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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM	FOR NPS US	
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CLASSIFICATION	Carr Crey/	1.70
CATEGORY	671716	ACCESSIBLE
(Check One) OWNERSHIP	STATUS	TO THE PUBLIC
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Site Structure Private In Process	☐ Unoccupied	Restricted
□ Object □ Both □ Being Considered	Preservation work	Unrestricted
	· in progress	□ No
		1
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)		
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				(Check One)	
COMPLETION	☐ Excellent	X Good	☐ Fair	Deteriorat	ed 🗌 Ruins	☐ Unexposed
CONDITION	(Check One)			(Che	ock One)	
	☐ Alte	red	X Unaltered		Moved	X Original Site

Located against the base of Staunton's Sears Hill, the Wharf Area is a compact warehouse and commercial district that generally encompasses Middlebrook Avenue between South Lewis Street and South New Street, and a block of South Augusta Street between Middlebrook Avenue and Johnson Street. The block of Middlebrook Avenue between South Lewis Street and South Augusta Street forms a kind of small trapezoidal piazza surrounded by a variety of commercial architecture. Lining the north side of the block is a row of small, attached late-nineteenth century warehouses that vary between two and three stories in height. The architectural treatment of the warehouses diverges widely: some have very simple brick fronts broken only by plain window openings and doors, while others are ornamented with rich brickwork details such as corbeled cornices and elaborated window surrounds. The rich brickwork ornamentation on the small warehouse at 5 Middlebrook Avenue is a superior example of its type. This block of warehouses faces across the space onto the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad passenger station and freight The somewhat robust passenger station, which exhibits a blending of classical and bungaloid details, closes the vista at the south end of South A principal focal point for the area is the former Ameri-Augusta Street. can Hotel building located at the northeast corner of Middlebrook Avenue and South Augusta Street. Though now used as a warehouse, this simple but imposing Greek Revival structure is a rare example of the earliest hotels built in the nation.

East of South Augusta Street on Middlebrook Avenue is a small, latenineteenth structure, formerly a garment factory, and the vast White Star Mills building which forms the eastern edge of the Wharf Area. Silhouetted against Sears Hill, the trapezoidal-shaped four-story mill building is a major downtown Staunton landmark.

The block of South Augusta Street leading into the Wharf Area is lined with two and three-story late-nineteenth century commercial structures. Most of the buildings on this narrow street feature rich Italianate cornices, elaborate window treatments and metal shop fronts. The Simmons Parts Company at 119-123 South Augusta Street is embellished with particularly fine cast-iron architectural ornaments. The facade of the commercial building across the street at 120-124 South Augusta Street is an unusual example of wood used to resemble both masonry and metallic forms. The highly original detailing on this building has a somewhat oriental flavor.

The historic appearance of the Wharf Area is further enhanced by the survival in some sections of Belgian Block paving, brick paving, and stone curbs. It is likely that most of Middlebrook Avenue was originally surfaced with Belgian block, but the major part of it is now covered with sheet asphalt.

The following inventory provides a brief architectural description of the buildings included in the Wharf Area Preservation Zone.

Middlebrook Avenue:

Cast Iron Footbridge to Sears Hill
Middlebrook Avenue: Cast iron, Pratt and Warren truss construction.
Late-nineteenth century.

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8.

IGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One or More as Pre-Columbian 15th Century	Appropriate) 16th Century 17th Century	☐ 18th Century ☐ 19th Century	X 20th Century
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicat	le and Known)		
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Ch Aboriginal Prehistoric Historic Agriculture Architecture Art Commerce Communications Conservation	Education Education Engineering Industry Invention Landscape Architecture Literature Military Music	Political Religion/Philosophy Science Sculpture Social/Humanitarian Theater X Transportation	VI Urban Planning Other (Specify)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Wharf Area survives as an unusually picturesque and excellently preserved example of a Turn-of-the-Century warehouse and commercial district. Proceeding south on South Augusta Street or climbing east on Middlebrook Avenue, one is drawn through rows of late-nineteenth century and early-twentieth century storefronts and into an elongated plaza framed by small warehouses and serviced by three access roads and the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad. The area most likely gained its name by being a district developed for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of the town's goods. Replacing less substantial wooden stores which were destroyed by fires and increased prosperity, the buildingsof the Wharf are a visual manifestation of the remarkable growth of Staunton in the second half of the nineteenth century. In the early development of the area, all attention was focused towards the railroad as it increasingly became the force behind the entire city's progress.

