

Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
Name of Property

Richland County,  
South Carolina  
County and State

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Company Substation

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 1337 Assembly Street

☐ not for publication

city or town Columbia

☐ vicinity

state South Carolina code SC county Richland code 079

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination     request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide x local

Elizabeth M. Johnson  
Signature of certifying official

12/15/2010  
Date

Elizabeth M. Johnson, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property     meets     does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
Name of Property

Richland County,  
South Carolina  
County and State

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

##### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1		<b>Total</b>

##### Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

##### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

#### 6. Function or Use

##### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: rail-related

Commerce/Trade: business

##### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: professional

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Italian Renaissance Revival

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Brick

walls: Brick

roof: Composite

other: Terra Cotta

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### Summary Paragraph

The Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Company Substation Building at 1337 Assembly Street, (at the corner of Assembly and Washington Streets), in Columbia, Richland County, South Carolina, is a rectangular two-story brick building with basement, laid in five-to-one common or American bond. The substation is situated in downtown Columbia, one block west of Main Street, amidst a variety of commercial and local government properties. It was constructed in 1900 as a power conversion facility for the city's electric streetcars and general offices of the trolley company. The building was designed by the firm of W. B. Smith Whaley & Company, Architects and Engineers.<sup>1</sup> The brick foundation rises to form wide piers in support of brick arcades or arcaded windowed bays on three sides of the building. The slightly peaked roof is of composite roofing membrane. The building displays distinctive elements of the Italian Renaissance Revival style. Although the building has been remodeled at least twice, the most substantial alterations occurred within the period of significance. Subsequent alterations do not compromise to any significant degree the substation's integrity, which is preserved by the retention of nearly all of its defining architectural features.

### Narrative Description

The brickwork is laid in five-to-one common or American bond pattern and includes such details as belt courses and a corbeled frieze. The three original public façades (east, north, and south) were designed to be fundamentally identical. The windowed arcade design and decorative elements are repeated on all three elevations. The primary façade (east elevation) was originally built with a four-bay arcade. The north and south elevations originally had five bays each; however, in 1912 the building was expanded westward to accommodate an additional three bays on both the north and south elevations. The semicircular brick arches spring from massive piers approximately five-and-a-half feet wide. The arches originally accommodated one-over-one light, double-hung windows. Yellow terra-cotta, egg-and-dart molded impost blocks punctuate the archivolt. A primary cornice of yellow unglazed terra-cotta is set on corbeled brickwork; a brick parapet with molded terra-cotta coping rises above the cornice. The parapet with corresponding terra-cotta coping rises at the building's

<sup>1</sup> John E. Wells and Robert E. Dalton, *The South Carolina Architects, 1885-1935: A Biographical Dictionary* (Richmond, VA: New South Architectural Press, 1992), p. 200.

corners and along the north and south elevations where the building was expanded to accommodate brick inset panels. The cornice originally ran the entire perimeter of the substation.

The main entrance, on Assembly Street, is by way of the third bay or second from the street corner. Apparently, this bay originally consisted of a larger semicircular arch similar to all others; however, was rebuilt, possibly ca. 1938 when the building was adapted for retail use, with a large frame and glass entry and trabeated brick lintel and molded surround. The entrance is flanked by a pair of wall-mounted opaque glass lamps. A firehose hookup protrudes from the lower north corner of the east elevation.

The west elevation is essentially a solid brick load-bearing wall featuring four massive brick pilasters in addition to the corner piers which are in dimension twice the width of the pilasters. While the terra-cotta cornice and parapet coping wrap onto this rear [west] elevation, it is a much more simply articulated and utilitarian side of the building. In addition to brick beltcourses and the brick corbeled frieze, its parapet is dominated by a large central horizontal block. Modern entrances to both the main and basement levels are accessed by an iron-railed and canopy-covered stair and landing and an iron-railed ramp, respectively. A small parking lot occupies the remainder of the parcel to the west.

The substation has had several outbuildings during its history, although none are extant. A one-story brick stable building existed at least as early as 1904 and survived until at least 1910. By 1919 the stable had been replaced by a two-story brick building with two one-story extensions to the west. This outbuilding was apparently an auto house and supply room with a two-story dwelling along Assembly Street.<sup>2</sup> How long it survived is unknown.

The south elevation of the substation was originally more visible from Assembly Street but now fronts onto an alley approximately twelve feet wide. The alley separates it from the Vista Center, a three-story reinforced concrete parking structure containing commercial spaces and military recruiters at street level, which occupies most of the remaining city block. This parking structure wraps around the west (rear) side of the substation, where an additional parking lot connected to the alley separates the substation from the vehicle entrance to the parking structure. The fact that the substation now has only two public façades instead of the original three is the result of changes in the environs and not changes to the building.

The substation was enlarged and remodeled in 1912 to accommodate new electrical equipment. This renovation added three additional bays to the west. The terra-cotta cornice and parapet coping appear to have been removed from the original west elevation and reused along the extended north elevation. Otherwise, the details of the addition matched the original exterior configuration. A monitor roof (raised central section with windows along the sides) was also apparently added at this time; however, was removed at a later date. A number of changes occurred to the building within the period of significance and are representative of the historic use of the building over time. At some unknown time the original windows on the north, west, and east elevations were replaced with units consisting of ten panes surmounted by half-circle paned windows.

