

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

VLR 3/20/8  
NRHP 5/29/0

**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 Northampton Lumber Company Historic District  
other names/site number DHR # 267-5005; Nassawadox Steam Powered Sawmill/Northampton Lumber Company (DHR # 267-5004); Northampton Lumber Company (DHR # 267-5001)

**2. Location**

street & number Mill Road (S.R.912) and US Route 13 not for publication N/A  
city or town Nassawadox vicinity N/A  
state Virginia code VA county Northampton code 131 zip code 23413

**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] 4/14/08  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property      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)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

- building(s)
X district
site
structure
object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows: buildings (7, 1), sites (0, 0), structures (3, 0), objects (0, 0), Total (10, 1).

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: INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION, AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE, COMMERCE/TRADE, TRANSPORTATION. Sub: manufacturing facility, processing, specialty store, rail-related.

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE, INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION, TRANSPORTATION. Sub: specialty store, manufacturing facility, rail-related.

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK; CONCRETE
roof METAL: Tin; ASPHALT
walls WOOD: Weatherboard, Plywood/particle board; BRICK; METAL: Aluminum; SYNTHETICS: Vinyl
other N/A

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.
X 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
COMMERCE
TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance 1898-1957

Significant Dates c.1898 construction of original sawmill, retail store, storage sheds; 1903 incorporation of Northampton Lumber Company

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

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**10. Geographical Data**  
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**Acreage of Property** approximately 7 acres

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

Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing
<u>18</u>	<u>424050E</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4147471N</u>

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 Sarah McPhail, Preservation Specialist

organization Commonwealth Preservation Group, LLC date August 2007

street & number PO Box 4266 telephone 757 923 1900

city or town Suffolk state VA zip code 23439

=====  
**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 Joshua E. Lattimore

street & number 8531 Wellington Neck Road telephone 757 442 6137

city or town Franktown state VA zip code 23354

=====  
**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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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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**Northampton Lumber Company  
Northampton County, VA**

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**Architectural Description**

Summary Architectural Description

The Northampton Lumber Company Historic District is located in Nassawadox, VA in the northeast portion of Northampton County. The period of significance of the district is 1898-1957, as it has been in continuous operation as a lumber company since the first building was constructed on the site. The lumber company was and continues to be a part of the economic and social well being of the citizens of Nassawadox. The Northampton Lumber Company Historic District is located southeast of the intersection of Charles M. Lankford Jr. Memorial Highway (US13 North) and Rogers Street. The c. 1898 site, built on cleared land is bound by Shell Street to the north, a mobile home park to the east, Mill Street to the south and Lankford Highway to the west. A service road running through district allows the site to be accessible and functional. The c.1898 district consists of twelve contributing and one non-contributing resources including a retail store, storage sheds, a saw mill and two sets of railroad tracks. The three primary resources are the Northampton Lumber Company (DHR# 267-5005-001), which includes the retail store, potato shed, barn, 1940s shed, water tower, new shed, and lumber sheds 1 and 2; the saw mill (DHR#267-5005-002), and the railroad tracks (DHR#267-5005-003). The main functions of these resources include retail sales and lumber storage.

Architectural Description

**Northampton Lumber Company DHR# 267-5005-001**

**Retail Store:**

**Contributing**

The original portion of the retail store is a two story wood frame building clad in vinyl siding. The building rests on a brick and concrete block foundation, and the roof is clad in corrugated painted metal. The façade features two double leaf and one single leaf doors flanked on either side by large display windows. The two sets of doors are separated by an 'air lock' or vestibule. There are several two-over-two wood frame windows on the second floor which have been covered over with the vinyl siding. The interior of the building includes wood structural supports; the first floor is an open plan with a centrally located sales counter, a small office, storage room, and restrooms at the rear. The second floor of the original portion of the building is largely unfinished and has always and continues to be used for storage.

There are three additions to the retail building, all of which are historic. Appended to the southwest side of the retail building is a single story addition which has a shed roof clad in metal and obscured from view with a parapet on its façade. The addition rests on a concrete block foundation and has a wood frame structural system clad in vinyl with one-over-one vinyl windows on the façade. The interior has been incorporated into the retail space of the main building.

