

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**historic name MONARCH KNITTING COMPANY FACTORYother names/site number Spencer Lens Company Factoryname of related multiple property listing N/A**2. Location**street & number 19 Doat Street [ ] not for publicationcity or town Buffalo [ ] vicinitystate New York code NY county Erie County code 029 zip code 14211**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [X] locally. ([ ] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Ron Daniel Mulvey

Signature of certifying official/Title

12/14/2018

Date

DSA MO

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register  
[ ] see continuation sheet  
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register  
[ ] see continuation sheet  
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register  
[ ] removed from the National Register  
[ ] other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Alexandra K. ...

date of action

2/7/19

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property

**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	structures
<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<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**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

no style

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone  
  
walls Brick  
  
roof Asphalt  
  
other \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**

Name of Property

**Erie County, New York**

County and State

**8. Statement of Significance****Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

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

**Areas of Significance:**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry

Architecture

**Period of Significance:**

1912-1946

**Significant Dates:**

1912, 1913, 1916, 1918, 1926, 1946

**Significant Person:**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation:**

N/A

**Architect/Builder:**

Robert E. Williams (Builder)

W.E.S. Dyer (Mill Engineer 1918)

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References****Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- ☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. **NPS #38,338**
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by historic American Building Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

**Primary location of additional data:**

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal Agency
- ☐ Local Government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other repository: \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property

**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** 1.73 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 17 677961 4753028  
Zone Easting Northing

3 17                            
Zone Easting Northing

2 17                          

4 17                          

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Matthew Shoen, Kelsie Hoke, M.Arch, Caitlin Moriarty, Ph.D. [Edited by Jennifer Walkowski, NYSHPO]

organization Preservation Studios date 10-29-2018

street & number 170 Florida Street telephone (716) 725-6410

city or town Buffalo state NY zip code 14208

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## Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

### Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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

name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**

**Name of Property**

**Erie County, New York**

**County and State**

**Description**

The Monarch Knitting Company Factory is located in the City of Buffalo, Erie County, New York. Consisting of a large brick industrial building (one contributing building) with several additions and a separate, freestanding brick chimney (one contributing structure), the factory sits on a two-acre parcel just east of the southeast corner of Genesee and Doat Streets in Buffalo's East Side, three-and-a-half miles northeast of downtown and one-half mile northeast of Frederick Law Olmsted's Martin Luther King Jr. Park (NR listed). Genesee Street, a primary traffic radial in this part of the city, runs northeast to southwest and was once a primary commercial strip on the East Side, although it has since declined and is now somewhat sparsely populated with a mix of residences and small commercial enterprises. Doat Street is a short, east-west traffic corridor that branches off of Genesee Street at an acute angle and contains a mix of residential and commercial properties along with a number of empty lots. The surrounding area in each direction is primarily residential and composed of frame housing stock that dates from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. One block east of the intersection of Genesee Street and Doat Street, however, a rail spur runs due north and has light industrial enterprises located to either side. The Monarch Knitting Company Factory occupies a parcel half a block in size, bordered by Doat Street to the north, Lansdale Place to the south, Rustic Place to the west, and a narrow portion of Concordia Cemetery (NR 2008) between it and the rail spur to the east. Its sprawling components are concentrated in the southwest quadrant of the parcel, built to the lot line, with asphalt paving and parking areas in the northeast quadrant.

In 1912, the Monarch Knitting Company erected the original building at the northwest corner of the parcel, facing north onto Doat Street. It measures six bays wide by fourteen bays deep and is a four-story, red brick, factory building with a raised basement and a flat roof. In 1916, the Monarch Knitting Company doubled the building in size with a thirteen-bay addition in an identical style that extended south to the lot line at Lansdale Place. Permit cards indicate that a four-car garage was also built in 1916 east of the factory at the southern lot line, but this structure is no longer extant. A dye house, boiler house, and storehouse were then added and connected to the main factory building in 1918 at the southeast corner of the lot. The east-west oriented dye house extends east from the center of the 1916 portion of the factory and is a double-height brick building measuring five bays wide by four bays deep with a large roof monitor along its spine. It is connected at the rear to the factory via a short, single-story, brick passage. The boiler house is the smallest of the facility's components and is a two-story wing measuring two bays wide by three bays deep with a flat roof. It is oriented north-south and sits twenty feet south of the west end of the dye house along the southern lot line of the parcel. The dye house and boiler house are the most ornamented additions with glazed yellow brick picking out the windows and cornices of the building, contrasting with the rest of the dark brick exterior. The storehouse is more utilitarian in appearance and consists of a single-story volume built of a mix of hollow clay tile and concrete masonry units with a flat roof. It occupies the space between the south end of the main factory, the south wall of the dye house, and the west wall of the boiler house, though set back thirty feet from the southern

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
**Name of Property**  
**Erie County, New York**  
**County and State**

lot line; as such, it acts as an internal connection between the different portions of the facility. On the interior, the building has large, open, light-filled spaces as is typical for early factory buildings, with painted brick walls, hardwood floors, regular timber columns, and exposed wood ceiling decks throughout. Having been in nearly constant use from 1913 until 2010, the building retains a high degree of integrity on both the interior and exterior and, while it has been more or less disused for the past several years, it is good condition inside and out. Although all of the factory building components were interconnected during the period of significance, each still retains its sense of individuality and will be described as if separate buildings.

County and State

Diagram of additions to the Monarch Knitting Company Factory between 1912-1938.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 4

Monarch Knitting Company Factory

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

**The Factory Building – 1912-1916**

The factory building consists of the 1912 portion of the building together with the identical 1916 addition at the south end, which forms one long, continuous edifice. Facing north onto Doat Street, it measures five bays wide by twenty-seven bays deep, and stretches from Doat Street at the north end to Lansdale Street at the south and is built to the lot line at each side. The building is a modestly articulated, turn-of-the-twentieth century, semi-mill construction factory with exterior walls of load-bearing red brick, a heavy-timber framed interior, and a flat roof.<sup>1</sup> It rises four stories in height over a raised basement with a three-foot-high fieldstone foundation and is wrapped at the top by a simple parapet with camel-back clay tile coping. Each side of the building has regular windows in each bay and a concrete sill and segmentally arched brick sill at each opening. Throughout, almost all of the original windows remain in place at the first and second stories and most are wood, double-hung windows with a six-light upper sash and a nine-light lower sash. At the third and fourth stories, only a few openings have original windows remaining and the remainder are filled in with plywood. On the east elevation of the building, two original stair towers are present, one at the south end and one at the center. A third tower containing a freight elevator was added just north of center in the 1950s and has a single-story corrugated metal loading bay wrapping the base.

Primary (north) Facade

The three-bay primary façade is simply and symmetrically composed with regular windows in each bay at each floor level. In the center bay, the main entry is located in a wide, segmentally arched opening at grade, straddling the raised basement and first stories. The opening contains a tall, segmentally arched transom at the top, (currently covered over with plywood) and a pair of original wood doors below, each with a solid panel in the bottom third and a glazed panel in the upper two-thirds. A small, narrow opening containing an original, double-hung, four-over-one window is present to either side of the entry, its lintel height aligned with that of the entry. The remainder of the elevation has two openings in each bay with short openings at the basement and identical openings in each bay of each story at the first through fourth stories. The first story bays each contain one-over-one double-hung windows at the front portion as the administrative offices were historically located at this end of the building and had a higher level of finish. The second-story openings each contain six-over-two sash windows while the remaining floors have plywood infill at all of the window openings. At the outside edges, the corners of the building are framed with brick quoins.

West Elevation

The twenty-seven-bay west elevation consists of the 1912 and 1916 portions of the factory, with the brick seam of the two portions faintly visible just south of center. Its long and continuous elevation faces Rustic Place and

<sup>1</sup> Semi-mill construction was a framing method for non-excessive floor loads which utilized heavy timber posts and beams spaced at their greatest allowable distance per the load. This allowed for a maximum of floor space while also controlling for both floor loading and fire safety. Full mill construction was similar but involved closer spacing of support columns to withstand greater floor loads.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 5

Monarch Knitting Company Factory

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

is made up of regular repeating bays. The bays on this side of the building each consist of two windows at the basement, first, and second stories with wider openings at the third and fourth stories containing paired windows. Just south of center, the two northernmost bays of the 1916 addition are slightly different and both have a wide door opening with a flat lintel at grade, straddling the basement and first stories, and paired windows in each of the bays above. Of the two door openings, the northern one is infilled with plywood but the southern one contains its original pair of wood doors and flanking sidelights, all with a solid wood panel in the lower third and a multi-pane glazed panel above. At the north end of the building, as on the primary facade, the first story window openings corresponding to the original administrative offices have double-hung, one-over-one sash while the remainder of the first and second story openings have six-over-nine sash.

Rear (south) Elevation

The rear elevation is composed of five regular bays with the southern stair tower forming a sixth bay at the east end. To the west, the elevation is articulated by brick quoins at the corner and consists of regular bays matching those at the side elevations flanking a center bay with a large door opening at each floor. The first story door opening appears to have been altered and has a modern, flat brick lintel and contains a non-historic overhead garage door. At the second and third floors above, the wide brick openings each has a segmentally arched brick lintel and contains a pair of original wood doors with multi-light glazing in the upper two-thirds and a solid panel at the base. The fourth story opening is identical but contains original wood louvers instead of a pair of doors. At the east end, the stair tower bay has regular openings aligned along the eastern edge, consisting of a single door opening at grade and three windows rising above it, lighting the intermediate landings of an interior stair.

East Elevation

The east elevation is largely identical to the west elevation with the exception that it includes three projecting vertical circulation towers. The southernmost and center towers are both stair towers original to the building. Each of these has single windows aligned along the southern edge, lighting interior stair landings, while the northern side contains a wide, double door opening at each floor level. On the center tower, each door opening has a pair of original wood doors with multi-light glazing in the upper two thirds and a solid panel at the base. The southern of the two stair towers was altered to accommodate a passenger elevator and so its door openings are filled in and it has a solid brick extension to the north matching the brick of the third, non-original tower. This third tower is an elevator tower dating to the 1950s, which is located two bays north of the central tower. It is solid red face brick on each side in a lighter shade than the historic brick and rises approximately fifteen feet higher than the original stair towers. At the base, it is wrapped on its three projecting sides by a steel and corrugated metal loading dock in rather poor condition.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 6

Monarch Knitting Company Factory

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State

**Interior**

Although the building has changed hands several times over the course of its life, the interior remains quite intact to its historic appearance. Currently, it is being used primarily as a warehouse and so no new partitions have been added, leaving the rooms open, as they would have been originally.