During the 1830's the town of Staunton was hardly more than a village with a population of about two thousand and it was not until the Virginia Central Rialroad reached the town in 1852 that real commercial growth began. The advent of the railroad changed the economic structure of Staunton for it made it possible for a merchant to cut by one third the cost of goods previously brought in by pack trains. In return the new line of communication opened up the Tidewater market to the farmers of Augusta County. The growth brought about by the railroad helped to initiate the building of the American Hotel in the heart of what was to become the Wharf Area. still-standing American Hotel building, it would seem, has witnessed the growth of this commercial district, originally part of A.H.H. Stuart's "Meadow". This building as it appears on an 1857 panoramic view of Staunton had a front gable, Ionic porch and cupola. It is said that when General Grant passed through Staunton in 1870, he was entertained by the Stonewall Brigade on the porch of the American Hotel.

During the War between the States, the Wharf Area came to play an essential part in the operation of Staunton as a military post, supply depot, training and hospital center. Along South Augusta Street arsenals were established and quartermaster and commissary warehouses were set up in easy distance from the railroad. The economic and commercial growth of Staunton continued despite the War, and from the United States census we find a thirty-two percent increase in population between 1860 and 1870. Although the Panic of 1873 was a blow to the business community of the Wharf Area, there was prosperity enough to erect the elaborate Burns Building in 1874 on the site of three earlier wooden buildings.

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tional 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is: Nothern State To Local To	i in the
National State Local Date	
James W. Moody, Jr., Director	
Title Va. Historic Landmarks Commission	
DEC 21 1971 . Keeper of The National Register	

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	
VIRGINIA	
COUNTY	
STAUNTON (in cit	(y)
FOR NPS USE ONL	Υ
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

Page 1. (Number all entries) (Continuation Sheet)

The Wharf Area Preservation Zone includes all properties with frontage on Middlebrook Avenue between S. New Street and S. Lewis Street, as well as all properties with frontage on S. Augusta Street between Johnson Street and Middlebrook Avenue. see Continuation Short # 5

7. Chesapeake and Ohio Freight Depot Middlebrook Avenue: Brick and frame, one story shed with second story frame addition, gable roof, about six-bay long. Late-nineteenth century.

132 - 14 - 0001

132-14-0002 Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad Station Middlebrook Avenue: Brick and stucco, one-and-one-half stories, low hipped roof, eight-bay front, overhanging roof with exposed rafter ends and brackets, dormer on west side, frontispiece with triple arcade, stone trim, pilasters, decorative mullions. Bungaloid; built 1902.

132 - 14 - 0003 Railroad Telegraph House

Middlebrook Avenue: Brick and frame, two stories, gable roof, one-bay first floor and four-bay second floor, imbricated shingles in gable, penting on gable end and exposed rafter ends, teeth motif brick course through first floor, brick chimney with corbeled neck, multi square-pane transom over window. Queen Anne; late-nineteenth century.

132-14-0004 Erskine Building

- 1-3 Middlebrook Avenue: Brick, three stories, flat roof, seven-bay front, open arcade lights first floor, molded stone cornice, windows tripled, castellated motifs. Built 1904.
- 5 Middlebrook Avenue: Brick, two stories, flat roof, three-bay front, ornately corbeled cornice, facade divided by pilasters and belt courses, windows recessed into segmental hood moldings. Circa 1890. 132-14-0005
- 7-9 Middlebrook Avenue: Brick, three stories, flat roof, four-bay front, corbeled cornice, string courses are extended around the tops of the segmental arched windows. Circa 1900. 132-14-0006
- 11-13 Middlebrook Avenue: Brick, two stories, flat roof, five-bay front, bracketed cornice, string courses are extended around the tops of the segmental arched windows, sawn scroll-work lintels, brick teeth motif below sills and in cornice. Late-nineteenth century. 132-14-0007
- 15 Middlebrook Avenue: Brick, two stories, flat roof, three-bay front, heavily molded cornice supported by brackets, wooden lintels with faceted corner blocks and wooden sills. Late-nineteenth century. 132-0014-0008
- 17 Middlebrook Avenue: Brick, two stories, flat roof, three-bay front, corbeled cornice, striated pilasters rest on belt course, segmental arched

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	
VIRGINIA	
COUNTY	The Line
STAUNTON (in city	1)
FOR NPS USE ONL	Y
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

Page 2.

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

windows, three-panel molded double door. | Circa 1900.

