

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

(Former)

historic Windsor Cotton Mills Office

and/or common

2. Location

street & number East Corner of Market and Gilmer streets not for publication

city, town Burlington vicinity of

state North Carolina code 037 county Alamance code 001

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Charlotte College Foundation c/o Burlington Industries

street & number Box 21207

city, town Greensboro vicinity of state North Carolina 27420

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Alamance County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Graham state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Architectural Inventory of Burlington has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981-82 federal state county local

depository for survey records N.C. Division of Archives and History

city, town Raleigh state North Carolina

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The 1890 Windsor Cotton Mills Office is situated at the east corner of Market and Gilmer streets. The office building faces the Southern Railway tracks to the southwest, from which it is separated by Market Street. Grass covers the small southwest and northwest yards, and in the front yard, near the southwest corner of the building, a tall hardwood branches out over much of the lawn. There are no foundation plantings. Asphalt paving extends from the rear elevation of the office to the rest of the mill complex. The contemporary two-story factory, originally similar in design to the office, is located to the east on a northeast-southwest axis, perpendicular to the office. The factory has been considerably altered through a series of renovations and additions. One of the one-story additions now connects the southwest end of the mill to the southeast elevation of the office building. A chain link fence topped with barbed wire surrounds the entire complex. Due to the extent of the alterations to the factory components of the Windsor Cotton Mills complex, only the office block, which survives remarkably intact, is being nominated.

The two-story brick office building is almost cubical in form, its side elevations slightly narrower than the front and rear. The side elevations are three bays with the windows asymmetrically placed across the facades. The main and rear facades are four bays in the first story and three in the second, all doors and windows symmetrically arranged. On the rear, the middle two bays, originally doors, have each been filled with brick and a very small window. Tie rod end discs appear between the floors on this elevation. The other original windows are all twelve-over-twelve double-hung sashes in segmental arches with lintels of paired headers. The bricks covering the elevations are laid in one-to-five common bond. Brick machicolation in low relief embellishes the parapet that rises from the main and side facades to conceal a flat or very shallow pitched roof. An interior corbelled chimney stack rises near the middle of the rear elevation.

The most notable feature of the Windsor Cotton Mills Office is the one-story hip-roofed porch that extends across most of the lower main facade. Covered in raised seam tin, the porch roof is supported by chamfered wooden posts with molded wooden bases and molding near the top. Above the top molding, sawnwork spandrels with quatrefoil cut-outs decorate the posts. The wooden porch floor rests on brick piers. The porch shelters the four evenly spaced bays, consisting of two entrances in the middle and a window at either end identical to the rear facade prior to its alteration. The segmental arches of the entrances, each with a single door, are identical to those of the windows. Each door has two pairs of vertical panels, the taller top pair filled with glass.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1890 **Builder/Architect** Lafayette Holt

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

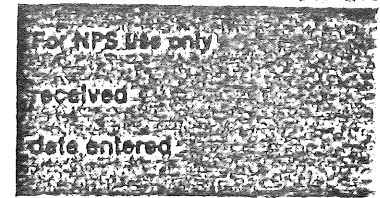
Constructed in 1890, the Windsor Cotton Mills Office and its adjacent factory constitute one of the five cotton mills established in Burlington by the descendants of Edwin M. Holt between 1883 and 1892. These mills were instrumental in the development of the city as a textile center of national importance. Windsor Cotton Mills was one of the four Holt family factories designed by the leading textile technologist, Lafayette Holt. Windsor also has the distinction of being the only one of these five mills to have been acquired by northern investors during the general movement of capital into North Carolina's textile industry at the turn of this century. Although the rest of the factory has undergone considerable alteration, the brick Windsor Cotton Mills Office is notable for its virtually intact condition that reveals the fine attention to detail used in the construction of mill offices during the late nineteenth century.

Criteria Assessment

- A. The Windsor Cotton Mills Office and its adjacent factory formed one of Burlington's major late nineteenth-century cotton mills that were pivotal factors in the city's rise as a national textile center.
- B. The Windsor Cotton Mills Office is part of the mill organized by Robert L. and James H. Holt, Jr., leading local textile manufacturers who perpetuated the heritage begun by their grandfather, textile pioneer Edwin M. Holt.
- C. The 1890 brick Windsor Cotton Mills Office survives virtually intact as a reminder of the close attention to detail manifested in later nineteenth-century mill office construction.