The substation shows normal damage to the brick and cornice from weather. Notwithstanding the normal wear and the modifications to the building after the period of significance (1900-1936), the overall integrity of Whaley's design remains intact. The retention of its distinctive features ensures that the substation remains instantly recognizable. The basic shape, massing, volume, and scale have been entirely preserved. Only one of the twenty-four arches has been rebuilt, leaving this characteristic Italian Renaissance Revival feature to define

<sup>2</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Columbia, South Carolina, 1904, 1910, and 1919.



the style of the substation. The cornice has survived almost entirely, and a portion of it that was originally on the west elevation was removed and reused on the 1912 addition. Although the original windows were replaced at some unknown time, the current windows do not detract from the substation's historic appearance and actually enhance the verticality established by the building's repetitive arches.<sup>3</sup> The substation retains more than enough unifying and distinctive decorative features to maintain its integrity. The typical Italian Renaissance Revival form, massing and arcades, the repetition of form, and the unifying cornice and brick details remain its strongest and most prominent visual elements, ensuring a high degree of integrity.

Historic details on the interior of the building are found only in particular locations since much of it has been obscured by modern finishes installed in recent years with the building being upfitted for a modern law firm. The interior is divided into private offices and conference rooms. In some areas, heavy timber post-and-beam construction is still visible, with large floor joists/ceiling beams and beaded edged flooring that is visible from the lower level. In some areas a combination of heavy timber framing and steel framing is still evident. Some historic windows and window operating mechanisms and hardware remain visible as well.

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<sup>3</sup> Historic Columbia Foundation, *Columbia Electric Street Railway Light and Power Company Building*.

## 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 is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- ☐ 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Architecture

### Period of Significance

1900 - 1936

### Significant Dates

1900, 1912, 1927, 1936

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

### Cultural Affiliation

### Architect/Builder

W.B. Smith Whaley & Company, Architects &  
Engineers

Period of Significance (justification)

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

The Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Company Substation is architecturally significant for its distinctive Italian Renaissance Revival characteristics and historically significant for its direct and specific association with Columbia, South Carolina's street railway or trolley system. The building was designed by W. B. Smith Whaley, an architect well-known for his cotton mills throughout the American southeast. From its construction in 1900 until 1936, the building served as a power substation (and briefly as the general offices) for the Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Company and its successors. The trolley system operated by this company and powered by the substation played an integral part in the creation, growth, and subsequent annexation of Columbia's suburbs during the early twentieth century. These developments are illustrative of the broad pattern of trolley-based public transportation and suburban expansion of many American cities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Company Substation meets Criterion A for its strong association with Columbia's trolley system and its role in the growth and suburban expansion of the city. It meets Criterion C for clearly illustrating a variety of architectural characteristics distinctive to the Italian Renaissance Revival style.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance)

### **Summary History of the Building**

On January 3, 1900, the Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Company's board of directors authorized the purchase of the lot on the southwest corner of Assembly and Washington streets in downtown Columbia as the site for a new substation.<sup>4</sup> The property was acquired on February 7, 1900, for \$4000.<sup>5</sup> On March 12, 1900, the company moved the wooden residence on the lot to an adjoining lot on Washington Street in preparation for construction of the substation, which began shortly thereafter and continued over the next few months. The new substation, when built, was a single-story with basement brick building with a slate or metal roof. The north end of the building contained the offices and the south the transformers.<sup>6</sup>

The substation was upgraded in 1912 to meet the growing needs of the burgeoning trolley system. The building underwent a major renovation and the electrical equipment was upgraded. Three bays were added to the west end of the building, extending it by approximately thirty feet. A second story was also added within the volume of the building, the original office space was removed, and the tile floor was replaced with reinforced concrete throughout the building. A monitor roof was also installed, and the cornice on the west elevation was removed and reused on the extended north elevation. During this renovation the switchboards were replaced and new heavy equipment was installed, including an additional rotary converter and three additional transformers.<sup>7</sup>

Technical advances and the further demands on the system again led the company to upgrade the substation equipment. In 1920 the company installed new mercury arc rectifiers and constant current transformers and converted the old equipment to alternating current.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Nell C. Pogue, *South Carolina Electric & Gas Company 1846 - 1964* (Columbia: State Printing Co., 1964), p. 51-52.

<sup>5</sup> Deed Book, AJ 299, 1900, Richland County Register of Deeds.

<sup>6</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Columbia, South Carolina, 1904 and 1910.

<sup>7</sup> Pogue, *South Carolina Electric & Gas Company*, p. 53-4.

<sup>8</sup> Pogue, *South Carolina Electric & Gas Company*, p. 55.