The first floor of the building contains an entry vestibule at the front (north) end, just inside the primary entry doors, and a largely historic office layout at the first eight bays. The remainder of the first floor along with the whole of the second, third, and fourth floors is given over to open manufacturing space. Two staircases located inside the original stair towers at the center and southern end of the eastern wall provide the primary vertical circulation for the building. An original freight elevator is located just north of center of the building, as it was originally installed at the south wall of the original 1912 portion of the building. A second freight elevator is located in the mid-century elevator tower just north of center on the east wall.

At the first floor, the entry vestibule has a landing and a short flight of stairs leading from grade up to the first floor. The doors are original and original wood baseboard wraps the small room while modern, painted faux paneling is present at the walls and the floor is carpeted. At the top of the stairs there is a large lobby or reception space surrounded on each side by offices. Though a few new partitions have been added at this area, the historic office floorplan remains largely intact. Currently there is a dropped ceiling, carpeted floors, and 1970s era paneling throughout this space and surrounding offices; however, some investigation has revealed that the original plaster ceilings are intact above the dropped ceilings and that historic, borrowed-light, millwork partitions are still present beneath the 1970s paneling. Additionally, an original concrete-encased metal safe remains built into the southwest corner of the lobby. From the lobby, a wide, double-loaded corridor extends south to about the center of the building and has offices of varying size to either side and borrowed-light transoms with millwork casings in several locations. Many of the offices have plaster walls with painted wood trim, casings, and original panel doors and several also feature large borrowed-light glazing with painted millwork casings. At the north end of the corridor there is an original stairwell and wood stair that leads to the basement level and is wrapped on three sides by an original painted wood railing with straight, slender spindles and a molded wood handrail. At the south end of the corridor along the west wall, there are two very large rooms which were likely historically a dining area and a recreation area for the mill workers as both of these spaces are mentioned in early newspaper articles regarding the building. Currently the historic finishes of both rooms are obscured by faux paneling at the walls, dropped ceilings, and carpet or vinyl tile over the floors. Beyond the existing finishes though, there are plaster walls and flat plaster ceilings and the southern of the two spaces has borrowed-light glazing with painted millwork casings at its northern and eastern walls.

The upper floors and the remainder of the first floor are each similar in appearance. Each consists of a large, open volume punctuated by regularly spaced, square, timber columns supporting exposed wood decking at the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 7

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

ceiling, with painted brick walls and original maple hardwood flooring throughout. All of the wood structure and decking has been painted white, making the spacious interior volumes very bright. At the first floor and the basement of the building, the floor is concrete. In some locations, original enameled steel pendant light fixtures still hang from the ceiling, and while some piping and ducting are present and exposed, both are minimal and have little impact on the appearance.

In both of the stair towers there is a wide wood stair with wood treads and risers, hardwood floor at the landings, and simple, linear, painted wood handrails and square newel posts. The walls of the stair towers are brick and appear to retain the original paint scheme – a dark green following at the lower portion following the run of the stair and white above. On each floor, both stairwell entries retain their original, sheet metal-clad fire door on a counterweight.

**The Dye House – 1918**

**Exterior**

The single-story dye house is rectangular in shape and two bays in width across its eastern face by five bays deep. It faces east onto the open yard of the lot and is connected at its west end to the 1916 portion of the factory by a small enclosed brick passage. The building has exterior walls of load-bearing masonry in polychrome red and glazed yellow brick, a tall original monitor which runs the length of its spine, and heavy timber interior framing.

On its primary eastern elevation, the dye house has two wide loading bays in simple brick openings with non-historic overhead garage doors. Both openings appear to have been altered as the lintels are flat and constructed of a nonmatching, lighter-colored red brick. At the center of the east elevation, the large roof monitor is expressed as a second story with a pair of arched windows and a slight gabled roofline. The side elevations of the dye house are simple and symmetrical and each of the five bays contains two wide, full-height window openings with a segmentally arched lintel. On each side, the building is wrapped by a parapet with a decorative motif composed of alternating squares and rectangles of glazed yellow brick, capped by a terra cotta coping in a matching yellow glazing. Additionally, the arched brick lintel and canted brick sill of each of the windows is carried out in the same glazed yellow brick. On the east elevation, the pair of arched openings at the face of the monitor both retain their original six-light fixed-sash windows. On the side elevations, most of the openings are filled in with plywood or metal panels, but some still retain their original pair of tall, triple-hung, six-light wood sash. The monitor along the spine of the building also retains all of its original twelve-light wood sash windows but these are currently covered over with roofing material.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 8

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

**Interior**

The interior of the dye house is a single large open volume that was originally lit both by the large windows at the north and south sides as well as the tall monitor above. It has a concrete floor throughout with a slight slope to facilitate the drainage of water and painted brick walls. Overhead, it has an impressive ceiling constructed of timber trusses supporting original beadboard ceilings at the outer third on each side and the tall, open roof monitor at the center. Similar to the factory spaces, the wood structure and brick perimeter of the dye house interior has been painted in light colors to amplify the effect of the light. All of the original windows remain at the monitor overhead although roofing material at the exterior obscures their light. Back at the ground, several original triple-hung six-light sash also remain in place at the south wall though their light is blocked by the presence of the storehouse beyond. At the center of the west wall, there is a wide door opening with a pair of original steel fire doors; the doorway connects the dye house to the main factory building via a short passage. A door at the west end of the south wall connects the dye house directly to the adjacent storehouse.

**The Boiler House – 1918**

The boiler house is two bays wide across its primary southern face by three bays deep and faces south onto Lansdale Place. Built concurrently with the dye house, it is two stories in height with a flat roof and has the same polychrome red and yellow brick at its exterior walls. The boiler house is simply and symmetrically composed and all elevations are similar. On each side, double-height bays with large openings are framed by brick piers. On the east and west elevations, each bay contains a double-height opening with a brick sill, a heavy trabeated limestone lintel and a band of diamond-patterned corbelled brick across the top. On the southern elevation, the two bays each contain a large opening at the first and second floor with the same lintel and corbelling at the second floor and a brick spandrel panel separating the two openings between floors. Above, the building is wrapped by a polychrome parapet matching that at the dye house. A single vertical row of glazed yellow brick is picked out at the second story of each of the piers, centered on the glazed yellow squares at the parapet.

The interior of the boiler house is a single, open, double-height volume. The space is utilitarian and has a concrete floor, exposed brick walls, and a wood plank ceiling with steel trusses and slender steel purlins. The space is currently used for storage purposes. The interior of the boiler room appears to have historically been connected to the storehouse at the northwest corner of the boiler house wall, but that opening is now filled in.

**Chimney – 1918**

North of the boiler house and just south of the dye house is the original freestanding cylindrical chimney stack. The stack rises approximately five stories in height and is built of glazed cream-colored brick, rising from a base about fifteen feet in diameter and tapering to twelve feet at the top.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 9

Monarch Knitting Company Factory  
Name of Property  
Erie County, New York  
County and State

**Storehouse - 1918**

The only visible elevation of the storehouse is its southern face which stretches from the west wall of the boiler house to the east wall of the factory. This elevation was originally an interior wall of the 1916 garage that is no longer extant and is composed of hollow-clay tile with red brick and a non-original, flat fascia board at the flat roof. An original brick opening is present at the center and contains a modern flush metal door, while a second original brick opening at the east end has been filled in with concrete masonry units. Aligned along the western edge is a garage door opening containing a non-historic overhead door.

On the interior, the storehouse is utilitarian in appearance. It has exposed brick and hollow clay tile at the walls with a concrete floor and modern steel bar joists at the ceiling. Currently it serves as a storage location for automobiles. The north wall of the boiler house abuts the south wall of the dye house and the two are connected via a doorway at the west end of the dye house wall.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 1

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

*Summary Statement of Significance*

The Monarch Knitting Company Factory is significant under criterion C in the area of Architecture as a good example of a small-scale textile mill in Buffalo using semi-mill construction, a framing method used for non-excessive floor loads that used heavy timber posts and beams spaced at their greatest distance per load and allowed manufacturers to maximize the space between support columns. It also contains important secondary spaces for cleaning and coloring wool, including a one-and-a-half-story dye house designed to foster airflow and steam ventilation. The building is also significant under criterion A in the area of Commerce for its association with two locally significant industrial firms, including the Monarch Knitting Company and the Spencer Lens Company. The Monarch Knitting Company, a Canadian textile firm that specialized in knit sweaters, built the factory as their Buffalo branch in 1912-13, and occupied the building until 1923. During this time, the company steadily expanded the factory with additions in 1916 and 1918. The firm used the factory to dye wool, knit sweaters, and ship products throughout the United States, and by 1919 the factory housed all of the company's industrial processes. The Spencer Lens Company, one of America's first optics firms, purchased the factory in 1926 and vacated the property in 1946. The firm developed and manufactured optical devices such as microscopes and telescopes in the factory, and between 1926 and 1938 the factory was the Spencer Lens Company's sole production facility and corporate offices. In addition to producing optical devices for civilian use, the Spencer Lens Company supplied the American military with range finding devices, medical equipment, gun sights, fire control tools, and other optical instruments during the World Wars. The period of significance for the Monarch Knitting Company Factory stretches from 1912 to 1946, beginning with the initial construction of the factory and ending when the Spencer Lens Company left the premises. This era encompasses all significant architectural developments on the property, as well as marks the period during which the Monarch Knitting Company, and subsequently the Spencer Lens Company, were at their most prominent in their respected industries.

