metal canopy in 1963. The Edens Building housed the shipping department and finished products warehouse.

The elevated walkways or bridges connect all of these building and significantly contribute to the industrial character of this area. Sheathed with corrugated metal, they have slightly pitched gable roofs and several have small windows. The largest of these walkways crosses Perry Street and connects the Perry Street building with the Cameron Building on two levels. There are windows on both levels and a faded advertisement for Kool cigarettes is visible on the southern side.

Most of these bridges were built in the 1930s. The first two were constructed in 1935 and connected the second floor of the Perry Building to the second floor of the Cameron Building. The following year, the bridge connecting the third floors of Perry and Cameron was built. Also in 1935, a bridge connecting the second floor of the Cameron Building to the Brown Street Building was completed. 1939 saw the construction of two bridges connecting the second floor of Cameron to the A Building and the Brown Street Building with B Building. Most of these bridges survive today. The most modern bridge, constructed after 1967, connects the roof of the three-story A Building with the four-story Old Perry Building. Bridges were not the only method of connecting the buildings. A tunnel was built in 1939 under Perry Street to connect the basement of Old Perry with the basement of A Building. A tunnel also connects the large case tobacco storage warehouse in the middle of block north of Wythe Street with the A-B Building.

Brown & Williamson built a warehouse (123-5424-0006) for case storage in the center of the block bounded by Washington, Market, Wythe, and Perry Streets in 1922. Between 1925 and 1930, the company added a machine shop on Market Street. The warehouse is a four-story, Art Deco-style building constructed of concrete with brick curtain walls. The flat roof has decorative parapets at the corners facing Market and Washington Street. There is a covered loading dock along the north elevation that once was accessed by a rail spur. Each of the corner bays has ribbon windows but most have been infilled. The interior features sturdy concrete pillars, concrete ceilings and floors. A one-story metal-frame Butler building was added to the rear in 1951 for fumigation.

Brown & Williamson also constructed a one-story, five-bay frame building between 1925 and 1930 on the west side of South Market Street to house a machine shop and storage. The walls are stucco and it has a hipped roof. The main entry occupies the center bay and consists of a single-leaf door with sidelights and topped by a fanlight. Nine-by-nine-light casement windows with multiple panel transoms occupy the remaining bays of the façade and engaged

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Doric columns separate the façade bays and the first two bays on either side. This nicely detailed building is a departure from the other buildings associated with the tobacco factory, which are more utilitarian in character.

The changes that occurred in the Brown & Williamson buildings were a result of the changing technologies. The widespread availability of artificial light and air conditioning lead to almost all windows being enclosed with either brick or block. This occurred in parts of the Cameron Building, the warehouses adjacent to the Cameron Building, the A-B Building, and the case storage warehouse. When an addition was built onto the Perry Building, it was almost windowless. The large ducts hanging on the front and rear of the case storage warehouse were added when a system that removed tobacco dust from the air was installed. The pumps are located in the metal building at the rear. As building use changed, so did the building.

The H. P. Harrison Company building (123-4524-0009), built in 1912, is a three-story, five-bay, Italian Renaissance Revival-style commercial building constructed of reddish-brown brick laid in a five-course American bond pattern. The façade is organized by pilasters set on a rusticated base which support a simplified entablature and the parapet. The basement is separated from the first story by a limestone belt course broken only by the centered, primary, at-grade entrance that bridges the basement and first story. There is a concrete masonry unit loading dock in the northern most bay at the basement level. The first story is separated from the second story by a three-part terracotta fascia and the first story is further defined by brick laid in a rusticated pattern. The primary entrance is centered in the façade and is set at grade with a granite threshold and a fourteen-light transom and jack arch above the doors. The three window openings on the first story of the façade are identical. These openings contain paired six-over-six-light, double-hung, wooden sash that are separated by a flat mullion. The limestone sills and aprons join the limestone belt course that separates the basement and first story. There are arched panels above the window sash with heavy applied, flat moldings and stuccoed tympanums. Above the terracotta fascia that separates the first and second stories, the wall plane steps back at the corners to further emphasize the verticality of the upper two stories. The upper two floors are organized into five bays by brick pilasters that separate the vertically stacked, rectangular window openings. The second story had paired windows that filled the openings between the pilasters. The projected belt course is composed of alternating terracotta bands at the pilasters and stuccoed bands above the windows. The belt course forms the sills for the third-story windows. The third story window openings have been partially infilled with brick and six-light steel sash have been installed. Above the third story windows there is another three-part terracotta fascia. The parapet rises above the terracotta fascia and terminates in a corbelled band and copper coping. The parapet is ornamented with a terracotta band that arches up at the center to just below the corbelling. The arched terracotta band rests on a series of corbelled brackets and the area between the arch and the terracotta fascia contains a painted sign for the Harlow-Hardy Company, the second occupant of the building.

The commercial buildings on the northern block of the district are one-story, flat-roofed, masonry buildings and most have a rectangular block footprint. Two of the buildings facing South Market Street (4 and 42 South Market Street) have central entrances flanked by large storefront windows (VDHR 123-5424-0005 and VDHR 123-5424-0007). The building located at 314 West Washington Street (VDHR 123-5424-0001), built in the 1940s, shows the influence of the Art Deco style with its facade that curves at the northwest corner. Built to house auto sales and service, the two garage bays on the façade are representative of that use. Gibson's Drive-in (VDHR 123-5424-0003) located at West Washington Street is the most unusual building in the historic district. Opened in 1962, its bright red tile roof and

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yellow steeple are vaguely reminiscent of HoJo's and Stuckeys, which catered to the traveling public and were designed to attract customers. It also continued the automobile-related theme of most of the other commercial buildings on this block.