The trolley system entered a period of steep decline in the years following World War I. Service was discontinued in 1927, briefly reinstated in 1931, and permanently discontinued in 1936. Two years later the Assembly Street substation was sold to the Ginsberg Arnold Realty Company for \$5.00, ending its association with the former trolley company.<sup>9</sup>

## Transportation

The poor quality of Columbia's unpaved downtown streets led its residents to discuss the idea of a street railway as early as Reconstruction, but no serious action was taken until February of 1876, when the Columbia Street Railway was founded. The new company possessed \$100,000 in capital but proved ineffective and no railway was created. In 1882 a new company with the same name was chartered, and following four years of planning and construction commenced operating mule-drawn streetcars in 1886. Increasing public interest in electric power led a group of investors to incorporate the Columbia Electric Street & Suburban Railway & Electric Power Company in 1890, which took over the streetcar system in 1892. Under the new ownership the streetcar lines were electrified the following year. This company was consolidated with the Congaree Gas and Electric Company in 1894 to form the Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Company. A group of investors led by W. B. Smith Whaley purchased this company in August 1899.<sup>10</sup>

On January 3, 1900, the board of directors authorized Whaley, as president, to purchase the lot on the southwest corner of Assembly and Washington streets in downtown Columbia as the site for a new substation.<sup>11</sup> The property, which contained the bakery and wooden residence of Miss L. V. Donald, was acquired by Whaley on February 7, 1900, for \$4000.<sup>12</sup> (Whaley later conveyed the deed to the company in 1904 for five dollars.<sup>13</sup>) On March 12, 1900 the company moved the wooden residence to an adjoining lot on Washington Street in preparation for construction of the substation, which began shortly thereafter and continued over the next few months. The newly completed building was first listed in the *Columbia City Directory* in 1901.<sup>14</sup> The 1903 *Columbia City Directory* describes the building as "Col Elec St Ry Light & Power Co, office and sub station."<sup>15</sup> *The State* described the building in 1903 as

the handsome office building and sub-station at the corner of Washington and Assembly streets. In this building is all the ponderous machinery, such as dynamos, converters, generators and exciters, for distributing the current after it is brought in from the main power plant. The very latest electrical machinery can be seen here, and nothing but the best has been put in. In another part of the building are the accounting and general office of the company, all of which are finished in handsome style. The wood work in the interior of the building is polished oak, the floor is of tiling. The furniture is also of oak, the whole making a beautiful appearance.<sup>16</sup>

The new substation was a single-story and basement brick building with a slate or metal roof. The north end of the building contained the offices and the south the transformers.<sup>17</sup> Among the new electrical machinery were "two of only four rotary converters then in existence."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Deed Book, EJ 174, 1938, Richland County Register of Deeds.

<sup>10</sup> John Hammond Moore, *Columbia and Richland County: A South Carolina Community* (Columbia, University of South Carolina Press, 1993), p. 234-5.

<sup>11</sup> Nell C. Pogue, *South Carolina Electric & Gas Company 1846 - 1964* (Columbia: State Printing Co., 1964), p. 51-52.

<sup>12</sup> Deed Book, AJ 299, 1900, Richland County Register of Deeds.

<sup>13</sup> Deed Book, AJ 298, 1904, Richland County Register of Deeds.

<sup>14</sup> *Columbia, South Carolina City Directory*, 1901, p. 103.

<sup>15</sup> *Columbia South Carolina City Directory* 1903, p. 103.

<sup>16</sup> *The State* (newspaper), Columbia, South Carolina (December 9, 1903), p. 8.

<sup>17</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Columbia, South Carolina, August 1904.

<sup>18</sup> Pogue, *South Carolina Electric & Gas Company*, p. 52.



The construction of the substation was a part of the rapid expansion of the trolley system under the company's new owners. In 1899 the Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Company operated eighteen cars on eight miles of track. By December 1903 the trackage had nearly doubled to fifteen miles comprising four main lines. By 1907 the company was operating forty-two cars on twenty-two miles of track, and could boast that "approximately three million passengers were carried annually."<sup>19</sup> The system continued to be expanded until 1917, reaching its peak transportation load the following year.<sup>20</sup>

The street railway system had grown slowly since its pre-electric period of 1886 to 1893. Thomas Feters describes the original Columbia Street Railway Company route, which

began near the company's carhouse and stable at what today is 823 Gervais, near the original Union Station on Gervais at Wayne Street. The tracks ran along Gervais to Main where a double track was put down from the State House to Laurel Street. Here two branches continued: one to Elmwood Cemetery following Main Street to Elmwood Avenue and west on Elmwood to the Cemetery; the other along Laurel to Barnwell, south the Blanding one block, and east two blocks to the depot of the Charlotte, Columbia & Augusta (later the Southern's Charlotte line). A short spur left this line at Laurel and Pickens and ran north on Pickens to the South Carolina Hospital for the Insane.<sup>21</sup>

Twenty Kentucky mules (later replaced by thirty horses) were used to pull six cars along the four-mile route. Cars ran every ten minutes and carried about 800 riders each day.<sup>22</sup>

Despite the popularity of the service, the Columbia Street Railway Company experienced financial uncertainty that prevented immediate expansion of the trolley lines. By 1889, however, the company had sufficient funds to refurbish the rolling stock and contemplate laying more track. The planned expansion was shelved after December 24, 1890, when the South Carolina General Assembly authorized the creation of a new company to operate an electric streetcar service. The new company purchased the Columbia Street Railway on February 13, 1891, and immediately began planning for the electrification and expansion of the system. A hired consultant from the Edison Works estimated that it would take two months of work to electrify the lines at a cost of \$20,000 to \$25,000. The first electric cars began operation on October 1, 1892, and ran between Union Depot and the fairgrounds. On May 3, 1893, the electric cars began running on Main Street.<sup>23</sup>