19-21 Middlebrook Avenue: Brick, two stories, flat roof, six-bay front divided into a pair of three-bay units, corbeled cornice, pilasters bind ends and mark the center, store fronts on first floor. Circa 1900. 132-14-0010

23 and 25 Middlebrook Avenue: Brick, two-and-one-half stories, flat roof, six-bay front divided into a pair of three-bay units, solid parapet with recessed panels, segmental arch of windows filled with sawn scroll-work lintels, enlarged central bays used for loading. Circa 1900. 122-14-0011

27 Middlebrook Avenue: Brick, two stories, flat roof, three-bay front, solid parapet with recessed panels, segmental arch of windows filled with sawn scroll-work lintels, enlarged central bay used for loading. Circa 1900.

29 Middlebrook Avenue: Brick, three stories, flat roof, three-bay front, stepped gable front, segmental arched windows, enlarged central bays used for 132-14-0013 loading. Circa 1900.

Fulz's Lumber Yard 132-14-0014

44 Middlebrook Avenue: Brick, two stories, flat roof, four-bay front plus onebay diagonally cut recessed entrance, solid parapet, molded cornice, stone lintels and sills, round arch vehicle entrances. Late-nineteenth century.

South Augusta Street:

John Burns Building 132 -14-0015 108-114, 116-118 South Augusta Street: Brick, three stories, flat roof, thirteen-bay front, bracketed cornice, flat and arched hood moldings, projecting sills. Italianate; built 1874.

111-113 South Augusta Street: Brick, two stories, flat roof, four-bay front, heavily molded metal cornice ornamented with brackets, modillions, finials and bosses, arcade of windows, cast iron store front. Late-nineteenth century.

115-117 South Augusta Street: Brick, two stories, flat roof, six-bay front, heavy metal cornice, second story window arcade with corbeled head surround; first story segmental head surrounds. Circa 1900. Demolished 1979-see Cont. Sheet#5 132-14-0017

119-123 South Augusta Street: Brick, two stories, flat roof, six-bay front, molded metal cornice with supporting brackets, rope motif metal hood moldings, cast iron first floor store front with modillion cornice and ornamental 132-14-0018 pilasters. Late-nineteenth century.

120-124 South Augusta Street: Wood facade, three stories, flat roof, five-bay front, bracketed cornice, windows with wood segmental arch lintels and sawn scroll-work, windows flanked by fluted panels giving pilaster effect. Late-132-14-0019 nineteenth century.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

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Page 3.

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

7.

American Hotel

132-14-0020

125 South Augusta Street: Brick, three stories, deck-on-hipped roof, eightbay front, molded cornice, frontispiece emphasized by pilasters and crowning pediment flanked by chimneys. Greek Revival; circa 1854; west end bay added.

South New Street:

1/2

132-14-0021

15, 17, 19 South New Street: Brick, two stories, flat roof, three-bay front, bracketed cornice, with drop pendants, corbeled string courses are extended around heads of segmental arch windows, sawn scroll-work lintels, coursed limestone rubble foundation. Late-nineteenth century.

White Star Mills 132 - 14 - 0022

121, 123, 125 South New Street: Brick with coursed rough-hewn ashlar foundation, four stories, flat roof, six-bay front, triple band corbeled cornice, paired bays divided into three recessed sections, segmental arch windows. Circa 1900.

FOR ADDITIONAL INVENTORY, SEE CONT. SHEET #5

8.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Wharf developed a colorful character built around the commercial ventures of the commission merchants, wholesale grocers, saloons, distilleries and liveries. Surviving from this period of the 1880's is the Erskine Miller building located at 5 Middlebrook Avenue. During the 1880's Augusta County had a reknowned wild game supply and the Wharf with it's wealth of commission merchants was undoubtedly the point from which game was shipped to the hotels of Washington and Baltimore. Staunton also by this time had become a major railway break between Washington and Cincinnati, putting the American Hotel in a convenient location for passengers seeking food and rest on this long trip. In 1890 it is said that more passengers embarked and disembarked at Staunton's Chesapeake & Ohio station than at any other point on the line except Richmond. The American Hotel accomodated one hundred and fifty guests and in 1878 the daily rates ranged from two to two and a half dollars.

Introduced in 1890, street cars drawn by mustang mules supplied an added method of transportation running from the railway station up Augusta Street. Also in 1890 the Staunton Development Company was established with the intent of linking the coal and iron of the areas to the west of Staunton with the local limestone. The company office was located in the western side of what had been the American Hotel and the remainder of the building was transformed into the Staunton Shoe Factory. The new development company backed by northern and western capitalists, was headed by Mr. Erskine Miller who was both president and chief executive officer. On April 30, 1890, the Staunton Vindicator reported that a train destroyed the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway station; "Mowing it down, as grass, and snapping off the six inch iron columns, used as roof supports, for the distance of three hundred feet, as if they were mere pipe stems. The front roof of the passenger station, the windows and the front wall of the east baggage room was completely wrecked."