A second addition was built onto the east side of the retail store in the 1920s, doubling the square footage. This addition also rests on a concrete block foundation and its south, east and west sides are clad in clapboard. The north side is covered with painted plywood. The north and east sides of the addition have sliding wood loading doors and an additional one on the northeast corner. This particular loading door is covered by a shed roof. The east side of the addition has a first floor loading door, a second floor hay loft door covered by a shed roof, and two c.1950 two-over-two windows.

A third addition was appended to the southwest side of the rear of the retail store. This wood frame one-story addition is covered with plywood and has a corrugated metal shed roof and no windows. Loading doors cover the southern façade completely.

**Potato Shed:**

**Contributing**

An original potato shed stands directly east of the retail building. This shed was moved during WWI from its original location southwest of the retail store. The wood frame potato shed sits on a concrete block foundation and has a gabled roof clad in painted corrugated metal. Sliding wood loading doors cover the north side of the building. The original windows and single wood door on the east side have been boarded up. The west side of the shed has two single-pane windows and the south side has one window that has been boarded up. There are four sliding wood loading doors and two single doors on the shed's south side. The open-front wood framed addition to the south side is covered by a shed roof clad in corrugated metal.

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**Description (Continued)**

**1940s Shed:**

**Contributing**

Built in the 1940s for additional lumber storage, the shed is dressed with clapboard siding and covered by a gabled roof clad in asphalt shingles. The shed has a wood frame structural system and rests on a wood and cement block foundation. Its floor is constructed of poured concrete. There are two sliding wood loading doors on the southeast end of the shed and seven sliding wood loading doors that span the entire front (west) façade. A concrete apron extends across the base of the entrance for loading purposes.

**Water Tower:**

**Contributing**

Standing directly east of the 1940s shed is a c. 1898 water tower. The cast iron tower sits atop a concrete foundation. Until the 1950s, the tower served as a water source for the lumber yard and several surrounding properties. The water tank was removed at an unknown date.

**Barn:**

**Contributing**

The barn, c. 1912, backs up to the ditch that marks the east boundary of the district. The wood frame barn is supported by a brick pier foundation and is covered by a gabled roof clad in asphalt shingles. The exterior is covered with clapboard siding. The only two windows are found on the west side of the barn and have wood frames with four panes each. Four sliding wood loading doors and a single wood door also cover the west side. Other doors include a boarded up hay loft door and a lower loading door on the south side and a hay loft door over a loading door on the north side. The barn's wood frame lean-to shed, part of the original construction, has no foundation. It is covered on its west side by painted plywood siding and has a shed roof clad in corrugated metal.

**New Shed:**

**Non-Contributing**

The new storage shed, c. 21st century, sits on the original concrete block foundation of one of the original barrel sheds of Northampton Lumber Company and has a metal frame structural system. The gabled roof and siding of the shed are both clad with corrugated metal and there are four large openings on the east and west sides for loading lumber.

**Lumber Sheds 1&2:**

**Contributing (2)**

Two lumber sheds were added to the district in the 1920s. They sit just inside the chain link fence that confines the lumber yard. The two sheds face each other and are identical in nature. Resting on a concrete block foundation, the wood frame sheds are covered by shed roofs clad in corrugated metal and the sides are covered with painted wood siding. The south side of shed 1 and the north side of shed 2 have ten sliding wood loading doors spanning the entire side. Neither shed has windows or doors on any other sides.

**Saw Mill DHR# 267-5005-002**

**Contributing**

The original saw mill sits south of the retail store in an open field across Mill Road. The mill rests on a concrete pier foundation and is covered by a gabled roof clad in corrugated metal. With the exception of the mill's southwest corner, there are loading doors and window openings on all four sides. The sides are clad in painted vertical wood siding. The brick enclosure on the southwest corner of the mill is covered by a shed roof clad in corrugated metal. This enclosure housed two boilers used to turn the saws and served as a collection pit for saw dust and wood chips. A lean-to, original to the structure, on the south side of the mill is supported by a concrete pier foundation and covered by a shed roof clad in corrugated metal. The interior of the saw mill includes an interior railroad track and several large industrial saws which are historic and were made functional during the course of a rehabilitation project by the Town of Nassawadox using ISTEAF funding in 1997.