Additional lines soon followed the commencement of electric service. Short lines were added to serve Waverly, Heidt Street, and the newly-built Shandon dance pavillion, which the company hoped would generate weekend business. The Heidt Line was eventually incorporated into the new Belt Line, which was completed in 1896. A suburban line to Hyatt Park was leased from another utility company in 1897.<sup>24</sup> By 1899 the Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light and Power Company operated ten open cars and eight closed cars on twelve miles of track that ran along Gervais, Main, Elmwood, Richland, Laurel, Blanding, and Harden Streets.<sup>25</sup>

Whaley and his fellow investors purchased the company in August of 1899 and soon began a rapid expansion of the service. The Hyatt Park Line was purchased on November 14, 1899, and new lines were planned. To help

<sup>19</sup> David McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina: 1882 - 1936* (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1975), p. 22-6.

<sup>20</sup> Pogue, *South Carolina Electric & Gas Company*, p. 80.

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Feters, *Palmetto Traction: Electric Railways of South Carolina* (Forty Fort: Harold E. Cox, 1978), p. 37.

<sup>22</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p. 15, 18.

<sup>23</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p. 20-1.

<sup>24</sup> Feters, *Palmetto Traction*, p. 39.

<sup>25</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p. 22.

power the growing system and provide general offices for the company the substation was built at Washington and Assembly Streets. By September 4, 1900, four main lines were operating.<sup>26</sup>

Additional lines soon followed. The Mill Village-Fairgrounds Line serving the south and southwest opened in May of 1900 and also ran to the company's car barn. This line was extended to form a loop in 1909. The Shandon-Shandon Annex Line was extended along Devine Street to Holly Street in 1900. The Irwin Park Line, which ran north from Gervais on Huger and Gist Streets to the baseball diamond of the same name, was completed in 1905 and rehabilitated in 1911. The Colonial Heights Line, constructed in 1907 by the Suburban Homes Company, was purchased in 1912. The College Place Line was extended from the Eau Claire Line in 1908 to serve the New Columbia Female College and later continued into Arden in 1912. The Colonial Hotel on Pickens and Hampton Streets received its own single-track branch in 1911. The Wales Garden Line along Saluda Avenue to Heyward Street was completed in 1915, and double-track line serving Camp Jackson was established in 1917.<sup>27</sup>

The substation was upgraded in 1912 to meet the growing needs of the burgeoning trolley system. The building underwent a major renovation and the electrical equipment was upgraded. Three bays were added to the west end of the building, extending it by approximately thirty feet. A second story was also added within the volume of the building as it stood, the offices of the original building were removed, and the tile floor was replaced by reinforced concrete throughout the building. A monitor roof was also installed, and the cornice on the west elevation was removed and reused on the extended north elevation. "Otherwise, the details of the addition matched the original exterior configuration."<sup>28</sup> During this renovation the Columbia Railway, Gas and Electric Company (having changed its name in 1911) replaced the switchboards and installed new heavy equipment, including an additional rotary converter and three additional transformers.<sup>29</sup>

Columbia's suburban expansion closely followed the building of streetcar lines into the planned developments. The growth of the initial suburban developments planned around the turn of the nineteenth century (Shandon, Waverly, Cotton Town, College Place, and Colonial Heights) as well as the Olympia Mill Village and the nearby town of Eau Claire was directly facilitated by the extension of trolley service into these areas. Shandon provides an illustrative example. "More than eighty percent of the houses [constructed in Shandon between 1912 and 1921] were located within one block of the line and all but one within two blocks."<sup>30</sup> Similarly, nearly all homes in Colonial Heights and Arden were built within two blocks of the line.<sup>31</sup>

The rapid growth of these suburbs led to their annexation by the city of Columbia. Shandon, Waverly, and Cotton Town were all annexed in 1913, by which time Shandon had even grown "to such an extent that it became a town with a mayor and city council before being annexed."<sup>32</sup> By 1920 the population of the city, including the recently annexed suburbs, had grown to 37,524.<sup>33</sup> Technical advances and the further demands on the system again led the company to upgrade the substation equipment. In 1920 the company installed new mercury arc rectifiers and constant current transformers and converted the old equipment to alternating current.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>26</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p. 22, 77.

<sup>27</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p. 29-34.

<sup>28</sup> State Historic Preservation Office, *Preliminary Research File*.

<sup>29</sup> Pogue, *South Carolina Electric & Gas Company*, p. 53-4.

<sup>30</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p. 42-50.

<sup>31</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p. 56.

<sup>32</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p. 44.

<sup>33</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p. 45.

<sup>34</sup> Pogue, *South Carolina Electric & Gas Company*, p. 55.

