

4.0 INDIVIDUAL NR REGISTRATION FORMS

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**DRAFT****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 an 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 Propertyhistoric name ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDINGother names/site number General Cigar Co. Factory; Ansco company names include: Agfa-Ansco, General Aniline and Film (GAF), Anitec**2. Location**street & number 16 Emma Street [] not for publicationcity or town Binghamton [] vicinitystate New York code _____ county Broome code _____ zip code 13905**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 as 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 of certifying official/Title

Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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

ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING
Name of Property

BROOME, NEW YORK
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	TOTAL

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES OF BROOME COUNTY, NEW YORK

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/
Manufacturing Facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION
COMMERCIAL/TRADE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick

roof membrane

other _____

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

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- ☒ **A** Property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that 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 boxes that apply.)

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

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance:

1927- 1950

Significant Dates:

1927-28, 1938, 1950 (addition)

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Alfred Freeman, General Cigar Co. architect

Bowie-Clark Construction Co., contractors

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(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 Building 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 repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.29 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 1 8 | | | | | | | | | |
Zone Easting Northing

3 1 8 | | | | | | | | | |
Zone Easting Northing

2 1 8 | | | | | | | | | |

4 1 8 | | | | | | | | | |

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 Jennifer Walkowski, Architectural Historian [Edited and Arranged- Kathleen LaFrank NYSHPO]

organization CLINTON BROWN COMPANY ARCHITECTURE, pc date February 2012

street & number 653 Main Street, Suite 104 telephone 716-852-2020

city or town Buffalo state NY zip code 14203

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 SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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

name

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.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503

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**ANSCO CAMERA
FACTORY BUILDING**

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The Ansco Camera Factory Building (originally General Cigar Company) is located on the east side of Emma Street, just north of Main Street, on Binghamton's west side. The site is adjacent to the rail lines of the Erie Railroad (E.R.R.) and Delaware, Lackawanna & Western (D.L. & W.) Railroads which run east-west through this neighborhood. Much of the development and growth in this portion of Binghamton did not begin until the rail lines, developed in the second half of the nineteenth century, were laid. These rail lines spurred the growth of numerous factories along their lines. When General Cigar Co. constructed the factory on Emma Street in the 1920s, some buildings were already located in this neighborhood; however, the completion of the factory spurred the construction of stores and residences in the surrounding area. While many of the factory's employees could walk to work, the new building also featured parking areas, as the automobile became an increasingly popular mode of transportation in the late 1920s. Today, the building is still surrounded by a relatively dense neighborhood of mixed residential, commercial and industrial uses. The boundary was drawn to include the entire current tax parcel for the property, which largely corresponds to the original historic boundaries of the property. The property consists of the large main factory building and a historic power house building, both contributing buildings, and two non-contributing modern buildings, a modern boiler house toward the north-east side of the property and a garage at the south-east end.

The Ansco Camera Factory Building is a four-story with basement rectilinear factory building constructed in 1927-28. The building is twenty bays long and five bays wide and features an intersecting four-bay-wide, four-story wing at the center. A slightly wider primary façade of the building faces west. A two-story addition was constructed in 1950 on the north side of the building adjacent to the rail lines. Two elevator towers are located on the north elevation, towards the west and east ends of the building, and a stair tower is on the east elevation. A loading dock is located on the main building's south elevation, towards the east end of the building. At the crossing of the central wing and the main body of the building is a recessed, fifth-story rectangular mass, which once housed the building's complex environmental controls. Surmounted on this additional story is steel framework that supports the building's original 40,000-gallon cylindrical water tank. Overall the building measures approximately 62-feet wide by 402-feet in length, and contained approximately 130,000 square feet of space in the basement and upper four floors of the original building.

The building was constructed with a raised, cast-concrete foundation, a steel structural system with wood floors, and brick-clad walls with a concrete beltcourse above the first floor that wraps the entire building. The building's main entrance is located on the west elevation, just south of center. It features a prominent surround of tan-colored stone. In a vague nod to classical architecture, stylized and simplified pilasters are present between the second and third floors on the west façade and along the south and north elevations. These pilasters feature simple concrete bases and capitals. Below the fourth floor is a slight molded brick cornice, again highly simplified. The two-story north addition is also constructed with a steel frame and features a brick-clad appearance, without any pilasters or decoration. The building retains nearly all of its original metal-framed industrial windows, which are characterized by large square openings filled with numerous small fixed panes and one center operable awning sash. The large north addition complements the original appearance of the building, with a series of large metal-framed industrial windows around the roughly rectangular shaped unit.

Also located on the site is a small raised one-story brick-faced steel framed power house building with intact

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brick chimney with metal straps. This building measures approximately 36 feet wide by 52-feet long and historically contained two large boilers to provide steam heating. There were also spaces for an engineer's room and a transformer room. The site also includes two non-contributing modern metal shed buildings. A large asphalt paved parking area is located on the south side of the building.

The main Ansco Camera Factory Building features an interior typical of a still-operating industrial building, with minimal detailing, functional, fire-resistant and durable materials, and numerous non-permanent interior partitions separating various tenant spaces. The building is entirely leased and includes an unusual mix of uses, including an electroplating business in the basement, storage on upper floors, and an art gallery located at the fourth floor. The entrance lobby from Emma Street is one of the more "designed" spaces, featuring a wide cast-in-place concrete stair with metal pipe railing to the building's first floor. The lobby contains walls of painted brick, flush steel fire doors, and acoustical tile ceiling. The basement of the building houses an electroplating company, and has a concrete floor, brick walls, exposed steel structural columns, and a dense network of various ducts and pipes at the ceiling. This basement space is filled with a variety of industrial machinery and components used in the electroplating process. The first floor features wood tongue-and-groove flooring, painted brick walls, steel columns and a wood-plank ceiling supported by wide-flange steel beams. Various pipes and ducts lace the ceiling of this level, as well. A large historic freight scale is located toward the west end of the first floor, and the building retains an original freight elevator along the north side of the building. The interior is divided with modern partitions and is used for storage. The east wall of the building reveals a unique feature of the building. Here, the windows are paired or layered, with an exterior window and matching interior window unit mounted to give a few inches of space between the two units. The reasoning behind this unusual window configuration may stem from the architect's carefully designed environmental controls, giving the windows an insulating quality.¹ Some interior walls retain cork tiles, which likely were installed for thermal insulation and sound absorption in the noisy industrial factory spaces. The fourth floor of the building houses a highly finished art gallery. This area features a black lacquered wood floor, and the walls and ceiling are painted white. The art gallery highlights the industrial feel of the building by leaving the steel structural skeleton and various pipes and ducts at the ceiling and at some walls exposed, which are painted white. Large full-height drapes cover the windows in the gallery space, but detailing is otherwise kept at a minimum. Overall, the interior of the main factory building retains much of its original materials and appearance as an industrial building, highlighting the flexibility and versatility of the open-plan industrial building that accommodates activities ranging from electroplating to showing fine art.

The Ansco Camera Factory Building remains a significant landmark in the area, its prominent water tower a long-time feature of the skyline.

¹ See Section 8, page 4-5.

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**ANSCO CAMERA
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Significance

The Ansco Camera Factory Building is significant as an excellent intact example of early twentieth century industrial architecture. The building is associated with the City of Binghamton's most important industries, with strong ties to Binghamton's thriving cigar manufacturing trade and also the Ansco camera and film company. The building on Emma Street is significant under Criterion C as an excellent extant and largely intact example of historic industrial buildings in the city of Binghamton, Broome County. The Ansco Camera Factory Building is also significant under Criterion A for its associations with two of Binghamton's most prominent industries; the building was built by the General Cigar Co. and is associated with the city's thriving cigar manufacturing industry of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and was later the long-time home of the nationally-prominent Ansco camera and film company's camera and equipment manufacturing. The period of significance spans the initial construction of the building in 1927 to the date of the last major addition to the building, the two story addition added in 1950.

Constructed in 1927-28 for the General Cigar Company, the building was designed by New York City-based architect Albert Freeman. At the time of its construction, Binghamton's once-thriving cigar manufacturing trade was beginning to decline, and the construction of this new, modern factory building by the nation's leading cigar company was seen as a boost to the local economy. However, the Great Depression crippled the General Cigar Company's plans for expansion in Binghamton, and the building was purchased by the Ansco company in 1937. During this pre-World War II era, the Ansco company was at the height of its growth and technical prowess and was expanding and modernizing its operations in Binghamton. As a part of this upgrading, the company transferred its camera and photographic equipment manufacturing operations from an older factory building into what was still heralded as a modern, efficient factory building on Emma Street some ten years after its original design and construction. The Ansco Camera Factory Building was the long-time home of the Ansco's camera manufacturing operations for several decades before its decline in the post-war decades. The Ansco company in its later years was "the only domestic manufacturer to compete with Kodak in offering a full line of photographic materials and equipment."²

The Ansco Camera Factory Building is a unique industrial building with ties to both Binghamton's booming cigar industry of the late nineteenth century and the city's transition to innovative and high-technology products such as cameras in the twentieth century, supporting Criterion A. The reuse of this factory building, transitioning from cigar factory to camera factory, reflects the flexibility and versatility of steel-framed industrial buildings as containers for space. Reused once again after the closing of the Ansco plant, the building now houses a variety of industrial operations and storage, and also an art gallery space, reflecting how versatile the building is even nearly a century after its initial design and construction. As an excellent, intact early twentieth century steel framed industrial building, the Ansco Camera Factory Building also is significant under Criterion C.

² Bergmann Associates, *The First Ward Redevelopment Plan for the City of Binghamton, New York*, report (Rochester, Nov 2010), 5, <http://www.cityofbinghamton.com/userfiles/file/First%20Ward%20Redevelopment%20Plan/Drafts%20of%20pre-nomination%20study/Final%20Document%20-%20Sec%201.pdf>.

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A History of Industry in Broome County

Industry has played a key role in shaping and defining the culture of Broome County, since the earliest settlement began in the region in the late eighteenth century. With its prominent role as a transportation center for the region, first from its prime location on the Susquehanna and Chenango Rivers, and later as a railroad hub, the city of Binghamton became the home of many of Broome County's prominent industries. As the nation moved into the twentieth century, Broome County became home to several nationally and internationally prominent companies that left an indelible mark on our lives today. After World War II, industry began a slow decline in the region, following national trends, and many of the area's stalwart companies were forced to close their doors or relocate elsewhere, meaning thousands of lost jobs. Today, Binghamton and Broome County are using this proud legacy of industrial history for new growth and development, using it as a basis for historic preservation projects and heritage tourism.

During its early history, from the late eighteenth until the mid-nineteenth centuries, logging and timber were the region's dominant industries, making use of the region's vast forested land. Rafts of logs, lashed together, were floated down rivers and streams from the interior areas of the county to the markets in Binghamton and beyond. When this sector dried up by the 1850s, other significant industries emerged in the county. Binghamton was the center of a thriving woodworking and furniture making industry in the mid-1800s. The city's dominant industry during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was the cigar manufacturing industry. During this era, Binghamton was second in the nation only to New York City in cigar production.

By the dawn of the twentieth century, shoe manufacturing would become one of Broome County's most prominent industries. The Endicott-Johnson company, located in Johnson City and in Endicott just west of Binghamton, grew into a massive company that included numerous tanneries and shoe making factory buildings. The company gave shape to the Johnson City and Endicott communities, establishing them as planned factory towns and shaping their growth and development. EJ, under leader George F. Johnson, became well known for its paternalistic welfare capitalism program, known as the "Square Deal" which was an agreement between workers and management intended to maintain the peace and stall unionization. The company had a tremendous influence over the daily lives of its employees, offering things like insurance, medical care and even houses to workers, and a wide variety of entertainment and recreation was available as well. Company plays, bands and sports teams were among the many activities and groups associated with Endicott-Johnson.

Broome County also had thriving technology and aerospace industries in the nineteenth century, becoming a center for invention and new technologies in the twentieth century. Now a household name for computers and software, the International Business Machine (IBM) company has roots in Endicott, at its Plant No. 1 which it established in 1905. Here, IBM established not only a sprawling complex of reinforced concrete factory buildings at North Street and McKinley Avenue (extant, NRE) built largely between the 1900s until the 1940s, but a research laboratory and school building to train and educate the workers and salespeople. In Endicott, IBM made significant developments in technology, data processing and computer technologies. Broome County was also home to the Link Aviation company, who pioneered flight simulation to safely and effectively

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train pilots. The Link Trainer was an important invention as it pioneered what we now call “virtual reality,” creating a machine that simulated the process of another machine. Link Trainers were widely used to train pilots during World War II, and flight simulation is still used to train commercial, military and private pilots to this day.

After World War II, many of Broome County’s largest and most prominent companies began to slowly decline. This was part of a national trend in post-war America, as companies struggled to compete with emerging foreign markets. Many companies were forced to reduce their workforce, close their doors all together, or relocate manufacturing overseas in order to stay in business. Locally in Broome County, the three largest companies including IBM, Endicott-Johnson and Ansco all suffered in the second half of the twentieth century. As IBM became an international company, the factory in Endicott became outdated and outgrown, and by 2004 the company had sold all of its Endicott properties, maintaining a minimal presence in the community. Endicott-Johnson failed to keep pace with growing footwear trends after World War II, and also faced stiff foreign competition. After the death of company visionary, George F. Johnson in 1948, EJ underwent a series of different leadership changes, which resulted in cuts and changes to the company. After selling off various departments in the 1990s, Endicott-Johnson closed its doors in 2004.

History of 16 Emma Street

The industrial building at 16 Emma Street was constructed by the General Cigar Company in 1927-28. General Cigar Company began as the United Cigar Manufacturers Co. in 1906 in New York City, eventually taking the name General Cigar Company in 1917. At the time of the construction of the Binghamton facility, General Cigar Company operated 41 factories and 36 warehouses in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin.³ The company operated distributing branches and retail stores in 103 cities in 23 states and the Hawaiian islands.⁴

Negotiations to attract the General Cigar Company to Binghamton began in June 1926 by Jay B. Wiles, manager of the Chamber of Commerce. Binghamton won out over forty other cities also vying for the \$30 million dollar company. Attracting what was said to be the largest cigar manufacturer in the world at the time was surely a shot in the arm for Binghamton’s ailing cigar industry, which suffered a decline following the 1890 cigar strike and by the 1920s was waning in significance.⁵ In order to entice the company to set up operations in the area, the Chamber of Commerce worked out a deal that established a 50-50 partnership

³ The General Cigar Company constructed a factory in Evansville, Indiana in 1902. The building has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2000, see NRHP Reference number 00000212.

⁴ *The Binghamton Press*, "General Cigar Co. to Build New Factory on Site Purchased at Main and Emma Streets," January 24, 1927, Second sec., <http://fultonhistory.com/Newspaper4/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale%201927.pdf/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale%201927%20-%2000682.pdf>.

⁵ For additional information on Broome County’s cigar industry and the cigar strike of 1890, see Jennifer Walkowski, “Rise of the Factory Economy (ca. 1850s-1910s),” *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York Multiple Property Documentation Form*, report (Buffalo: Clinton Brown Company Architecture, 2011), E-12-E-25.

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between the Chamber of Commerce (through the Greater Binghamton Industrial Corporation, a holding company established for this project with funds from the chamber's industrial development fund) and the General Cigar Company, with both entities sharing the burden of purchasing land and constructing the factory.⁶ The General Cigar Company would lease the building, and would purchase all interest in the property within ten years.⁷

On March 11, 1927, a three and one-half acre parcel at the corner of Emma and Main Streets in Binghamton was purchased from the Larrabee-Deyo Motor Truck Manufacturing Company for \$50,000.⁸ This was an ideal location, as the site was adjacent to rail lines to its north that enabled the company to have easy access to raw materials shipped via train directly to the building and also allowed for ease in shipping out the final products.⁹

The General Cigar Company brought in its in-house architect, Alfred Freeman, to design and construct the Binghamton factory. A graduate of Cornell University's architecture program and a New York City-based architect, Freeman also designed the Frank Bros. Building at 588 Fifth Avenue in New York City (ca. 1916) as well as a high school in his hometown of Plymouth, Pennsylvania (1913, later the Junior High School, extant). Freeman also is identified as the architect of the A. Sulka & Co. Building, at 661 Fifth Avenue in New York City, which was commended for its "handsome façade" by noted architectural critic Lewis Mumford in his essay "The Sky Line" of 1937.¹⁰ Working with Freeman, the General Cigar Company brought in local labor and suppliers to build the new factory. This included the Bowie-Clark Construction Company of Binghamton, with A.W. Bowie serving as lead contractor for the project.¹¹

Ground was broken for the project on June 15, 1927 for the modern new factory, which was designed to be 60-feet wide by 402-feet in length, with a full basement with four upper floors containing a total of 130,000 square feet. An adjacent power plant building, measuring 36 feet by 51 feet in size, was built just to the north of the main factory. The power house was designed to house two large boilers to provide steam heat, with spaces for an engineer's room and a transformer room. Typical of industrial facilities of this era, the interior of the main building was designed to house elevators, stairways, and lavatories as well as rest rooms for the workers. The "casing room" (where tobacco leaves are moistened) and the "sweat room" (a room where tobacco is fermented) were to be located in the basement, as was tobacco storage, while upper floors were to house machinery and storage. The first floor contained offices at the west end, with a cafeteria and locker room as well as additional machinery and production space also on this level. The second floor housed cigar-making machinery, while the third floor was as a stock room. Huge bins were kept on this floor, filled with various

⁶ The industrial development fund was raised through credits provided by area business and professional leaders, with the actual cash coming from four local commercial banks. *The Binghamton Press*, "General Cigar Factory Walls Rise Steadily," September 7, 1927: 16.

⁷ *The Binghamton Press*, "C. of C. Aided in Financing of Cigar Factory," June 2, 1928: 15.

⁸ For information on the Larrabee-Deyo company, refer to *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York Multiple Property Documentation Form*, pages E-15 and E-29.

⁹ "General Cigar Co. to Build New Factory on Site Purchased at Main and Emma Streets."

¹⁰ Robert Wojtowicz, *Sidewalk Critic: Lewis Mumford's Writings on New York* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000), 199.

¹¹ "General Cigar Factory Walls Rise Steadily."

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grade of tobacco. On the fourth floor was the wrapping, banding, packing, labeling and shipping departments.¹² Familiar with the design of other cigar factories, Freeman was especially sensitive to the special needs of the cigar manufacturing industry. He designed the windows and doors to be essentially air-tight, creating a special heating, humidifying and ventilating unit on the roof of the main factory building. This system allowed for a carefully controlled environment within the factory, maintaining a constant humidity in the building necessary for the tobacco and cigar making process.¹³

Construction of the building was completed by March of 1928. Initial plans had called for the installation of one hundred machines in the Binghamton factory; however, in April of 1928, it was decided that an additional thirty machines would be ordered, raising the anticipated annual output to 175 million cigars.¹⁴ The factory had been built on north portion of the parcel. While this was convenient to the rail lines, it was also intentionally located by the General Cigar Company, which anticipated the construction of an additional "sister" factory building of equal size and design to the south, as well as a large, approximately 60-foot by 200-foot warehouse, on the site.

As constructed, the building was touted as the second largest and most modern cigar factory in the world, a close second behind the General Cigar Company's factory in Kingston, Pennsylvania.¹⁵ It was planned that the Binghamton factory would operate 130 machines and employ between 1,500 and 2,000 workers, turning out 175 million cigars annually. The company's "White Owl" and "William Penn" brand cigars, noted as among its most popular brands, were manufactured at the Binghamton facility. The opening of the new \$550,000 factory was celebrated with a luncheon and meeting held at the Arlington Hotel, followed by a tour of the new building, on May 5, 1928.¹⁶

Despite enormous expectations, growth was slow. In June of 1928 the company was operating 30 of the 122 machines, with many still awaiting installation in the factory. About 250 workers were producing about 100,000 cigars a day. By the end of 1928, 400 employees were on the payroll, and by the end of 1929 the total figure was 900, due to the installation of additional machines.¹⁷ This was a far cry from the projected 1,500 workers producing 175 million cigars.