*Buffalo's East Side in the Vicinity of Genesee and Doat Streets*

The City of Buffalo, New York, was surveyed in 1797 by Joseph Ellicott, the chief surveyor of the Holland Land Company, a consortium of thirteen Dutch investors who purchased much of western New York in 1793. Ellicott's survey showed Buffalo had an advantageous harbor on Lake Erie and a number of nearby rivers and creeks capable of producing waterpower. These water resources indicated Buffalo would make an excellent settlement site and Ellicott laid out streets for the prospective community modeled off the street grid Pierre L'Enfant designed for Washington D.C.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Christine Longiaru, Frank Kowsky and Martin Wachadlo, "Broadway Fillmore Neighborhood Intensive Level Historic Resources Survey," City of Buffalo, last updated 2004, [https://www.city-buffalo.com/Home/City\\_Departments/Office\\_of\\_Strategic\\_Planning/RegulatoryBoards/Preservation\\_Board/HistoricResourcesIntensiveLevelSurvey](https://www.city-buffalo.com/Home/City_Departments/Office_of_Strategic_Planning/RegulatoryBoards/Preservation_Board/HistoricResourcesIntensiveLevelSurvey), Section 3-2.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 2

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

Ellicott's plan centered on Niagara Square and from this central location, streets radiated to the north, east, and west like the spokes of a wheel.<sup>3</sup> Three of these radials, Genesee Street, Sycamore Street, and Broadway, became major thoroughfares in Buffalo's East Side. Genesee Street, which Doat Street branches off from, was particularly important, as it connected Buffalo to the Genesee Road, a roadway used by early settlers moving to western New York.

During the 1830s, Buffalo's core around Niagara Square developed quickly with homes and businesses lining the radial streets. The section of Genesee Street closest to downtown experienced this growth; however, Genesee Street east of Jefferson Avenue (formerly Jefferson Street) remained thinly settled. In 1854, Buffalo annexed forty-two square miles of land, much of it on the East Side, and more neighborhoods developed along Genesee Street, steadily pushing east as the city's population grew. Yet the forefront of development along Genesee Street at this time did not reach the vicinity of Doat Street and the area featured scattered residential development with rarely more than five houses on a given block.<sup>4</sup> At the start of the twentieth century, however, the neighborhood grew rapidly as industrial firms took advantage of local railroad networks and citizens built homes in the area.

The construction of railroad tracks by companies such as the New York Central Railroad and the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad helped spur industrial growth throughout Buffalo's northern and eastern quadrants. After the Civil War, Buffalo experience a boom in railroad construction and by 1887 eleven trunk railroads passed through Buffalo. Of all the railroads that crisscrossed Buffalo, the New York Central Railroad Belt Line played arguably the greatest role in shaping the city. Completed in 1883, the Belt Line circled Buffalo, providing industrialists a transportation route uncoupled from the city's waterfront, where most industry had previously centered.<sup>5</sup> Many companies built factories near the railroad tracks and built rail spurs to allow trains to pull off and load or unload goods on the factory grounds. Other railroad companies built similar looping track networks, among them the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad, which laid tracks at the intersection of Genesee and Doat Streets.<sup>6</sup> However, the railroad's presence did not lead to immediate growth around Genesee and Doat Streets. By 1900, the Jacob Joeckle Lumber Yard (not extant) was the only large industry near the railroad tracks, although this would change during the 1910s and 1920s.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Longiaru, Kowsky, and Wachadlo, "Broadway Fillmore Neighborhood Intensive Level Historic Resources Survey," Section 3-2.

<sup>4</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo, Erie County, New York, 1900*, Sheet 460.

<sup>5</sup> The Belt Line connected portions of the former Buffalo and Niagara Railroad, the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad, and the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway in a continuous loop around Buffalo and featured passenger stops every mile as well as large depots and freight houses at key points throughout the city.

<sup>6</sup> Joseph Rudolf Bien, *City of Buffalo* (New York: Rawdon, Wright & Co., 1895), David Rumsey Map Collection, <http://www.davidrumsey.com/>.

<sup>7</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo, Erie County, New York, 1900*, Sheet 460.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 3

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

While Sanborn maps from 1900 show limited growth around the intersection of Genesee and Doat Streets, maps from 1939 show a dense mix of industry, commerce, and residences around the intersection. When the Monarch Knitting Company erected its factory in 1912, it was one of the first significant industrial firms to do so, helping to pioneer industrialization in the vicinity of Genesee and Doat Streets. During the late 1910s and 1920s other industrial concerns joined the Monarch Knitting Company around Genesee and Doat Streets; these included the Bettinger Coal & Coke Corporation (1929), the City Ice & Fuel Company (factory built circa 1920), the Teachout Company (1921, factory extant), the Kendall Refining Company (1918), and the Evans Lumber Company (built circa 1920), all of which erected factories along the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad tracks.<sup>8</sup> The emergence of industry around Genesee and Doat Streets simulated population growth, and by 1939 side streets such as Montana Avenue, Nevada Avenue, and Kilhoffer Street were lined with homes.<sup>9</sup> While industrial buildings were primarily built alongside the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad's tracks and houses lined the side streets, Genesee Street itself developed into a vibrant commercial corridor. Two-to-three-story commercial buildings lined the street, as did buildings like the Genesee Theater, a 1,600-seat movie palace that opened in 1927. The theater anchored the block just east of the intersection of Genesee and Doat Streets.<sup>10</sup>

Ethnically, German immigrants and their descendants dominated the neighborhood around Genesee and Doat Streets. Street names such as Rhine Street (later renamed Bissell Street) and Danube Street (later renamed Goodyear Street) point to German influence in the area.<sup>11</sup> In addition to street names, German immigrants created religious spaces such as Concordia Cemetery (1859, NR 2008), which served as the burial grounds for three German congregations: First Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Peter's Evangelical Church, and St. Stephen's Evangelical Church.<sup>12</sup> In 1892, the Reverends August Senne and John Sieck organized the Gethsemane Lutheran Church at 427 Goodyear Avenue (extant), with the intention of forming the first English speaking Lutheran congregation on the East Side.<sup>13</sup> Both men quickly realized that most of their worshipers spoke German and started to preach their sermons in German.<sup>14</sup> While the congregation began with only twenty members, by 1903 450 people worshiped at the church and by 1909 the congregation numbered 1,000 people.<sup>15</sup> In 1911, a second German Lutheran church called the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Resurrection opened

<sup>8</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo, Erie County, New York, 1939*, Sheet 619; Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo, Erie County, New York, 1939*, Sheet 620; Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo, Erie County, New York, 1939*, Sheet 607.

<sup>9</sup> Century Atlas Company, *The New Century Atlas of Greater Buffalo*, Plate 22.

<sup>10</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo, Erie County, New York, 1939*, Sheet 618.

<sup>11</sup> Century Atlas Company, *The New Century Atlas of Greater Buffalo* (Philadelphia: Century Atlas Co., 1915), Plate 23.

<sup>12</sup> Mark Peckham and Bonnie Fleischauer, "Concordia Cemetery," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 2007, Section 8, Page 1.

<sup>13</sup> James Napora, "Houses of Worship: A Guide to the Religious Architecture of Buffalo, New York" (master's thesis, University at Buffalo, 1995), 20.2.

<sup>14</sup> Napora, "Houses of Worship: A Guide to the Religious Architecture of Buffalo, New York," 20.2.

<sup>15</sup> Napora, "Houses of Worship: A Guide to the Religious Architecture of Buffalo, New York," 20.2.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 4

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

at 5 Doat Street.<sup>16</sup> The congregation grew quickly and in 1925 it demolished the original church and erected a new church, capable of seating 500 people on the same lot.<sup>17</sup>

The rapid growth of these congregations reflects the overall growth of the area. In 1890, census data for the eighteenth ward, a large district bound by Jefferson Avenue, East Delevan Street, Walden Avenue, and the city limits had 31,303 people within its borders [See Figure 1].<sup>18</sup> In 1910 the ward was redrawn as the twelfth ward with boundaries at the New York Central Railroad Belt Line, East Delevan Street, Broadway, and Buffalo's city limits. This significantly smaller district contained 24,542 people [See Figure 2].<sup>19</sup>

With Genesee Street serving as a major commercial thoroughfare and transportation artery to downtown Buffalo, the area around the intersection of Genesee and Doat Streets flourished in the early twentieth century. Though largely a residential neighborhood, factories such as the Monarch Knitting Company Factory and the City Ice & Fuel Company Factory (extant, 200 Rapin Place) provided jobs and helped sustain the neighborhood for decades. However, starting in the 1950s, Buffalo's economy began to contract as industry left the city and longtime residents departed for the suburbs. Deindustrialization and suburbanization hit the area around Genesee and Doat Streets and the neighborhood presently suffers from high levels of housing vacancies and problems related to substance abuse.<sup>20</sup>

***The Monarch Knitting Company in Buffalo (1912-1923)***

The Monarch Knitting Company, a textile company specializing in sweaters and knit outerwear, organized in 1903 in Dunnville, Ontario, Canada. The company formed in response to the growing popularity of sweaters. Prior to 1900, sweaters were primarily used for athletic events such as soccer matches and hockey games, giving sweater manufactures a limited market for their product.<sup>21</sup> However, around 1900, sweaters became a socially acceptable cold weather garment and companies formed to supply the growing demand for knit outerwear.<sup>22</sup> Initially, the Monarch Knitting Company faced competition from inexpensive German imports; however, the company's quality garments, trademarked as Monarch Knit Sweaters, gained popularity and soon outpaced the German sweater manufacturers.<sup>23</sup> The company expanded quickly and within a decade became

<sup>16</sup> Napora, "Houses of Worship: A Guide to the Religious Architecture of Buffalo, New York," 20.3.

<sup>17</sup> Napora, "Houses of Worship: A Guide to the Religious Architecture of Buffalo, New York," 20.3.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, *Report on the Population of the United States: Thirteenth Census, 1910* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1910), 197.

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, *Report on the Population of the United States: Eleventh Census, 1890* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1890), 246.

<sup>20</sup> Chris Arnade, "In East Buffalo, Drug Addition's Grip is Tightened by Decades-Long Cycle," *The Guardian*, January 7, 2016.