Passenger traffic was also inflated by the activities of the First World War. "The population of Columbia more than doubled overnight with an influx of soldiers pouring into Camp Jackson."<sup>35</sup> The trolley system began to face serious difficulties shortly after the end of the war. Demobilization of the armed forces, competition from private automobiles and jitneys (unregistered and unlicensed taxis), declining patronage and falling revenue led the company in July of 1921 to ask the city's permission to remove some track.<sup>36</sup> This would prove to be the first of many such requests, and by 1925 the track removals had begun to affect noticeably the service.<sup>37</sup>

Labor disputes also contributed to the company's woes. Although a 1912 strike had been resolved by arbitration after only six days, the company was forced to settle after a 1920 walkout. Another strike was called on February 16, 1922, after the company discharged 21 employees, that succeeded in completely shutting down service. The company responded by bringing in strikebreaker labor on March 20, 1922, which provoked an altercation with the strikers resulting in three hospitalizations and four arrests. The strike was eventually settled but the company had been severely damaged, and many former employees turned to operating jitneys.<sup>38</sup>

By 1925 the streetcar company's prospects looked dire. Facing plummeting patronage, the company decided to rid itself of the burdensome trolley service, but because this service was a legal monopoly it could not simply quit the business. Instead, it decided to drive the street railway to bankruptcy:

[The Street Railway Company] instituted a systematic campaign to discontinue the streetcar system, began to give inadequate and unsatisfactory service, took off various cars and cut down the income, arranged to bring a bus company into the community so as to increase competition and furnish an apparent justification for, and lessen the opposition to, the complete discontinuance of the streetcar service,...[The company further] contributed \$500 each month for the maintenance of the bus company. In all, the company contributed \$19,000 to keep the bus company operating.<sup>39</sup>

The company's intentions were readily apparent to the local residents, who observed that trolley tickets were deliberately priced higher than bus tickets, and that streetcars invariably ran directly behind busses.<sup>40</sup>

Trolley service was discontinued on March 11, 1927. The heavily-subsidized bus company lost its mortgage the following year, leaving the city of Columbia without a public transit system. Broad River Power Company, which now owned the trolley system, was sued on the grounds that it was failing to operate a franchise granted to it.<sup>41</sup>

[There followed] four years of long drawn out litigation through practically all South Carolina Courts, into the United States District Court, United States Circuit Court, and United States Supreme Court.... Stripped of technicalities, the Company contended through these many legal ramifications that it could not be compelled to operate street cars at a loss, and that to require service without compensation was confiscation. The Courts held that Broad River Power Company, in acquiring control of the assets of Columbia Railway, Gas & Electric Company, had assumed the latter's liabilities including the operation of street cars, and must operate them unless it was willing to abandon all other franchise rights obtained through the affiliated company.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Pogue, *South Carolina Electric & Gas Company*, p. 80.

<sup>36</sup> Pogue, *South Carolina Electric & Gas Company*, p. 81.

<sup>37</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p. 34.

<sup>38</sup> Feters, *Palmetto Traction*, p. 46-9.

<sup>39</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p.35.

<sup>40</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p.35.

<sup>41</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p.35.

<sup>42</sup> Pogue, *South Carolina Electric & Gas Company*, p. 81.



Surrender of a single franchise, in other words, would invalidate all of the company's legal monopolies. As a result of the United States Supreme Court ruling in 1931 trolley service was briefly re-opened and seven lines resumed operation. The Broad River Power Company, which had inherited the streetcar system, ran secondhand cars and did little to maintain them. On November 22, 1936, with the cars "in the last stages of disintegration,"<sup>43</sup> streetcar service was permanently discontinued; the remaining tracks were paved over and the trolleys replaced by busses.<sup>44</sup> Two years later the Assembly Street substation was sold to the Ginsberg Arnold Realty Company for five dollars, ending its association with the former trolley company.<sup>45</sup>

## Architecture

The Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Company Substation was designed by the prominent textile mill engineer and architect W.B. Smith Whaley. Whaley came to Columbia, South Carolina, in 1892 and together with his partner, Gadsden E. Shand, founded the architectural and engineering firm of W. B. Smith Whaley & Co. His designs "favored Romanesque compositions and motifs" and he was a prominent designer of cotton mills throughout the American southeast.<sup>46</sup> His firm contributed several notable buildings to the Columbia area, including Olympia Mill (at 600 Heyward Street, listed in the National Register February 2, 2005), Granby Mill (400 Heyward Street, listed in the National Register as part of the Granby Mill Village Historic District, September 20, 1993), the W.B. Smith Whaley House, his private residence at 1527 Gervais Street, listed in the National Register March 2, 1979), the Canal Dime Savings Bank (1530 Main Street, listed in the National Register November 25, 1980), as well as the Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Company Substation.

The substation, like many of Whaley's designs, is typically Italian Renaissance Revival in many of its defining features. The primary construction material is monochromatic red brick, laid in common or American bond pattern. The primary architectural element is the the arcade of rounded compound arches or archivolts springing from broad piers. The massing is heavy, solid, and imposing. This weightiness is further emphasized by the flat roof and the recessed window and door openings.

The Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Company substation stands as an excellent example of Italian Renaissance Revival architecture applied to a building of relatively modest size. It expresses many of the architectural elements characteristic to the style, including heavy massing, monochromatic brick, arcades, rounded compound arches, belt courses, corbel courses, corbel tables, robust piers, recessed windows, and terracotta ornamentation. It is representative both of this dramatic architectural style that flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and of the work of W. B. Smith Whaley, its designer.

<sup>43</sup> Fetters, *Palmetto Traction*, p. 50.

<sup>44</sup> McQuillan, *The Street Railway and the Growth of Columbia, South Carolina*, p. 35-6.

<sup>45</sup> Deed Book, EJ 174, 1938, Richland County Register of Deeds.