Nevertheless, the construction of the new factory on Emma Street was a significant real estate and business achievement for Binghamton, and it generated a great deal of growth and development in the surrounding area and in Binghamton in general. Well publicized in the newspapers at every step of the construction process, the investment created a boom of new buildings being constructed nearby. It was reported in 1927 that a new gas station, house, stores and apartment buildings were going up further north on Emma Street and on Lake Avenue

¹² *The Binghamton Press*, "New Plant of General Cigar Co. Already Producing 100,000 Cigars Daily," June 2, 1928, 14.

¹³ "General Cigar Factory Walls Rise Steadily."

¹⁴ While it was hoped that 130 machines could be installed in the building, later reports indicate the Emma Street factory utilized 122 cigar making machines. Other machinery included 125 stripping machines, anticipated to expand to 200 machines, and 5 foil wrapping machines. *The Binghamton Press*, "General Cigar Factory Machines Will Be Tried Out This Week," April 23, 1928, 3.

¹⁵ *The Binghamton Press*, "Cigar Factory Nearly Ready for Machines," March 29, 1928, 3.

¹⁶ *The Binghamton Press*, "Opening of New Cigar Factory Is Celebrated," May 5, 1928, 5.

¹⁷ *The Binghamton Press*, "General Cigar Co. Will Increase Force When Machines Are Set," January 25, 1930, 20.

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in the surrounding area.¹⁸ Other Binghamton companies also benefited from the arrival of the General Cigar Company. The National Cigar Box company, located at 320 Water Street in Binghamton, became the supplier of cigar boxes for the General Cigar Company. The increased demand allowed the National Cigar Box Company to construct a new two-story addition to its existing factory building.¹⁹

General Cigar Company designed and built the Binghamton factory at 16 Emma Street at an interesting turning point in American history. During the late 1920s, when the building was conceived and constructed, the country was in the midst of the so-called "Roaring 20s," an era marked by extreme industrial and commercial growth and unprecedented optimism in the future. The General Cigar Company appears to have shared in this enthusiasm, believing that the current boom in business, manufacturing luxury goods like cigars, would only increase in the coming decades. Newspaper articles note the company's plans to hire additional workers and build an additional factory building and warehouse at the Emma Street site almost immediately after the construction of the original facility. In fact, it was noted that the expansion of the factory was anticipated to occur before 1933. Many articles written in 1927 and 1928 indicate that architect Freeman was already at work designing the "sister" factory for Binghamton.²⁰ However, stymied by the Great Depression, which crippled American industry and business beginning in 1929, none of these plans came to fruition.

While the Great Depression had an impact on the General Cigar Company, shelving plans for an additional factory building and perhaps slowing the anticipated growth of the Emma Street building, it appears that the Binghamton factory remained open into the early 1930s. In January of 1930, the holdings of the General Cigar Company were noted as being twenty large factories, employing 12,000 workers, and forty warehouses.²¹ Compared to the 1927 estimate of forty factories employing 15,000 workers, it appears that the company had to sell off or close some of its facilities due to the Depression.

Despite the unprecedented economic challenges created by the Great Depression, the Chamber of Commerce and the General Cigar Company remained optimistic about the future of the company in Binghamton. At the end of 1930, General Cigar Company was forced to reduce the workforce to about 800 workers and cut employee hours to less than full-time. However, by January of the following year, all 122 cigar making machines had been installed and new orders were increasing, allowing the factory to return to full-time schedules, hire an additional 200 workers and employ about 1,000 workers total. While a significant employer in the Binghamton community, these figures are a far cry from the 1,500 to 2,000 workers anticipated by the General Cigar Company when they first undertook the project. During this time it was noted:

*"With the return of normal business conditions, expected by the chamber officials in the near future, the hope is expressed that the General Cigar Co. will carry out its plans for doubling the size of the local factory and the construction of a large warehouse."*²²

¹⁸ *The Binghamton Press*, "Cigar Plant Causes Boom in Vicinity," September 28, 1927, 18.

¹⁹ This addition has since been removed, although the older portion of the building remains standing. *The Binghamton Press*, "National Cigar Box Firm Will Build Addition," August 14, 1928, sec. 2, 11.

²⁰ "Opening of New Cigar Factory is Celebrated."

²¹ "General Cigar Co. Will Increase Force When Machines Are Set."

²² *The Binghamton Press*, "General Cigar Co. to Start Full Blast Again Monday With 1,000 Employees," sec. 2, 11.

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However, despite the optimism and hopes of the local community, General Cigar Company closed its Binghamton factory by 1936. While the initial agreement with the Chamber of Commerce was that the company would lease the site with the intent to purchase the property by 1937, this appears not to have occurred. Likely facing the economic and financial hardships of the Depression, coupled with the general decrease of the cigar industry following World War I, the General Cigar Company opted not to purchase the Emma Street factory and ceased operations in Binghamton sometime around 1936.²³ After the ten-year lease agreement expired on March 1st 1937, a lawsuit against the General Cigar Company was filed on behalf of the Greater Binghamton Industrial Corporation, petitioning for the partition and division of the site or the sale of the property and suing for back taxes. The suit also named as a defendant the Endicott-Johnson company, which was noted as having temporarily leased the building in 1937.²⁴

On August 11, 1937, Ansco, the nationally significant local camera company (then operating as the Agfa Ansco) acquired the Emma Street factory building. Company vice-president Rudolph Worch announced Ansco's plans to move its camera manufacturing operations from the Corliss Avenue plant in Johnson City, NY (in the former Marshall Furniture Company building that Ansco had operated since 1900) into the modern factory building at 16 Emma Street before the end of the year. Ansco purchased the factory from the Greater Binghamton Industrial Corporation and the General Cigar Company for an estimated \$300,000.²⁵ Only a few days later, Ansco began negotiations for the sale or lease of the Corliss Avenue factory with the Ozalid Corporation of New York City, manufacturers of sensitized papers and a subsidiary of Agfa Ansco. By early January of 1938 the new Ansco factory on Emma Street was running at full production, employing about 400 people, later reaching 550 by the end of the year.²⁶

The Ansco company maintained operations at the Emma Street plant for several decades, producing the company's wide variety of cameras and equipment. A 1939 promotional booklet issued by the Ansco company touts its operation of a large, modern plant for the manufacture of cameras and photographic equipment, noting that "here the processes are more mechanical and less chemical than film or paper manufacture," such as occurred at the company's large Charles Street factory.²⁷ Steel, brass, nickel, leather, glass, wood and paint were among the many materials utilized for production in the Emma Street factory. One of the company's primary departments was the press shop, which housed numerous massive presses and punches used to stamp out the metal parts for the camera bodies and other components. Once the parts were stamped out, they moved on an assembly line, described as being a long table with hundreds of workers, to be welded or riveted together. The next step involved lacquering the bodies with spray guns before being dried in ovens. Sub-assembly lines

²³ The General Cigar Company appears to have continued in business up to the present day. Information on the current company is available on its website at <http://www.cigarworld.com/about/history.aspx>.

²⁴ *The Binghamton Press*, "Factory Sale Here Sought in Lawsuit," March 4, 1937, sec. 2, 21. Endicott-Johnson does not appear to have very strong ties to the Emma Street building, and its use and occupation of the building are unknown. For additional information on EJ, refer to "The World Comes to Work: The Rise of Endicott-Johnson (ca. 1900s-ca. 1920s)." *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York Multiple Property Documentation Form*, E-25 – E-30.

²⁵ *The Binghamton Press*, "Ansco to Make Cameras in Its New Building," August 12, 1937, 5.

²⁶ *The Binghamton Press*, "New Camera Plant Starts Full Production With 400 Workers on Job," January 6, 1938, sec. 2, 11.

²⁷ Quoted from *The Story of Agfa Ansco: 1842-1939*. (Binghamton, NY: Agfa Ansco, 1939), 22.

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assembled smaller components before being passed to the main production line, responsible for assembling the cameras. Lenses and shutters were the last to be mounted on the camera, before each unit was tested and inspected. Finally, the tested cameras were boxed and readied for shipping.

At the Emma Street factory, the Ansco company manufactured both professional and amateur cameras. Professional lines produced at the company include the Universal View and Commercial models. Amateur camera lines included the inexpensive Cadet box cameras, the Agfa Memo 35mm miniature camera, the Shur-Shot, Plenax, Readysset and Clipper models. Also made at the Emma Street factory were many different accessories such as tripods, filters, filter holders and other attachments.²⁸ Production at the plant must have been prosperous, necessitating construction of a two-story addition on the north elevation of the building in 1950. The new space housed the shipping and raw material storage on its first level with an expanded employee cafeteria and locker room area on the second.²⁹

In the mid-twentieth century, the Ansco company began to lose its share of the camera, film and photographic papers market, and the company struggled to maintain its workforce. In August of 1941, 100 workers from the Emma Street plant were laid off due to metal shortages precipitated by World War II.³⁰ With the Ansco laborers unionized by the Local 22615 of the Photographic and Chemical Workers Union, AFL, beginning in the 1940s, tensions appear to have been rising between labor and management. In 1946 the Union Mine Workers started a campaign to organize Ansco's production and maintenance workers.³¹ More layoffs came in 1949, affecting approximately 1,700 camera, film and paper workers.³² In August 1950, over 1,900 hourly-paid Ansco workers at all the company's Binghamton plants, including the Emma Street camera plant, went on strike as members of the International Chemical Workers Union, AFL. The mid-century appears to have been a tumultuous period in Ansco history, especially at the Emma Street factory, as workers demanded additional benefits and higher wages, coupled with the company's struggle to maintain profitability. However, despite these internal difficulties, the Emma Street camera plant continued to churn out cameras and equipment; in February of 1948 Ansco produced a record 150,989 camera units and production for the year totaled more than two million units.³³

Facing rising labor costs and increasingly stiff competition from foreign manufacturers, Ansco began to manufacture fewer of its camera models at the Emma Street plant. Companies in Japan, India and China began producing cheap electronic devices, including cameras, in the post-World War II era. These units could be manufactured and sold at a lower price than American-made products due in part to the cheaper labor costs in these countries. Under the ownership of the General Aniline & Film Company (GAF) and allied with the German Agfa company, Ansco began retailing an increasing number of German-made cameras. In October, 1951 the company introduced five new camera models made at the Agfa Camera Works, Germany. Throughout

²⁸ *The Story of Agfa Ansco: 1842-1939*, 24-25.

²⁹ Based on the 1918 – updated to 1950 Sanborn fire insurance map, sheet 32.

³⁰ *The Binghamton Press*, "Agfa Concentration on New Defense Work Indicated; 100 Laid Off," August 16, 1941, 3.

³¹ *The Binghamton Press*, "Campaign to Organize Ansco Is Started by Lewis' UMW Union," April 19, 1946, 10.

³² "Forrestal Sees More Ansco Layoffs, Attorney General Expects Rehiring." *The Binghamton Press*. 1 July 1949: 5.

³³ William L. Camp, "ANSCO Chronology," Bill's Photo History, March 12, 2004, accessed November 14, 2011, <http://billsphotohistory.com/3.html>.

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the 1950s Ansco continued to introduce an increasing number of German-made products, reducing the needs of the American-based Emma Street factory. In 1960 Ansco began selling a 35mm camera, the Anscomark M, that was imported from Japan.³⁴

The Ansco company continued its slow and gradual decline throughout the 1960s and 70s. The Emma Street factory was said to have about 200 to 250 workers in 1968, a dramatic reduction of more than half the workforce of 550 workers noted in 1938. In 1977, GAF decided to withdraw from the consumer photography industry and closed the consumer film departments in Binghamton. As a result, 1,100 workers were laid off, and it appears that Ansco's Emma Street factory was closed at this time.³⁵

A History of the Ansco Company³⁶

The Ansco Company was once one of the nation's leading manufacturers of cameras and photographic films and papers during the twentieth century. The company's roots date back to an era of great experimentation in the nascent field of photography that emerged in the early 1800s. During the mid to late nineteenth century, photography emerged from considered just a novelty or toy to become a more serious art form. As artists began to push the boundaries of what camera equipment and photographic films could do, Ansco developed new and more sophisticated photo products as well.

Ansco operated two primary factory locations in Broome County. The Charles Street factory produced the photographic films and papers, and also contained administrative and research facilities. A separate factory on Corliss Avenue in Johnson City, later moved to a building at 16 Emma Street in Binghamton, manufactured cameras. Near the Charles Street factory is an extant large warehouse building located at 219 Clinton Street, which was built ca. 1960 and was once used by Ansco. Other sites include a factory in Afton, Chenango County, NY (built 1916, demolished 1935), and a former New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG) building, now expanded into the Engineering Innovation Center and used by Binghamton University, in Vestal.³⁷ This building was constructed in 1958, designed and built by the Austin Company, to serve as the new administration building. Other buildings may have ties to use by Ansco, however its primary factory sites were the Charles Street factory for films and papers and the Corliss Avenue then later the Emma Street factory for cameras.

The Ansco company began in Binghamton in 1898 as the Westcott Photo Specialty Company, located at 170 Washington Street, founded by Melvin DeVer Westcott to manufacture a special type of paper used for

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ For additional information on the history of the Ansco company, please refer to *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York Multiple Property Documentation Form*, E-35 – E-38, E-41 – E-42.

³⁷ The Afton plant was built to manufacture film-grade nitrocellulose, a primary ingredient in flexible film base. However, shortages of nitrocellulose during World War I severely affected Ansco. The newly-built Afton plant was never used because by the time it was completed, film-grade nitrocellulose became available to the civilian market at a very low cost as the war was winding down, rendering the plant unnecessary. Michael R. Peres, *Focal Encyclopedia of Photography: Digital Imaging, Theory and Applications, History, and Science* (Oxford: Focal Press, 2007), 42-43.

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photography, marketed as the "Monarch Brand." Following Westcott's death in 1899, the E. & H. T. Anthony & Co. of New York City acquired the company in 1900.³⁸ After acquiring the Westcott company, the Anthony company moved all their photographic papermaking to Binghamton, renaming the company the Monarch Paper Company. In 1900, the Monarch Paper Company relocated from the Washington Street location to facilities located at 29-31 Charles Street. In 1901 the company became the Anthony & Scovill Company after a merger with the Scovill & Adams Company. In 1907 the firm is again renamed, as Ansco, merging the two former names into a new moniker.³⁹

The early decades of the twentieth century appear to have been very successful and profitable for Ansco in Broome County. In 1910 the company enlarged its Charles Street factory, and in May of that year, Ansco purchased the former Marshall Furniture Company plant, located on Corliss Avenue in Lestershire (now Johnson City). Production of cameras commenced at this site in October of 1910. During the early decades of the 1900s, the Ansco company grew and expanded, enlarging its primary Charles Street factory. Finally, in 1916 the company's primary stockholders held a vote, approving the transfer of Ansco's headquarters from New York City to Binghamton.⁴⁰

Despite introducing several popular cameras in the 1910s, by the 1920s, sales and profits were lagging for Ansco. As an attempt to stimulate new growth and profits, in 1928 Agfa, a unit of the large German chemical conglomerate I.G. Farben, acquired Ansco, becoming known afterwards as Agfa-Ansco. In May of 1928, Agfa-Ansco, revitalized with the injection of European money into the company, began making significant upgrades in its facilities in Broome County, constructing massive new factory buildings at the existing Charles Street factory.

With this new influx of capital and energy, the 1930s were more successful for the Agfa-Ansco company. Despite the devastation of the 1935 flood to the film factories on Charles Street, the company continued to grow both its product lines and its Broome County facilities. In the mid-1930s the Ansco company was investing in their factories in Binghamton, and undertook new modernization and upgrade projects for its paper and camera divisions. At the Charles Street paper plant, new state-of-the-art reinforced concrete buildings were constructed. Meanwhile, the company acquired the former General Cigar Company Building at 16 Emma Street in 1937, and moved production from the older Corliss Avenue buildings in Johnson City to the more modern facility on Emma Street.⁴¹

The German control that had helped a struggling Ansco emerge more successful in the 1930s would soon prove to be problematic. In late 1939, Agfa-Ansco's holding company became known as General Aniline & Film Company (GAF), at which time Agfa-Ansco became a subsidiary of GAF. In 1941, after the United States entered World War II following the attacks on Pearl Harbor, Agfa-Ansco was considered "enemy property" and the company was seized by the federal government, with agents stationed at the company to supervise

³⁸ "Melvin DeVer Westcott," Westcott Family Genealogical Forum, January 8, 2010, <http://genforum.genealogy.com/westcott/messages/973.html>.

³⁹ Camp, "ANSCO Chronology."

⁴⁰ Refer to the 1918 Sanborn map for Binghamton, Sheet 37.

⁴¹ Camp, "ANSCO Chronology."

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operations. As at other companies during the war, production shifted to more military-related products. Camera production was halted, and Agfa-Ansco manufactured optical devices such as sextants and range finders. In 1942, the company introduced the first color film that could be user-processed to the American market. However, all of the material went towards governmental uses and was not available to the general consumer. Later this same year, the company was put under control of the Alien Property Custodian (APC). In 1944 the name "Agfa" was dropped from the company moniker, and the company adopted a new red-white-and-blue color scheme as an attempt to Americanize the business.⁴²

Under government control during World War II, the company stagnated. Ansco returned to manufacturing amateur cameras and films in 1945, updating versions of its cameras that it offered before the war while introducing several new models. However, the company was beset with internal discord. Under government control, leadership appointments were awarded based on political connections and influence rather than on merit, and the company went through a string of directors. A growing sign of the times, Ansco cameras increasingly were made overseas in places like Germany, Japan and Hong Kong, and were of average quality. It was not until 1965 that the company was relinquished from governmental control, being taken over by General Aniline & Film Company (GAF) in 1967.⁴³

Several factors beginning in the 1970s made it increasingly difficult for GAF to compete in the market. In this decade, GAF sold its photographic division, splitting it into two divisions. By the 1980s it became increasingly difficult for GAF to compete with the Kodak company's hold on the film industry, and in 1981 the Binghamton GAF plant was purchased by Andlinger & Company. The company was split into two separate units, one of which was the Ozalid company. The other company was the Anitec Image Corporation, which maintained the production of photographic film and paper. As Anitec the company continued operations for over a decade, although in 1998 the company was purchased by International Paper, a division of the Eastman Kodak Company. Only 40 days following the purchase of the Anitec company, International Paper announced the closure of the Binghamton factory.⁴⁴ The former Ansco camera facility on Corliss Avenue, which dated back to the Marshall Furniture Company in the 1890s, in Johnson City was demolished beginning in 2009.⁴⁵

Industrial Architecture

Industrial architecture is a broad category which includes many types of buildings which once served as factories, manufacturing plants, machine shops and other types of functions. New York State passed a law on factory regulation in 1914 which defined a "factory" as any place where goods or products were manufactured or repaired, cleaned or sorted. Buildings such as mills, workshops, manufacturing businesses and all associated buildings, sheds and structures were included in this definition. The term factory can be used to describe a

⁴² Camp, "ANSCO Chronology." Also, Charles Browne, *Ansco: Cameras, Construction & Community* (Binghamton, NY: Roberson Museum, 2002), 11-12.

⁴³ Camp, "ANSCO Chronology." Also, Browne, 12.

⁴⁴ Browne, 14.

⁴⁵ "Broome County, NY," Former Industrial Site in Endicott- Johnson Corridor to Be Demolished, November 23, 2009, <http://www.gobroomecounty.com/countyexec/former-industrial-site-endicott-johnson-corridor-be-demolished>.

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single building or to an entire facility of composed of any number of structures, and the term is synonymous for industrial architecture.⁴⁶

The earliest industrial buildings were not typically constructed with aesthetics as the primary focus; typically these buildings featured simple, utilitarian designs based on function and the needs dictated by the interior production.⁴⁷ Industrial buildings of the nineteenth-century relied on the natural elements for interior illumination, ventilation and even for the power to drive the belts and shafts which in turn operated machinery. As a result, industrial buildings are often constructed in phases, with additions added to the building as need dictated, and typically featured numerous window voids. Industrial buildings were typically not thought of as true “architecture” in the nineteenth-century, and in fact many architects lacked interest in industrial architecture due to the financial and economic limitations and a belief in the lack of artistic possibilities in their design. Factory design was often a mix of common empirical engineering with engineering based on rationalized, technological planning. But, prior to the development of specialized engineers or architects, early factory design also involved a bit of luck and trial and error by builders and craftspeople.⁴⁸ As a result, most nineteenth-century industrial buildings were designed as anonymous collaborations between industrialists, engineers, local carpenters and mill builders.