Petersburg boasts a collection of signs painted on buildings, and this historic district has two buildings with painted signs. The most visible are the signs designating the former H. P. Harrison Building, located at 9 South Market Street, as the Harlow Hardy Warehouse, a recent use of the building. With the side of the building fronting West Washington Street, a major transportation corridor in Petersburg, the signs on this building are highly visible and the owners took the opportunity to point the way to their furniture showroom on Washington Street between Union and Sycamore. Not only is the store name prominently displayed, a big white arrow points the way to the showroom. If the Harlow Hardy signs are the most visible, the faded sign for Kool cigarettes with interlocking Os is the most iconic of the painted signs. The Kool sign is painted on the south side of the large two-level bridge that spans Perry Street between the Cameron Building and the Old Perry Building. Kool was one of the brands produced by Brown & Williamson before it merged with J.R. Reynolds Corp. in 2004. Kool cigarettes are a menthol cigarette and were one of Brown & Williamson's most popular brands.

A third interesting sign survives in the historic district. The small metal sign supported on two poles stands in front of a small, gable-roof building sheathed with corrugated metal that is located on Perry Street just south of Export Leaf Tobacco's Perry Street buildings (VDHR 123-5424-0004). The faded sign, which once sported neon, advertised for D Wilkerson Poultry. A turkey is depicted in the lower right corner and a chicken in the lower left. The Wilkerson Poultry Building (123-5424-0004) is located at 222 Perry Street and is a contributing resource in this historic district.

The buildings located in the historic district represent the industrial and commercial architecture of Petersburg as well as the evolution of the city as it changed from the home of many industries and railroads to a more commercial and service based economy with the automobile as the primary mode of operation. They range in age from the 1879 Cameron Building to the New Perry Building, the last major addition to the Brown & Williamson buildings. The former building has rows of sash windows that is characteristic of industrial buildings constructed in the city prior to and immediately after the Civil War when industry played a major role in the prosperity of Petersburg. The later has no windows on its major sides as artificial light and ventilation were incorporated into industrial design. Likewise, the architectural evolution of the commercial buildings is demonstrated by the ca. 1912, three-story, brick H. P. Harrison Building with its rusticated first floor and brick details when compared with one-story plain commercial buildings that were erected along West Washington Street between 1925 and 1962. Taken together, these buildings embody commerce and industry in Petersburg and how they have changed over the years.

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**INVENTORY**

**Inventory Justification:**

In the following inventory all resources, both primary and secondary, have been considered either contributing or non-contributing based upon the areas of significance as listed under Criteria A and C as: INDUSTRY, TRANSPORTATION, and ARCHITECTURE; and based upon the period of significance as 1879 through 1962.

**Brown Street:**

**325 Brown Street                    123-5424-0008**

**Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation**

Primary Resource Information: Factory (Cameron Building), Stories: 3, Style: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Commercial, 1879.

Secondary Resource Information:

Factory (A-B Building), Stories: 3, Style: Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Commercial, ca. 1914.

Factory, (Old & New Perry Building/Edens Building), Stories: 4, Style: Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Commercial, ca. 1914

Warehouse (Brown Building), Stories: 1, Style: Commercial, ca. 1902

Other (Grinding Building), Stories: 3, Style: No Discernable Style, late 1960s.

Other (Brick Outbuilding), Stories: 1, Style: No Discernable Style, 1960s.

Other, (Brick Outbuilding) Stories; 1, Style: No Discernable Style, 1950s.

Individual Resource Status:	Factory	Contributing
	Factory	Contributing
	Factory	Contributing
	Warehouse	Contributing
	Fence	Contributing
	Other	<b>Noncontributing</b>
	Other	Contributing
	Other	Contributing

**South Market Street:**

**4 S. Market Street    123-5424-0005**

Primary Resource Information: Commercial Building, Stories: 1, Style: No Discernable Style, ca. 1945.

Individual Resource Status: Commercial Building    Contributing



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**310 W. Washington Street 123-5424-0001**

Primary Resource Information: Commercial Building, Stories: 1, Style: Art Deco, 1940s.

Individual Resource Status: Commercial Building   Contributing

**Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Bed 123-5424-0010**

Primary Resource Information: Railroad Bed

Individual Resource Status: Railroad Bed   Contributing

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Commercial and Industrial Historic District is located in Petersburg and is roughly bounded by South Market, Farmer, Guarantee, and West Washington Streets. Located just south of the city's historic core, the district contains both industrial and commercial buildings that housed some of Petersburg's most important industries and businesses—tobacco, wholesale grocery, confectioner and automobile-related stores—as well as historically open space. These businesses represent Petersburg's historic significance as a commercial and industrial center and reflect the evolution of the basis of the city's transportation system from the railroad to the automobile. The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, which cut diagonally through the area from the southwest to its terminus a few blocks east, tied the disparate parts of the district together with spur lines to most of these industrial and commercial buildings, especially to the tobacco factory located at Perry and Brown Streets. The railroad, one of several that served Petersburg, reflects the city's importance as a transportation center in the nineteenth century. From the early to mid-twentieth century, commercial enterprises were constructed in the district on West Washington Street that reflected the shift from the railroad to the automobile as the basis for commercial and personal transportation. The district also represents a typical development pattern in Petersburg with the juxtaposition of industrial, commercial, and residential buildings in close proximity to each other instead of discrete areas for commerce, industry, and residential neighborhoods. The architecture of these buildings also represents the evolution of both commercial and industrial architecture from multistory buildings with decorative features to one-story, plain utilitarian commercial buildings. Likewise, the tobacco buildings located in the historic district demonstrate the evolution of industrial architecture as technological changes rendered obsolete the necessity of rows of sash windows. The district is locally significant for industrial and commercial architecture, as well as for its association with an important transportation corridor and the change from the railroad to the automobile as the primary mode of transportation in the twentieth century. While the railroad tracks are gone now, the railroad bed remains intact. As late as the early 1980s, Brown & Williamson used the railroad to bring in tobacco and ship out finished cigarettes.