**Railroad Tracks DHR# 267-5005-003**

**Contributing (2)**

There are two sets of railroad tracks running north and south along the northwest side of the district. The first set of tracks located directly east of Lankford Highway (US 13) is intact and still in use today. The second set of tracks is historic and is located east of Railroad Avenue and west of the chain link fence bordering the lumber yard. The location of these tracks is still evident as rails are still visible in some areas but the cross-ties are missing.

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**Statement of Significance**

The Northampton Lumber Company historic district has been an integral part of the history and livelihood of Nassawadox, VA for over a century and is the oldest building supply store still in operation on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. They provide building supplies, paint, household needs, and lumber. The retail store, water tower, and saw mill were constructed c. 1898 and used by the predecessor of the Northampton Lumber Company. It was incorporated in 1903 after the merger of the Chandler & Walker Firm and B.D. Holland & Company lumber firm.<sup>1</sup> A 1945 report indicates the company's financial stability. Between the years of 1941 and 1944, net sales increased from \$135,000 to \$185,000.<sup>2</sup> They gained a reputation for being reliable in providing quality, low-price products. Prompt execution and delivery were another component contributing to the success of the company. Its location along the New York, Pennsylvania, & Norfolk RR gave the Northampton Lumber Company the access necessary for shipping their products. The lumber company has been and continues to be an economic and social hub to Nassawadox and surrounding areas.

**History of the Northampton Lumber Company**

The charter members of the Northampton Lumber Company were John W. Chandler, John C. Walker, and Barton D. Holland. John W. "Jack" Chandler was a prominent business man, produce broker, and land owner. Walker was the original President of Northampton Lumber Company when it incorporated, as well as had other business interests. The Northampton Lumber Company historic district has been an integral part of the history and livelihood of Nassawadox, VA for over a century. It is the oldest building supply store still in operation on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The retail store has always been an important establishment in the town of Nassawadox. Since it is such a small town, there is a need for a variety store to supply convenient necessities. The saw mill enabled the company to produce lumber and barrels, and took away the need for the lumber company to rely on any other suppliers of timber. The water tower was used as a water source for the horses and mules used by the company as well as to several no longer extant houses in the town built for employees. The Northampton Lumber Company was one of the major producers of the wood barrels bused for shipping potatoes, the dominant crop for Accomack and Northampton Counties and the focus of the Eastern Shore of Virginia Produce Exchange, of which Chandler was likely involved. The lumber company employed almost ten percent of the population of Nassawadox. The Northampton Lumber Company influenced the prosperity and development of Nassawadox and Northampton County and continues its operations to this day.

Over the past 100 years, the Northampton Lumber Company has undergone physical changes, changes in management, and changes in its product production. The retail store and water tower were constructed first in the late 1890s. Next, in 1912, the barn on the east side of the property was constructed. Eight years later, two sheds were added for dry lumber storage. Other changes included the movement of the potato shed during WWI to its current location on the northeast side of the property and the addition of another storage shed in the 1940s.<sup>3</sup> The latest addition was a 21<sup>st</sup> century storage shed built on the foundation of an original barrel storage shed.

The retail store has always been an important establishment in the Town of Nassawadox. In its earliest years of existence, the retail store sold building supplies, potatoes, and mules. Since it is such a small town, there is a need for a variety store to supply convenient necessities. After WWII, the store sold GE appliances, Boston Whaler boats, and became a dealer and service center for Mercury Outboard motors.<sup>4</sup> Today, the store sells a full line of building materials, paint, and hardware. Since Nassawadox has always been a small town, there is a need for a variety store to supply convenient necessities.

The saw mill, currently owned by the Town, is a resource which enabled the company to produce lumber and barrels. It also took away the need for Northampton Lumber Company to rely on any other suppliers for timber. Like many companies along the shore, Northampton Lumber Company was established in an area with plenty of pine trees surrounding it. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the lumber company produced lumber and barrels for the packing and shipping of produce on site. Nassawadox citizens used to rely on the mill's steam whistle to set their clocks and to stay on schedule.<sup>5</sup> Over 50 of the citizens were employed at the lumber company, a large percentage considering the population of the town was a mere 475 people in 1920. The Town of Nassawadox renovated the mill in the 1990s after being rewarded an ISTE grant.<sup>6</sup> The Northampton Lumber Company saw mill is the only steam powered saw mill still standing today in Northampton County.