Fires were a major concern of nineteenth-century industrial buildings, which often featured heated boilers to drive machinery, gas lighting and volatile compounds. As a result many industrial buildings were built utilizing fire retardant materials. Resistance to fire would be a major driving force behind the development of new construction methods and materials in industrial architecture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

One of the most common industrial construction methods in the nineteenth century in New York State is brick masonry with heavy timber framing, a construction method broadly known as mill construction for its early and widespread use in the construction of fabric and textile mills in Massachusetts and New England in the early 1800s. During the nineteenth century, industrial loft buildings were typically constructed of brick or stone masonry for their fire resistance, often with an interior structure of wood framing. Wood framed industrial loft buildings were also not uncommon. Later in the century the use of iron or steel framing became more popular, as technology advanced and allowed for improvements in fire resistance. These types of buildings were generally long and narrow and typically featured numerous windows along the elevations, maximizing interior illumination and ventilation. Sometimes skylights or rooftop monitors were used to illuminate upper floors. Exterior features could consist of external fire escapes and ladders, loading bays (sometimes raised or covered), hoists and other functional features. Flat roofs were popular, and could be used to accommodate water tanks and elevator penthouses.⁴⁹

By the end of the nineteenth century other materials were also introduced to industrial architecture. The use of structural iron as a building material was introduced to industrial architecture as early as the 1820s, used in the

⁴⁶ Betsy H. Bradley, *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 7-8.

⁴⁷ This bias is still present among historians and scholars, as there are few comprehensive studies of industrial architecture available.

One of the best sources is Betsy Bradley's *The Works*, from which much of this discussion is taken.

⁴⁸ Bradley, 14-15.

⁴⁹ Bradley, 137-138.

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framing and as structural columns in textile mills. Cast iron was frequently used for columns, preferred over wrought iron for the fact that it would develop a surface patina of rust that would not compromise its structure, while wrought iron would rust more thoroughly leading to structural deficiency. As early as the 1870s builders introduced the use of unglazed, hollow terra cotta tiles into industrial construction. Often used in tandem with steel or iron framing, this system became used in exterior curtain wall construction, either exposed or covered with stucco or brick. The interior air spaces of the hollow terra cotta tiles allowed for insulation, and the system was noted as more heat and moisture proof than brick.⁵⁰

One of the next major milestones in industrial architecture was the development and refinement of steel reinforced concrete. This building system was initially pioneered by Earnest Ransom who at the end of the nineteenth-century, invented a method for embedding steel rods into concrete as a means of creating a solid, fireproof system of construction. This new structural system could then support concrete floor slabs, eliminating a wood structural system which was highly susceptible to fires and collapse in industrial applications. While this new structural system eliminated the threat of fires it also had the added benefit of creating large, open floor plans with flexible interior spaces which could later be configured with partitions depending on the needs of the company within. Reinforced concrete structural systems were also modular, meaning they were composed of a repetition of equally sized units or "modules." Modularity made them less expensive and easier to construct since components could be manufactured of equal size and shape and quickly installed on site, with little customizing of individual features or elements, therefore reducing expensive hand-building labor. Nonstructural walls were inserted in the space between the concrete columns and, since they were non-load bearing, could be comprised solely of industrial metal-sash windows, occasionally with a narrow spandrel of brick, allowing light to flood the interior spaces. This construction system was popularized by Detroit-based architect Albert Kahn, who showcased the technology in his landmark Packard Automobile Plant in Detroit, built between 1903 and 1911. Kahn and his contemporaries including the Boston-based firm of Lockwood, Green and Company, would build reinforced concrete industrial buildings across the country. During this era, industrial architecture began to emerge as a distinct architectural and engineering field requiring specialized designers, elevating industrial architecture out of the realm of anonymous local builders working by trial and error, and into practice as a specialized and scientific field.⁵¹

The use of steel reinforced concrete for industrial architecture was widely used throughout the 1910s and 1920s, and was common for several decades afterwards. During the 1930s the use of steel framing, often clad in brick or terra cotta tile, became more popular for industrial buildings. While structural steel had been used for industrial buildings beginning in the late nineteenth century, by the turn of the twentieth century steel began to replace cast iron as a structural material. Steel offered great tensile and compressive strength, allowing for stability, wide spans, and resistance to the vibrations of machinery. Steel could be manufactured into standardized members, quickly assembled on site. Riveting replaced the earlier bolts as a fastening system, but by the 1920s, welds were used to connect steel members, a small but significant improvement that created stronger connections between steel members, allowing for lighter frames. Similar to reinforced concrete, steel

⁵⁰ Bradley, 137 – 139.

⁵¹ Refer to Reyner Banham, *A Concrete Atlantis : U.S. Industrial Building and European Modern Architecture, 1900-1925* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986), 31.

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skeletons offered nonstructural walls that could feature multiple large windows, large and flexible open interiors that could be adapted for a variety of different uses, and also an improved level of resistance to fire. Steel columns and beams could be encased in poured concrete to provide resistance to fire, or could have concrete sprayed on to them, a material sometimes known as Gunite. As electrical technology improved, the need for exterior illumination was less critical, and smaller windows could be utilized. Likewise internal environmental systems improved, creating better ventilation that helped to reducing the risk for fires. Internal sprinkler systems, utilized since the 1880s, also became more common place.⁵²

The Ansco Camera Factory Building is an excellent example of the type of simple, functional industrial architecture that was being designed and built in the early twentieth century. This steel framed industrial building was designed using the most modern technology available at the time to build factory buildings that maximized the useable interior space. The factory building on Emma Street typifies the generic, flexible design of factories as containers for a process within, making it as functional for making cigars as producing camera equipment. Using a structural steel skeleton, the building could contain large, open interior spaces free of partitions unless necessary. Machinery, which was rapidly developing and changing in the late 1800s and early 1900s, could be moved, changed, and replaced without making complex and costly changes to the architecture of the building. The building at 16 Emma Street also reflects improvements to fire resistance in industrial buildings.

The Ansco Camera Factory Building also reflects a growing pride and recognition of industrial buildings as architecture. While factory buildings were often built by anonymous builders and engineers through most of the 1800s, industrial architecture became an increasingly complex and specialized field in the 1900s. In this period it became more common for architects and engineers to specialize in industrial architecture. Like Albert Kahn, who popularized the use of reinforced concrete for industrial buildings, industrial architecture became increasingly appreciated for its specialized construction and Here at 16 Emma Street, newspaper articles celebrate the architect of the building, Alfred Freeman, as an experienced specialist in designing modern cigar factory buildings.

Conclusion

The Ansco Cameras Factory Building is an excellent and highly intact example of an industrial building built by the nation's leading manufacturer, the General Cigar Co., to mass manufacture cigars. It also has strong ties to the nationally significant Ansco camera and film company and was the long-time home to the Ansco company's camera and camera equipment production. Architecturally, the building reflects the adaptability and flexibility of open-planned steel framed industrial buildings, making it highly suitable for such different uses as manufacturing cigars and cameras.

⁵² Bradley, 150-154.

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FACTORY BUILDING**

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FACTORY BUILDING**

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Verbal Boundary Description

The Ansco Camera Factory Building contains all of the land presently associated with the building. The 3.29 acre parcel is located on the east side of Emma Street, just north of Main Street, in the city of Binghamton. The north boundary is adjacent to rail lines. The parcel is surrounded by commercial and residential parcels at the south, west, east and north of the railroad tracks.

Boundary Justification

The boundary reflects all land currently associated with the building at 16 Emma Street. These boundaries also correspond to the original historic property associated with the building.



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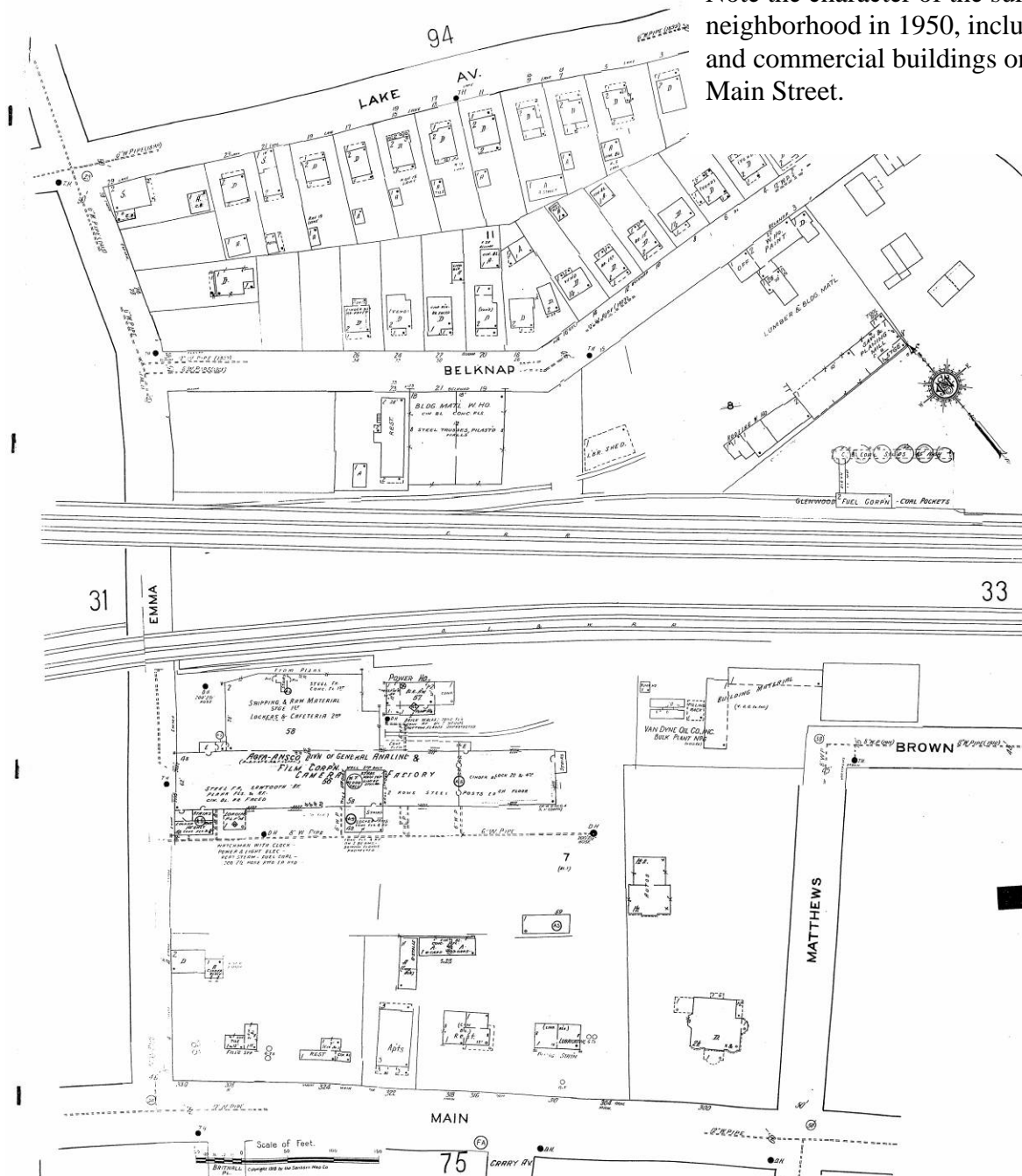
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FACTORY BUILDING**

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Additional Information

Sanborn Map, 1918- Updated to 1950

Note the character of the surrounding neighborhood in 1950, including several houses and commercial buildings on Lake Avenue and Main Street.



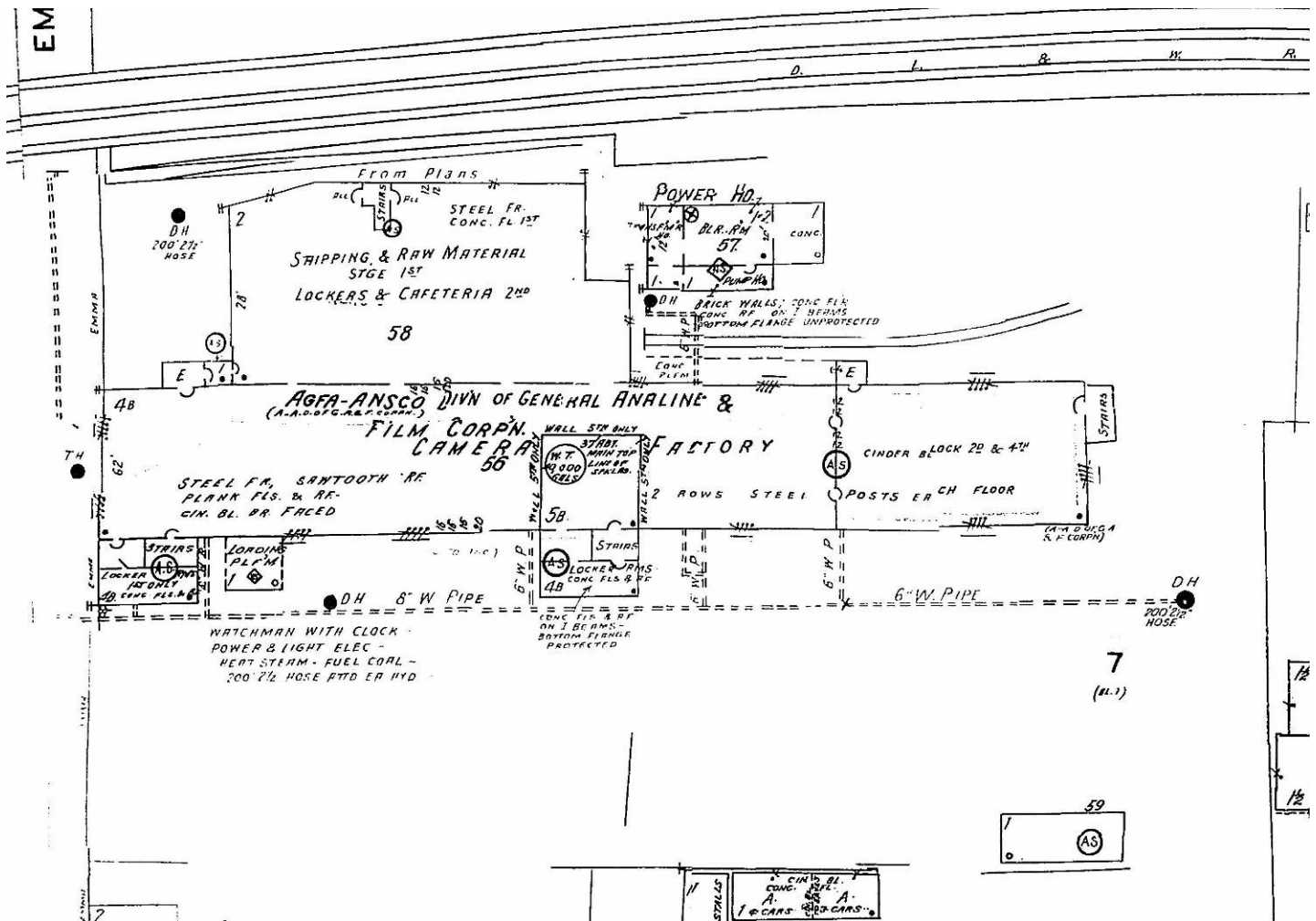
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Detail of Previous Image, 1918 – Updated to 1950

Note the close proximity to the rail lines which aided in bringing raw materials into the factory and shipping out finished goods. Also note that the open area just south of the building was planned to hold an additional “sister” factory by the General Cigar Co. This image from 1950 also shows the large 2-story addition constructed in this same year at the north side of the building. The small boiler or power house building is visible just north of the main factory building adjacent to the railroad lines.

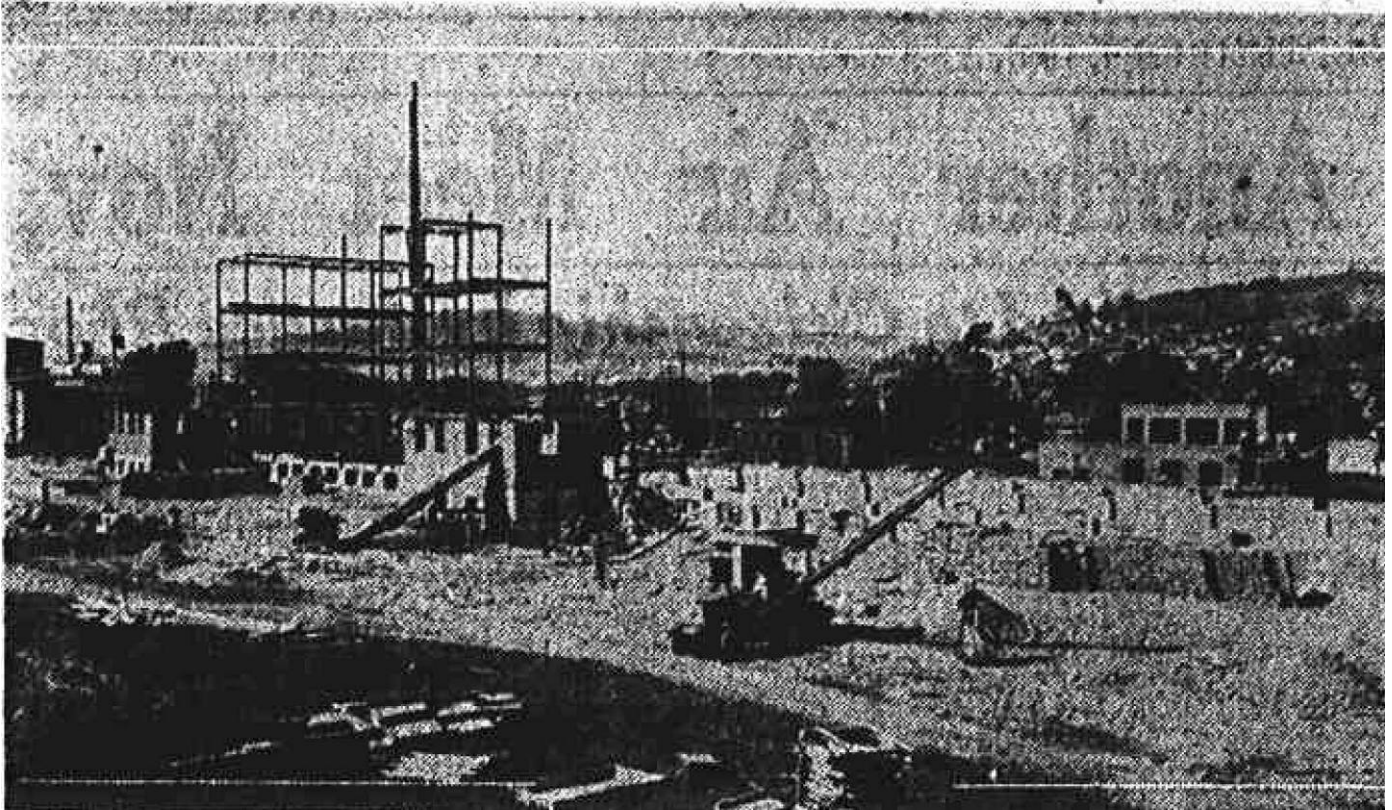
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“Progress Made on New Cigar Factory” (September 7, 1927)

From *The Binghamton Press*, 7 Sept. 1927: 16.

This newspaper image shows the initial construction of the concrete foundation, some of the steel skeleton being built and other work.