<sup>21</sup> "Representative Sweater Mills: The Monarch Knitting Co., Ltd.," *Sweater News* 1, no. 5 (1914): 10.

<sup>22</sup> "Representative Sweater Mills: The Monarch Knitting Co., Ltd.," *Sweater News*, 10.

<sup>23</sup> "Representative Sweater Mills: The Monarch Knitting Co., Ltd.," *Sweater News*, 11.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 5

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

Dunnville's largest employer with over 500 workers.<sup>24</sup> In that time the Monarch Knitting Company built two additional factories in St. Catharines and St. Thomas, Ontario.<sup>25</sup>

In 1910, the Monarch Knitting Company decided to expand into the United States and leased space for a factory at 885 Niagara Street in Buffalo (extant, NR Listed, 2016). Rather than control the Niagara Street factory from Dunnville, the company created a separate corporation under the laws of New York State and managed the factory from New York City.<sup>26</sup> The Niagara Street factory grew rapidly, employing 200 people by 1911 and supplying American jobbers with the company's trademarked sweaters.<sup>27</sup> By 1912, the company had outgrown the Niagara Street factory and sought a new location in Buffalo.<sup>28</sup>

In 1912, the Monarch Knitting Company decided to build a factory on a lot near the tracks of the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad at 19 Doat Street. Between 1912 and 1913, contractor Robert E. Williams erected the factory, a \$38,000 project.<sup>29</sup> Once completed, the Monarch Knitting Company touted the new factory as 'The First and Only Sweater Mill in Buffalo' [See Figure 3].<sup>30</sup>

The Monarch Knitting Company Factory featured semi-mill construction and incorporated a number of elements the company believed would improve employee welfare. The first floor of the building contained the only finished spaces in the facility, which was largely devoted to knitting equipment. One of the first floor's key finished spaces was a dining room for employees.<sup>31</sup> Women made up the majority of the factory's employees, and the company supplied them with a lunch menu as well as pie and coffee for those who brought their own meal.<sup>32</sup> The factory also had a rest room and space for dancing, with music supplied by a Victrola.<sup>33</sup> Both were likely located near the dining hall, as company officers frequently played musical selections for the workers at lunch.<sup>34</sup> Beadboard wall paneling and windows still articulate a central corridor in this section of the building, with offices present on the east side of the hallway. On all floors, long banks of windows admitted fresh air and sunlight, which company leaders believed would maintain a sanitary environment and happy workers.<sup>35</sup> In addition to providing meals, the Monarch Knitting Company staffed the factory with trained

<sup>24</sup> "Representative Sweater Mills: The Monarch Knitting Co., Ltd.," *Sweater News*, 11.

<sup>25</sup> "Representative Sweater Mills: The Monarch Knitting Co., Ltd.," *Sweater News*, 11.

<sup>26</sup> "Merchants and Dealers," *American Wool and Cotton Reporter* 36, no. 7 (1922): 1227.

<sup>27</sup> "Overcoming the Handicap of a Lost Trade-mark," *Marketing Communications* 91, no. 12 (1915): 25.

<sup>28</sup> "First and Only Sweater Mill in Buffalo," *The Buffalo Courier*, January 12, 1913, 46.

<sup>29</sup> City of Buffalo Building Permit Card, dated November 13, 1912, Erie County Permit Card Vault.

<sup>30</sup> "First and Only Sweater Mill in Buffalo," *The Buffalo Courier*, 46.

<sup>31</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo, Erie County, New York, 1917*, Sheet 583; "Meals at Cost, Ideal Rest Room for Girls at Monarch Knitting Mill," *Buffalo Evening Times*, July 28, 1919, 7, Monarch Knitting Company File Folder, Research Library, Buffalo History Museum, Buffalo.

<sup>32</sup> "Meals at Cost, Ideal Rest Room for Girls at Monarch Knitting Mill," *Buffalo Evening Times*.

<sup>33</sup> "Meals at Cost, Ideal Rest Room for Girls at Monarch Knitting Mill," *Buffalo Evening Times*.

<sup>34</sup> "Meals at Cost, Ideal Rest Room for Girls at Monarch Knitting Mill," *Buffalo Evening Times*.

<sup>35</sup> "Representative Sweater Mills: The Monarch Knitting Co., Ltd.," *Sweater News*, 12.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 6

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
**Name of Property**  
**Erie County, New York**  
**County and State**

nurses to tend to any injured or ill employees and built a four-car garage on the property in 1916 (since demolished) providing ready transportation for any employee who needed to be quickly sent home.<sup>36</sup>

While the first floor of the factory contained large spaces dedicated to worker welfare and company offices, a small portion of the basement was partitioned off for a pair of generators, which supplied electricity to the factory.<sup>37</sup> The second, third and fourth floors were filled with knitting and spinning machinery and these floors consisted of large open floor plates that accommodated rows of machinery.<sup>38</sup>

In 1916, the Monarch Knitting Company expanded the factory, doubling its length to the south.<sup>39</sup> To reduce the risk of a fire consuming the factory, sheet metal-clad fire doors on each floor separated the older and newer portions of the building, a common fire safety design choice at the time. The same doors were present at each of the staircases and are still extant. The company installed shipping and packing departments on the first and second floor of the addition, while the third and fourth floors were used for knitting. The company spent \$40,000 on the addition and Robert E. Williams once again oversaw the work.<sup>40</sup>

In 1914, the Monarch Knitting Company faced a major challenge after discovering a Southwestern garment wholesaler had trademarked the word Monarch.<sup>41</sup> Although the company could still sell its Monarch Knit Sweaters in Canada, they could no longer market them in America. As a result of the preexisting trademark, the Monarch Knitting Company rebranded its American knit goods as Bison-Knit and embarked on sales campaign that emphasized high quality fabric and stylish designs, which to that point had always been of secondary concern to sweater manufacturers.<sup>42</sup> The company introduced new patterns, ornaments, trimmings, and colors and produced advertisements promoting the new sweater lines.<sup>43</sup> The advertisements often featured live models imposed over photographs depicting important events such as the Panama-Pacific Exposition or sporting events such as baseball games and horse races [See Figures 6, 7, and 8].<sup>44</sup> The marketing campaign, originally conceived to sell goods produced in Buffalo, proved so successful that the company adopted it for its Canadian branches as well.<sup>45</sup>

The success of the Bison-Knit product line allowed the Monarch Knitting Company to further expand the factory. In 1918, the firm spent \$22,000 to build a dye house and storehouse with the capacity to dye up to

<sup>36</sup> "Meals at Cost, Ideal Rest Room for Girls at Monarch Knitting Mill," *Buffalo Evening Times*.

<sup>37</sup> "Representative Sweater Mills: The Monarch Knitting Co., Ltd.," *Sweater News*, 11.

<sup>38</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo, 1917*, Sheet 583.

<sup>39</sup> "Plans Filed This Week," *The Buffalo Evening News*, July 29, 1916, 16.

<sup>40</sup> Permit Cards.

<sup>41</sup> "Overcoming the Handicap of a Lost Trade-mark," *Marketing Communications*, 25.

<sup>42</sup> "Overcoming the Handicap of a Lost Trade-mark," *Marketing Communications*, 26.

<sup>43</sup> "Overcoming the Handicap of a Lost Trade-mark," *Marketing Communications*, 26.

<sup>44</sup> "Overcoming the Handicap of a Lost Trade-mark," *Marketing Communications*, 27.

<sup>45</sup> "Overcoming the Handicap of a Lost Trade-mark," *Marketing Communications*, 27.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 7

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

25,000 pounds of wool as well as a \$60,000 boiler plant.<sup>46</sup> The construction of these buildings was partially motivated by the company's desire to compete for war contracts with the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I. During the war, the company received a \$100,000 government contract to manufacture over 500,000 wool puttees, a type of leg wrapping.<sup>47</sup> Construction of the dye house may have also been motivated by the loss of access to German dyes, which were cut off by blockades during World War I. German dyes were considered the best in the world and wartime blockades spurred the development of many dye factories and dye houses in North America.

Following World War I, the Monarch Knitting Company continued to sell its line of sweaters, bathing suits, coats, and hats. The company's selling agents had offices in major cities like Chicago, St. Louis, and Atlanta and distributed knit goods to wholesalers throughout the country.<sup>48</sup> By 1922, 500 people worked in the Monarch Knitting Company Factory; however, in 1923 the company decided to pull out of the American market and sold the factory to the Navy Knitting Mill for \$350,000.<sup>49</sup> The company had seen a drastic fall in profits after 1919 and it is possible it sold the American plant in an attempt to infuse capital into the business and consolidate manufacturing.<sup>50</sup>

After selling the factory, the Monarch Knitting Company continued to operate in Canada. During World War II, the firm released a pattern book showing Canadian women how to knit sweaters, hats, and other woolens for Canadian G.I.'s fighting in Europe.<sup>51</sup> In 1963 Montex Holdings, a textile firm that specialized in head and footwear, acquired the Monarch Knitting Company. The company bought out the Monarch Knitting Company's stockholders and shut down all of the firm's Canadian plants in 1967, ending the firm's existence.

***Architecture of the Monarch Knitting Company Factory***

The Monarch Knitting Company Factory stands as a good representative example of an early twentieth century textile mill in the City of Buffalo. The building's largest spaces, the 1912 building and 1916 addition, were primarily sites for spinning cloth, and their architecture reflects a design philosophy predicated on providing the greatest possible space for weaving and spinning machines. The factory also features an intact one-and-a-half-story dye house, the architecture of which demonstrates an overriding concern with venting large volumes of steam produced by kettles of boiling dye. Both spaces were designed with features recommended by mill

<sup>46</sup> "Order Clearing of Scajaquada Creek Channel," *The Buffalo Evening News*, September 21, 1918, 5; "Buffalo," *Electrical World* 72, no. 12 (1918): 582.

<sup>47</sup> U.S. Department of War, *Claims Adjusted Under War Contracts Act* (Washington D.C: GPO, 1919), 47.