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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8.

From pictures in the Chamber of Commerce book put out by the South Publishing Co. in 1893, it appears that the building at 7-9 Middlebrook Avenue postdates this publication. The present Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Station dates from 1902, and the type of brick employed in its construction was also used in the Erskine Building, built in 1904, directly across from the station.

Although it is perhaps not as active as in former years, there has been little alteration to mar the rich character of the Wharf, an area which since the mid-nineteenth century has been of vital importance to the history and growth of the city of Staunton.

9.

Brice, Marshall Moore, "Augusta County During the Civil War," Augusta Historical Bulletin, Vol. I, no. 2 (1965) pp. 5-19.

Clem, Gladys B., <u>It Happened Around Staunton in Virginia</u>, McClure Printing Co., Staunton, Virginia, 1964.

Gordon, Armistead C., <u>Staunton</u>, <u>Virginia</u> <u>Its</u> <u>Past</u>, <u>Present</u> <u>and</u> <u>Future</u>, The South Publishing Company, New York, 1893.

Hotchkiss, Jed, The City of Staunton, Augusta Co., Virginia and the Surrounding Country, Spectator Steam Printing-House, Staunton, Virginia, 1878.

Tams, William Purviance, "Recollections of Augusta County" Augusta Historical Bulletin, Vol. I, no. 1 (1965) pp. 7-28.

Files of Richard M. Hamrick, Jr.

215 Fillmore Street, Staunton, Virginia 24401.

Files of the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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WHARF AREA HISTORIC DISTRICT, Staunton, Virginia CONTINUATION SHEET 5

ITEM NUMBER 2,7,10 PAGE

CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS -- December 16, 1980

Continuation Sheet 1, Item 2, Page 1:

Delete statement and replace with:

The Wharf Area Historic District includes the following:

Middlebrook Avenue: North side from S. Lewis to S. Augusta streets and

South side from 44 (Fultz Lumber Yard) to White Star Mills Grain Bins, including railroad complex, footbridge, and water

tower:

West side: 120-124 S. Augusta Street:

East side: 111-125

S. New Street:

West side: 112

East side: 121-125 (White Star Mills)

- Continuation Sheet 2, Item 7, Page 2:

5th Entry: Fultz's Lumber Yard (spelling); 44 Middlebrook Avenue (add street no.)

8th Entry: 115-117 South Augusta Street -- demolished summer of 1979 by Augusta

County; now a vacant lot.

- Continuation Sheet 3, Item 7, Page 3

2d Entry: 15, 17, 19 South New Street -- change street no. to 112 South New Street.

- Item 7 -- Inventory Additions

Railroad Water Tower: erected prior to 1891; round, metal tower, 30 feet high;

132-14-0023 depth gauge in feet demarcations on one side.

Grain Bins (White Star Mills complex): three cinder block grain bins. Ca. 1960.

132-14-0024

- Item 10 -- GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (amended)

USGS Quadrangle: Staunton, Va. Scale: 1:24000

7 acres UTM References: 17/668880/4223710

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries have been amended to include White Star Mills and Grain Bins, the entire cast-iron footbridge over the railroad tracks, and the old railroad tower as a part of the railroad complex:

(see Continuation sheet #6)

FHR-8-300A (11/78)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10

PAGE

Item 10 -- GEOGRAPHICAL DATA Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on W side of South New Street at SE property line (pl) of 114-116 S. New; thence extending about 210' ESE to W corner of bridge over Lewis Creek; thence extending about 100' SE, paralleling creek; thence extending about 100'SW to RR tracks; thence extending about 550' W along said tracks; thence extending about 75'S to 1430' contour; thence paralleling said tracks for about 350'; thence extending about 300'NW to SW corner of 44 Middlebrook; thence extending about 150' NW to NW corner of parking lot at Middlebrook and South Lewis; thence extending about 475' NE along rear pls of 29-7 (west to east) Middlebrook; thence extending about 120'N to SW corner of Augusta County parking lot; thence extending about 135'E to E side of South Augusta; thence jogging S to Npl of 111-113 S. Augusta and continuing about 140' NE along said line and N side of Lewis Creek; thence extending about 125' SE to SW corner of 114-116 S. New; thence extending about 75' E along S side of said building to point of origin.