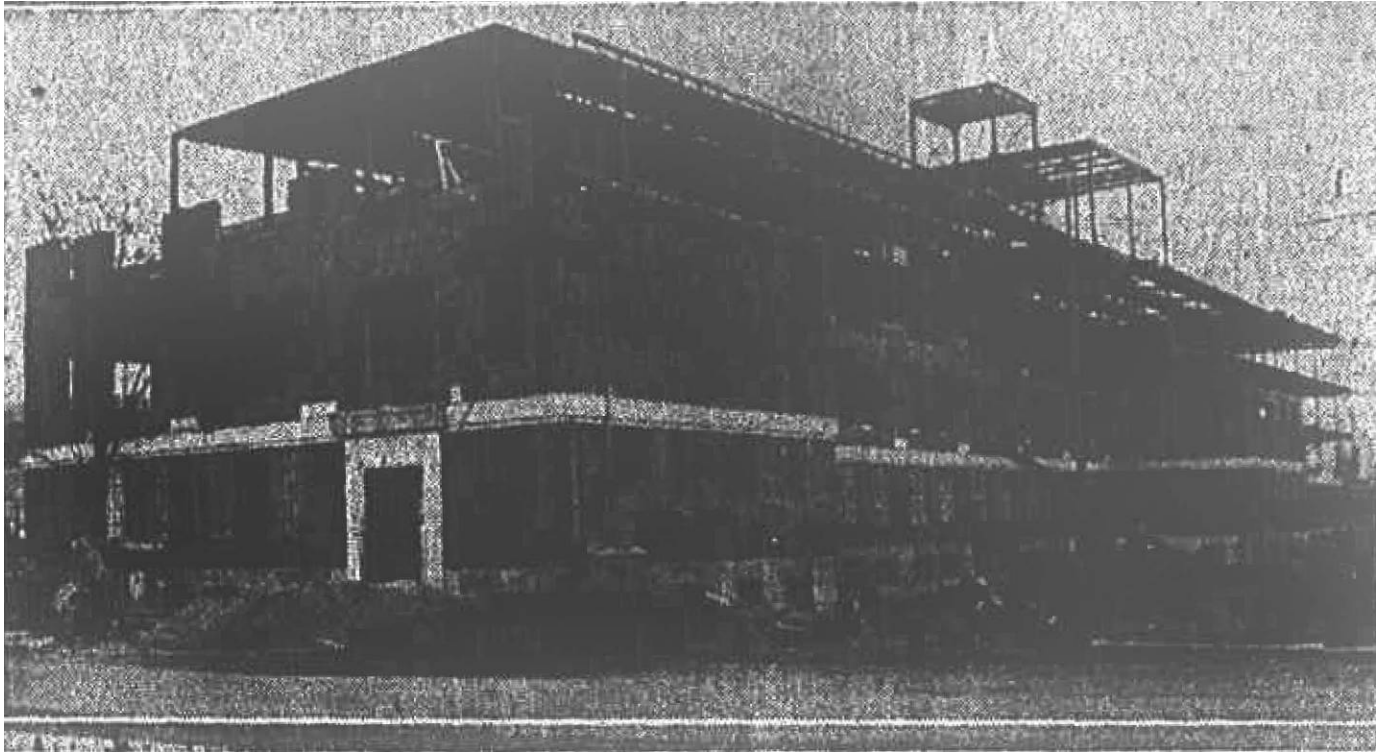
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“Work Progresses on New Cigar Factory” (October 26, 1927)

From *The Binghamton Press*, 26 Oct. 1927: 12.

While difficult to see, this newspaper image shows the progress of construction of the new factory building. The light-colored door surround and beltcourse above the ground floor are visible as well as the steel skeleton on upper floors. The construction of this building, the largest of its type in Binghamton and one of the biggest construction projects in the late 1920s, was tracked nearly daily in the newspapers.

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The newly-opened General Cigar Co. factory building on Emma Street (June 2, 1928)

From *The Binghamton Press*, 2 June 1928: 14

This image shows the building as it initially appeared upon its opening in 1928. Of note, the large water tank, a signature feature for the building, is not yet installed although the platform on which it will rest is visible in this image.

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“Stripping Machines at Work” inside the General Cigar Co. factory building (June 2, 1928)

From *The Binghamton Press*, 2 June 1928: 15.

This newspaper image shows the size and type of machinery installed in the building by the General Cigar Co. Note that the open interior, with few structural columns in the workspaces, allowed for rows of machines to be installed. The open layout of the building actually allowed the company to install additional machines than they had originally intended.

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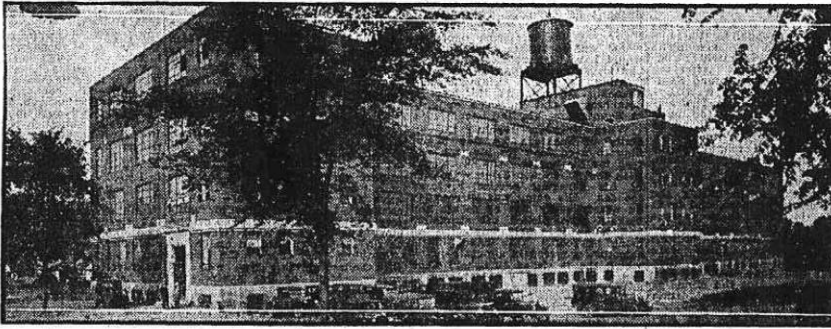
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Central Station Power for General Cigar Co. Factory



New factory of General Cigar Co. covers nearly 25,000 square feet of ground, and contains 140,000 square feet of floor space

UNTIL TEN YEARS AGO practically all cigars made in this country were rolled by hand, whereas today there are but few factories that are not equipped with modern, electrically-driven machinery, resulting in increased production and economies in manufacturing methods.

When the General Cigar Co. considered building a factory in Binghamton, officers and engineers of the company first investigated the reliability and availability of central station electric power. Their findings in this connection assisted them in arriving at a decision to construct the factory now being operated on Emma Street.

Upon signing the contract to purchase central station electric power, a representative of the company said: "Our experience in operating our large number of cigar factories has proven that power purchased from a dependable source is more economical, efficient and convenient than maintaining generating plants in our own factories."

The new Binghamton factory of the General Cigar Co. has capacity for producing 125,000,000 White Owl cigars annually on machines driven by 300 electric motors. When the factory is in full operation 1,200 persons will be steadily employed. The factory is one of the most modern, sanitary and best equipped of its kind in the world.

BINGHAMTON LIGHT, HEAT & POWER CO.

172 WASHINGTON STREET
BINGHAMTON, N.Y.

Binghamton Light, Heat and Power Co. Advertisement (1928)

From *The Binghamton Press* 26
Sept. 1928: 27.

This advertisement celebrates the opening of the Emma Street factory, and the Binghamton Light, Heat and Power Co.'s role in supporting production there.

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AnSCO Camera Works (ca. 1930s)
From *The Valley of Opportunity*, 176.

This image shows the Emma Street factory after the AnSCO company purchased it in 1938. Note the prominent painted signage across the top of the building, as well as the painting of the signature water tower.

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**ANSCO CAMERA
FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property
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Ansko Camera Plant, postcard image (ca. 1940s)

This rare color image of the building shows a small guardhouse located just south of the building (at left). Note that it appears some of the factory windows have shades or have been enclosed from inside the building, likely due to light-sensitive camera equipment manufacturing. The industrial sash windows remain intact.

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**ANSCO CAMERA
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Aerial view of the Emma Street factory (1951)
From New York State Archives

This image shows the 1950 addition on the north side of the building (at left).

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**ANSCO CAMERA
FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property
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Current Photos

Photography by CBCA 2011-2012



16 Emma Street, looking north-east from Emma Street (2011)

United States Department of the Interior
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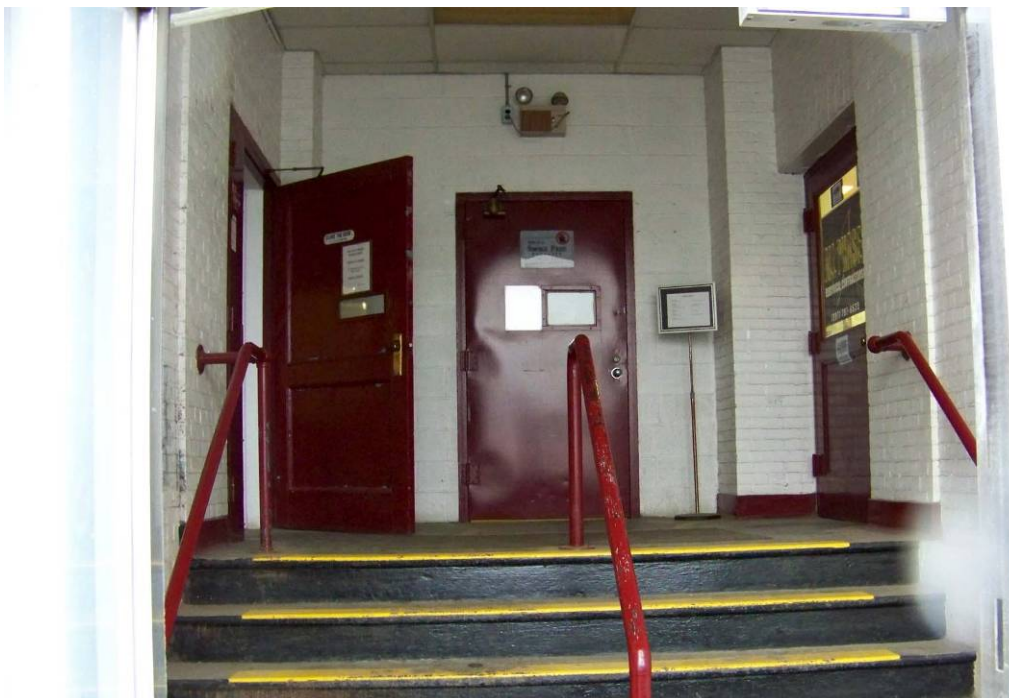
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**ANSCO CAMERA
FACTORY BUILDING**

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16 Emma Street, looking south-east from across railroad tracks (2012)



16 Emma Street, primary entry lobby

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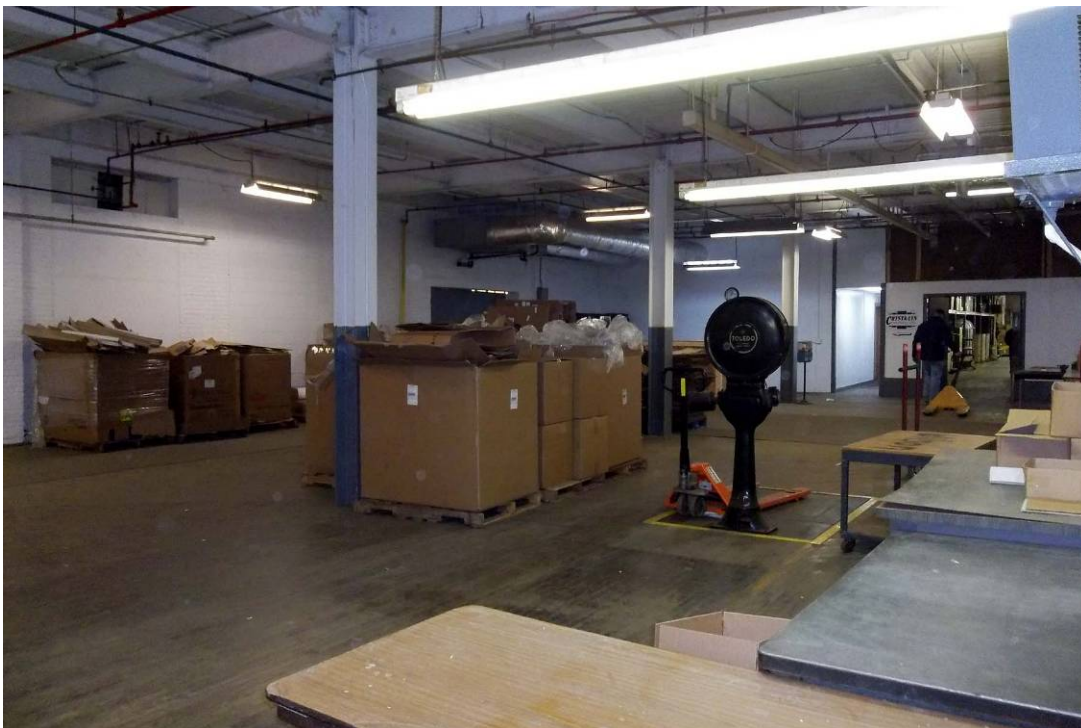
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**ANSCO CAMERA
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16 Emma Street, basement view



16 Emma Street, view of first floor

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**ANSCO CAMERA
FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property
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16 Emma Street, first floor window detail

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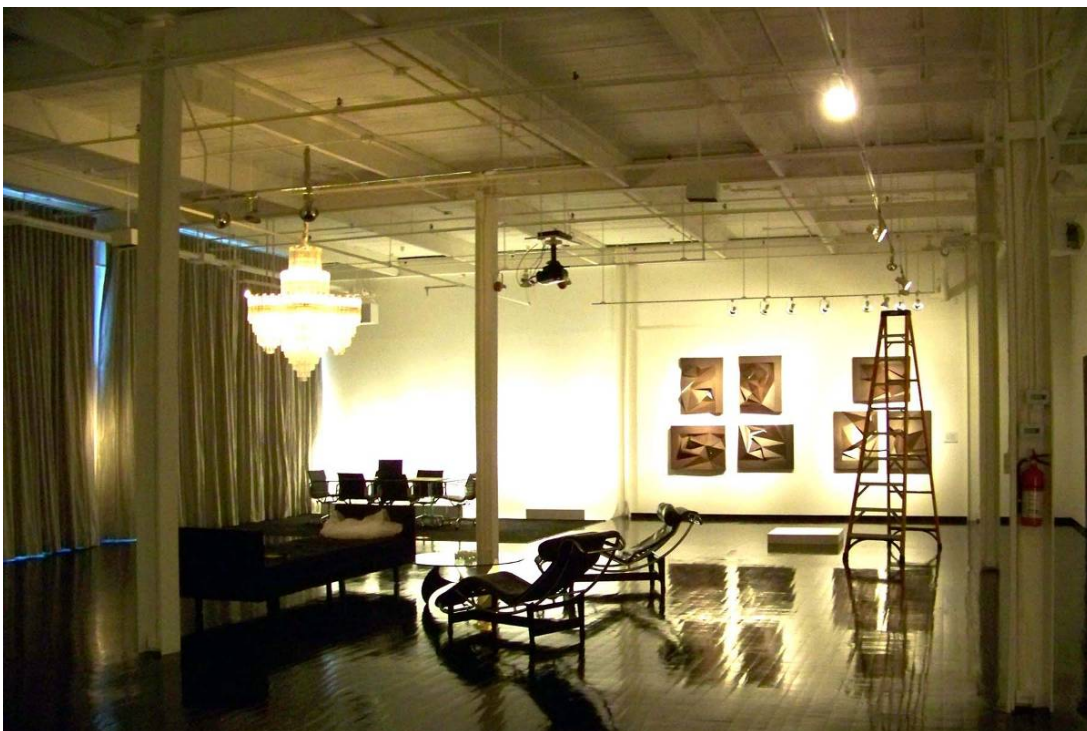
Section 11 Page 15

**ANSCO CAMERA
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Name of Property
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16 Emma Street, second floor storage space showing openness of original interior spaces



16 Emma Street, fourth floor art gallery space

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**DRAFT****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 an 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 Propertyhistoric name AnSCO Company Charles Street Factory Buildingsother names/site number Company names include: Agfa-AnSCO, General Aniline and Film (GAF), Anitec**2. Location**street & number 15 & 17 Charles Street, 219 Clinton Street [] not for publicationcity or town Binghamton [] vicinitystate New York code _____ county Broome code _____ zip code 13905**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ 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 as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide ☒ locally. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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

Broome County, New York
County and State

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>3</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		3	TOTAL

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCIAL/business

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick, concrete block

roof built-up

other _____

© CBCA 2012

Ansco Company Charles Street Factory Buildings
Name of Property

Broome County, New York
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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- ☒ **A** Property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that 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 boxes that apply.)

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

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance:

1910 - 1954

Significant Dates:

1910-1911 original construction

ca. 1914-1918 wedge addition to 15 Charles

1953-54 warehouse construction

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Charles Street builder unknown

Frank W. O'Connell, Inc. contractors (219 Clinton)

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(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 Building 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 repository: _____

Ansco Company Charles Street Factory Buildings
Name of Property

Broome County, New York
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.79 total acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18
Zone Easting Northing

3 18
Zone Easting Northing

2 18

4 18

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 Jennifer Walkowski, Architectural Historian [Edited and Arranged- Kathleen LaFrank NYSHPO]

organization CLINTON BROWN COMPANY ARCHITECTURE, pc date February 2012

street & number 653 Main Street, Suite 104 telephone 716-852-2020

city or town Buffalo state NY zip code 14203

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 SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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

name _____

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.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS**

Name of Property
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The Ansko Company Charles Street Factory Buildings site encompasses all extant factory buildings related to the Ansko Company's Charles Street factory site. These buildings were once part of a large complex of over 50 industrial buildings that spanned both the west and east sides of Charles Street and along Clinton Street and were used for making photographic films and papers and related activities. The majority of the factory buildings at this site were demolished in 2000 due to environmental and reuse concerns and to reclaim this land for new development. The three buildings that comprise the site are the neighboring 15 Charles Street and 17 Charles Street properties, both of which were constructed during the early phase of construction at this location in 1910-1911, and also 219 Charles Street, which was built as a warehouse for the Ansko company in 1953-54 and is located less than a quarter mile to the south-west of the Charles Street buildings. 15 Charles Street was identified in a 1939 Ansko publication as the Paper Plant, while a 1918 Sanborn map identified the smaller building at 17 Charles Street as the Power House and Boiler House. Information indicates that each of the Ansko buildings was identified with a number; 15 Charles Street has a large painted "10" on its east Charles Street elevation, and 17 Charles Street has a painted "12" which both correlate to numbers for these buildings on the 1918 Sanborn maps. Both buildings share similarities in appearance, materials, and function. 219 Clinton Street reflects mid-century design and construction.

The Ansko Company Charles Street Factory Buildings are located along Charles Street, just north of Clinton Street, and on Clinton Street in the city of Binghamton's western region known as the First Ward. The Ansko Company Charles Street Factory Buildings encompass the remaining buildings of what was once a large factory complex that was located near the Erie Railroad (E.R.R.) and Delaware, Lackawanna & Western (D.L. & W.) Railroad lines that run east-west in the neighborhood. These lines would have once served as a valuable transportation route for the Ansko company, allowing them to bring in raw materials and ship out finished products. When the Ansko company first established a presence in the neighborhood around 1900, as the Monarch Paper Company, this area of Binghamton was sparsely developed. However by the twentieth century when the company underwent significant expansion of its Charles Street facility, the area was a mixed industrial, commercial and residential neighborhood. Numerous bars and taverns were located on nearby Clinton Street, catering to the workforce. Like other areas in Broome County, the neighborhood grew up as a "walk-to-work" area similar to the Endicott-Johnson company in Endicott and Johnson City or the IBM company in Endicott. Due to the factory's handling of toxic chemicals used in manufacturing photographic papers and films, many of the former Ansko company factory buildings were demolished in 2000, leaving a 32-acre area now known as the Charles Street Business Park ready for redevelopment.¹ The remaining two properties on Charles Street have been rehabilitated. 17 Charles Street currently houses a rehabilitation and fitness center and offices, while 15 Charles Street contains several apartment units, many of which retain original industrial character and materials, and a dance studio. Today this area is surrounded by the vacant land of the former Ansko factory buildings, as well as several small-scale, freestanding houses and commercial buildings, some of which appear vacant. Located on the east side of Charles Street, across the street from the site, is a large modern metal-clad generator building with a tall chimney. This building was built on part of the property once used by Ansko and is now owned by Trans-Alta and used to provide energy at times of peak

¹ Bergmann Associates, *The First Ward Redevelopment Plan for the City of Binghamton, New York*, report (Rochester, Nov 2010), 29, accessed December 12, 2011.

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Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 2

**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS**

Name of Property
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demand. The remaining brick AnSCO factory buildings are notable in the neighborhood for their size, historic appearance and industrial feel.

15 and 17 Charles Street share commonalities in their design and construction, and were built approximately at the same time. These two buildings date to 1910 and 1911, and were constructed in close proximity to each other as part of the early wave of growth for the AnSCO company at its Charles Street facility. While once historically part of the large factory complex in this area, today each building is under separate ownership, with each building on its own tax parcel.