<sup>46</sup> John E. Wells and Robert E. Dalton, *The South Carolina Architects, 1885 - 1935: A Biographical Dictionary* (Richmond, VA: New South Architectural Press, 1992), p. 168-9.



### **Bibliographic References**

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- Pogue, Nell C.. *South Carolina Electric & Gas Company 1846 – 1964*. Columbia: State Printing Co., 1964.
- Richland County Register of Deeds, *Deed Books AJ & EJ*. Columbia, South Carolina.
- South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. *Preliminary Research File: Columbia Electric Street Railway & Light Co.* South Carolina Department of Archives and History.
- Wells, John E. & Robert E. Dalton. *The South Carolina Architects, 1885 – 1935: A Biographical Dictionary*. Richmond, VA: New South Architectural Press, 1992.

## 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 Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

☒ State Historic Preservation Office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency  
☐ Local government  
☒ University  
☐ Other

Name of repository: Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 17 496606 3762308  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

### Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary of the nominated property is shown as the black line labeled "Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Company Substation," on the accompanying portion of Richland County, South Carolina Tax Map Number R09013, Block 10, Parcel 06.

### Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The nominated property is restricted to the historic building and the city lot on which it is located.

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lee Durbetaki [with the assistance of the South Carolina SHPO staff]  
organization Public History Program date 15 December 2010  
street & number University of South Carolina telephone 803.777.6398  
city or town Columbia state SC zip code 29208  
e-mail DURBETAK@EMAIL.SC.EDU

### Owner Information

Turnipseed & Associates  
P.O. Box 11601  
Columbia, SC 29211  
803.252.9000  
[T&A@TURNIPSEED.NET](mailto:T&A@TURNIPSEED.NET)

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

---

### Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

**Name of Property:** Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Company Substation

**City or Vicinity:** Columbia

**County:** Richland **State:** South Carolina

**Photographer:** Lee Durbetaki

**Date Photographed:** 13 September 2010

### Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1. West elevation.
2. Northwest corner showing extent of cornice and coping.
3. Detail of southwest corner without cornice or coping.
4. South elevation, showing historic windows and extent of cornice and coping.
5. Detail of south elevation, showing modification to brickwork.
6. Detail of historic windows exterior on south elevation.
7. Detail of terra-cotta archivolt inset, south elevation.
8. Detail of southeast corner showing cornice, coping, and corbeling.
9. Roof, showing parapet crown.
10. Detail of rebuilt main entry arch, east elevation.
11. East elevation.
12. North elevation.
13. South elevation, showing belt courses, corbel course, and corbel table below cornice.
14. View of main entryway interior.
15. Interior, showing dropped ceiling built around window.

16. Interior, showing dropped ceiling built around window.
17. Detail of historic window hardware.
18. Detail of historic window hardware.
19. Detail of historic window hardware.
20. View of main lobby.
21. Full-length interior view of historic window.
22. Timber beam supporting second-story ceiling, supplemented by steel beam.
23. View of window cutout from second-story.
24. Timber beam supporting second-story beadboard ceiling.
25. Detail of steel and timber roof framing.
26. Exposed foundation in basement.
27. Framing supporting first-story floor.
28. Basement walls.
29. Detail of basement framing showing rivets.
30. Intersection of basement framing.
31. Detail of brick piers in basement showing modification.
32. Brickwork in basement.
33. Detail of brick pier supporting beams in basement.
34. Detail of brickwork in basement modified for structural support and HVAC ducting.
35. Detail of historic front door, east elevation.
36. Detail of historic rear door, west elevation.
37. Detail of lamp, west elevation.

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



## Richland County Map



COLUMBIA  
ELECTRIC  
STREET  
RAILWAY,  
LIGHT &  
POWER  
COMPANY  
SUBSTATION  
1337 ASSEMBLY  
STREET  
COLUMBIA,  
RICHLAND  
CO., S.C.



**COPYRIGHT 2009, RICHLAND COUNTY GIS**

DISCLAIMER : THIS IS A PRODUCT OF THE RICHLAND COUNTY GIS DEPARTMENT. THE DATA DEPICTED HERE HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED WITH EXTENSIVE COOPERATION FROM OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS, AS WELL AS OTHER FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AGENCIES. RICHLAND COUNTY EXPRESSLY DISCLAIMS RESPONSIBILITY FOR DAMAGES OR LIABILITY THAT MAY ARISE FROM THE USE OF THIS MAP.

RC  
GE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light & Power Substation

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: SOUTH CAROLINA, Richland

DATE RECEIVED: 12/20/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/20/11  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/04/11 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/04/11  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10001220

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 2.4.11 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



1. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

West elevation



2. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Northwest corner showing extent of cornice and coping