JUSTIFICATION OF CRITERIA

The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Commercial and Industrial Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A (Industry and Transportation). The district is significantly associated with commercial and industrial development along part of a major transportation route in Petersburg, and reflects the evolution of commercial and personal transportation methods from the railroad to the automobile. In addition, the district is eligible for listing under Criterion C (Architecture) for its collection of commercial and industrial buildings that are representative of Petersburg's commercial and industrial architecture for several of Petersburg's most important businesses and industries. The district retains the integrity of its historic location, association, setting, feeling, design, materials, and workmanship. The period of significance extends from circa 1879, the year in which the Cameron tobacco factory likely reopened after rebuilding following the fire of 1878, to 1962, when the last substantial commercial building was completed.

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**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Early in the eighteenth century, as the Virginia colony spread inland from the coastal plain, trading communities grew at the head of navigation (the “fall line”) of each major river. These communities included—from north to south—Alexandria, established on the Potomac River in 1749, Fredericksburg on the Rappahannock River in the 1720s, Richmond on the James River about 1737, and Petersburg on the Appomattox River about 1738. Like Richmond, Petersburg had its origins in trade with Virginia Indians. Fort Henry, which had been erected about 1645 at the falls of the Appomattox River in response to the Powhatan Indian attack on the English settlements the previous year, formed the nucleus of the new town. Petersburg’s lots were laid out on the land of Abraham Jones in Prince George County about 1738; the town became part of Dinwiddie County when the county was separated from Prince George in 1752. Also about 1738, Blandford was developed on the land of William Poythress, just across the future county boundary in Prince George, east of Petersburg. Both communities were called towns by 1748. Another town—Pocahontas—was laid out in Chesterfield County just across the river from Petersburg and Dinwiddie County in 1749, when Chesterfield was formed from Henrico County, on the land of Richard Witton and at the site of a tobacco warehouse that John Bolling erected about 1732. In May 1784, the General Assembly passed an act incorporating the town of Petersburg and uniting it with the towns of Blandford, Pocahontas, and Ravenscroft, a suburb located south of early Petersburg.<sup>1</sup>

At first, Petersburg prospered because of its location at the head of navigation on the Appomattox River, with Pocahontas as its “port.” Like its competitor to the north—Richmond—Petersburg became a leader in the processing of tobacco. By 1820, Petersburg was the third-largest town in Virginia and a major commercial and industrial center, and it was incorporated as a city in 1850. By the time of the Civil War, it was one of the most important commercial, industrial, and transportation-related cities in the southern United States. It manufactured and shipped tobacco, cotton, flour, iron, foodstuffs, and other products both by water and, increasingly, by railroad. Raw materials and finished products came and went, transported by an ever-expanding railroad network as railroads supplanted water as the principal medium of transportation. By 1838, three railroads served Petersburg: the City Point Railroad connected the town with the deep-water terminal eight miles down the Appomattox; the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad linked the two cities with a terminal in Pocahontas; and the Petersburg Railroad (also known colloquially as the Southern or Weldon Railroad), which originated at Washington and Union Streets, ran south to Weldon, North Carolina. Two other railroads were completed before 1858. The South Side Railroad ran west to Lynchburg, while the Norfolk and Petersburg Railroad linked Petersburg with Hampton Roads. The railroads enabled Petersburg, with Richmond, to dominate the state’s tobacco market: in 1861, Petersburg accounted for 23 percent of Virginia’s tobacco sales, with Richmond selling 61 percent. Richmond had fifty tobacco factories, and Petersburg had twenty. Together, the two cities constituted the world’s largest tobacco-manufacturing complex. In the years after the war, as railroad construction surged nationwide, the network of which Petersburg was a part grew more extensive. The railroads that connected Richmond and Weldon through the city merged into the Atlantic Coast Line system. The rail line ran through the district and served the commercial and industrial establishments there.<sup>2</sup>

During the antebellum period, Petersburg grew beyond its original boundaries and expanded south from the Appomattox River, where mills and factories had first been constructed. Tobacco factories did not require water power, which allowed them to be built some distance away from the river and near the railroad terminals. Among them

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was the Riddle and McIlwaine tobacco factory located on the northeastern corner of Perry and Brown Streets, erected just before the Civil War adjacent to the Petersburg Railroad tracks.

James C. Riddle and his partner, J. Finley McIlwaine, purchased the lot on February 28, 1859, from Thomas Wallace, and constructed their tobacco factory soon thereafter. There were two buildings on the lot, one stretching north along Perry Street and the other next door and extending into the lot from Brown Street. By 1860, Riddle and McIlwaine had a \$32,000 capital investment in the firm. The factory used 262 tons of tobacco lugs (the less-valuable leaves at the bottom of the stalks) annually (valued at \$31,670) to manufacture 175 tons of twist and lump chewing tobacco valued at \$56,202. Hand labor was used: 70 males and 25 females worked for an average wage of \$18 per month for the men and \$9 per month for the women.<sup>4</sup>

Late in September 1861, the new factory was converted into a hospital for North Carolina troops. A booklet published later that year described the structure:

The General Military Hospital for the North Carolina Troops, in Petersburg, Virginia, is situated on Perry street, within a few yards of the Southern [Petersburg] Rail Road, and is one of the most convenient and comfortable Military Hospitals in the country. The building is three stories in height, each story or floor being divided into wards. It is provided with suitable heating apparatus, and the windows are arranged for lowering or hoisting. Each ward is lighted by gas; hot and cold water carried over the Hospital, into the kitchen, the bathing rooms and other places, on each floor, and into the laundry in the yard. Suitable arrangements have also been made for conveying patients from one floor to another without being carried up and down the stairs by hand.