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It was indeed fortunate for Company Shops that expansion of the textile industry offset the demise of the railroad maintenance and repair shops. The town's economy did decline for a while as people moved away in response to administrative changes accompanying the North Carolina Railroad Company's leasing of its line to the Richmond and Danville Railroad in 1871. But Alamance County's textile industry had been growing ever since Edwin M. Holt opened his mill on Little Alamance Creek in 1837, and with the development of steam power it became possible to build mills away from the streams and rivers that formerly had provided the sole power of the cotton mill machinery. The convenient transportation afforded by the railroad line rendered Company Shops an ideal location for new mills. By the time the repair and maintenance shops were removed altogether in 1886, the steadily increasing need for labor by the burgeoning textile industry was bringing an influx of new residents to the town. As its character was transformed with the new economic base, the town changed its name from Company Shops to Burlington in 1887.¹

The family and descendants of Edwin M. Holt and his distant cousin, Peter F. Holt, were the driving forces behind Burlington's emergence as a textile manufacturing center of national importance. In 1882, Peter Holt and others opened the town's first mill, Lafayette Cotton Mills, designed by Holt's son, textile technologist Lafayette Holt. Between 1883 and 1892, Edwin M. Holt's sons and grandsons established five mills in Burlington. Four of these were designed by Lafayette Holt, including the Windsor Cotton Mills founded by brothers James H. Holt, Jr. and Robert L. Holt.²

The two Holt brothers had learned the textile industry from the ground up. Their father, James Henry Holt, Sr., was the oldest of the three sons to whom Edwin M. Holt turned over his business interests in 1864. James H. Holt, Sr., who had entered the family's banking business in 1852 at age nineteen, became the leader of E. M. Holt's Sons and soon began expanding his own business interests, thus providing managerial positions for his seven sons. On the Haw River four miles north of Graham, in 1867 he and three others built Carolina Mills, of which he gave a one-fifth interest to his son Lawrence in 1873. When his two oldest sons, Walter L. Holt and Edwin C. Holt were ready to enter the business in 1880, he built Glencoe Cotton Mills nearby where they learned from the ground up. Walter and Edwin set an example for their younger brothers when they went out on their own in 1886 to settle in Burlington where they organized the W. L. and E. C. Holt Mill, later renamed the Elmira Cotton Mill. In 1890, James H. Holt, Jr. and Robert L. Holt, ages twenty-six and twenty-four, respectively, established Windsor Cotton Mills in the area known as East Burlington, with James H. Holt, Sr. acting in an advisory capacity. Two years later, the elder James H. Holt would put two other sons, Samuel and William, into the cotton mill business as managers of Lakeside Mills.³

The establishment of Windsor Cotton Mills was chronicled in the Alamance Gleaner. An item in the February 13, 1890 issue of that newspaper states,

The Burlington News says that Messrs. Jas. H. Holt, Jr., and Rob't. L. Holt have bought a site at that place upon which to erect a cotton mill. Alamance already has fifteen cotton mills which are doing a prosperous business. These young men know the cotton milling business and that they will make a success goes without saying.⁴

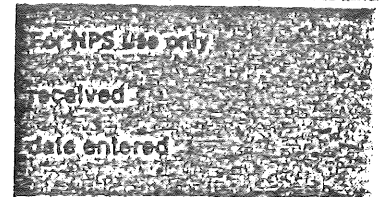
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Two weeks later, the paper reported that James H. Holt, Jr. and Robert L. Holt recorded a deed on February 25, 1890 for the new mill site; they purchased about thirty-seven acres, on the north side of the railroad and opposite Aurora Mills (formerly Lafayette Cotton Mills), from the North Carolina Railroad Company.⁵ That deed was executed on February 1, 1890.⁶ The newspaper article went on to state that the Holts planned to erect a two-story, 200- by 75-foot mill "to spin exclusively, making such yarns as are used for knitting purposes.... Theirs will be the third or fourth mill of this class in the South."⁷ According to Julian Hughes in Development of the Textile Industry in Alamance County, "Lafayette Holt... came to terms with the father [James H. Holt, Sr.] and two sons and designed the Windsor Mills. Construction started in the spring of 1890, and so clever did Lafayette Holt supervise the building and installation of machinery that the mill was dedicated early in 1891."⁸