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The c.1898 water tower was part of the original construction of the lumber company. Historically, it was used as a water source for the horses and mules used by the company. Later, the Northampton Lumber Company decided to extend its water service to several houses on the lumber yard that are no longer standing. The tower had a windmill powered by two gas engine pumps. Eventually, the small pipes could not support the number of houses on the system and in the 1950s the lumber company ended service. The water tank was removed from the tower at an unknown date.<sup>7</sup>

The charter members of the Northampton Lumber Company were John W. Chandler, John C. Walker and Barton D. Holland. John W. "Jack" Chandler was a prominent business man, produce broker, and land owner. He was the original owner of the saw mill and a member of the firm of Chandler & Walker. In addition to starting the Northampton Lumber Company, he bought and traded mules between years of 1895 and 1905. He later gained the reputation of being the largest individual produce broker on the Eastern Shore between the years of 1907 and 1918. Chandler was a pioneer in the industry and was one of the first produce dealers to export Irish potatoes to Cuba after the produce exchange extended its service to include everything from the Atlantic to the Pacific and Canada to Cuba. It is documented that that he sold potatoes, corn and grain and one can surmise that he was involved with the Eastern Shore of Virginia Produce Exchange, a local marketing organization created by business owners. Some of Chandler's other business ventures included bank President at Parkley National Bank, President of the Chandler Fertilizer Company and a Director of the Eastern Shore Fire Insurance Company.<sup>8</sup>

John C. "Jeff" Walker was another one of Northampton Lumber Company's founding fathers. Walker was the original President of Northampton Lumber Company when it was incorporated in 1903. His interest in the lumber industry began in 1890 when he moved from Maryland to the small Eastern Shore town of Willis Wharf. He managed the lumber yard and the buying and selling of mules during the early to mid-1900s. In addition to being the Northampton Lumber Company President, Walker was a board member at the Bank of Northampton, a member on the Board of Trustees at the Northampton-Accomack Memorial Hospital, and a Director of the Eastern Shore of Virginia Fire Insurance Company. After his death in 1929, his sons Linwood and George joined the Northampton Lumber Company business. Walker's brother W.E. "Will" Walker later became the Vice-President of the company.<sup>9</sup>

Barton D. Holland was the third person involved with the incorporation of the Northampton Lumber Company. Holland moved to Nassawadox from Maryland in 1898, just two years prior to starting B.D. Holland & Company, a local lumber firm. Holland became the treasurer of Northampton Lumber Company when it first opened and continued with his position until his death in 1934.<sup>10</sup> The company has managed to keep ownership within or closely related to the Chandler, Walker, and Holland families until today.

The Eastern Shore of Virginia has a history of agricultural success. In fact, many of the towns on the shore, including Nassawadox, have been reliant on agriculture for economic stability for centuries. The staple crops have been potatoes, corn, and grain. The potato industry became the livelihood of the eastern shore around the turn of the 20th century. Potato production rapidly increased between the years of 1900 and 1910 and at one point, the Eastern Shore was the most prolific producer of Irish potatoes in the country.<sup>11</sup> The crops were plentiful but many growers and produce brokers were having difficulty with proper marketing for their crops. In 1899, a committee of prominent growers and business owners of Northampton and Accomack Counties met to discuss the development of a more efficient and comprehensive marketing plan.<sup>12</sup> The committee devised a plan and a few months later in January 1900, the Eastern Shore of Virginia Produce Exchange was chartered by a legislative act.<sup>13</sup> The act required that the capital stock be no less than \$5,000 and no more than \$50,000. It was to be divided into shares priced at \$5 each. The main exchange office was centrally located between Northampton and Accomack Counties in the town of Onley. The object of the exchange was "to get the farmers of the Eastern Shore the utmost possible measure of money returns for their produce".<sup>14</sup>

Other main objectives included protection for growers, the elimination of competition between farmers and brokers, proper marketing, and product standardization. Ideally, the exchange would not only increase the farmer's income, but it would also bring more money into the communities for improving farming methods, and building better schools, churches and homes.<sup>15</sup>