Unfortunately, arsonists deliberately burned at least one of the buildings in April 1863, while it was empty of patients temporarily for cleaning.<sup>5</sup>

William Cameron bought the lot and the remains of the factory buildings in 1867, to take advantage of the location near the Petersburg Railroad. He was a Scotsman, born near Inverness on August 11, 1829. After his father died in April 1840, Cameron's mother remarried, and the family immigrated to Petersburg in 1841. Cameron worked in the tobacco factory of David Dunlop, the city's preeminent tobacco manufacturer, until opening his own factory with Robert Crawford about 1860. The enterprise was located on land the partners purchased on February 28, 1860, from George W. Phillips near Poplar Spring at Adams and Mars Streets, in the southeastern part of Petersburg. The industrial census of 1860 noted that Cameron and Crawford had a capital investment of \$20,000. The factory used 325 tons of tobacco valued at \$50,000 to produce 275 tons of lump chewing tobacco with a value of \$110,000. The partners employed 75 male and 35 female workers and paid the men an average monthly wage of \$20 and the women \$10.<sup>6</sup>

The business survived the Civil War, and William Cameron expanded his operations dramatically in the years immediately following the end of the conflict. In May 1865, he departed Petersburg on an eighteen-month-long trip to

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Australia, where he and his brothers, Alexander and George Cameron, opened tobacco factories in the 1870s. In 1866, Alexander Cameron moved to Richmond and opened a factory there. The following year, William Cameron purchased the Riddle and McIlwaine tobacco factory lot at Perry and Brown Streets. George Cameron joined William in the operation of the factory there, which was named William Cameron and Brother. Soon, the family opened other factories in Kentucky and England. William Cameron negotiated a contract to supply tobacco to the Royal Navy. The Cameron companies traded with Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America, with the Australian firms reportedly supplying 75 percent of the manufactured tobacco sold in Australia and India. By late in the nineteenth century, the Cameron brothers' combined businesses were among the largest operated by Americans. William Cameron, in declining health, sold his interest to his brothers in 1886. In his retirement, he constructed a grand castellated mansion in the Scottish Baronial style at the south end of Adams Street that he named Mount Erin (demolished 1943). Cameron died on October 26, 1902, and is buried in Blandford Cemetery in Petersburg.<sup>7</sup>

The Cameron factory at Brown and Perry Streets prospered in the years following the Civil War. By 1870, the brothers had \$50,000 in capital invested in the factory, which was operated not only by hand labor but also by a twenty-horsepower steam engine that consumed 360 tons of coal worth \$2,160 to drive three hydraulic machines. There were also 30 "retainer machines" and 22 "screw machines." The factory employed 198 males over 16 years of age, 120 females over age 15, and 72 "children and youths" and paid them \$60,000 in wages annually. Operating twelve months a year, the factory used 1,476,842 pounds of leaf tobacco valued at \$147,684; 42,373 pounds of sugar valued at \$5,084; 34,074 pounds of licorice with a value of \$10,222; and 1,816 gallons of molasses valued at \$744 to produce 1,181,474 pounds of chewing tobacco with a value of \$294,527. Ten years later, in 1880, the capital investment had grown to \$161,000 and the company employed 179 men over 16, 96 women over 15, and 70 children. The average workday was ten hours, and a day's wage for skilled labor averaged \$1.50, and for "ordinary" labor 75 cents (a total of \$22,583). During the year, the factory operated for nine months and was idle for three. It consumed \$106,000 in raw materials and fuel to produce chewing tobacco worth \$272,000. The fuel powered two 100-horsepower steam boilers and a 45-horsepower engine.<sup>8</sup>

Like the company itself, the factory building grew during the last part of the nineteenth century. The Beers map of 1877 showed a different footprint for the factory—one building occupying the space of the two that stood on the lot during the Civil War. In 1878, the factory burned to the ground. The Cameron brothers built a new factory that opened in 1880, when it operated for nine months instead of the usual twelve. A drawing of the factory, published in 1884, as well as the 1885 Sanborn Insurance Company map, showed that the building at Perry and Brown Streets had assumed its present footprint, with a stair tower on the eastern part of the facade linking the factory to the office building, which was then one story high. The 1891 Sanborn map showed the factory expanding eastward, a trend that gradually obliterated most of the dwellings in the block. By 1915, new buildings had been constructed north of the old one, across St. Stephens Street (and the old church had been demolished to make way for them), and also on the western side of Perry Street. Spurs of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad served the tobacco factory complex including the buildings on erry Street and the building near South Market Street.<sup>9</sup>

In 1903, the British American Tobacco Company acquired the Cameron companies, as well as the establishments of David Dunlop and T. C. Williams. The new company, formed in 1902, was a joint venture between the United

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Kingdom's Imperial Tobacco Company and James "Buck" Duke's American Tobacco Company. Ownership of British American was unevenly divided at first, with American holding approximately two-thirds of the stock. The headquarters was located in London, with an office in New York City to manage the purchase of leaf tobacco and its manufacture in the United States. Export Leaf Tobacco Company, a subsidiary that functioned as the buying agency in the United States, constructed facilities adjacent to the Cameron buildings. British American products were for export, and the company's market was virtually the whole globe. By 1910, the company sold ten billion cigarettes worldwide. The next year, American Tobacco sold its shares in the venture, and the company ownership became entirely British. Over the next few decades, the company constructed additional buildings adjacent to the former Cameron property, as well as bridges and tunnels to connect them.<sup>10</sup>

The part of the Cameron Building that fronted Brown Street housed management, sales, and other offices, while activities related to tobacco preparation and packaging took place in the rear. Other buildings were devoted to the drying, packing, storage, and shipping of tobacco, as well as the manufacture of cigarettes. The large warehouse facing Market Street was used for storage, while the machine shop became an employment office and training center.