15 Charles Street is the larger of the buildings, and is a long rectilinear industrial loft building.² The building spans the width of the block, with elevations facing onto Jarvis Street to the west and Charles Street to the north. The elevated concrete foundation and water table of the building is scored to resemble stone blocks. The general mass of the building is essentially a long, thin rectangular box-like form which allowed for the numerous segmentally-arched windows to provide interior lighting. A wedge-shaped form (added between 1914-1918) is located on the south elevation, towards the eastern Charles Street side, and contained storage space, an elevator (in 1918) and a reinforced concrete fire stair tower. The north elevation of the building has a small rectangular stair tower with a historic, ca. 1950s 1-story unit that wraps its north and west sides. The elevations feature brick pilasters, which project slightly above the roofline, that are spaced approximately 34-feet on center. It features 3-bays on its east and west elevations, and 10-bays along its north and south sides. Between each set of pilasters are three segmental arched windows for each floor level on the south and north elevations, and sets of two windows on the smaller west and east sides. A small penthouse unit is visible on the roof, located in the south-western corner of the building. Entry doors are located at the southern bay of the east elevation, and also on the westernmost bay of the north elevation.

The interior of 15 Charles Street has been rehabilitated, however it still retains much of its original historic character as an industrial loft building. The first floor contains storage areas, and retains its heavy wood timber framing. As an example of this construction method from the late stages of its development, metal plates are used to connect the wood columns and beams. Ceilings are the exposed wood from the floor above, and walls are painted brick. This open flexible interior space was typical of industrial buildings of the era, as machinery and work spaces could be altered and rearranged as needed. The interior has now been subdivided into apartment units, although rooms are large and open and retain much of the historic character as an industrial space. The second floor of the building has been converted to student housing, however the brick has been left exposed (and typically painted), and the structural system is also exposed in the walls and ceilings. The minimally designed steel stairs remain intact as well. Likewise the dance studio located on the second floor retains features such as exposed painted brick, and revealed structural columns and beams. Overall, the building still retains its sense as a simply, modestly designed industrial building despite its new functions.

Once used as a power house, 17 Charles Street is a smaller, approximately 60-foot square 3-bay by 3-bay building located just to the north-east of 15 Charles Street. Although constructed of reinforced concrete, the

² Refer to Jennifer Walkowski, *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York Multiple Property Documentation Form*, report (Buffalo: Clinton Brown Company Architecture, 2011), F-3 – F-4.

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**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS**

Name of Property
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building is clad in brick and resembles its solid brick-constructed neighbor. It also features a similar appearance of brick pilasters with segmental arched window openings, here set in pairs in each bay. In the northernmost bay of the eastern elevation is a large segmental arched window unit on the ground level which is modern, but sympathetic to the design of the building. The north elevation features a projecting metal canopy above a modern large segmental arched large entry door and window unit, which is also complementary to the building's appearance. A 1-story addition was added to the building's west elevation prior to 1950. Historically, 17 Charles Street and 15 Charles Street were linked via a subterranean connection in the basement.

17 Charles Street is now used as a physical therapy office, however the interior of the building retains its sense of simple, minimally designed industrial space. Like 15 Charles, the building uses exposed (here, unpainted) brick to give the walls texture and color. The lobby space of the therapy office retains some original segmental-arched window and door openings, further enhancing the sense of being in an historic building. While some new materials have been installed in the building, and the building has been partitioned into new spaces, the structural system remains exposed in many areas. Constructed with a steel skeleton, the simple steel columns and beams are exposed. Overall, the building has been successfully reused for its new purpose, while still reflecting the construction and materials of the original historic building.

219 Clinton Street was designed and constructed nearly a half-century later and reflects the typical mid-twentieth century design and construction for wide-span space for industrial warehouses that was the evolution of its Charles Street forebears. The building is approximately 150-feet on Clinton Street by 225-feet along Rogers Street, and is a raised one-story large rectangular building with a poured concrete foundation, walls of concrete block with some brick cladding on the primary elevations, and a membrane roof. Fenestration on the building is minimal, and only a few irregular window openings, now filled with glass block, are located on the north elevation. One of the most prominent elements of the building is a long truck dock on the east elevation. Shielded with a large open canopy with a corrugated metal roof, this elevation features numerous bays with freight doors at an elevated platform used for shipping.

The Ansco Company Charles Street Factory Buildings represent a rare remaining collection of extant buildings with a direct connection to the Ansco camera and film company. While most of the factory buildings in the Charles Street facility were demolished in 2000, these three buildings survive. Together they represent a good collection of existing industrial buildings from the first half of the twentieth century, which are becoming increasingly rare in Broome County.

Building List:

Charles Street, west side:

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**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS**

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15 Charles Street ca. 1910

Building #10 – Paper Plant

Large rectilinear 3-story brick industrial building. Concrete foundation is incised to give effect of individual blocks. Full-height pilasters divide numerous segmental arched windows with modest stone sills into typically groups of two. Some windows infilled; contemporary replacement windows throughout. Corbelling at roofline; pilasters interrupt cornice line slightly.

17 Charles Street ca. 1911

Building #12 - Ansco Power House and Boiler House Building

2-story, 3-rank brick industrial building with incised concrete foundation and full-height pilasters. Large segmental arched window on east elevation and new entry door unit on north elevation.

Clinton Street, south side:

219 Clinton Street 1953-54

Ansco Warehouse

1-story industrial warehouse building with concrete watertable, brick on north elevation, concrete block walls on secondary elevations. Glass block windows of varied sizes and shapes on north elevation. East elevation features continuous metal canopy, bays for tractor trailers at an elevated platform.

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Section 8 Page 1

**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS**

Name of Property
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Significance

The Ansco Company Charles Street Factory Buildings should be considered eligible for the State and National Registers of Historic Places as containing a rare remaining collection of largely intact buildings associated with the nationally-significant camera and film company, the Ansco Company. The buildings at 15 Charles Street and 17 Charles Street are significant under Criterion C as an excellent and largely intact set of historic industrial buildings in the city of Binghamton, Broome County. These two buildings are also the earliest existing buildings with ties to Ansco, built in the early twentieth century as the company was just emerging as a nationally significant company. This group of buildings is also significant under Criterion A for its association with one of the nation's most prominent manufacturers of cameras and photographic films. The Ansco company in its later years was "the only domestic manufacturer to compete with Kodak in offering a full line of photographic materials and equipment."³ The Ansco Company Charles Street Factory Buildings represent one of the area's most prominent and influential industries, the camera and film industry, that played a strong role in shaping the character of Binghamton as a center for innovation and technical prowess.⁴

The buildings at 15 and 17 Charles Street were constructed in 1910 and 1910 as early factory buildings used by the Ansco company to manufacture specialized photographic papers. By the mid-twentieth century, these buildings were part of a sprawling campus of factory buildings at this location, with significant new construction especially in the 1930s. 219 Clinton Street was built in 1953-54 as a new modern warehouse for the nationally-significant camera manufacturer. The design of the building reflects the company's growing reliance on trucks and tractor trailers for shipping their products, as the nation's highway system supplanted the rail system for transportation in the mid-1900s. With the demise of the Ansco company in 1998, as it failed to keep pace with its competition and a changing global market, the massive Charles Street factory site was largely demolished in 2000. Once a signature feature of the neighborhood, the Ansco Charles Street factory site was cleared for redevelopment. The only factory buildings to survive the demolition are those included in the Ansco Company Charles Street Factory Buildings group: 15 Charles Street, 17 Charles Street and 219 Clinton Street.

Today these buildings are occupied and still serve roles in the area. The massive former Paper Plant building at 15 Charles has been rehabilitated into student housing, while the former Power House building at 17 Charles Street is now a physical therapy office. 219 Charles Street still serves a similar function as it did originally, housing an industrial finishing company that appears to make good use of the building's historic truck docks. These buildings are the rare survivors of the Charles Street factory which once played a significant role locally in the community and as a national and international film and photographic paper manufacturing center.

A History of Industry in Broome County

³ Bergmann Associates, *The First Ward Redevelopment Plan for the City of Binghamton, New York*, report (Rochester, Nov 2010), 5, accessed December 12, 2011, <http://www.cityofbinghamton.com/userfiles/file/First%20Ward%20Redevelopment%20Plan/Drafts%20of%20pre-nomination%20study/Final%20Document%20-%20Sec%201.pdf>.

⁴ A commercial building located at 171-177 Clinton Street in Binghamton (NR 2002) also has ties to Ansco, and was used as an office building by the company. It was not constructed by the company as an industrial building.

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**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS**

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Industry has played a key role in shaping and defining the culture of Broome County, since the earliest settlement began in the region in the late eighteenth century. With its prominent role as a transportation center for the region, first from its prime location on the Susquehanna and Chenango Rivers, and later as a railroad hub, the city of Binghamton became the home of many of Broome County's prominent industries. As the nation moved into the twentieth century, Broome County became home to several nationally and internationally prominent companies that left an indelible mark on our lives today. After World War II, industry began a slow decline in the region, following national trends, and many of the area's stalwart companies were forced to close their doors or relocate elsewhere, meaning thousands of lost jobs. Today, Binghamton and Broome County are using this proud legacy of industrial history for new growth and development, using it as a basis for historic preservation projects and heritage tourism.

During its early history, from the late eighteenth until the mid-nineteenth centuries, logging and timber were the region's dominant industries, making use of the region's vast forested land. Rafts of logs, lashed together, were floated down rivers and streams from the interior areas of the county to the markets in Binghamton and beyond. When this sector dried up by the 1850s, other significant industries emerged in the county. Binghamton was the center of a thriving woodworking and furniture making industry in the mid-1800s. The city's dominant industry during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was the cigar manufacturing industry. During this era, Binghamton was second in the nation only to New York City in cigar production.

By the dawn of the twentieth century, shoe manufacturing would become one of Broome County's most prominent industries. The Endicott-Johnson company, located in Johnson City and in Endicott just west of Binghamton, grew into a massive company that included numerous tanneries and shoe making factory buildings. The company gave shape to the Johnson City and Endicott communities, establishing them as planned factory towns and shaping their growth and development. EJ, under leader George F. Johnson, became well known for its paternalistic welfare capitalism program, known as the "Square Deal" which was an agreement between workers and management intended to maintain the peace and stall unionization. The company had a tremendous influence over the daily lives of its employees, offering things like insurance, medical care and even houses to workers, and a wide variety of entertainment and recreation was available as well. Company plays, bands and sports teams were among the many activities and groups associated with Endicott-Johnson.

Broome County also had thriving technology and aerospace industries in the nineteenth century, becoming a center for invention and new technologies in the twentieth century. Now a household name for computers and software, the International Business Machine (IBM) company has roots in Endicott, at its Plant No. 1 which it established in 1905. Here, IBM established not only a sprawling complex of reinforced concrete factory buildings at North Street and McKinley Avenue (extant, NRE) built largely between the 1900s until the 1940s, but a research laboratory and school building to train and educate the workers and salespeople. In Endicott, IBM made significant developments in technology, data processing and computer technologies. Broome County was also home to the Link Aviation company, who pioneered flight simulation to safely and effectively train pilots. The Link Trainer was an important invention as it pioneered what we now call "virtual reality," creating a machine that simulated the process of another machine. Link Trainers were widely used to train

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**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS**

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pilots during World War II, and flight simulation is still used to train commercial, military and private pilots to this day.

After World War II, many of Broome County's largest and most prominent companies began to slowly decline. This was part of a national trend in post-war America, as companies struggled to compete with emerging foreign markets. Many companies were forced to reduce their workforce, close their doors all together, or relocate manufacturing overseas in order to stay in business. Locally in Broome County, the three largest companies including IBM, Endicott-Johnson and Ansco all suffered in the second half of the twentieth century. As IBM became an international company, the factory in Endicott became outdated and outgrown, and by 2004 the company had sold all of its Endicott properties, maintaining a minimal presence in the community. Endicott-Johnson failed to keep pace with growing footwear trends after World War II, and also faced stiff foreign competition. After the death of company visionary, George F. Johnson in 1948, EJ underwent a series of different leadership changes, which resulted in cuts and changes to the company. After selling off various departments in the 1990s, Endicott-Johnson closed its doors in 2004.

A History of the Ansco Company⁵

The Ansco Company was once one of the nation's leading manufacturers of cameras and photographic films and papers during the twentieth century. The company's roots date back to an era of great experimentation in the nascent field of photography that emerged in the early 1800s. During the mid to late nineteenth century, photography emerged from considered just a novelty or toy to become a more serious art form. As artists began to push the boundaries of what camera equipment and photographic films could do, Ansco developed new and more sophisticated photo products as well.

Ansco operated two primary factory locations in Broome County. The Charles Street factory produced the photographic films and papers, and also contained administrative and research facilities. A separate factory on Corliss Avenue in Johnson City, later moved to a building at 16 Emma Street in Binghamton, manufactured cameras. Near the Charles Street factory is an extant large warehouse building located at 219 Clinton Street, which was built ca. 1960 and was once used by Ansco. Other sites include a factory in Afton, Chenango County, NY (built 1916, demolished 1935), and a former New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG) building, now expanded into the Engineering Innovation Center and used by Binghamton University, in Vestal.⁶ This building was constructed in 1958, designed and built by the Austin Company, to serve as the new administration building. Other buildings may have ties to use by Ansco, however its primary factory sites were the Charles Street factory for films and papers and the Corliss Avenue then later the Emma Street factory for cameras.

⁵ For additional information on the history of the Ansco company, please refer to *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York Multiple Property Documentation Form*, E-35 – E-38, E-41 – E-42.

⁶ The Afton plant was built to manufacture film-grade nitrocellulose, a primary ingredient in flexible film base. However, shortages of nitrocellulose during World War I severely affected Ansco. The newly-built Afton plant was never used because by the time it was completed, film-grade nitrocellulose became available to the civilian market at a very low cost as the war was winding down, rendering the plant unnecessary. Michael R. Peres, *Focal Encyclopedia of Photography: Digital Imaging, Theory and Applications, History, and Science* (Oxford: Focal Press, 2007), 42-43.

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The Ansco company began in Binghamton in 1898 as the Westcott Photo Specialty Company, located at 170 Washington Street, founded by Melvin DeVer Westcott to manufacture a special type of paper used for photography, marketed as the "Monarch Brand." Following Westcott's death in 1899, the E. & H. T. Anthony & Co. of New York City acquired the company in 1900.⁷ After acquiring the Westcott company, the Anthony company moved all their photographic papermaking to Binghamton, renaming the company the Monarch Paper Company. In 1900, the Monarch Paper Company relocated from the Washington Street location to facilities located at 29-31 Charles Street. In 1901 the company became the Anthony & Scovill Company after a merger with the Scovill & Adams Company. In 1907 the firm is again renamed, as Ansco, merging the two former names into a new moniker.⁸

The early decades of the twentieth century appear to have been very successful and profitable for Ansco in Broome County. In 1910 the company enlarged its Charles Street factory, and in May of that year, Ansco purchased the former Marshall Furniture Company plant, located on Corliss Avenue in Lestershire (now Johnson City). Production of cameras commenced at this site in October of 1910. During the early decades of the 1900s, the Ansco company grew and expanded, enlarging its primary Charles Street factory. Finally, in 1916 the company's primary stockholders held a vote, approving the transfer of Ansco's headquarters from New York City to Binghamton.⁹

Despite introducing several popular cameras in the 1910s, by the 1920s, sales and profits were lagging for Ansco. As an attempt to stimulate new growth and profits, in 1928 Agfa, a unit of the large German chemical conglomerate I.G. Farben, acquired Ansco, becoming known afterwards as Agfa-Ansco. In May of 1928, Agfa-Ansco, revitalized with the injection of European money into the company, began making significant upgrades in its facilities in Broome County, constructing massive new factory buildings at the existing Charles Street factory.

With this new influx of capital and energy, the 1930s were more successful for the Agfa-Ansco company. Despite the devastation of the 1935 flood to the film factories on Charles Street, the company continued to grow both its product lines and its Broome County facilities. In the mid-1930s the Ansco company was investing in their factories in Binghamton, and undertook new modernization and upgrade projects for its paper and camera divisions. At the Charles Street paper plant, new state-of-the-art reinforced concrete buildings were constructed. Meanwhile, the company acquired the former General Cigar Company Building at 16 Emma Street in 1937, and moved production from the older Corliss Avenue buildings in Johnson City to the more modern facility on Emma Street.¹⁰

⁷ "Melvin DeVer Westcott," Westcott Family Genealogical Forum, January 8, 2010, <http://genforum.genealogy.com/westcott/messages/973.html>.

⁸ William L. Camp, "ANSCO Chronology," Bill's Photo History, March 12, 2004, accessed November 14, 2011, <http://billsphotohistory.com/3.html>.

⁹ Refer to the 1918 Sanborn map for Binghamton, Sheet 37.

¹⁰ Camp, "ANSCO Chronology."

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The German control that had helped a struggling Ansco emerge more successful in the 1930s would soon prove to be problematic. In late 1939, Agfa-Ansco's holding company became known as General Aniline & Film Company (GAF), at which time Agfa-Ansco became a subsidiary of GAF. In 1941, after the United States entered World War II following the attacks on Pearl Harbor, Agfa-Ansco was considered "enemy property" and the company was seized by the federal government, with agents stationed at the company to supervise operations. As at other companies during the war, production shifted to more military-related products. Camera production was halted, and Agfa-Ansco manufactured optical devices such as sextants and range finders. In 1942, the company introduced the first color film that could be user-processed to the American market. However, all of the material went towards governmental uses and was not available to the general consumer. Later this same year, the company was put under control of the Alien Property Custodian (APC). In 1944 the name "Agfa" was dropped from the company moniker, and the company adopted a new red-white-and-blue color scheme as an attempt to Americanize the business.¹¹

Under government control during World War II, the company stagnated. Ansco returned to manufacturing amateur cameras and films in 1945, updating versions of its cameras that it offered before the war while introducing several new models. However, the company was beset with internal discord. Under government control, leadership appointments were awarded based on political connections and influence rather than on merit, and the company went through a string of directors. A growing sign of the times, Ansco cameras increasingly were made overseas in places like Germany, Japan and Hong Kong, and were of average quality. It was not until 1965 that the company was relinquished from governmental control, being taken over by General Aniline & Film Company (GAF) in 1967.¹²

Several factors beginning in the 1970s made it increasingly difficult for GAF to compete in the market. In this decade, GAF sold its photographic division, splitting it into two divisions. By the 1980s it became increasingly difficult for GAF to compete with the Kodak company's hold on the film industry, and in 1981 the Binghamton GAF plant was purchased by Andlinger & Company. The company was split into two separate units, one of which was the Ozalid company. The other company was the Anitec Image Corporation, which maintained the production of photographic film and paper. As Anitec the company continued operations for over a decade, although in 1998 the company was purchased by International Paper, a division of the Eastman Kodak Company. Only 40 days following the purchase of the Anitec company, International Paper announced the closure of the Binghamton factory.¹³ The former Ansco camera facility on Corliss Avenue, which dated back to the Marshall Furniture Company in the 1890s, in Johnson City was demolished beginning in 2009.¹⁴

Only 40 days following the purchase [of the Anitec company], International Paper announced the closure of the Binghamton factory. In 2000, Brandenburg Industrial Services Co. from Chicago was tasked with demolishing all above and below ground structures on the Charles Street in Binghamton

¹¹ Camp, "ANSCO Chronology." Also, Charles Browne, *Ansco: Cameras, Construction & Community* (Binghamton, NY: Roberson Museum, 2002), 11-12.

¹² Camp, "ANSCO Chronology." Also, Browne, 12.

¹³ Browne, 14.

¹⁴ "Broome County, NY," Former Industrial Site in Endicott- Johnson Corridor to Be Demolished, November 23, 2009, <http://www.gobroomecounty.com/countyexec/former-industrial-site-endicott-johnson-corridor-be-demolished>.

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site, which had been home to the company since about 1900. The former Ansco camera facility on Corliss Avenue, which dated back to the Marshall Furniture Company in the 1890s, in Johnson City was demolished beginning in 2009.”¹⁵

For over a century, the Ansco company had a significant presence in Binghamton’s First Ward neighborhood. Much of the surrounding neighborhood developed around the Ansco factory. While not a planned worker’s community in the style of those in nearby Lestershire (Johnson City) or Endicott, the community developed as a thriving factory town by the many employed at the Ansco factory. Houses sprung up in this neighborhood especially during the 1920s through the mid-twentieth century, creating a “walk to work” community. Clinton Street in this area became known as “bar mile” due to the growth of numerous bars, taverns and other establishments, all catering to the Ansco factory workers.¹⁶ As the Ansco factory on Charles Street grew in size and prominence in the early half of the twentieth century, so, too, did the surrounding community, and the factory became enmeshed in the daily life and character of Binghamton’s First Ward.