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The members of the exchange were divided into three classes. The first were the stockholders who were entitled to everything the exchange had to offer. The second class was made up of the tenants of stockholders. Since they lived on the land, they were able to use the exchange to market their produce. The third class was known as the shipping privilege members. Shipping privileges could be purchased for \$1 each.<sup>16</sup> According to an address made by Ben T. Gunter, an organizer of the produce exchange, "many Negroes own(ed) shipping privilege certificates". These certificates entitled members all the benefits of the exchange except for voting rights.<sup>17</sup>

Within a few years of being chartered, the Eastern Shore of Virginia Produce Exchange was a thriving business. On July 10, 1907, the exchange handled and distributed over 32,000 barrels of Irish potatoes from its 40 shipping points along the shore. In that same year, Northampton County earned over \$1,000,000 from Irish potatoes.<sup>18</sup> The 1910 census revealed that in 1909, over 16,000 acres of farm land in Northampton County were planted with Irish potatoes.<sup>19</sup> Part of the plan of the exchange was to standardize the quality of potatoes and the quantity packed in each barrel. The exchange developed a potato grading system. The top quality potatoes were called the "Red Star Brand". The exchange patented the trademark "Red Star Brand" and its standards were adopted by the USDA for their No. 1 grade Irish potatoes at an unknown date. The next grade of potatoes was called "Bell Brand". They met all of the requirements of No. 1 potatoes, except in size. The lowest grade of potatoes was labeled with the "Gearwheel Brand" and met all USDA standards for No. 2 Irish potatoes.<sup>20</sup>

When the exchange was chartered, there were no standards set for the size of the barrels used in packing and shipping potatoes. Exchange officials later had congress pass an act standardizing the size of barrels being used to ship potatoes. The new standard allotted 185 pounds of potatoes to be placed in each barrel.<sup>21</sup> The standards set by the exchange put them ahead of the competition in other markets who were suffering from poor regulation leading to lower production and food shortages.

In its 55 years of existence, the Eastern Shore of Virginia Produce Exchange dominated the industry. The Eastern Shore was a prime location because of its growing conditions and easy access to shipping points all along the peninsula. Potatoes were shipped all over the United States and even to Canada and Cuba. The plan of organization set up by the exchange was so efficient and successful that it was adopted as a model for later cooperative marketing organizations.<sup>22</sup> It promoted prosperity and well being to the farmers and people of the shore. The potato industry and produce exchange also contributed to the success of businesses such as the Northampton Lumber Company well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Northampton Lumber Company was one of the major producers of the wood barrels used for shipping potatoes. The property was built parallel to two sets of railroad tracks, which allowed them easy access for barrel loading. The barrel making process was long, but the Northampton Lumber Company managed to produce up to 500 barrels per day. Generally, the barrels were constructed by a team comprised of five workmen and one leader. These workers were known as "coopers." They worked long shifts beginning at 4 a.m.<sup>23</sup> The Northampton Lumber Company employed almost 10% of the population of Nassawadox. Some of the workers even lived in bungalows that sat on the property along the railroad tracks. These bungalows are no longer standing. The timber used for the barrels was from local pine trees, which were prevalent in the area. The pine was cut into long strips that were ½ to 5/8 of an inch thick and 3 to 4 inches wide. The staves (long, narrow piece of wood) were cut and then put in the yard to dry for 3-5 years. After drying, the short pieces were stapled together in a 3 foot square flat. The edges were then beveled so that the barrel could take its circular shape. Next, the flats were stacked and taken to the barrel house.

From there, the staves were grooved and pulled up with a rope by the cooper's foot. Next, the barrels were placed in a 3 feet deep tub for one day. The barrels were then dropped at the working area to be filled and shaken down by the potato diggers. The barrels were then labeled with the correct brand according to the specifications set by the produce exchange.<sup>24</sup>

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The barrel business was such a success for the company, that Northampton Lumber expanded its business to include a new barn in 1917. Before 1920, the cost of barrels was between three and four dollars.<sup>25</sup> Beginning in 1920, Northampton and neighboring Accomack Counties had control of shipping potatoes in the US for five years. The cost of barrels grew to fifteen dollars per barrel as the demand for shipping potatoes grew.<sup>26</sup> This increasing cost of barrels contributed directly to the development of new banks and financial institutions along Virginia's Eastern Shore. Northampton County's potato industry reached its peak around 1928. The potato industry continued to bring money in to the community for years to come.<sup>27</sup> The produce exchange dissolved in 1955 and all outstanding shares were redeemed. The Northampton Lumber Company continues its operations to this day and is still an essential entity for the town of Nassawadox and Northampton County.