Like many late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century factories, the Cameron factory employed child laborers as well as men and women. In June 1911, Lewis W. Hine, the investigative photographer for the National Child Labor Committee (NCLC), captured several images of young boys and girls walking to the factory entrance on Brown Street to work at about 6:30 A.M. Hine wrote in the caption for the images, "I went through the factory during working hours and saw dozens of little boys and girls working and helping, who were apparently from 11 to 14 years old. Many of the smallest ones would not be photographed." The NCLC, a private nonprofit organization founded in 1903, still actively promotes "the rights, awareness, dignity, well-being and education of children and youth as they relate to work and working."<sup>11</sup>

In 1927, British American Tobacco entered the United States market when it acquired a small North Carolina tobacco company, Brown and Williamson. The expanding facility at Brown and Perry Streets that had been the Petersburg Branch of British American Tobacco soon became the principal cigarette factory of the new Brown and Williamson subsidiary. These products were made for marketing in the United States rather than abroad. Brown & Williamson was the major private sector employer and chief taxpayer in Petersburg when it closed in 1985. It relocated to Macon, Georgia where workers could be hired for lower wages. Brown and Williamson merged with J. R. Reynolds Corp. in 2004. The current owner of two of the former Brown & Williamson buildings, the case warehouse and machine shop, is Star Scientific, Inc. Founded in 2000, the company develops technologies to reduce the toxins in tobacco products.<sup>12</sup> The other former Brown & Williamson buildings are used for storage and research.

Between the end of the Civil War and the end of the nineteenth century, the railroad companies, like their counterparts in the tobacco industry, underwent a host of mergers, bankruptcies, and reorganizations. In March 1898, the Petersburg Railroad and the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad merged into a new entity named the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad. The new line occupied the same right-of-way as the earlier railroad, and businessmen established several commercial enterprises in the district on the south side of West Washington Street to take advantage of the line's proximity. They include the buildings constructed as the H. P. Harrison Building and the former Gibson's Drive-In. The area along the

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south side of West Washington Street and east side of South Market Street evolved into an automobile-focused quarter with three businesses located here that housed auto parts, tire sales and service, and new and used car sales.

Herbert P. Harrison, who had been engaged in the wholesale grocery and confectionery business since 1882, constructed a new factory and warehouse at 7–9 South Market Street, on the southeastern corner of South Market and West Washington Streets, in 1912. A spur of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad ran to the rear of the business. Harrison at first had worked for Thomas M. Gilliam as a clerk, and then had become a partner in Gilliam and Harrison. Besides dealing in groceries, Harrison made ice cream and candy. The H. P. Harrison Company occupied the building until 1985, when the Harlow Hardy Company, a large furniture retailer in Petersburg, began using it as a warehouse.<sup>13</sup>

Several buildings constructed in the twentieth century on the south side of West Washington Street and on South Market Street in the district reflect the change from railroad-based transportation to automobile-related transportation. The building located at 314 West Washington Street, at the southeastern corner of the intersection with Perry Street, was built in the 1940s as an automobile sales and service business (Beck Motor Company). It has facade that curves at the northwestern corner where the office was located. A spur of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad was located just southeast of the business, convenient for the transportation of automobiles to the dealership. Just west of the spur at 242 West Washington Street, near the intersection with Davis Street, stood a Tankar Station, which was erected by 1948 and demolished after 1962. Reflecting the transition from railroad- to automobile-related transportation, the Tankar Station was part of an automobile service-station chain established in the 1930s that used old railroad tank cars as above-ground gasoline tanks. The building located at 4 South Market Street (123-5424-0005) at the southwest corner of Market and West Washington Street sold tires and in the 1960s housed the Goodyear Service Store. The store located at 42 South Market Street (123-5424-0007) just south of the Brown & Williamson machine shop sold auto parts. In the middle of the block at 226 West Washington Street on the south side of the thoroughfare, is the former Gibson's Drive-In, currently occupied by Murray's Market. It opened in 1962, when the automobile drive-in restaurant was perhaps at its height of popularity, and still features a steep red roof topped with a bright yellow steeple.<sup>14</sup>

The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad merged with the Seaboard Air Line Railroad on July 1, 1967, to form the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad. On July 1, 1986, the line became part of the present-day CSX Corporation. The tracks that served the businesses and industries in the district have been taken up, but their beds are still visible and some of the tracks survive within the former Brown & Williamson complex.<sup>15</sup>

The buildings in the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Commercial and Industrial Historic District represent the industrial and commercial architectural history of Petersburg as well as the transition from the railroad to the automobile as the primary form of commercial and personal transportation. The industrial buildings that dominate the district, from the 1879 Cameron Building to the 1966 construction of the New Perry Building, illustrate the evolution of industrial factories and warehouses as technology changed. Although all buildings were constructed of brick, the plan of the buildings was influenced by the need for natural light and ventilation. Rows of traditional sash windows met this need in earlier factories. As technology changed, larger windows and curtain walls were used. When air conditioning and artificial light became readily available, the architecture evolved again and new buildings had fewer or no windows and the existing windows in older buildings were filled in. Much of the industrial architecture in Petersburg was built

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during the earlier period and consists of three- or four-story brick buildings with rows of sash windows. The industrial buildings in this district depict both traditional industrial architecture found in the Cameron Building and the Harrison Building and the evolution to modern industrial architecture as exhibited by the both the Old and New Perry Buildings and the Art Deco-style Brown & Williamson warehouse. Likewise, the district's commercial buildings—the Harrison Building, the former Goodyear Service Store, the Beck Motor Company sales and service center, and the Gibson's Drive-In, reflect the transition in transportation preferences from railroad to the automobile.