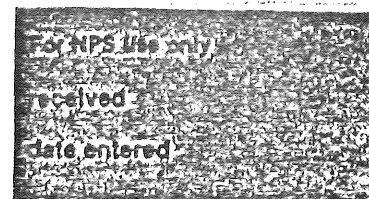
The evolution of Windsor Cotton Mills is well recorded in contemporary newspapers, deeds, and later accounts. In a special textile edition of the Raleigh News and Observer published November 28, 1895, an item on Windsor Cotton Mills reported that it was directed by Robert L. and James H. Holt, Jr., and managed by William I. Holt, a younger brother of the two directors. The article also stated that the mill has 3,120 spindles and 160 looms for the manufacture of "all kinds of colored fabrics, plaids, cheriots, shirtings, domets, cotton worsteds."⁹ After the death of James H. Holt, Sr., in 1897, administrative changes began to take place at Windsor when Robert L. Holt left the mill to look after the Carolina and Glencoe mills on the Haw River. Later, James H. Holt, Jr. added the direction of Lakeside Cotton Mills to his responsibilities. As Julian Hughes points out, fortunately Windsor Cotton Mills had such a good accountant in J. M. Browning that James H. Holt, Jr. did not have to worry about Windsor while he concentrated on Lakeside affairs.¹⁰

Windsor Cotton Mills bears the distinction of having been the only mill in Burlington acquired by northern interest in the general movement of capital into the state's textile industry early in this century. In July, 1903, Robert L. Holt and James H. Holt, Jr., sold the mill tract of 36.83 acres, all of the mill buildings and machinery, and the business itself, including "all trade marks, ... trade names and good will, stock on machinery and in process and all executory contracts in connection with said business," to Southern Textile Co. of New Jersey for \$129,150.¹¹ Southern Textile also owned Chicora Cotton Mills in York County, South Carolina, and Morehead Cotton Mills in Sunflower County, Mississippi. A little more than one year later, in November of 1904, the Southern Textile Co. filed for bankruptcy. In June of 1905, Walter Coles Cabell, Trustee of the Estate of Southern Textile Co., was directed by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York to sell Southern Textile's real estate at public auction. In July of the same year Cabell sold at auction all of Southern Textile's mills, including Windsor Cotton Mills, to the International Trust Company of Maryland for \$110,500, more than seventy-five percent of the appraised value of the premises.¹² On December 8, 1905, International Trust Company of Maryland realized a gain almost triple its investment of the previous month when it sold the Windsor, Chicora and Morehead mills to Bellevue Mills Co. of New Jersey for \$325,000.¹³

Windsor Cotton Mills remained under the control of northern interests as Bellevue Cotton Mills until June 1, 1912 when Bellevue Mills Co. sold the Burlington mill to King Cotton Mills Corporation of Virginia for \$50,000.¹⁴ The president of King Cotton, based in Richmond, Virginia, was Thomas F. Jefress (or Jeffries).

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Whereas the Sanborn Insurance maps indicate few, if any, changes to the Windsor Cotton Mills plant and village by the Southern Textile and Bellevue companies, the maps and newspaper accounts reveal that during the late 1910s and 1920s the property was improved by King Cotton. A one-story supply room on the southwest corner of the original factory and a separate warehouse south of the mill were added by 1918.¹⁵ A large one-story brick addition built between 1924 and 1929 connected the factory to the office, which remained intact.¹⁶ The special textile issue of the Charlotte Observer published January 3, 1919, reported that in Burlington King Cotton Mills Corp. owned "17 acres, all being in the city limits, and a great deal of money and time have been spent in beautifying the mill premises and the grounds about the homes of operatives." According to the newspaper, Robert M. Jeffries was secretary and general manager of the mill and T. K. Curlee was superintendent. Under their direction, humidifying systems and a Carrier air conditioning system were installed to reduce lint in the air. Each of the mill's twenty-three cottages, on two-third-acre lots, had running water and electric lights, and plans for a playground were under way. The Charlotte Observer also stated that King Cotton sent flower catalogues to the mill families so that they could order seeds and that the company offered prizes for the best-kept premises and best flower and vegetable gardens.¹⁷