**Applicable Criteria**

The Northampton Lumber Company Historic District is significant under Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places Criteria due to its continuous operation as a lumber company and its architectural integrity. It is eligible under Criteria A due to its commercial activities, longevity of operation, potato barrel production and its relationship to the Eastern Shore of Virginia Produce Exchange, and for providing lumber for local construction needs. It is eligible under Criteria C as the buildings are still being used for their original purposes, they retain their original detail and design, and the construction methods used while building each structure was specific to the period in which they were built. Criteria consideration B applies because the potato shed was moved approximately 300 yards east of its original location. This move occurred during the period of significance. The saw mill was also moved approximately 100 yards south at an unknown date. The period of significance for the district is 1898, the construction of the first building, to 1957, as it has been in continuous operation since its incorporation. The Lattimore family owns and operates the lumber company today under its original functions and is planning on continuing operation for many years to come.

**Endnotes**

1. Holland, C.W., *An Economic and Social Survey of Northampton County. University of Virginia Record Extension Series. XII*, No. 5, Charlottesville: The University Extension Division, 1927, 45.
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**10. Geographical Data**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Generally, the district is bound by Shell Road to the North, a ditch along the rear property line of Northampton Lumber Company, Mill Road to Cooper Smith Road bounded by the rear property line of the saw mill, back to Mill Road and along railroad right away back to Shell Road. Included properties are 021A1-((0A))-00-164, 021A1-((0A))-00-164A, and 021A1-((10))-00-000B as shown on the attached maps.

**Boundary Justification**

The property boundary is inclusive of all parcels related to the historic function of the Northampton Lumber Company.

**PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION:**

The following is the same for all photographs:

**NORTHAMPTON LUMBER COMPANY HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Location: Nassawadox, Virginia (Northampton County)

VDHR File Number: 267-5005

Date of photograph: August 2007

Photographer: Sarah McPhail

All photos are stored at the DHR Archives in Richmond, VA unless noted.

SUBJECT: Northampton Lumber Company Retail Store  
VIEW: West façade  
PHOTO 1 of 16

SUBJECT: Northampton Lumber Company Retail Store  
VIEW: Southwest elevation  
PHOTO 2 of 16

SUBJECT: Potato Shed  
VIEW: Northwest façade  
PHOTO 3 of 16

SUBJECT: Potato Shed  
VIEW: South elevation  
PHOTO 4 of 16

SUBJECT: Barn  
VIEW: West elevation  
PHOTO 5 of 16

SUBJECT: Barn  
VIEW: North elevation  
PHOTO 6 of 16

SUBJECT: 1940 Shed  
VIEW: East façade  
PHOTO 7 of 16

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National Park Service**

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Northampton Lumber Company  
Northampton County, VA**

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**PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION (Continued)**

SUBJECT: Water Tower  
VIEW: South elevation  
PHOTO 8 of 16

SUBJECT: 1940 Shed  
VIEW: West façade  
PHOTO 9 of 16

SUBJECT: New Shed  
VIEW: East façade  
PHOTO 10 of 16

SUBJECT: Shed 2  
VIEW: Northwest elevation  
PHOTO 11 of 16

SUBJECT: Shed 1  
VIEW: Southwest elevation  
PHOTO 12 OF 16

SUBJECT: Saw Mill  
VIEW: North façade  
PHOTO 13 of 16

SUBJECT: Northampton Lumber Company  
VIEW: West elevation  
PHOTO 14 of 16

SUBJECT: Historic Railroad Tracks  
VIEW: North elevation  
PHOTO 15 of 16

SUBJECT: Existing Railroad Tracks  
VIEW: East elevation  
PHOTO 16 of 16

8889 II SW  
(JAMESVILLE)

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

COMMONWEAL  
DIVISION OF MINES  
JAMES L. CALVER

75°52'30" 423000m E 424 ACCOMAC 19 MI EXMORE 2.5 MI 426 50' 427 585' 428 TEX



#267-5005  
of Washington Lumber Company  
historic district  
A 18 11050E 1147471N