The commercial and industrial businesses that once occupied these buildings have either almost disappeared from the city or are have significantly declined through the years. The Brown & Williamson buildings, which are the largest component in the historic district, represent the tobacco industry that has now vanished from Petersburg except for a few boxes of smokeless tobacco stored in the Star Tobacco building. This is the site of the Riddle and McIlwaine tobacco factory established in 1859. This building was burned, reconstructed, expanded, and used for tobacco processing, manufacture, storage, and sales until recently. After British American Tobacco Corporation acquired the facility in 1903, it was the company's principal cigarette factory in America for until 1985, operating as Brown and Williamson after 1927. Brown & Williamson had as many as 171 plants worldwide at its heyday, many of which were small operations with its headquarters located in Louisville, Kentucky. Brown and Williamson became the third largest manufacturer and marketer of cigarettes in America (behind Philip Morris and R. J. Reynolds) before it merged with R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company in 2004.

Through VDHR survey, four other individual buildings and one smaller complex have been identified as related to the tobacco industry in Petersburg where tobacco manufacturing had been a major industry since the eighteenth century. The Zimmer Tobacco Factory (123-0103-0084) was built in 1884, the David Dunlop Tobacco Factory (123-0072) was built in 1887, the Seidenberg & Company Cigar Factory (123-0096-0241) was built in 1880-1900, and the commercial building at 223-225 Henry Street, which was identified as a peanut warehouse as well as tobacco factory (at different times) was built 1850-1880. These were all built about the same time as the original building at Brown & Williamson, the Cameron Tobacco Factory built in 1879. These four buildings are all single, stand-alone buildings. Nineteenth-century industrial buildings were practical in nature and not intended to be corporate architectural statements. They were designed to be flexible, so that they could accommodate various industries and uses and the buildings were altered to conform to the next user. They were constructed in an era before modern manufacturing when equipment/machinery was smaller in scale and a lot of work was still done by hand. They are unlike modern factories that are designed to accommodate specialized machinery and manufacturing methods, i.e. large auto plants designed specifically for assembly line methods. The Maclin-Zimmer-McGill Tobacco factory was built in 1900 and appears to be a smaller complex of smaller buildings but was also built along a railroad. Of all of these tobacco-related buildings in Petersburg, only the Maclin-Zimmer-McGill complex is similar to Brown & Williamson but on a much smaller scale.

In addition to the manufacturing floors, the Brown & Williamson complex contained shops to keep the machines running, corporate offices, quality control, testing, cafeteria, nurse's station, employment offices, credit union, and its own power plant. It was a self-contained complex where employees thought of themselves as a family; indeed, often they were, with siblings and several generations of families working together. The complex also illustrates the

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evolution of factory architecture from the 1879 Cameron Building with its fenestration of regularly placed, stacked, punched openings to the New Perry Building with its vast areas of solid masonry walls and vertical strips of venting and single-light fixed windows. The newer buildings were even larger and more utilitarian and plain.

The changes that occurred in the Brown & Williamson buildings were a result of the changing technologies. The widespread availability of artificial light and air conditioning led to almost all windows being enclosed with either brick or block. This occurred in parts of the Cameron Building, the warehouses adjacent to the Cameron Building, the A-B Building, and the case storage warehouse. When an addition was built onto the Perry Building, it was almost windowless. As technology and use changed, so did the building.

Brown & Williamson is the only tobacco factory in Petersburg that is more than one building and is a complex of evolved and related buildings that for the most part, have remained vacant since Brown & Williamson closed the plant. In addition, no other factory in Petersburg has been such a significant part of a major international tobacco corporation, or continued in operation as a tobacco factory for so long a period rather than being converted to other uses. Brown & Williamson was the largest employer in Petersburg and its largest taxpayer. It was not a corporate headquarters trying to make a statement with architecture but a functional, utilitarian, nitty-gritty factory where employees worked hard and got dirty. These buildings illustrate the evolution of tobacco processing as technology changed and are able to tell the most complete story of tobacco manufacture in Petersburg. Not only are these buildings the most important tobacco factory in Petersburg, they are the largest intact complex in the city.

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Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Emily J. Salmon and Edward D. C. Campbell, Jr., eds., *The Hornbook of Virginia History*, 4th ed. (Richmond: Library of Virginia, 1994), 189–193; William W. Hening, *The Statutes at Large* (Richmond: Samuel Pleasants, 1819), 11: 382–87; John O. Peters, *Blandford Cemetery: Death and Life at Petersburg, Virginia* (Petersburg: The Historic Blandford Cemetery Foundation, Inc., 2005), 4.

<sup>2</sup> A. Wilson Greene, *Civil War Petersburg: Confederate City in the Crucible of War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 4–6; William D. Henderson, “The Evolution of Petersburg’s Economy, 1860–1900,” unpublished paper, 1–3; Petersburg Courthouse Historic District, File No. 123-103, 1990, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Va. (DHR).