15 and 17 Charles Street

Built in the early twentieth century, the buildings at 15 and 17 Charles Street were constructed during the early growth phase of the Ansco company. Ansco established a presence on Charles Street dating back to 1900, when the Monarch Paper Company (which became a part of the Anthony & Scoville Company, later Ansco, the following year) was located at 27-31 Charles Street. Located in a relatively diminutive wood framed structure, from these humble roots the Ansco factory’s Charles Street factory would grow.

Following a devastating fire that destroyed many of the company’s wood framed building in 1907, the Ansco company saw the immediate need to create fire resistant factory buildings. The design and construction of 15 Charles Street in 1910 was a direct result of this movement to create more modern factory buildings. Designed using a solid masonry exterior to provide some measure of fire resistance, the building was designed with heavy wood framing and wood floors and ceilings which still rendered the interior of the building susceptible to fire. In 1910, the use of steel reinforced concrete as an improved fire resistant factory construction system was just becoming widely known and appreciated, based on the success of the Packard Automobile Plant in Detroit, Michigan, designed by notable industrial architect Albert Kahn which began in 1903 and was finished in 1910. Utilizing a construction method that had been widely used for factories throughout the 1700 and 1800s, the brick and wood framed building at 15 Charles Street was built in the final stages of this type of industrial building.

15 Charles Street was designed to serve various processes in the manufacturing of photographic papers. Shortly after its erection, the building housed a baryta (a type of high-quality paper used for black and white photography) department in its basement, paper coating in its ground level, cutting and packing on the second floor and paper box factory and storage on the third floor. An advertisement for the company’s widely popular Cyko brand paper (manufactured at 15 Charles Street) from 1913 boasted that the paper plant was the second

¹⁵ *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York Multiple Property Documentation Form*, F- 35– F- 41.

¹⁶ Bergmann Associates, 5.

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largest in the world, and was the most modern and best equipped.¹⁷ In a smaller area to the east end of the building, a laboratory was located in the basement and first floor, while storage was accommodated on the second and third floors.¹⁸ A three-story, 2-bay wedge-shaped addition was constructed at the building's south-east corner somewhere between 1914 and 1918, and was used to house storage and an elevator.¹⁹ The building continued to function throughout most of its history as Ansco's primary photographic paper factory, being noted as the "Paper Plant" in a company-issued publication in 1939.²⁰

The interior of 15 Charles Street appears to have been rather unusual among general industrial buildings in several aspects. Like the film manufacturing that occurred in neighboring buildings, the paper manufacturing process was light-sensitive. Where as many other types of industrial buildings sought to maximize interior illumination, at 17 Charles Street the desire was the opposite. Paper manufacturing and coating took place in the basement in dark rooms, dimly lit by orange safe lights.²¹ Also installed in the building were light traps "resembling a winding maze" that helped to prevent light from penetrating into sensitive areas of the production spaces.²² While the building was designed with numerous windows likely to allow for good ventilation of the chemical fumes within the building, as the paper manufacturing expanded to other floors and ventilation technology developed, the company appears to have infilled many of the windows of the building, as evident in a ca. 1963 photo of the building (see page 11-7).²³ Another notable interior feature of the building was the carefully controlled environment necessitated by the manufacturing process. Described in a 1942 Ansco publication:

*"At the Agfa Ansco plant the air is washed and filtered before it is allowed to enter, and air pressure is maintained at a higher point within the building than outside, to prevent the infiltration of the outside air. Whether it is hot and humid July afternoon, or a sub-zero night in February, the temperature and humidity of every room must be maintained within the definite limits required for the different manufacturing operations."*²⁴

Designed and built only a year after its neighbor in 1911, 17 Charles Street demonstrates the next phase of fire resistant industrial buildings, the steel reinforced concrete building. While 15 Charles Street required fire resistance since volatile and potentially flammable chemicals and paper were stored inside, 17 Charles Street was also created with fire safety in mind. 17 Charles Street was designed to house the boilers and dynamos, serving as the factory complex's power house. In an age before smaller electrical engines could be used to power each individual machine, factories relied on large central power sources to drive machinery. Here, boilers

¹⁷ "Ansco Advertisement," *Photo-era Magazine* 31 (1913): 329.

¹⁸ Based on descriptions in the Sanborn map from 1918.

¹⁹ While highly sympathetic to the design of the original building, the addition is notable when comparing the slight variation in cornice height and detail. As this portion of the building is not visible in a 1914 image of the factory, it is present on the 1918 Sanborn map for the area, dating it to between these few years. Ansco Company. *Cyko : The Positive of Photography*. Binghamton, N.Y., 1914.

²⁰ *The Story of Agfa Ansco: 1842-1939*. (Binghamton, NY: Agfa Ansco, 1939), 21.

²¹ Ibid.

²² *Agfa Ansco, 1842-1942: 100 Years of American Photography* (General Aniline & Film, 1942), 19.

²³ Browne, 3.

²⁴ *Agfa Ansco, 1842-1942: 100 Years of American Photography*, 19.

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would have been used to create steam which in turn was used by the dynamos, a widely-used type of generator to create direct current electricity for factories. As a result of these large machines, a great deal of heat was generated that could put the building at risk for fire. 17 Charles Street was designed using a brick-clad steel reinforced concrete skeleton with concrete floor slabs which created a fire resistant building in response to these conditions of extreme heat and the potential for sparks and electrical surges. In addition to its construction method, 17 Charles Street also contained other features to assist in temperature control such as two 90-ton ice machines and ammonia coils mounted on the roof, which acted as a method of heat exchange to cool the building. In 1915, J.G. White Engineering Corp. of New York City undertook the expansion and improvement of the power plant.²⁵ While the building appears to have continued to serve as the primary power house for several decades, with the construction of a large modern power plant on the south side of Clinton Street in 1946, it appears the building at 17 Charles Street was used as a secondary power source and boiler facility.²⁶

219 Clinton Street

While the Ansco company had constructed a large reinforced concrete warehouse building at Charles Street near Field Street in 1936, by the 1950s a changing transportation system created the need for a new, modern warehouse and shipping building. With the growth of the national highway system and improved local roads in the post-World War II era, the use of vehicular transport, via tractor trailers and trucks, became increasingly popular to ship goods and products. In this era, the use of railroads as the primary mode of transporting goods significantly declined.

In August of 1953, Ansco announced plans to build a new warehouse building, to be used primarily to house photographic film and paper, on Clinton Street near Roger Street. The building would be built on property where Ansco operated a small storage and shipping building on Clinton Street nearby, located along the railroad lines. The company also requested some upgrades be made to accommodate the new warehouse, including a new waste water line to be laid under Clinton Street. Once the company received approvals from the city, Frank W. O'Connell, Inc. was selected to construct the building from the designs of the Ansco engineers, and ground was broken in fall of 1953. The cost of construction was given at \$250,000.²⁷ The building was simply designed with a steel skeleton and concrete block walls, clad in brick on certain elevations in an attempt to make it resemble the existing brick Ansco buildings nearby. The Clinton Street warehouse featured access to the rail lines at the building's south side via loading docks that could accommodate up to three freight cars. The east side of the building was designed to accommodate trucks, designed with a canopy and truck docks to accommodate up to eleven vehicles. Construction of the building was completed in Spring of 1954.²⁸

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²⁵ "Construction," *Electrical World* 66, no. 23 (1915): 1286,

<http://books.google.com/books?id=Jm0fAQAAAJ&dq=Ansko%20power%20house&pg=PA1286#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

²⁶ With the construction of the new power plant, the old power plant was slated to be "dismantled" (likely meaning that the machinery would be dismantled and removed) and the paper manufacturing operations would be expanded into the power plant. *The Binghamton Press*, "Ansco Plans New Plant at \$750,000 Cost," April 13, 1945, 14.

²⁷ *The Binghamton Press*, "Ansco Addition," January 25, 1954.

²⁸ *The Binghamton Press*, "Ansco Warehouse To Be Built on Firm's First Ward Property," February 18, 1953.

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Industrial architecture is a broad category which includes many types of buildings which once served as factories, manufacturing plants, machine shops and other types of functions. New York State passed a law on factory regulation in 1914 which defined a “factory” as any place where goods or products were manufactured or repaired, cleaned or sorted. Buildings such as mills, workshops, manufacturing businesses and all associated buildings, sheds and structures were included in this definition. The term factory can be used to describe a single building or to an entire facility of composed of any number of structures, and the term is synonymous for industrial architecture.²⁹

The earliest industrial buildings were not typically constructed with aesthetics as the primary focus; typically these buildings featured simple, utilitarian designs based on function and the needs dictated by the interior production.³⁰ Industrial buildings of the nineteenth-century relied on the natural elements for interior illumination, ventilation and even for the power to drive the belts and shafts which in turn operated machinery. As a result, industrial buildings are often constructed in phases, with additions added to the building as need dictated, and typically featured numerous window voids. Industrial buildings were typically not thought of as true “architecture” in the nineteenth-century, and in fact many architects lacked interest in industrial architecture due to the financial and economic limitations and a belief in the lack of artistic possibilities in their design. Factory design was often a mix of common empirical engineering with engineering based on rationalized, technological planning. But, prior to the development of specialized engineers or architects, early factory design also involved a bit of luck and trial and error by builders and craftspeople.³¹ As a result, most nineteenth-century industrial buildings were designed as anonymous collaborations between industrialists, engineers, local carpenters and mill builders.

Fires were a major concern of nineteenth-century industrial buildings, which often featured heated boilers to drive machinery, gas lighting and volatile compounds. As a result many industrial buildings were built utilizing fire retardant materials. Resistance to fire would be a major driving force behind the development of new construction methods and materials in industrial architecture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

One of the most common industrial construction methods in the nineteenth century in New York State is brick masonry with heavy timber framing, a construction method broadly known as mill construction for its early and widespread use in the construction of fabric and textile mills in Massachusetts and New England in the early 1800s. During the nineteenth century, industrial loft buildings were typically constructed of brick or stone masonry for their fire resistance, often with an interior structure of wood framing. Wood framed industrial loft buildings were also not uncommon. Later in the century the use of iron or steel framing became more popular, as technology advanced and allowed for improvements in fire resistance. These types of buildings were generally long and narrow and typically featured numerous windows along the elevations, maximizing interior illumination and ventilation,. Sometimes skylights or rooftop monitors were used to illuminate upper floors.

²⁹ Betsy H. Bradley, *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 7-8.

³⁰ This bias is still present among historians and scholars, as there are few comprehensive studies of industrial architecture available. One of the best sources is Betsy Bradley’s *The Works*, from which much of this discussion is taken.

³¹ Bradley, 14-15.

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Exterior features could consist of external fire escapes and ladders, loading bays (sometimes raised or covered), hoists and other functional features. Flat roofs were popular, and could be used to accommodate water tanks and elevator penthouses.³²

By the end of the nineteenth century other materials were also introduced to industrial architecture. The use of structural iron as a building material was introduced to industrial architecture as early as the 1820s, used in the framing and as structural columns in textile mills. Cast iron was frequently used for columns, preferred over wrought iron for the fact that it would develop a surface patina of rust that would not compromise its structure, while wrought iron would rust more thoroughly leading to structural deficiency. As early as the 1870s builders introduced the use of unglazed, hollow terra cotta tiles into industrial construction. Often used in tandem with steel or iron framing, this system became used in exterior curtain wall construction, either exposed or covered with stucco or brick. The interior air spaces of the hollow terra cotta tiles allowed for insulation, and the system was noted as more heat and moisture proof than brick.³³

One of the next major milestones in industrial architecture was the development and refinement of steel reinforced concrete. This building system was initially pioneered by Earnest Ransom who at the end of the nineteenth-century, invented a method for embedding steel rods into concrete as a means of creating a solid, fireproof system of construction. This new structural system could then support concrete floor slabs, eliminating a wood structural system which was highly susceptible to fires and collapse in industrial applications. While this new structural system eliminated the threat of fires it also had the added benefit of creating large, open floor plans with flexible interior spaces which could later be configured with partitions depending on the needs of the company within. Reinforced concrete structural systems were also modular, meaning they were composed of a repetition of equally sized units or "modules." Modularity made them less expensive and easier to construct since components could be manufactured of equal size and shape and quickly installed on site, with little customizing of individual features or elements, therefore reducing expensive hand-building labor. Nonstructural walls were inserted in the space between the concrete columns and, since they were non-load bearing, could be comprised solely of industrial metal-sash windows, occasionally with a narrow spandrel of brick, allowing light to flood the interior spaces. This construction system was popularized by Detroit-based architect Albert Kahn, who showcased the technology in his landmark Packard Automobile Plant in Detroit, built between 1903 and 1911. Kahn and his contemporaries including the Boston-based firm of Lockwood, Green and Company, would build reinforced concrete industrial buildings across the country. During this era, industrial architecture began to emerge as a distinct architectural and engineering field requiring specialized designers, elevating industrial architecture out of the realm of anonymous local builders working by trial and error, and into practice as a specialized and scientific field.³⁴

The use of steel reinforced concrete for industrial architecture was widely used throughout the 1910s and 1920s, and was common for several decades afterwards. During the 1930s the use of steel framing, often clad in brick

³² Bradley, 137-138.

³³ Bradley, 137 – 139.

³⁴ Refer to Reyner Banham, *A Concrete Atlantis : U.S. Industrial Building and European Modern Architecture, 1900-1925* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986), 31.

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or terra cotta tile, became more popular for industrial buildings. While structural steel had been used for industrial buildings beginning in the late nineteenth century, by the turn of the twentieth century steel began to replace cast iron as a structural material. Steel offered great tensile and compressive strength, allowing for stability, wide spans, and resistance to the vibrations of machinery. Steel could be manufactured into standardized members, quickly assembled on site. Riveting replaced the earlier bolts as a fastening system, but by the 1920s, welds were used to connect steel members, a small but significant improvement that created stronger connections between steel members, allowing for lighter frames. Similar to reinforced concrete, steel skeletons offered nonstructural walls that could feature multiple large windows, large and flexible open interiors that could be adapted for a variety of different uses, and also an improved level of resistance to fire. Steel columns and beams could be encased in poured concrete to provide resistance to fire, or could have concrete sprayed on to them, a material sometimes known as Gunitite. As electrical technology improved, the need for exterior illumination was less critical, and smaller windows could be utilized. Likewise internal environmental systems improved, creating better ventilation that helped to reducing the risk for fires. Internal sprinkler systems, utilized since the 1880s, also became more common place.³⁵

The buildings at 15 and 17 Charles Street are excellent examples of the type of simple, function industrial architecture of the early twentieth century. Both buildings reflect the simple, austere appearance of industrial buildings from the early nineteenth century. These buildings both feature numerous segmental-arched windows, which in the era before good electrical light, would have been critical to provide interior illumination. They also aided in ventilating the building. Both buildings are constructed to offer the highest degree of fire resistance available at the time. The buildings represent a turning point in industrial construction, built just before reinforced concrete buildings became more widely utilized for factory construction, including other Ansco buildings at the Charles Street plant built in the 1920s, 30s and 40s. The large building at 15 Charles Street was constructed as a load-bearing brick building, with a heavy wood timber system for columns and floors. While the wood members would be susceptible to fire, the brick exterior provided some fire resistance. The adjacent 17 Charles Street, created as a Power House and Boiler House building, would have had more serious fire resistance issues, as it was the location of several boilers and dynamos used to power other Ansco buildings. As a result, its construction is a bit different than its neighbor at 15 Charles Street. 17 Charles Street is constructed of reinforced concrete with a brick skin, giving it additional fire resistance. The 1918 Sanborn map indicates that 17 Charles Street historically featured ammonia coils on the roof, which were used to help cool the building and protect it from overheating. A tall brick chimney once stood adjacent to the building at 17 Charles Street, but appears to have been removed before the 1960s, perhaps once the new, larger power plant was constructed in 1946. Overall, both buildings are excellent and largely intact examples of early twentieth century industrial buildings.

219 Charles Street reflects common architectural design for industrial warehouses in the mid-twentieth century. The simple concrete block and steel frame system provided durable and affordable construction, and also created vast open interiors suitable for storage. While located adjacent to rail lines, the multiple bays on the building's east elevation reflect the growing importance of shipping via tractor trailers on the nation's growing

³⁵ Bradley, 150-154.

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highway system in the 1950s and the need for multiple modes, and therefore multi-modal buildings, for transporting raw materials and finished goods.

Summary

The Ansco Company Charles Street Factory Buildings represent a rare remaining collection of factory buildings with strong ties to the nationally-significant Ansco camera and film company, and is eligible under Criteria C and A. Once part of a sprawling industrial site that dominated Binghamton's First Ward neighborhood throughout most of the twentieth century, this complex has since largely vanished. The Ansco Company Charles Street Factory Buildings contain what are the only remaining buildings constructed at the earliest phase of growth for Ansco in the early twentieth century, and also a building constructed when the company was at the zenith of its importance in the mid-1900s. Together, they are a reminder of Binghamton's golden age of technological development and its contribution to our nation in the twentieth century.

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Also:

- Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
- Ancestry.com database files including census records
- HeritageQuest database files

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- Vertical Files, Local History and Genealogy Center, Binghamton Public Library, Binghamton, NY.

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**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS**

Name of Property
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Verbal Boundary Description

The Ansko Company Charles Street Factory Buildings contains three parcels, 15 Charles Street, 17 Charles Street and 219 Clinton Street in the city of Binghamton's First Ward area. These properties are located in very close proximity to each other on a block between Jarvis Street and Charles Street, just north of Clinton Street, and nearby on Clinton Street. See map for boundaries.

Boundary Justification

Once part of a much larger complex of factory buildings used by the Ansko company from the 1910s until 1998, these buildings remain after most of the surrounding industrial buildings were demolished in 2000. Today these areas are largely covered with asphalt paving or grass cover, retaining no evidence of their function as industrial sites. The boundaries reflect all property currently associated with these three extant buildings.