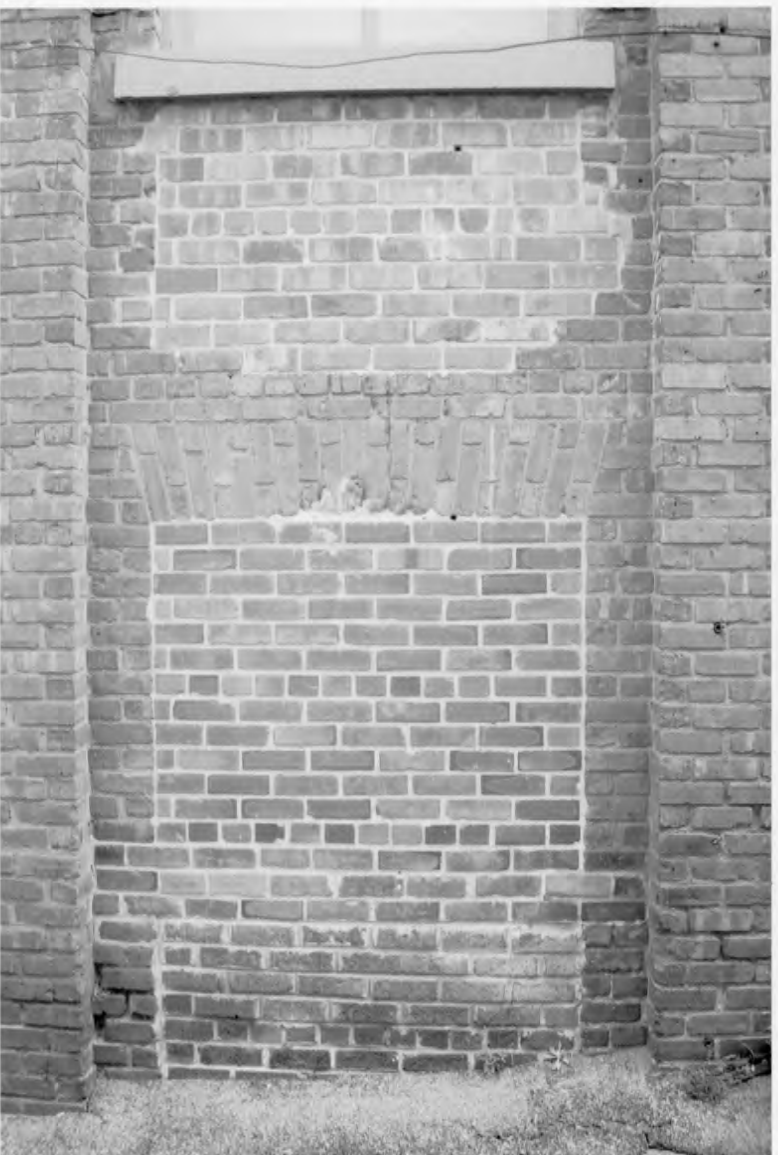
3. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of southwest corner without cornice or coping



4. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

South elevation, showing historic windows and extent of cornice and coping



5.

Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of south elevation, showing modification to brickwork



6.

Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of historic windows' exterior on south elevation





7. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of terra-cotta archivolt inset, south elevation



8. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of southeast corner showing cornice, coping and corbeling



9. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Roof, showing parapet crown



10. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of rebuilt main entry arch, east elevation





11. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

East Elevation



12. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

North elevation



13.

Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina



14.

Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

*View of main entryway interior*



15. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Interior, showing dropped ceiling built around window





16. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Interior, showing dropped ceiling built around window



17. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of historic window hardware



18. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of historic window hardware



19. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina



20. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of historic window hardware





21. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Full-length interior view of historic window



22. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Timber beam supporting second-story ceiling, supplemented by steel beam



23. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

View of window cutout from second-story



24. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Timber beam supporting second-story headboard ceiling



25. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of steel and timber roof framing





26.

Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Exposed foundation in basement



27. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Framing supporting first-story floor



28.

Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Basement walls



29.

Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of basement framing showing rivets



30. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Basement walls





31.

Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of brick piers in basement showing modification



32. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Brickwork in basement



33. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of brick pier supporting beams in basement



34. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of brickwork in basement modified for structural support and HVAC ducting



35.

Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of historic front door, east elevation



36.

Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of historic rear door, west elevation