<sup>48</sup> "Buffalo Knitting Company is Monarch Knitting Co., Now," *Sweater News: The Journal of the Sweater and Fancy Knit Goods Trade* 7, (1920): 93.

<sup>49</sup> "Announce Sale of Knitting Mill Here," *The Buffalo Evening News*, May 23, 1923, 8.

<sup>50</sup> "Monarch Knitting Co., Ltd.," *Moody's Manual of Railroads and Corporation Securities* 23, no. 2, (1922): 1442.

<sup>51</sup> *Hand Knits for Men and Women in Service* (Toronto, Southam Press Toronto Limited, 1941), 1.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 8

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

engineers and a number of interior spaces, such as the floors used to knit sweaters, the dye house, and the stair towers remain intact and legible.

*The Monarch Knitting Company Factory and Semi-Mill Construction*

The design of the Monarch Knitting Company Factory reflects design principles advocated by professional mill engineers and industrial architects at the turn of the twentieth century. In the late nineteenth century, factory owners frequently hired professional mill engineers to determine how to organize factory spaces, power machinery, and minimize fire hazards.<sup>52</sup> In addition to consulting, mill engineers wrote pamphlets promoting different building materials, design methods, and heating and cooling systems.<sup>53</sup> Around 1900, mill engineers and industrial architects began to grow in prominence and a number of trained architecture firms, such as Albert Kahn Associates, started to specialize in designing industrial complexes. By 1911, most industrial buildings were architect designed, a fact attributed to research that showed a correlation between the quality of goods and architect-designed buildings that took into consideration the health and comfort of employees.<sup>54</sup> Building features such as the dining hall and rest room reflect the Monarch Knitting Company's concern with employee welfare and health, as well as prevailing thoughts about factory design at the turn of the twentieth century.

While some of the Monarch Knitting Company Factory's spaces were designed for the benefit of employees, most of the building's functions were geared towards industry and the architecture of these spaces reflects the industrial processes carried out inside the factory. One of the factory's most important industrial features is its intact semi-mill construction. Semi-mill construction was a framing and construction method commonly used in large industrial mills where fire and vibration control and maximizing the space available for heavy machinery were of paramount concern. Semi-mill construction was a deviation from the more commonly applied standard mill construction methods; standard mill construction methods involved laying heavy plank floors upon large girders supported by regularly spaced wooden columns.<sup>55</sup> Buildings erected using semi-mill construction methods used girders as well as beams to support their floor load and provide greater structural integrity. More specifically, construction engineer C.E. Paul described semi-mill construction as:

Floors of heavy plank laid flat upon large beams which are spaced from 4 to 10 feet on centers and supported by girders spaced as far apart as the loading will allow. These girders are carried by wood posts or columns located as far apart as consistent with the general design of the

<sup>52</sup> Betsy Hunter Bradley, *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 19.

<sup>53</sup> Bradley, *The Works*, 19.

<sup>54</sup> Bradley, *The Works*, 24.

<sup>55</sup> C.E. Paul, *Heavy Timber Mill Construction Buildings* (Chicago: Engineering Bureau National Lumber Manufacturers Association, 1916), 7.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 9

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

building. A spacing of from 20 to 25 feet is not uncommon for columns in this class of framing where the load is not excessive.<sup>56</sup>

Paul also recommended girders be made of one solid piece of wood between eight and twelve inches thick and that columns should be connected to beams with a metal post cap.<sup>57</sup> The placement of wood columns, girders, and beams inside the Monarch Knitting Company Factory fit Paul's description. Robert E. Williams framed the factory so that the masonry walls supported the factory's outer bays and a pair of heavy timber girders, which appear to be around ten inches thick, supported the center bay. Beams spaced roughly six feet apart spanned the girders and walls, providing support for the floor planks while wood columns were spaced every twelve feet and supported the entire framework. This arrangement gave the Monarch Knitting Company the open spaces necessary to house spinning and weaving equipment [See Figure 9].<sup>58</sup> Additionally, the use of heavy timber framing was important for vibration control. Because textile mills relied on heavy machines to spin thousands of yards of cloth each day, mills needed to withstand hours of intense vibration. Though capable of supporting a greater load, cast iron columns lacked the elasticity necessary to withstand hours of vibration and wood remained the only viable support system for mills like the Monarch Knitting Company Factory.<sup>59</sup>

Wooden beams, columns, and girders were also important for fire suppression and prevention inside of textile mills. Although heavy timbers were flammable, the thickness of these beams slowed the spread of a fire. Mill engineers highlighted the strength of wood, showing charred beams that continued supporting their load next to iron girders that had warped due to heat.<sup>60</sup> Utilizing heavy timber frame construction was not the only method of fireproofing the Monarch Knitting Company employed. The firm laid a double layer of flooring with minimal gaps between the planks.<sup>61</sup> A smooth floor with little exposed wood made it difficult for a fire to start and conversely facilitated the quick spread of water in the event of a fire. Additionally, like many knitting mills, the Monarch Knitting Company Factory featured exterior towers that housed staircases and elevators.<sup>62</sup> Because stairwells and elevator shafts could act as flues during a fire, external stairs, divided from the factory floor by fireproof doors, were commonly utilized in textile mills; additionally, exterior stairs freed floor space inside the factory.<sup>63</sup> In the Monarch Knitting Company Factory, the staircase and elevator towers were built at the east side of the 1912 factory and 1916 addition, and large metal clad fire doors separated the towers from the factory workspace.

<sup>56</sup> Paul, *Heavy Timber Mill Construction Buildings*, 6.

<sup>57</sup> Paul, *Heavy Timber Mill Construction Buildings*, 27-28.

<sup>58</sup> Cynthia Carrington Carter, "Oak Knitting Company," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 2016, Section 8, Page 5.

<sup>59</sup> Bradley, *The Works*, 126.

<sup>60</sup> Bradley, *The Works*, 129.

<sup>61</sup> C.E. Paul, *Heavy Timber Mill Construction Buildings*, 20.

<sup>62</sup> Bradley, *The Works*, 127.

<sup>63</sup> Bradley, *The Works*, 127.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 10

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

In addition to its semi-mill construction and heavy timber frame, the Monarch Knitting Company Factory's location and windows are indicative of a textile mill. The building occupies a corner lot in a largely residential neighborhood and is significantly taller than the nearby residences. The building's height ensured that the factory's interior would have long periods of uninterrupted sunlight and the upper floors, where the largest windows and knitting machines were located, would experience the greatest light infiltration.

*Dye House Architecture*

Built in 1918, the Monarch Knitting Company's dye house features the best practices for dye house design, with a focus on ventilation and vapor control. Dye houses contained kettles filled with boiling water and dye that were used to color wool and other fabrics. These kettles constantly released steam which, if not properly ventilated, condensed back to vapor and made it impossible for workers to see.<sup>64</sup> To counteract the process of condensation, dye houses were designed to admit large volumes of warm air into the workspace; this warm air absorbed latent moisture and was regularly ventilated to prevent saturation from occurring.<sup>65</sup> Heating engineer Charles L. Hubbard described the best method of ventilating a dye house:

In general the greatest part [of warm air] should be admitted near the floor at as high a temperature as is possible without overheating the room, and should be removed through openings in the ceiling...In addition to the general supply mentioned above, it is well to admit a small amount [of air] in thin sheets at a comparatively high velocity along the ceiling for driving the steam towards the outlets. A false (hung) ceiling, with air space between it and the roof, is advisable in case of one-story buildings.<sup>66</sup>

The ventilation system articulated by Hubbard is consistent with the architecture found in the Monarch Knitting Company's dye house. The space's side elevations feature large openings at regular intervals that would have drawn warm air into the dye house. Once inside, the warm air could rise, taking moisture from the kettles with it before passing through the banks of windows that line the monitor. Additionally, the dye house featured a false ceiling where fans were likely installed to push out lingering moisture. The dye house also contains a sloping concrete floor, another feature recommended by industrial architects.<sup>67</sup> Architects recommended concrete floors as they allowed wastewater or spilt dye to be easily cleaned and swept towards drains located at the bottom of the sloped floor.

<sup>64</sup> Charles L. Hubbard, "Heating and Ventilating Industrial Buildings Part III," *American Architect and Architecture* 119, no. 2353 (1921): 98.

<sup>65</sup> Hubbard, "Heating and Ventilating Industrial Buildings Part III," 99.

<sup>66</sup> Hubbard, "Heating and Ventilating Industrial Buildings Part III," 99.

<sup>67</sup> D.H.G. "Dye House Methods," *Textile World Journal* 57, no. 2, (1920): 3785.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 11

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

The spaces of the Monarch Knitting Company Factory reflect the building's construction and use as a textile mill and the building is a good example of mill architecture in Buffalo. The semi-mill construction in the 1912 and 1916 portions of the building provided open spaces for heavy weaving machinery and shows an emphasis on vibration mitigation and fire control. Further, the spaces contain long banks of windows that were important to lighting the factory and maintaining a sanitary environment for the employees. The factory's dye house features regularly spaced ground level openings, banks of windows in the monitor, a false ceiling, and a sloping concrete floor. These design elements demonstrate the importance of ventilation and vapor control for a textile mill looking to color its own material.

*The Spencer Lens Company (1926-1946)*

The Spencer Lens Company purchased the Monarch Knitting Company Factory in 1926, converting the textile mill into an optics manufacturing site. The factory's mill design facilitated this vastly different industry because both textile and optics manufacturing required stringent humidity and dust controls.<sup>68</sup> Because of these similar production concerns the Spencer Lens Company could occupy the mill without significantly modifying the interior layout of the factory. Like the Monarch Knitting Company, the Spencer Lens Company initially used the factory for the majority of its operations, and the factory contained spaces for executive offices, research, product assembly, testing, and shipping, among other functions. The company did not significantly alter the building, as the existing layout accommodated these uses. Twelve years after acquiring the factory, the Spencer Lens Company erected a new manufacturing site in Cheektowaga, New York, and began consolidating operations at the new plant. Nonetheless, the Monarch Knitting Company Factory remained an important site for the company's business until 1946.