Deeds recorded at the Alamance County Courthouse indicate that King Cotton Corp. sold most of its Burlington house lots around Windsor Cotton Mills in groups in 1939 and 1940.¹⁸ On May 21, 1941, King Cotton sold the Burlington mill tract and all factory buildings and machinery to Celanese Lanese Corporation of Delaware, d.b.a. Celanese Corporation of America, for \$100,000.¹⁹ The new owners modernized the plant for the production of Celanese rayon yarns. In the 1960s, Celanese sold the factory to Burlington Industries. (The property continues to be occupied by Burlington Industries which recently donated it to the Charlotte College Foundation.)

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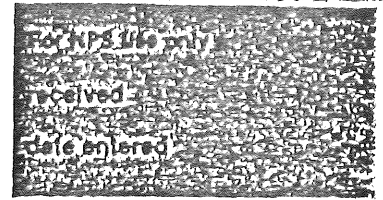
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Notes

(Some of the information presented in this nomination was gathered by Allison Harris in the course of her architectural inventory of Burlington.)

1

For a detailed history of Company Shops and the city's early years as Burlington, see Durward T. Stokes, Company Shops: The Town Built By a Railroad (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 1981).

2

Julian Hughes, Development of the Textile Industry in Alamance County (Burlington, N.C.: privately published, 1949), pp. 57-67.

3

Ibid., pp. 26-31.

4

Alamance Gleaner, 13 February 1890.

5

Alamance Gleaner, 27 February 1890.

6

Alamance County Registry of Deeds (ACRD), Book 14, Page 44.

7

Alamance Gleaner, 27 February 1890.

8

Hughes, p. 31.

9

News and Observer, 28 November 1899, p. 30.

10

Hughes, p. 32.

11

ACRD, Book 25, Page 160.

12

ACRD, Book 28, Page 576.

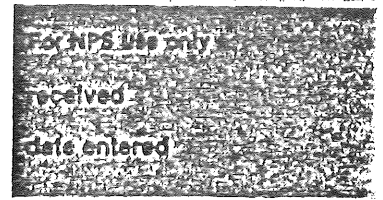
13

ACRD, Book 29, Page 100.

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14

ACRD, Book 46, Page 418.

15

Sanborn Map Company, "Alamance County, N.C.--Burlington, " 1918 series.

16

Ibid., 1924 and 1929 series

17

Charlotte Observer, 3 January 1919.

18

See Grantor and Grantee indices and Deed Books 130, 131 and 132, ACRD.

19

ACRD, Book 133, Page 454.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See notes on continuation sheets and Item 9 of "Historic Resources of Burlington"

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Burlington

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	7	6	4	1	3	8	0	3	9	9	4	8	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

B

Zone	Easting			Northing										

C

Zone	Easting			Northing										

D

Zone	Easting			Northing										

E

Zone	Easting			Northing										

F

Zone	Easting			Northing										

G

Zone	Easting			Northing										

H

Zone	Easting			Northing										

Verbal boundary description and justification

Block 127, Lot 100 Burlington Tax Maps: Only the east corner of the lot containing the office, as indicated on the attached plat map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Claudia P. Roberts

organization Consultant to the City of Burlington

date 6-30-83

street & number 425 South Lexington Avenue

telephone (919) 227-3603 Ext. 79

city or town Burlington

state North Carolina

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William S. Frier, Jr.