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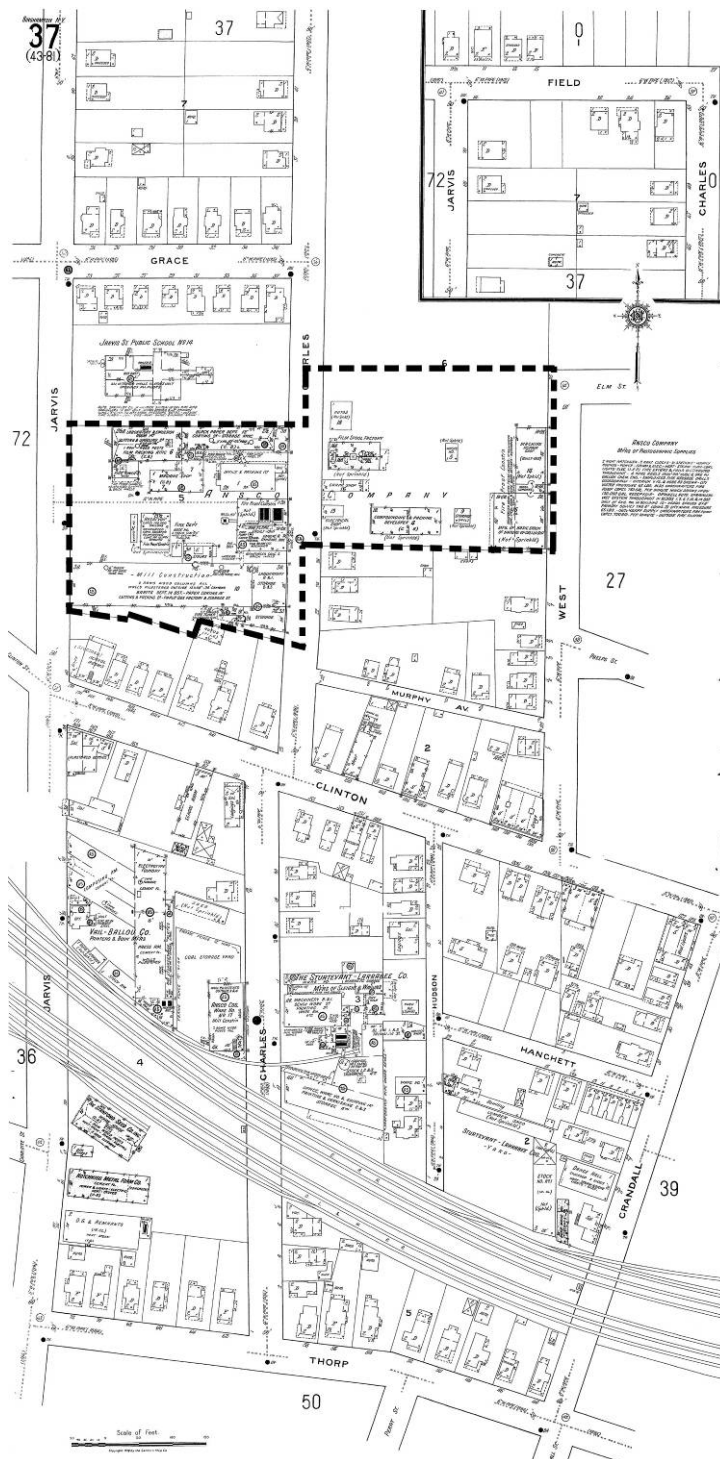
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**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS**

Name of Property
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Additional Information

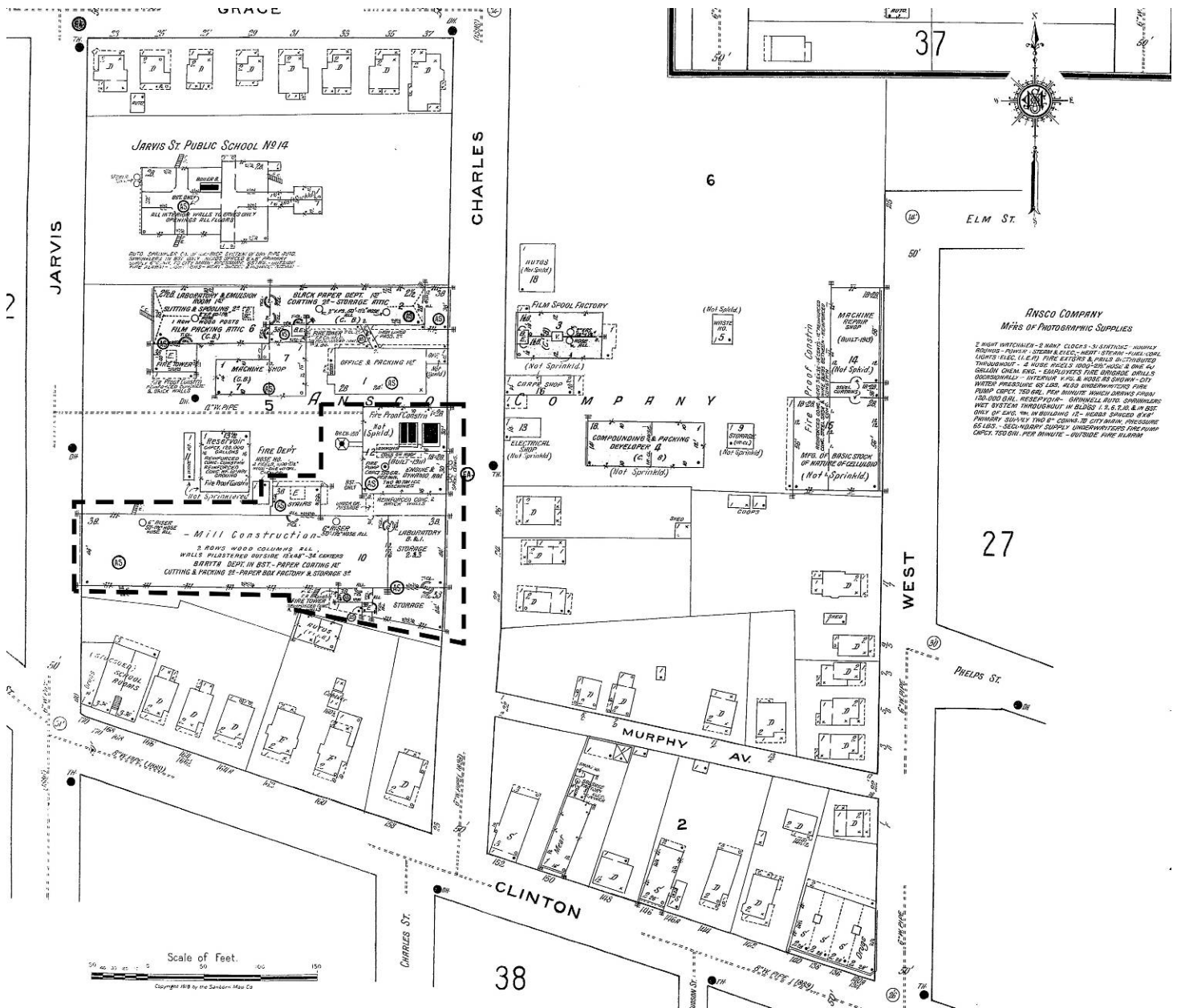


Combined 1918 Sanborn Maps of Site

Dashed line indicates approximate boundaries of
Ansko company factory site on Charles Street.

ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS

Name of Property
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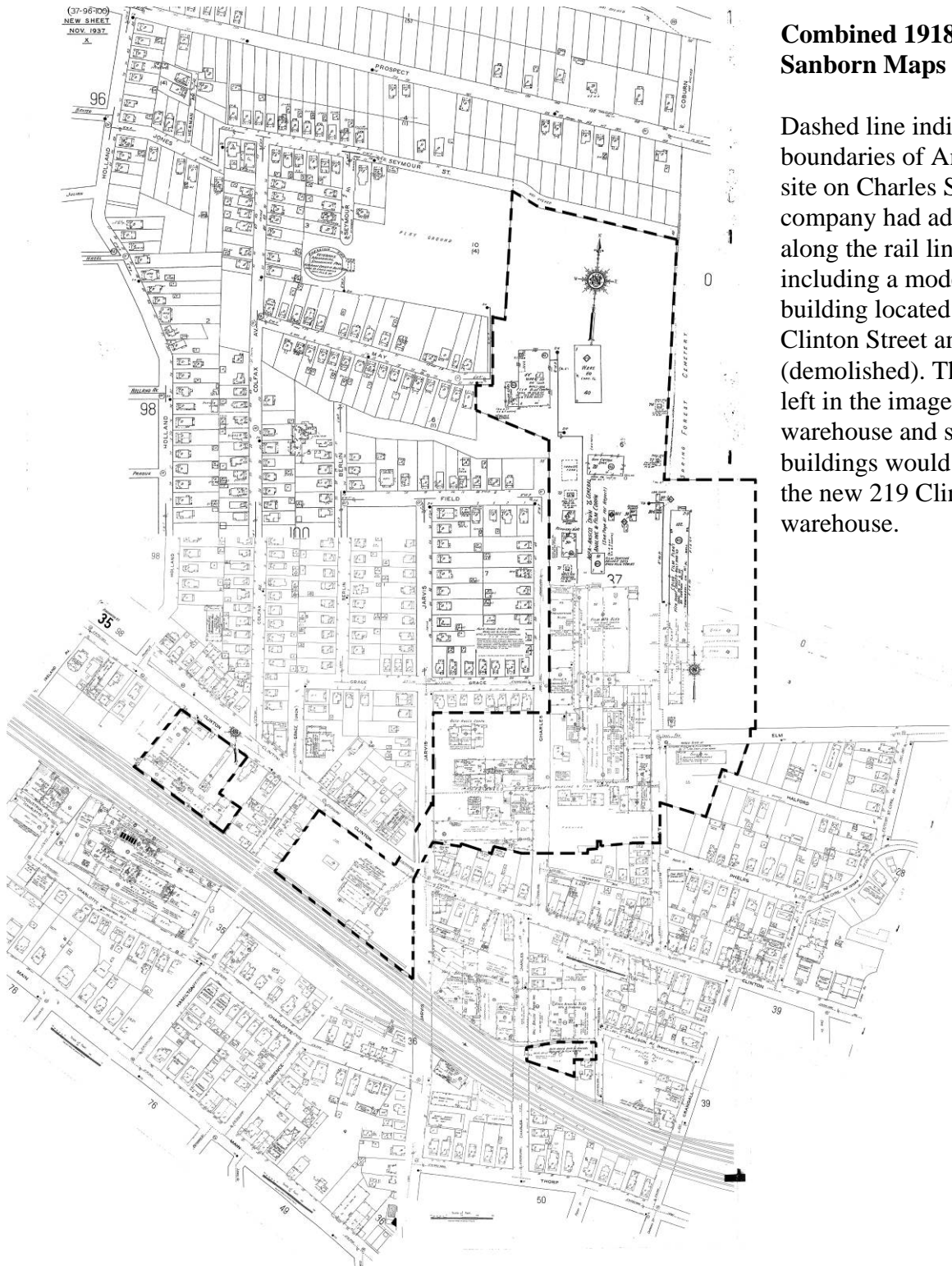


Dashed lines indicate location of 15 Charles Street and 17 Charles Street in relation to other neighboring Ansco properties.

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STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS**

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Combined 1918 – Updated to 1950 Sanborn Maps of Site

Dashed line indicates approximate boundaries of Anasco company factory site on Charles Street. Note that the company had additional facilities along the rail lines near Clinton Street including a modern power house building located at the corner of Clinton Street and Jarvis Street (demolished). The dotted box to the left in the image is the existing warehouse and shipping yard. These buildings would be demolished for the new 219 Clinton Street warehouse.

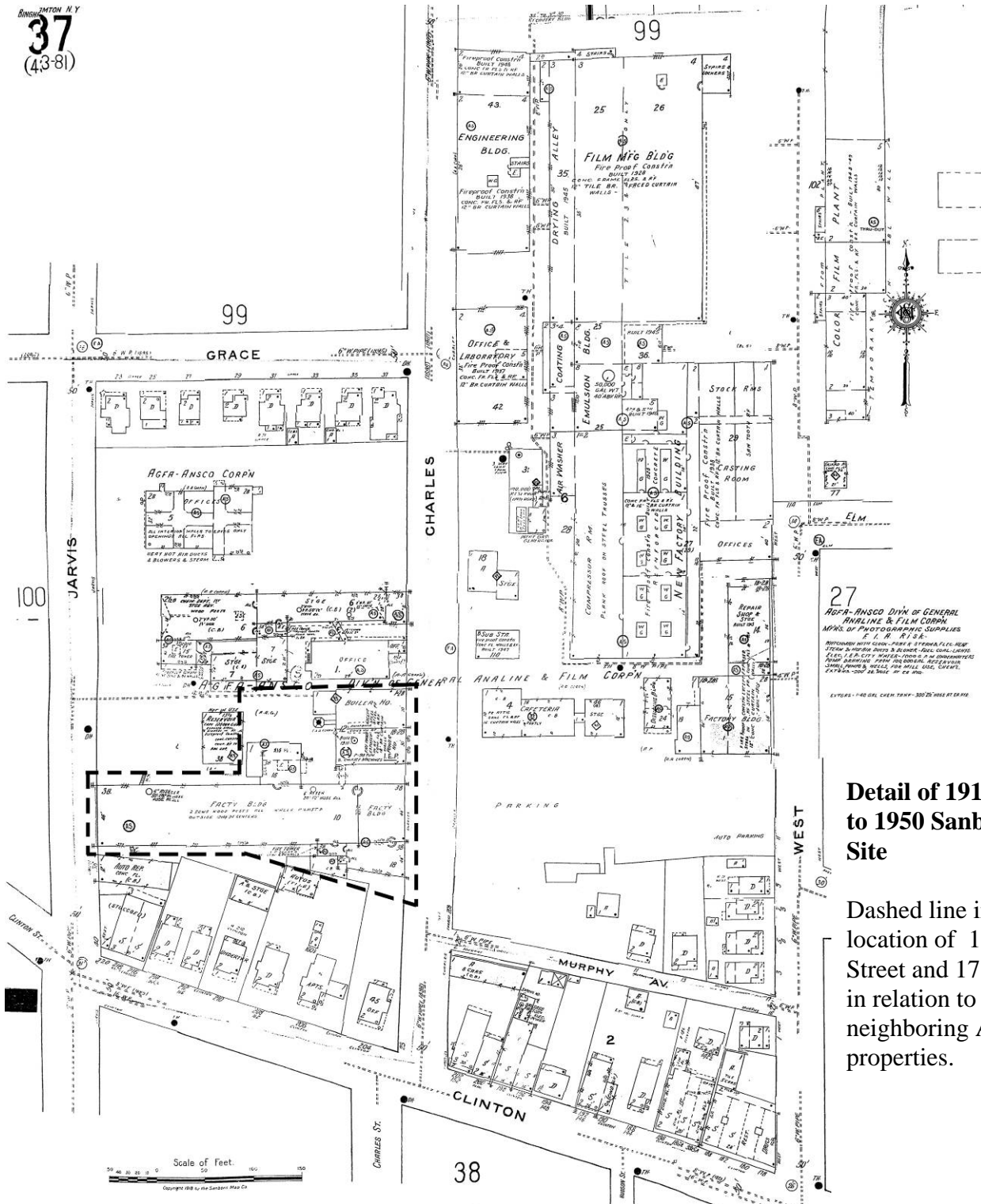
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**Detail of 1918 – Updated
to 1950 Sanborn Map of
Site**

Dashed line indicates
location of 15 Charles
Street and 17 Charles Street
in relation to other
neighboring Anso
properties.

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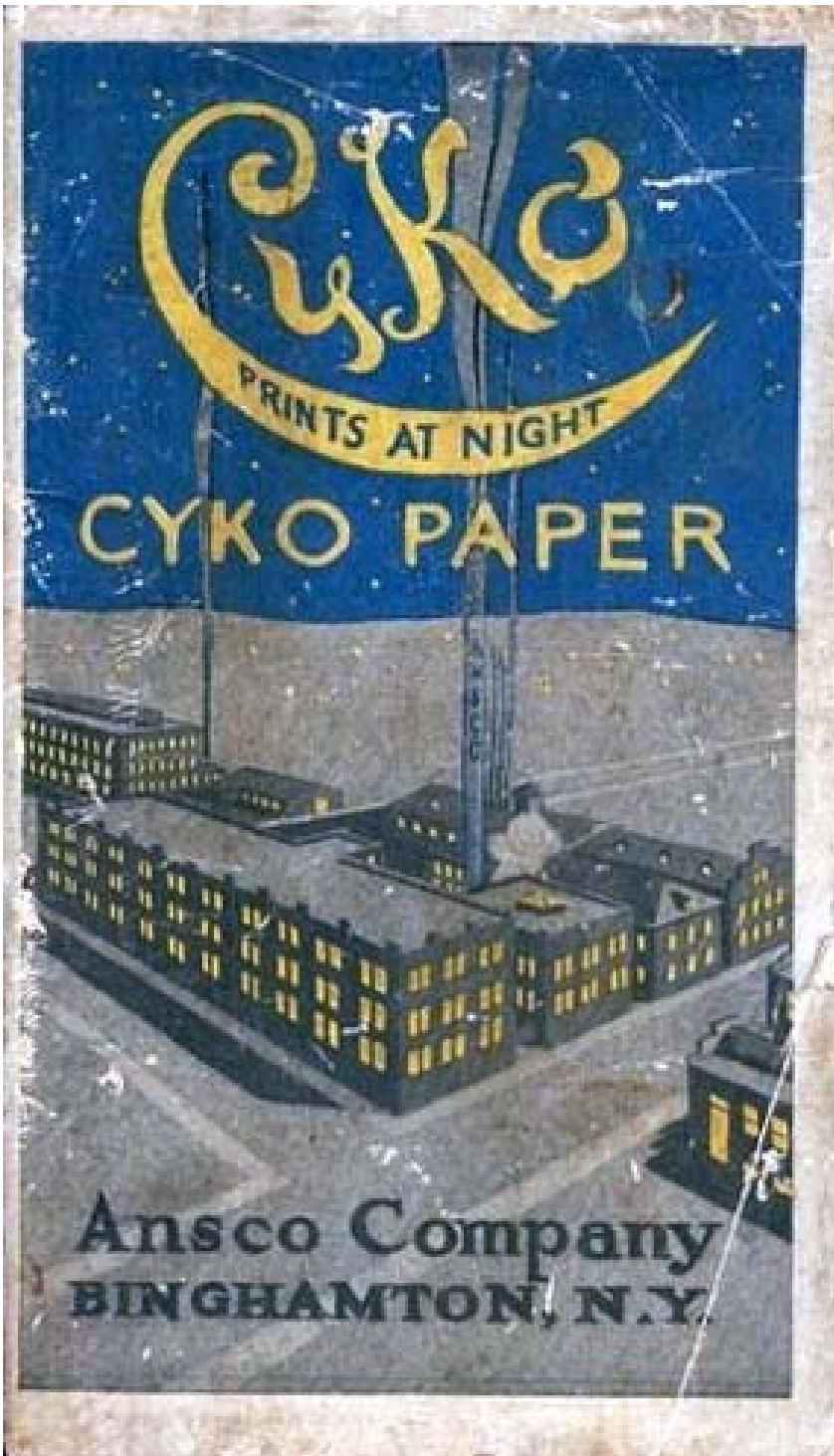
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**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS**

Name of Property
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Historic Images



Cover, “Cyko Paper” Promotional Booklet, Ansko Company (1914)

Although somewhat stylized and simplified, this view is clearly taken looking north-west from Charles Street just north of Clinton Street. The large rectangular building in the foreground is 15 Charles Street (the paper plant), while the building to its right is 17 Charles Street. Note the tall Ansko chimney to the rear (west) of the power plant. The building with the hipped roof appears to be the original Monarch Paper Company building, Building No. 1, which was first occupied in 1900 and demolished in 1960. The long rectangular building next to that with the stepped gable front was used for various paper and laboratory purposes. The function and identity building in the background is a mystery, as it does not appear on the 1918 Sanborn map.