The Spencer Lens Company manufactured microscopes, telescopes, and other specialized lenses and was one of the earliest microscope manufacturers in America. Charles Spencer founded the company in 1852 in Canisteo, New York, and in 1895 the firm incorporated in Buffalo with Spencer's son, Herbert, and Dr. Roswell Park as chief officers.<sup>69</sup> Park's influence and position as a professor of surgery at the University at Buffalo helped sustain the company during the early 1900s, and Park promoted the company's optical devices to laboratories, hospitals, and schools.<sup>70</sup>

With Park's financial and marketing support, the company opened its first factory in 1900 inside an 8,000 square foot building at 367 Seventh Street (not extant) in Buffalo's West Side neighborhood.<sup>71</sup> The company

<sup>68</sup> Hubbard, "Heating and Ventilating Industrial Buildings Part III," 98.

<sup>69</sup> "Was Founded in Canisteo 75 Years Ago," *Canisteo Times*, June 2, 1927, 1.

<sup>70</sup> Alva H. Bennett, "The Spencer Lens Company, American Optical Company," *Optical Heritage Museum*, <http://www.opticalheritagemuseum.com/>.

<sup>71</sup> "Human Fellowship between Employer and Employee is Spencer-Lens Co. Policy," *Buffalo Evening Times*, July 5, 1919, 7, Spencer Lens Company File Folder, Research Library, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 12

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

began production with fifty employees, but by 1918 the Spencer Lens Company had 500 employees and leased 90,000 square feet in the Niagara Manufacturing Buildings at 442 Niagara Street (not extant).<sup>72</sup> The company shared space in the complex with the Buffalo Manufacturing Company, B.F. Stinson & Company, and a number of unnamed manufacturers.<sup>73</sup>

In 1916, the Spencer Lens Company began producing optical glass from a factory in Hamburg, New York, near the intersection of Pleasant Avenue and the Erie Railroad's tracks (not extant).<sup>74</sup> The company's decision to manufacture optical glass came as a result of World War I and the loss of German glass suppliers.<sup>75</sup> Prior to 1914, American optics firms were primarily supplied with optical glass from Germany and the secrets of optical glass production were closely guarded.<sup>76</sup> Working with independent scientists and the federal government, the Spencer Lens Company devised its own production methods and opened the facility in Hamburg to fill the void of German glass firms. After opening, the Hamburg plant produced roughly 75,000 pounds of optical glass, around twelve percent of the country's wartime glass production.<sup>77</sup> The company sold much of its glass to Bausch & Lomb and the Pittsburg Plate Glass Company, where it was used to make range finding instruments and other supplies for the American Expeditionary Forces.<sup>78</sup>

The Spencer Lens Company's work with government scientists boosted the company's technical capabilities and allowed the firm to build lenses of a size never attempted in the United States. The company's most notable lens was a reflector disc built in 1922 for the Steward Observatory in Tucson, Arizona.<sup>79</sup> The Steward Observatory was built in 1916 under the leadership of Andrew Elliott Douglass, a professor of astronomy at the University of Arizona. Because of World War I, Douglass could not access the European firms that had built lenses for America's other observatories and was forced to find an American optics firm willing to develop the expertise necessary to build a research quality telescope lens. Douglass selected the Spencer Lens Company and after several failed castings, the firm succeeded in manufacturing a reflector lens large enough for Douglass's purposes.<sup>80</sup> The reflector lens built by the Spencer Lens Company was forty inches in diameter, weighed 900 pounds, and took nine months to complete.<sup>81</sup> The creation of the Spencer Lens Company's reflector disc marked an important moment in American astronomical history, as the Steward Observatory's telescope was the first

<sup>72</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo, Erie County, New York, 1925*, Sheet 142; "Human Fellowship between Employer and Employee is Spencer-Lens Co. Policy," *Buffalo Evening Times*.

<sup>73</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo*, Sheet 142.

<sup>74</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Hamburg, Erie County, New York, 1923*, Sheet 4.

<sup>75</sup> L.M. Potter, "Optical Glass Manufacture in America," *School Science and Mathematics* 19, no. 1 (1919): 181.

<sup>76</sup> Potter, "Optical Glass Manufacture in America," 181.

<sup>77</sup> Arthur L. Day, "Optical Glass and its Future as an American Industry," *The Journal of the Franklin Institute* 190, no. 4 (1920): 472.

<sup>78</sup> Day, "Optical Glass and its Future as an American Industry," 461.

<sup>79</sup> "Lens Company Completes 40-Inch Reflector Disc," *The Christian Science Monitor*, March 13, 1922, 10.

<sup>80</sup> "Lens Company Completes 40-Inch Reflector Disc," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 10.

<sup>81</sup> "Lens Company Completes 40-Inch Reflector Disc," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 10; The Steward Observatory's telescope was the first research telescope built in America with exclusively American parts.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 13

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

research telescope built with parts exclusively manufactured in America. The telescope was dedicated in 1923 and the Steward Observatory remained an important dark sky observatory until 1963, when light pollution from Tucson undermined the observatory's capabilities.<sup>82</sup>

In 1926, the Spencer Lens Company purchased the Monarch Knitting Company factory building for \$250,000.<sup>83</sup> The purchase allowed the company to increase its output, and by 1927 the firm had 350 employees and annual profits of over \$1,000,000.<sup>84</sup> Like the Monarch Knitting Company, the Spencer Lens Company put offices in the 1912 section of the factory; although, instead of a dining hall, the company installed its shipping department alongside the offices.<sup>85</sup> The first floor of the 1916 addition housed the company's laboratory spaces where researchers attempted to improve the company's microscope design by developing schematics and testing experimental lenses.<sup>86</sup> They also communicated with scientists unaffiliated with the company, working to develop better products to meet the changing needs of America's scientific community.<sup>87</sup> The rest of the factory contained a mixture of spaces, some of which featured open floor plans and individual workstations for researchers, draftsmen, and opticians. Other parts of the factory, such as the Metal Working Department, contained heavy machinery used to make microscope frames and stands.<sup>88</sup> Spaces such as the company's Precision Surfacing Department contained rotating belts that polished microscope lenses, some of which were the size of a pinhead, into the proper shape.<sup>89</sup> Lenses were cemented together by hand in a clean air-conditioned room. Inside the room, workers were careful to make sure no dust got affixed to the lenses as they were being cemented together as this would ruin the microscope.<sup>90</sup> After the machined parts and lenses were assembled into a working microscope, company experts tested the completed product, putting it through the same critical assessment an independent scientist would, before sending it to the shipping department for distribution.<sup>91</sup>

In 1935, the American Optical Company of Southbridge, Massachusetts, purchased a majority stake in the Spencer Lens Company, although the firm continued to operate under its own name for another decade.<sup>92</sup> In 1938, the Spencer Lens Company added a die and pattern vault to the factory, and in that same year purchased a twenty-five acre site in Cheektowaga, New York, where it built a new plant.<sup>93</sup> Initially, the Cheektowaga plant produced mechanical parts while the Monarch Knitting Company Factory continued to house executive offices,

<sup>82</sup> Department of Astronomy and Steward Observatory, "History," The University of Arizona, <https://www.as.arizona.edu/history>.

<sup>83</sup> "Spencer Lens Co. Buys Monarch Knitting Works," *Buffalo Courier*, February 4, 1926, 4.

<sup>84</sup> "Industries that have made Buffalo-and Victor's-Grow," *Buffalo Courier-Express*, May 30, 1927, 4.

<sup>85</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo, Erie County, New York, 1937*, Sheet 583.

<sup>86</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo*, Sheet 583.

<sup>87</sup> John Thomas, *I Saw them Making Microscopes* (Buffalo: Spencer Lens Company, 1937), 4.

<sup>88</sup> Thomas, *I Saw them Making Microscopes*, 5.

<sup>89</sup> Thomas, *I Saw them Making Microscopes*, 6.

<sup>90</sup> Thomas, *I Saw them Making Microscopes*, 8.

<sup>91</sup> Thomas, *I Saw them Making Microscopes*, 16.

<sup>92</sup> "Buys Lens Interest," *Buffalo Courier Express*, August 24, 1935, 16.

<sup>93</sup> "Spencer Lens to Build Plant in Cheektowaga," *Buffalo Courier-Express*, January 7, 1938, 26.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 14

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

research and development divisions, assembly, and inspection departments.<sup>94</sup> However, the Cheektowaga plant expanded throughout the late 1930s and early 1940s, and the Spencer Lens Company steadily transferred more employees and departments to the plant. By 1943, around 20 percent of the company's employees worked at 19 Doat Street, and the company planned to consolidate operations in Cheektowaga.<sup>95</sup> That year, the Royal Bedding Company, a mattress manufacturing firm, purchased the building.<sup>96</sup> Instead of vacating the factory immediately, the Spencer Lens Company continued to occupy the building, leasing space from the Royal Bedding Company.<sup>97</sup> This arrangement was necessary because the Spencer Lens Company had multiple war contracts and needed to maximize its production for the military.

Leading up to and during World War II, the Spencer Lens Company produced equipment for the American armed forces. In 1939, the firm filled a \$70,000 order for telescopes and spare parts for the artillery corps, and in 1940 the army paid \$43,000 for azimuth instruments.<sup>98</sup> During the war, the Spencer Lens Company supplied the military with range finding devices, binoculars, microscopes, turret gun sights, periscopes, and fire control instruments [See **Figure 12** for a list of the company's wartime production up to 1943].<sup>99</sup> Many of these products were produced at the Cheektowaga plant; however the company's executive offices and polishing departments occupied the Monarch Knitting Company Factory for the duration of the war.<sup>100</sup> In 1945 the Spencer Lens Company was renamed the Scientific Instruments Division of the American Optical Company and a year later completed its move to Cheektowaga, ending the firm's existence as an independent entity and its tenure in Buffalo.

***Builders and Architects of the Monarch Knitting Mill***

*Robert E. Williams (Builder)*

Robert E. Williams was a Canadian born general contractor who operated in Buffalo from circa 1912 to 1939. During this time, Williams developed a successful firm with offices in the Iroquois Building in downtown Buffalo (not extant).<sup>101</sup> Williams's contracts included commercial buildings, factories, and a number of large churches he erected in the 1920s. Circa 1933, Williams's son, Frederick, joined the firm, which they renamed

<sup>94</sup> "Spencer Firm Breaks Ground for New Plant," *Buffalo Courier-Express*, October 8, 1938, 6.