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date November 16, 1983

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

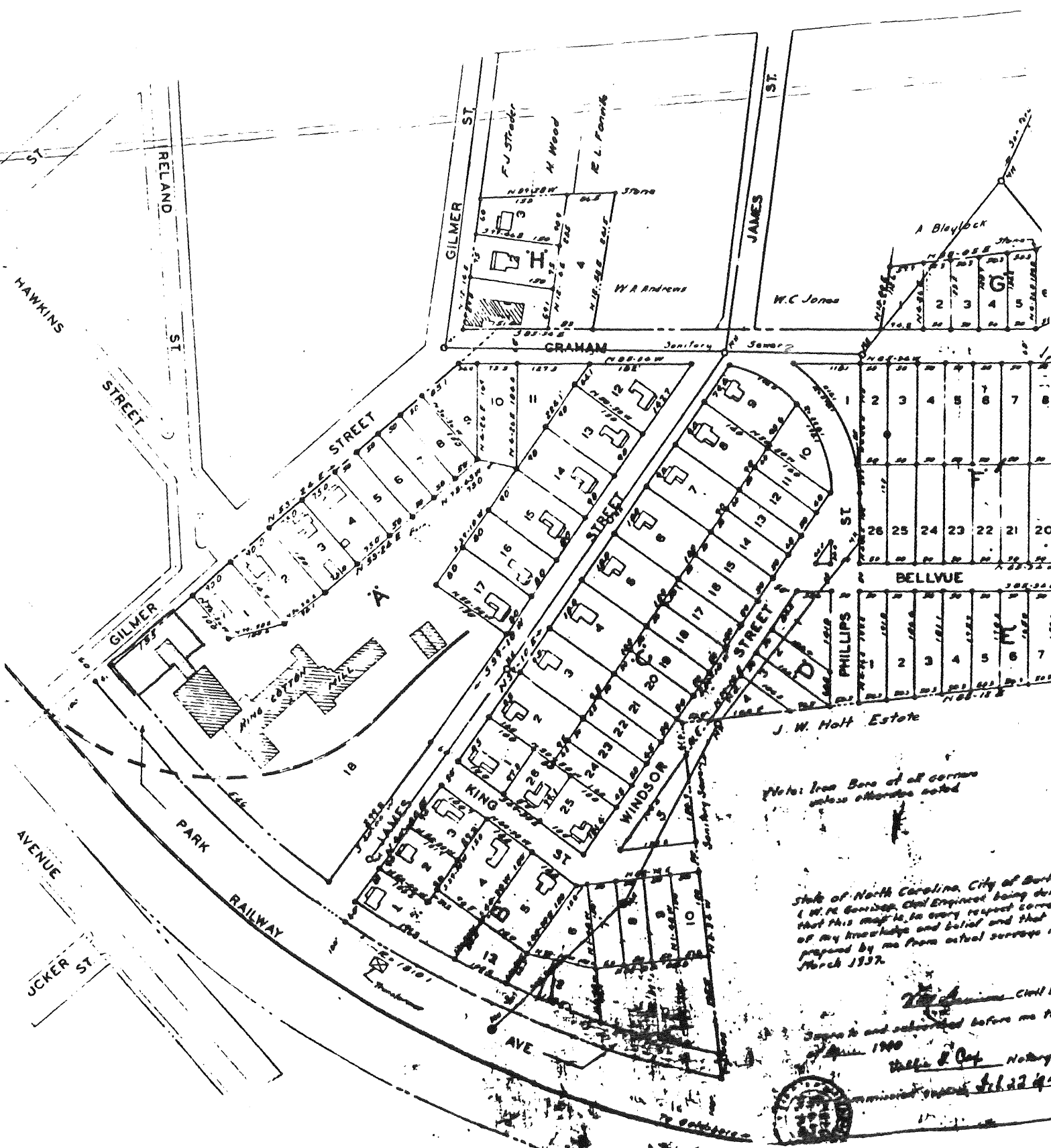
date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



Note: Iron Bars at all corners unless otherwise noted

State of North Carolina, City of Burlington
 I, W. M. Garrison, Civil Engineer being duly sworn, depose and subscribe before me that this map is, in every respect correct of my knowledge and belief and that so prepared by me from actual surveys on March 1932.

W. M. Garrison, Civil Engineer
 Subscribed and sworn to before me this 17th day of April 1932
 W. M. Garrison, Notary Public
 Notary Public for the State of North Carolina