<sup>4</sup> Petersburg, Hustings Court, Deed Book 29, 1866–1867, Reel 74, pp. 694–695, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va. (LVA); Map of the Siege of Petersburg, 1864–1865, Surveyed under the Direction of N. Michler, Maj. of Engrs., Bvt. Brig. Genl. USA, Surveyed & Drawn by Maj. J. E. Weyss, Assisted by Theilkuhl, Burchardt, Schuman, Thompson, Graham, Library of Congress, from Web site [www.memory.loc.gov](http://www.memory.loc.gov), accessed 1/17/09; U.S. Census, 1860, Virginia, Special Census, Industry Schedule, Dinwiddie Co. (Petersburg), Reel 198, LVA. The industry schedules do not record the workers race.

<sup>5</sup> Greene, 86, 122, 295; *The General Military Hospital for the North Carolina Troops in Petersburg, Virginia* (Raleigh, N.C.: Strother and Marcom, 1861), 1, from [www.doc.south.unc.edu](http://www.doc.south.unc.edu), accessed 1/17/09.

<sup>6</sup> Sara B. Bearss, John T. Kneebone, J. Jefferson Looney, et al., eds., *Dictionary of Virginia Biography* (Richmond: Library of Virginia, 1998–), 2: 532–533 (*DVB*); Petersburg, Hustings Court, Deed Book 26, 1860–1862, Reel 15, pp. 330–331; U.S. Census, 1860, Virginia, Special Census, Industry Schedule, Dinwiddie Co. (Petersburg), Reel 198, LVA.

<sup>7</sup> Bearss, et al., *DVB*, 2: 532–533; Petersburg, Hustings Court, Deed Book 29, 1866–1867, Reel 74, p. 735, LVA; Bryan Clark Green, Calder Loth, and William M. S. Rasmussen, *Lost Virginia: Vanished Architecture of the Old Dominion* (Charlottesville, Va.: Howell Press, 2001), 54.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Census, 1870, Virginia, Special Census, Industry Schedule, Dinwiddie Co. (Petersburg), Reel 258, LVA; *ibid.*, 1880, Reel 319, LVA.

<sup>9</sup> F. W. Beers, *Topographical Map of Petersburg, Dinwiddie County, Virginia* (Richmond: Southern and Southwestern Surveying and Publishing Company, 1877), LVA; Edward Pollock, *Historical and Industrial Guide to Petersburg, Virginia* (Petersburg, Va.: T. S. Beckwith and Co., 1884), 116–117; Sanborn Insurance Company, Fire Insurance Maps in the Library of Congress, 1885–1932, microfilm, LVA.

<sup>10</sup> “Inventory of the British American Tobacco Company Records, 1842–1929,” from Duke University Libraries Web site, [www.library.duke.edu](http://www.library.duke.edu), accessed 1/17/09; From the British American Tobacco Company Web site, [www.bat.com](http://www.bat.com), accessed 1/17/09.

<sup>11</sup> Prints and Photographs Collection, Library of Congress, Lot 7483, Vol. 1, Nos. 2217, 2217A, 2218, 2219, and 2220, from Web site [www.lcweb2.loc.gov](http://www.lcweb2.loc.gov), accessed 1/17/09; Emily J. Salmon and John S. Salmon, *Historic Photos of Virginia* (Nashville: Turner Publishing Co., 2008), 47.

<sup>12</sup> From the British American Tobacco Company Web site, [www.bat.com](http://www.bat.com), accessed 1/17/09; From Star Scientific’s Web site: [www.starscientific.com](http://www.starscientific.com), accessed 1/17/09.

<sup>13</sup> Kimberly R. Chen, “H. P. Harrison Co., Inc.,” Preliminary Information Form, October 1, 2008, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Va. (DHR).

<sup>14</sup> *Petersburg and Colonial Heights, Virginia, City Directory* (Petersburg, Va.: Webb & Fitzgerald, 1866–), 1939–1994; Sanborn maps, 1885–1932, LVA.

<sup>15</sup> Atlantic Coast Line Railroad history from Wikipedia Web site, [www.en.wikipedia.org](http://www.en.wikipedia.org), accessed 1/17/09.

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**BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The boundaries for the Atlantic Coast Line Commercial & Industrial Historic District contain the following tax parcels in the City of Petersburg, Virginia:

022040001, 022040002, 022040003, 022050003, 022140004, 023140002, 012140003, 023150003, 023150800, 023150801, 023320001, 023320002, and 023330001

The attached map at a 1 inch = 200 feet scale illustrates the boundaries of the historic district.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundaries of the Atlantic Coast Line Commercial & Industrial Historic District incorporate all of the land historically associated with the commercial and industrial buildings situated along the south side of West Washington Street and the west side of South Market Street. They incorporate the businesses and industries served by the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, including the railroad bed and parking lots where the factory workers parked their cars, as well as automobile-related commercial buildings. Areas immediately around the historic district are a mix of residential, both historic to the east and west and modern to the south, and religious buildings. The areas east and west are largely residential and are located within the South Market Street Historic District to the east and the Folly Castle Historic District to the west. The area to the north of the district boundaries consists of residential and religious buildings and is located either within the Folly Castle Historic District or consists of modern buildings and large surface parking lots.

One historic church is located on the north side of West Washington Street across from the historic district and has declined in the past to be included in a historic district. The area immediately south of the district includes two historic churches and modern institutional and residential buildings. To the west of the Brown & Williamson complex across a surface parking lot stand the Virginia Trunk buildings, which are being individually nominated to the National Register and not included in this district. The area along the bed of the former Atlantic Coast Line Railroad as it continues southwest from the Brown & Williamson complex is modern residential.