<sup>95</sup> "Expansion Planned by Royal Bedding in Doat St. Plant," *Buffalo Evening News*, December 30, 1943, 18.

<sup>96</sup> "Expansion Planned by Royal Bedding in Doat St. Plant," *Buffalo Evening News*, 18.

<sup>97</sup> "Expansion Planned by Royal Bedding in Doat St. Plant," *Buffalo Evening News*, 18.

<sup>98</sup> "Buffalo Firms Share in Navy, Army Awards," *Buffalo Courier-Express*, November 25, 1939, 22; "Firm Gets Army Order," *Buffalo Courier-Express*, April 21, 1940, L-9.

<sup>99</sup> "Optical Leader to be Speaker at E Ceremony," *Buffalo Courier-Express*, February 9, 1943, 22.

<sup>100</sup> "Spencer Lens Maps Addition," *Buffalo Courier Express*, August 31, 1940, 15.

<sup>101</sup> "Buffalo, N.Y.," *The American Contractor* 43, (1922): 52.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 15

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

R.E. Williams & Son Incorporated. After Frederick joined the firm, Williams completed some of his largest contracts.

The Monarch Knitting Company hired Williams to erect the factory at 19 Doat Street in 1912, and the factory is his first known contract in Buffalo. Williams doubled the length of the factory in 1916 and built a small garage at the factory that same year. In 1916 Williams also built a two-story brick commercial building at 234 Delaware Avenue (not extant), a one-story commercial building at 245 Delaware Avenue (not extant), and a three-story boys' home at 261 Delaware Avenue (not extant). In 1918, The Monarch Knitting Company hired Williams to build the boiler plant and storage buildings at 19 Doat Street.<sup>102</sup> Williams also built the Central Park Methodist Episcopal Church in 1921 (extant), the Parkside Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1924 (extant), a building at 190 Delaware Avenue (not extant) in 1925, the Kenmore Methodist Episcopal Church in 1927 (extant), the University Presbyterian Church in 1928 (NR 2015, extant), and Buffalo Public School 4 in 1930 (extant).<sup>103</sup> In 1934, Williams completed his largest contract, building Kensington High School for \$745,000 (extant).<sup>104</sup> Another large contract came in 1937, when he built the Irwin B. Clark Memorial Gymnasium for the University at Buffalo (extant) for \$350,000.<sup>105</sup> The last known contract completed by Robert E. Williams came in 1939 when he built the Cazenovia Park Baptist Church (extant).<sup>106</sup>

*William Elmer Seibert Dyer (Mill Engineer and Architect) 1880-1957*

William Elmer Seibert Dyer (professionally abbreviated to W.E.S. Dyer) was a mill engineer and architect from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, who designed the 1918 additions to the Monarch Knitting Company Factory.<sup>107</sup> Dyer advertised himself as an expert on the construction of factories, mills, power plants, and other industrial buildings and claimed to have designed over 800 buildings in eighteen years.<sup>108</sup> In addition to erecting buildings, Dyer also designed power systems for factories.<sup>109</sup> Dyer conducted much of his business around Philadelphia, where he designed several textile mills, including the Fred Pearson & Company Factory (extant); the Joseph R. Foster & Sons Factory, which specialized in worsted and wool yarns (not extant); and the Saxonia

<sup>102</sup> "Current News," *Electrical Review* 72, no. 23 (1918): 910.

<sup>103</sup> "Buffalo, N.Y.," *The American Contractor* 42, (1921): 41; "\$177,500 Day's Building Total in New Permits," *The Buffalo Courier*, June 21, 1924, 8; "Laborer Falls of Scaffold; Suffers Fractured Skull," *The Buffalo Courier*, December 25, 1925, 3; "Award Church Contract," *Buffalo Evening News*, July 24, 1927, 12; Kerry Traynor, "University Presbyterian Church," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, July 2015, Section 8, Page 4; "May End Case," *Buffalo Courier-Express*, October 31, 1930, 26.

<sup>104</sup> "Kensington High Start Due Oct. 1," *Buffalo Evening News*, August 14, 1934, 1.

<sup>105</sup> University at Buffalo, "Irwin B. Clark Memorial Gymnasium," *University Archives*, <http://library.buffalo.edu/archives/buildings/north/clark.html>.

<sup>106</sup> "Church Will Build," *Buffalo Evening News*, June 23, 1939, 25.

<sup>107</sup> "Along the Atlantic Coast," *The Iron Trade Review* 63, no. 14 (1918): 806.

<sup>108</sup> "Advertisement," *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, May 6, 1920, 23.

<sup>109</sup> "Advertisement," *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, June 24, 1920, 12.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 16

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

Dress Goods Mill (extant).<sup>110</sup> One of Dyer's buildings, the Richard L. Wallace Plant (not extant), bore a strong resemblance to the Monarch Knitting Company's dye house [See Figure 13]. Both featured a gabled roof surmounted by a monitor, as well as openings on the side elevations to provide light and ventilation for the workspace. In 1939, Dyer was arrested and charged with tax fraud after reporting his income for 1930-31 as \$37,000 when, in reality, he had earned \$126,000 that year.<sup>111</sup> Dyer was convicted in 1940 and forced to pay a \$5,000 fine in addition to his back taxes. Following the case, Dyer's career appears to have ended. W.E.S. Dyer passed away in 1957 at the age of seventy-seven.

***Subsequent Tenants***

After the Spencer Lens Company left the Monarch Knitting Company Factory in 1946, it was owned and occupied by the Royal Bedding Company. Founded in 1923 in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, the company opened a factory at 18 Hanover Street in Buffalo in 1942, taking over the former Egan-Luth Company Building (not extant).<sup>112</sup> A year later, the company purchased the Monarch Knitting Company Factory, citing a need for more floor space and a desire to expand its workforce.<sup>113</sup>

After the Royal Bedding Company moved into the factory, the firm began modernizing the building. The firm completed a modernization campaign in 1954 that included adding new elevators (non-historic) and unloading facilities.<sup>114</sup> The company also converted some space into a showroom, but it is unclear from existing conditions where this space was located. The company's offices occupied the first floor of the 1912 building while mattresses were built on the first, second, and third floor of the 1916 addition.<sup>115</sup> The company converted the dye house into a shipping building, as reflected by the garage doors on the east side of the dye house. The dye house's sloped concrete floors remain intact and the sloped floor likely aided the company's attempt to use the space for shipping. By 1957, the factory averaged an annual profit of \$2,000,000, and mattresses made in the factory were sold throughout the Great Lakes region.<sup>116</sup> The Royal Bedding Company occupied the factory for six decades; however, the firm steadily shrank operations inside the factory and by 2010 used it as a warehouse.

Despite the Royal Bedding Company's modernization campaign and long tenure, the Monarch Knitting Company Factory remains largely intact to its historic period. Important spaces such as the main factory space and dye house retain their configuration as well as the design features such as the factory space's semi-mill

<sup>110</sup> "Advertisement," *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, May 20, 1920, 16; "Advertisement," *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, May 27, 1920, 11; "Advertisement," *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, June 17, 1920, 19.

<sup>111</sup> "U.S. Opens Trial of Architect in \$20,000 Tax Fraud," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 5, 1939, 7.

<sup>112</sup> "Proper Bedding Declared Health Need," *Buffalo Courier-Express*, March 23, 1958, 8-C.

<sup>113</sup> "Expansion Planned by Royal Bedding in Doat St. Plant," *Buffalo Evening News*, 18.

<sup>114</sup> "\$75,000 Modernizing Program Announced," *Buffalo Courier-Express*, February 15, 1954, 19.

<sup>115</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo, Erie County, New York, 1955*, Sheet 605.

<sup>116</sup> "Proper Bedding Declared Health Need," *Buffalo Courier-Express*, 8-C.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 17

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

construction and dye house's ventilation oriented design help distinguish the factory as a former textile mill. Additionally, the Royal Bedding Company's mattress product line used weaving and knitting machines similar to the Monarch Knitting Company's machines [See Figure 14]. It is likely that the Royal Bedding Company arranged its machines in a manner similar to the Monarch Knitting Company and made limited changes to accommodate its equipment. The most significant changes the Royal Bedding Company made to the factory can be seen in the office spaces where wood paneling, carpeting, and drop ceilings were installed in the 1970s. These changes, however, are largely cosmetic as original plaster ceilings and millwork partitions are still present and were only covered by the 1970s modifications.

Under the Royal Bedding Company's ownership, large portions of the factory were leased to other manufacturing concerns. Starting in 1946, the Royal Bedding Company leased 30,000 square feet in the factory to the Bond Clothing Stores.<sup>117</sup> Bond Clothing Stores was a men's clothing company with retail stores and twelve plants throughout the United States. In Buffalo, the company had a store at 369 Main Street. Bond Clothing Stores set up a finishing shop inside the factory and employed over 800 people in coat manufacturing.<sup>118</sup> Bond Clothing Stores was not the only entity to lease space from the Royal Bedding Company. By 1955, a shoe and furniture warehouse occupied most of the 1912 building.<sup>119</sup>

The last architectural changes to occur at the Monarch Knitting Company Factory occurred sometime after 1980, when the 1916 garage, which had been converted to storage, was demolished. In addition to the garage, a small portion of the 1918 storage building was demolished. Except for these spaces, and the auto shed that was demolished sometime between 1950 and 1980, the Monarch Knitting Company Factory has retained all of the key, character defining spaces built during its period of significance.