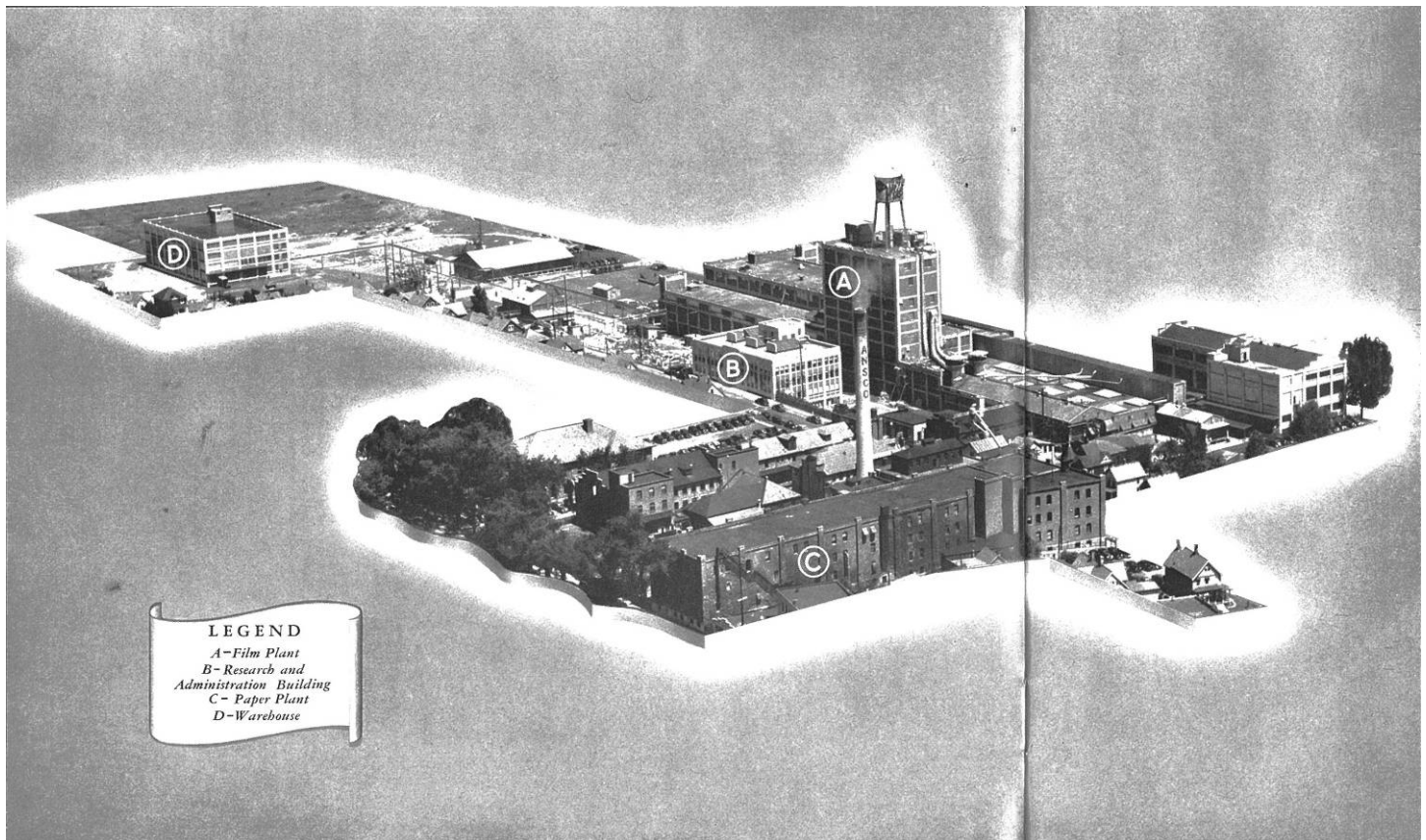
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**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
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The Ansko Company Charles Street Factory, 1939

From *The Story of Agfa Ansco 1842-1939*, page 4-5

An excellent image of the Charles Street Factory before World War II. Here, 15 Charles Street is marked with a "C" as the Paper Plant (bottom center), with the Power House and Boiler House building just behind it. Behind are the large reinforced concrete film plant and the Administration Building. This image gives a good view of the size and configuration of the factory site.

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Aerial View of AnSCO Factory, ca. 1964

From *AnSCO: Cameras, Construction & Community*, page 3.

This view shows the size and scale of the AnSCO company facilities along Jarvis and Charles Streets near Clinton Street after World War II. The buildings at 15 and 17 Charles Street are circled for reference, and an arrow marks the 219 Clinton Street warehouse. Notice the large new power plant in the foreground of the image (bottom, center) which was built in 1946. The raised conduits are visible, crossing over Charles Street to the building's north, connecting to the west elevation of 15 Charles Street. This power facility appears to have been constructed to boost the capacity or replace the functionality of the smaller and older 17 Charles Street building.

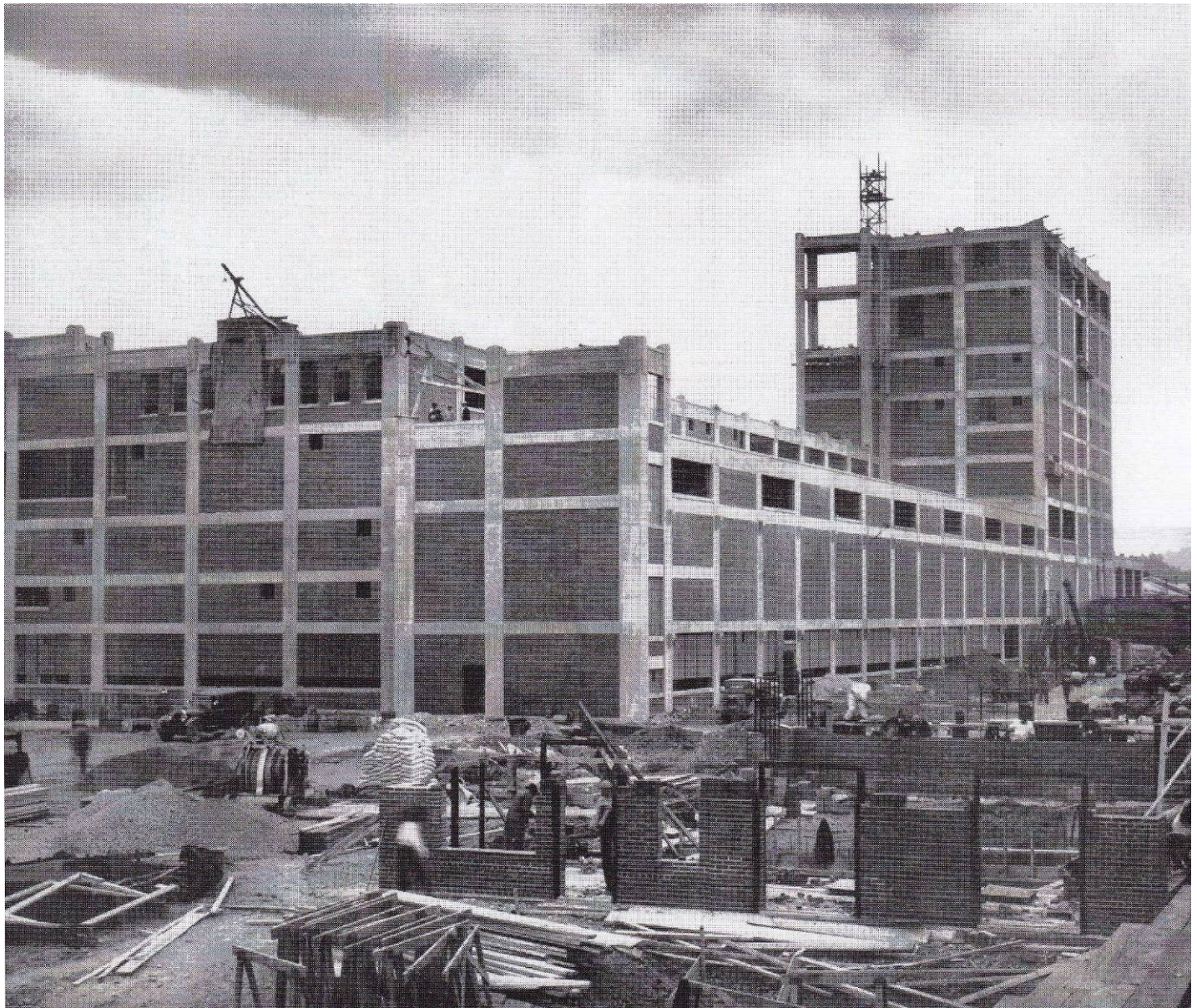
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**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS**

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Construction of the new Ansco Factory Building, 1929
From *Ansco: Cameras, Construction & Community*, page 9.

An excellent example of the newer reinforced concrete factory buildings that were added to the Charles Street beginning in the 1920s. The building here is the Film Plant which, when crowned with its large water tower, would become synonymous with the Ansco Charles Street plant.

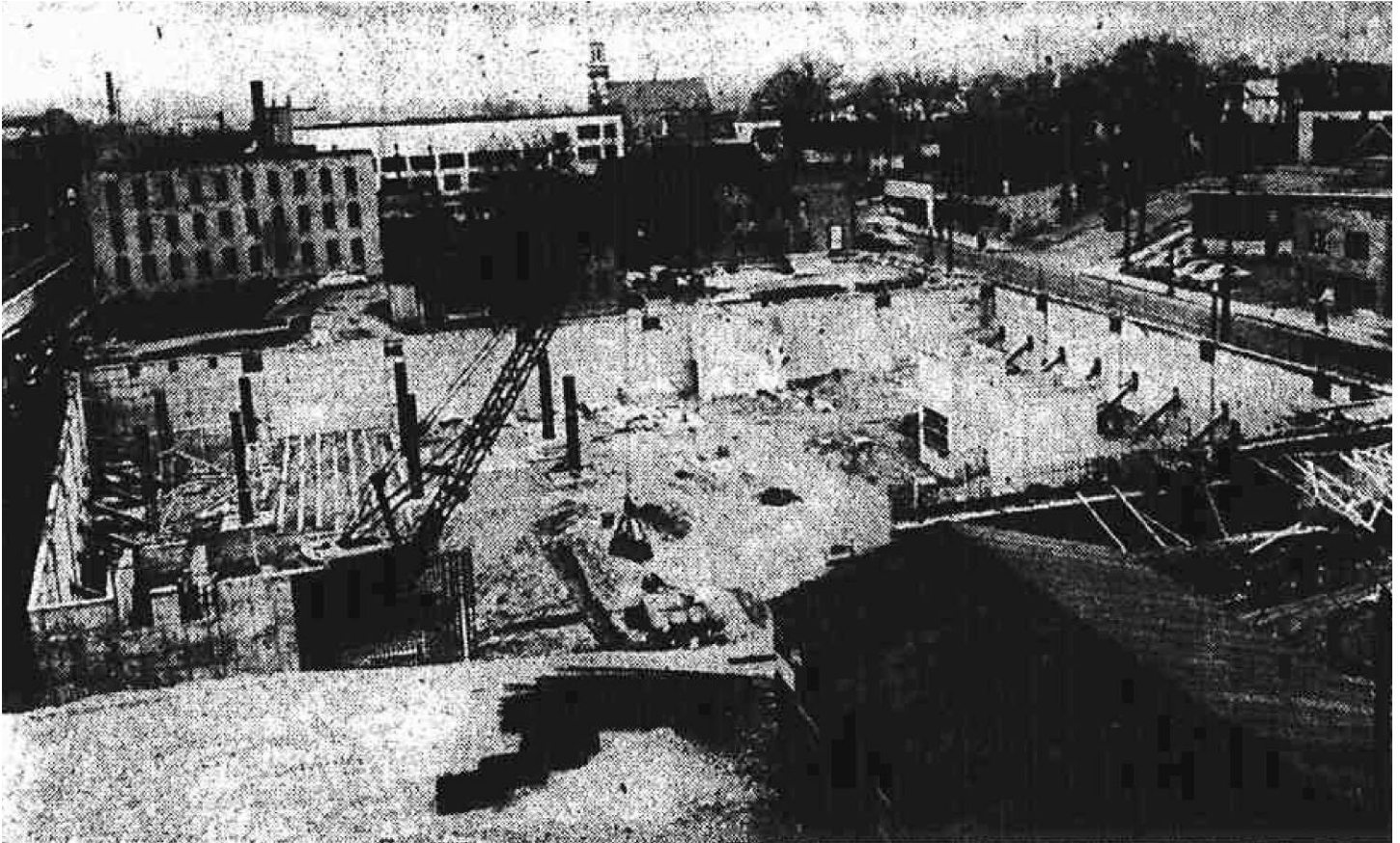
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Construction of the new Ansko Warehouse at Clinton Street, 1954

From Binghamton Press. "Ansko Addition." January 25, 1954.

This image shows the construction of the foundation for the Ansko warehouse in January of 1954, where it was noted that construction had started in fall of 1953. This image shows the large interior volume of the building, provided by its grid of structural steel, as well as its exterior shell of concrete block, clad in brick at the Clinton Street elevation.

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The Anasco (Anitec) Factory, Charles Street (1999, by Bob Chaffee)

This image, taken looking south-west from around the northern end of Charles Street shows the expanse of buildings, largely reinforced concrete buildings from the 1920s-1950s. 15 and 17 Charles Street are located just outside of this image, at the right. The buildings in this view would all be demolished in 2000 to make way for redevelopment.

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**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
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The Ansco (Anitec) Factory, Charles Street (1999, by Bob Chaffee)

This image, taken looking north-east on Charles Street, shows the tallest of the buildings to occupy the Ansco factory site. This 8-story reinforced concrete building was built 1945-46 as the Emulsion Building and was a landmark in Binghamton's First Ward neighborhood for almost 50 years. It was crowned for many years with the signature water tower which had the Ansco, and later Anitec, name painted on it. The smaller building at the left of this image is the Art Deco Office and Laboratory Building, built 1938. Demolished 2000.

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The Anasco (Anitec) Factory, Charles Street (1999, by Bob Chaffee)

This is an excellent image showing the 1938 Art Deco Laboratory and Office Building that fronted onto the east side of Charles Street. As an industrial building, it was designed using a reinforced concrete system, however the exterior piers are giving a geometric Art Deco treatment. Also note the three flag poles surmounting the building above the entry pavilion, and the curved metal canopy above the entry door. Demolished 2000.

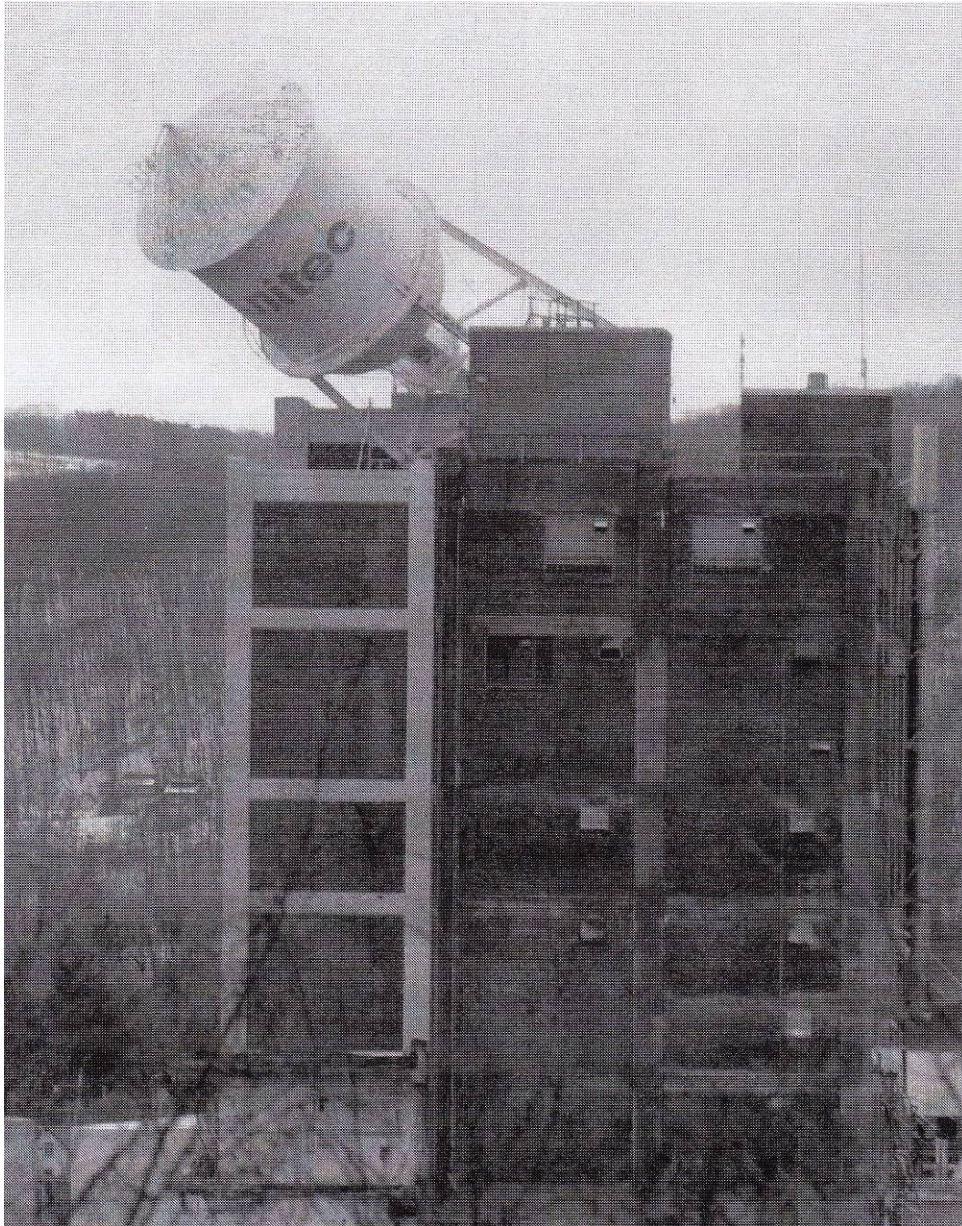
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Demolition of the AnSCO Factory, 2000

From *AnSCO: Cameras, Construction & Community*, page 15.

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Aerial view of former Ansko Company Charles Street factory site, 2010

In a comparison between the historic aerial images from 1939 and 1964, note that the majority of the former Ansko company factory has been demolished. The sole remaining significant buildings, here circled, are those at 15 and 17 Charles Street and 219 Clinton Street. The brick industrial buildings on Charles Street represent some of the earliest buildings built by the Ansko company in Binghamton.

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STREET FACTORY BUILDINGS**

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Photographs taken by CBCA 2011-2012



15 Charles Street, east elevation looking NW



17 Charles Street, east elevation looking NW

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17 Charles Street (foreground) and 15 Charles Street (rear), looking SW



15 Charles Street, north and west elevations looking SE

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17 Charles Street, interior of physical therapy space



15 Charles Street, first floor storage view

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15 Charles Street, detail of first floor interior

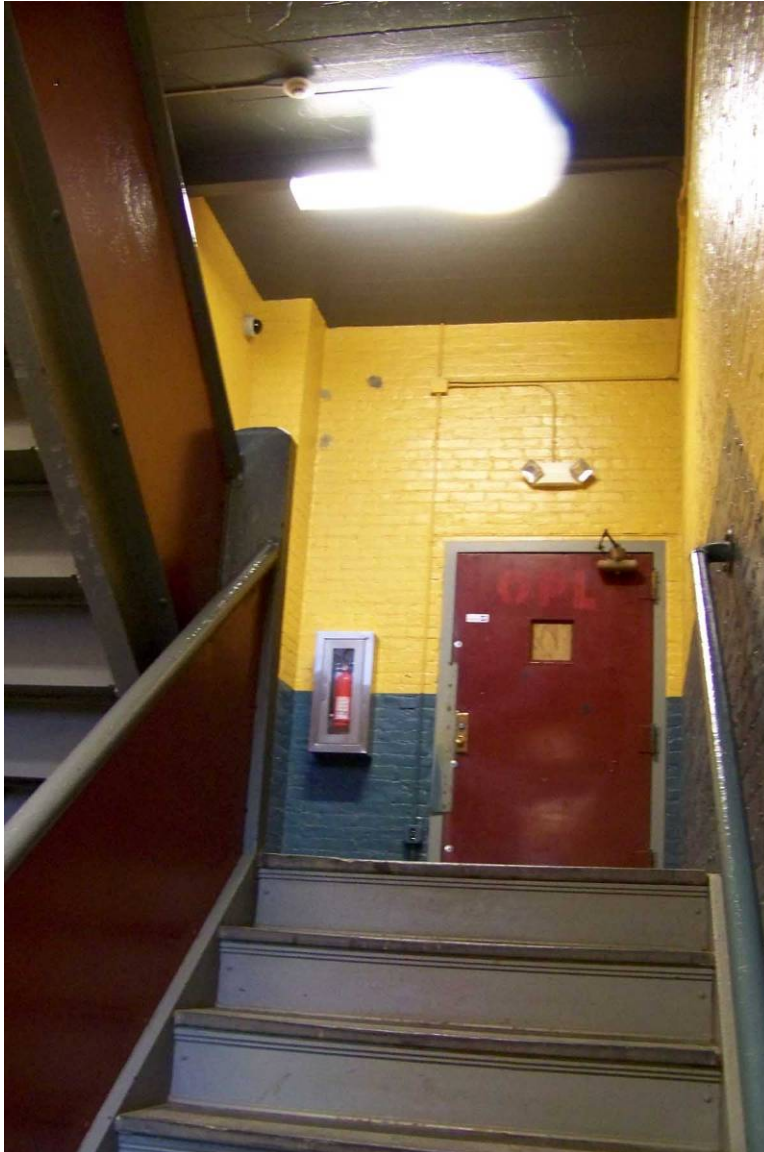
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15 Charles Street, view of typical stair

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**ANSCO COMPANY CHARLES
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15 Charles Street, second floor dance studio



219 Clinton Street, east elevation looking SW

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219 Clinton Street, east elevation