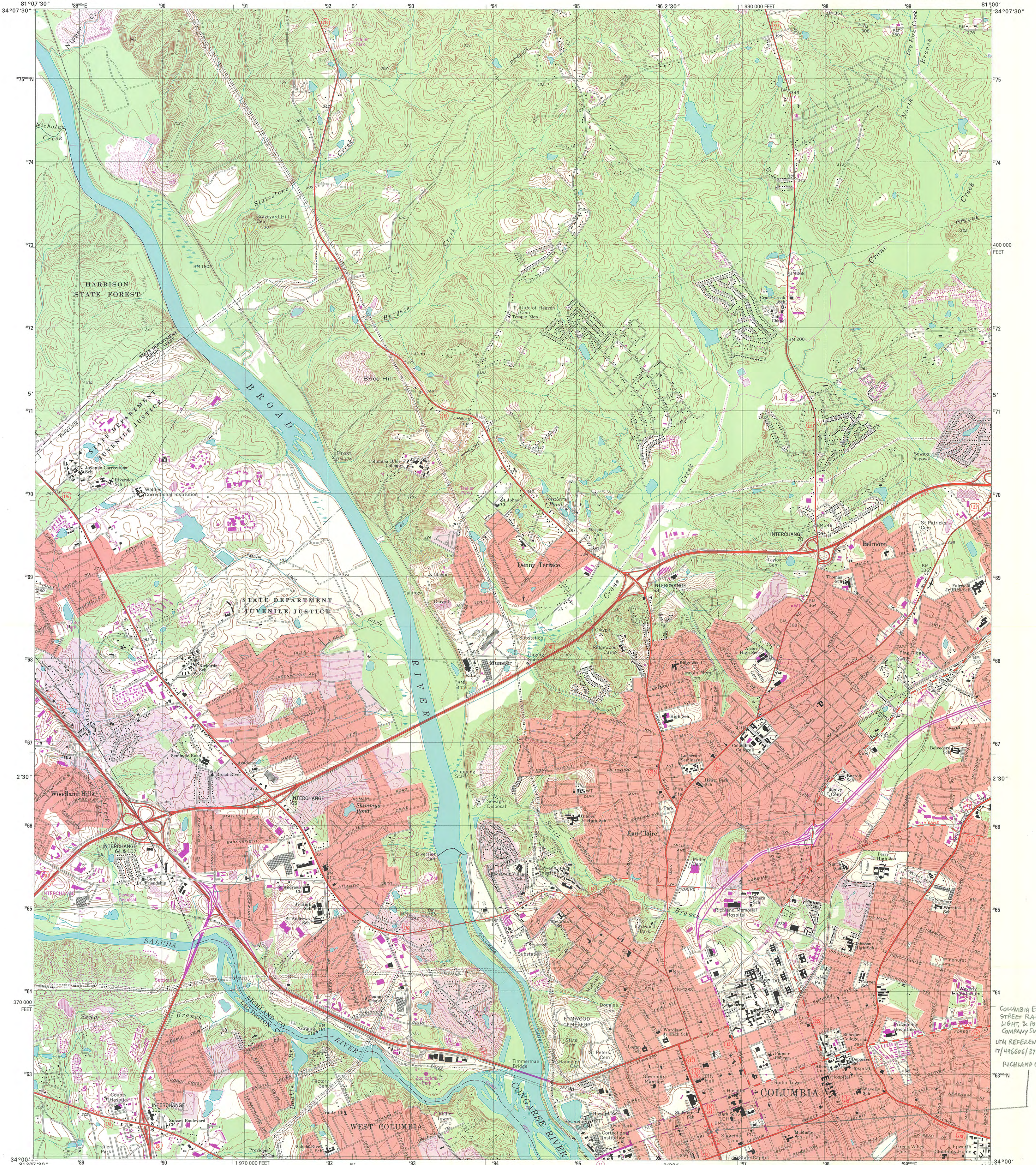




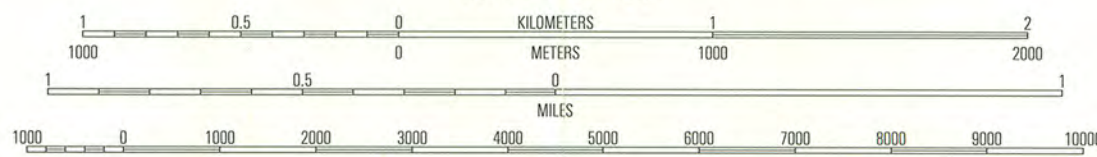
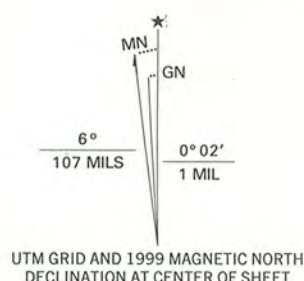
37. Columbia Electric Street Railway,  
Light & Power Company Substation  
1337 Assembly Street, Columbia  
Richland County, South Carolina

Detail of lamp, west elevation





Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
Topography compiled 1971. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1968 and other sources. Photointerpreted using imagery dated 1997; no major culture or drainage changes observed. Survey control current as of 1972. Boundaries, other than corporate, revised 1999  
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and 10 000-foot ticks: South Carolina coordinate system, north zone (Lambert conformal conic)  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 17  
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map  
Information shown in purple may not meet USGS content standards and may conflict with previously mapped contours



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



1	2	3	1 Richtex
4	5	6	2 Inno Ne
7	8	9	3 Blythe Wood
			4 Inno
			5 Fort Jackson North
			6 Lexington
			7 Southwest Columbia
			8 Fort Jackson South

ADJOINING 7.5' QUADRANGLE NAMES

ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Primary highway, hard surface  
Secondary highway, hard surface  
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface  
Unimproved road  
Interstate Route  
U. S. Route  
State Route

COLUMBIA NORTH, SC  
1997

NIMA 4752 II SE-SERIES V846

COLUMBIA ELECTRIC STREET RAILWAY, LIGHT & POWER COMPANY SUBSTATION  
UTM REFERENCE:  
17/49606/3762308  
RICHLAND CO., S.C.







Wednesday, 15 December 2010

Ms. Carol Shull  
Interim Keeper, National Register of Historic Places  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye (I) Street, NW, 8th Floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Here is the National Register nomination for the Columbia Electric Street Railway, Light and Power Company Substation in Richland County, South Carolina, recently approved by the South Carolina State Board of Review.

We are now submitting this nomination for formal listing in the Register.

If I may be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at the address below, call me at (803) 896-6182, fax me at (803) 896-6167, or e-mail me at [power@scdah.state.sc.us](mailto:power@scdah.state.sc.us). I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Tracy Power".

J. Tracy Power  
Historian and National Register Co-Coordinator  
State Historic Preservation Office