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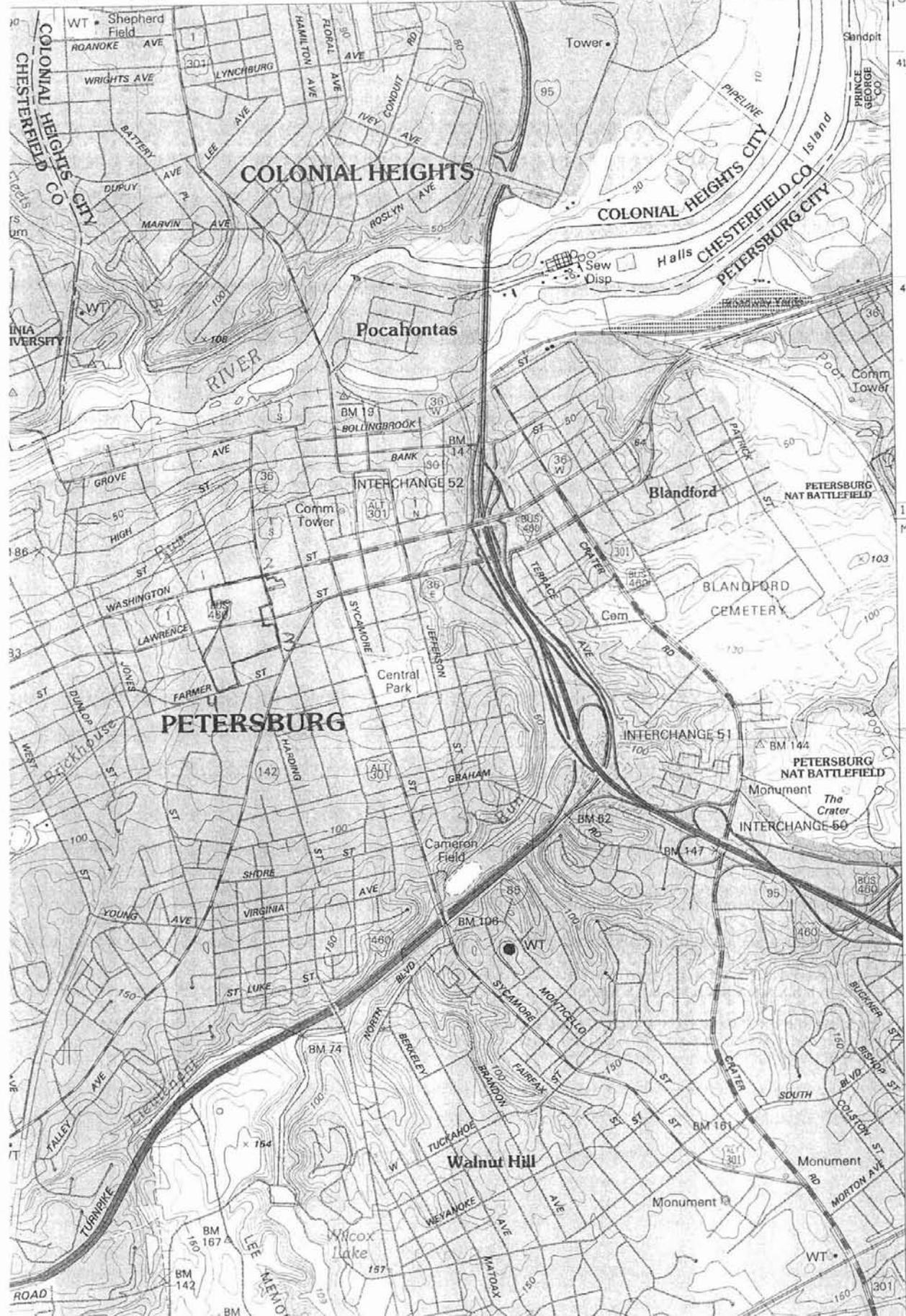
The photographs for the Atlantic Coast Line Historic District, Petersburg, Virginia, were taken by Ashley Neville on March 5, 2009. The photographic negatives are on file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia. The negative number for all photographs is 24534.

1. Cameron Building and Garage, Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation, view to the northwest
2. Gate at Cameron Building, Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation, view to the northwest
3. Cameron Building, Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation, view to the northwest
4. Cameron Building, Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation, view to the north
5. Old Perry Building, Export Leaf Tobacco Company, east elevation, view to the west
6. Export Leaf Tobacco Company buildings with Atlantic Coast Line Railroad bed on right, view to the southwest
7. Building A (on right) & Building B (on left), Export Leaf Tobacco Company, view to the southeast
8. Painted Sign for Kool Cigarettes on Elevated Bridge Between Cameron Building and Old Perry Building, view to the northwest
9. Machine Shop, Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation, view to the west
10. Bonded Warehouse, Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation with Atlantic Coast Line Railroad bed in front, view to the southeast
11. H. P. Harrison Company Building, view to the east
12. Commercial Building, view to the southeast



PETERSBURG QUADRANGLE  
 VIRGINIA  
 7.5-MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

25' 00" 286 3 597 500 METERS 288 289 77' 22" 30" 37' 15' 00"



4125  
 4124  
 1 100 000 METERS  
 4122  
 4121  
 12' 30"  
 4120

ATLANTIC  
 COASTLINE RAILROAD  
 COMMERCIAL AND  
 INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT, PETERSBURG  
 VIRGINIA  
 UTM REFERENCE  
 18/286270/4122745  
 18/286470/4122710  
 18/286530/4122700  
 18/286260/4122770