### *Conclusion*

The Monarch Knitting Company Factory is a good representative example of a textile mill in Buffalo, New York. Built in 1912-13 and expanded in 1916 and 1918-19 for the Monarch Knitting Company, the factory was subsequently owned by the Spencer Lens Company, an important manufacturer of optical devices. Both companies employed hundreds of people at 19 Doat Street and the factory played a vital role in the business plans and production process of both firms. Much of the building's historic fabric reflects the influence of the Monarch Knitting Company and elements such as the building's semi-mill construction and banks of windows reflect the factory's original function as a textile mill. Other elements, such as the external stairwells and metal fire doors evidence the importance of fire safety in the factory's design. Additionally, the dye house exemplifies contemporary practices for that building type, with regularly spaced ground level openings and rows of

<sup>117</sup> "Bond to Expand Coat Manufacture in Doat St. Plant," *The Buffalo Evening News*, September 28, 1946, 6.

<sup>118</sup> "Bond to Expand Coat Manufacture in Doat St. Plant," *The Buffalo Evening News*, 6.

<sup>119</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Buffalo, 1955*, Sheet 605.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 18

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

windows in the monitor to facilitate ventilation and vapor control. Furthermore, finished spaces on the first floor of factory's Doat Street elevation evidence the Monarch Knitting Company's concern for worker wellbeing. These finished spaces were later converted for use by researchers and managers working for the Spencer Lens Company and remain intact.

The Monarch Knitting Company Factory represents the industrial character of the neighborhood around Genesee and Doat Streets. Always a mix of residential, commercial, communal, and industrial buildings, the neighborhood has lost much of the industry and commercial architecture that once characterized it. Presently, Genesee Street, once a major commercial thoroughfare through the area, features long rows of vacant lots while the sidings of the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad tracks are largely devoid of industry. The Monarch Knitting Company Factory stands as one of the last examples of the large-scale industry that helped the neighborhood around Genesee and Doat Street develop and prosper in the early twentieth century.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 1

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 2

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 3

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 4

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 5

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 1

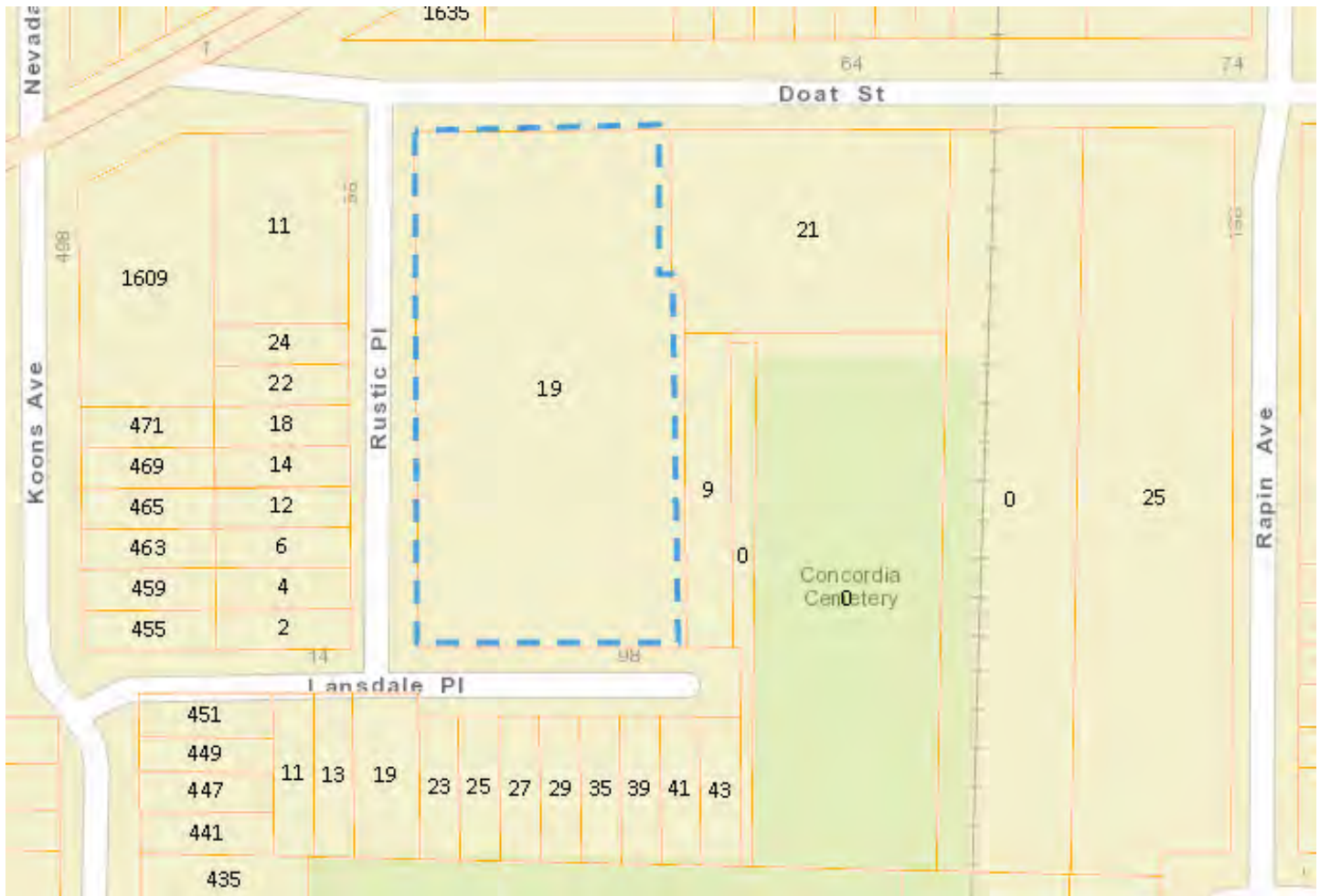
**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is indicated with a heavy line on the attached maps with scale.

Boundary Justification

This area encompasses the historic boundary of the Monarch Knitting Company Factory. The property includes the entire parcel under current ownership and includes the nominated factory building located at 19 Doat Street, Buffalo, NY.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

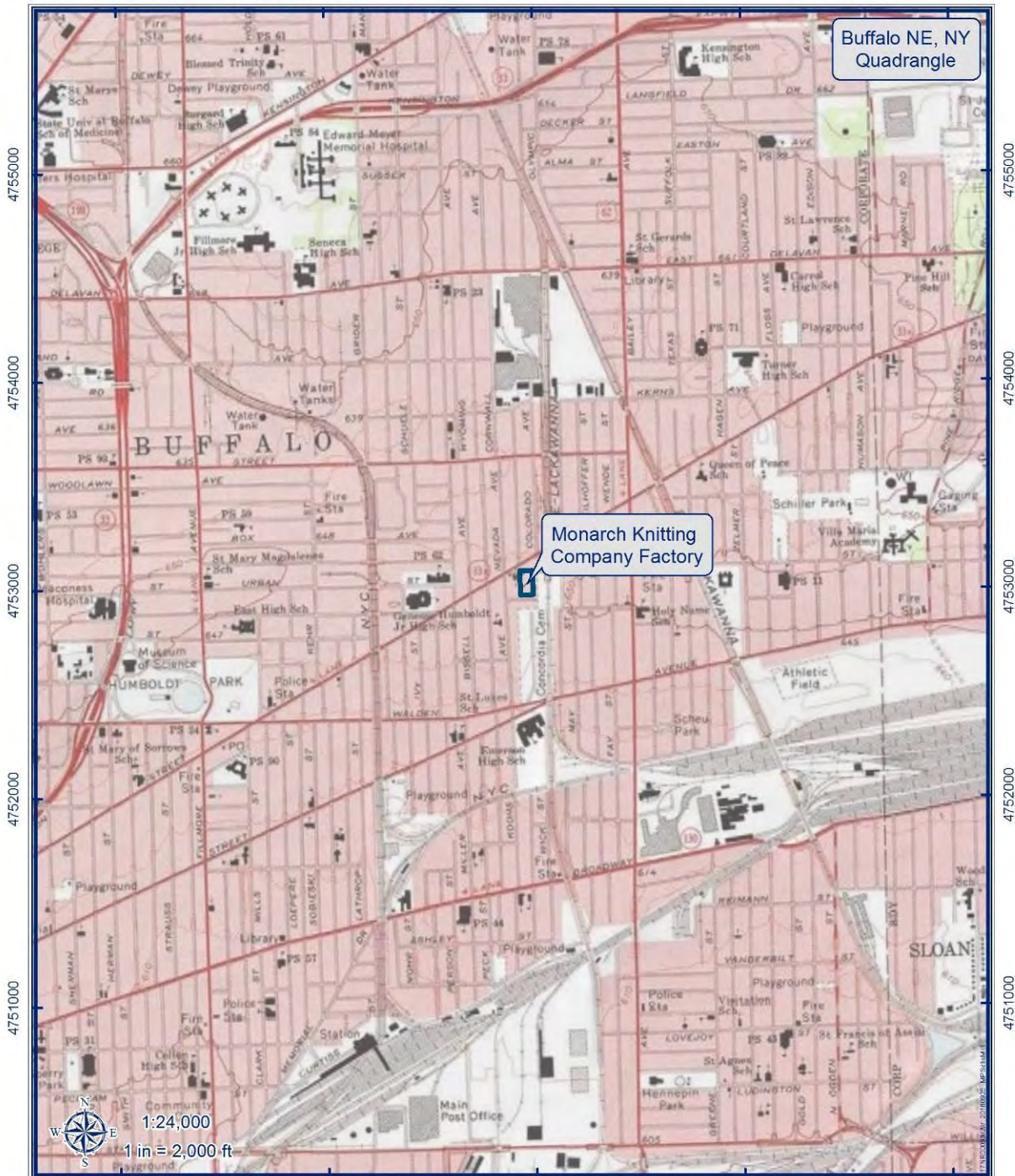
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 2

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

Monarch Knitting Company Factory  
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

19 Doat Street  
Buffalo, NY 14211



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter

0 750 1,500 3,000 Feet

Monarch  
Knitting  
Company  
Factory



Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation  
Division for Historic Preservation



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 3

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**

**Name of Property**

**Erie County, New York**

**County and State**

Monarch Knitting Company Factory  
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

19 Doat Street  
Buffalo, NY 14211



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter

0 375 750 1,500 Feet



Monarch  
Knitting  
Company  
Factory



Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation  
Division for Historic Preservation



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

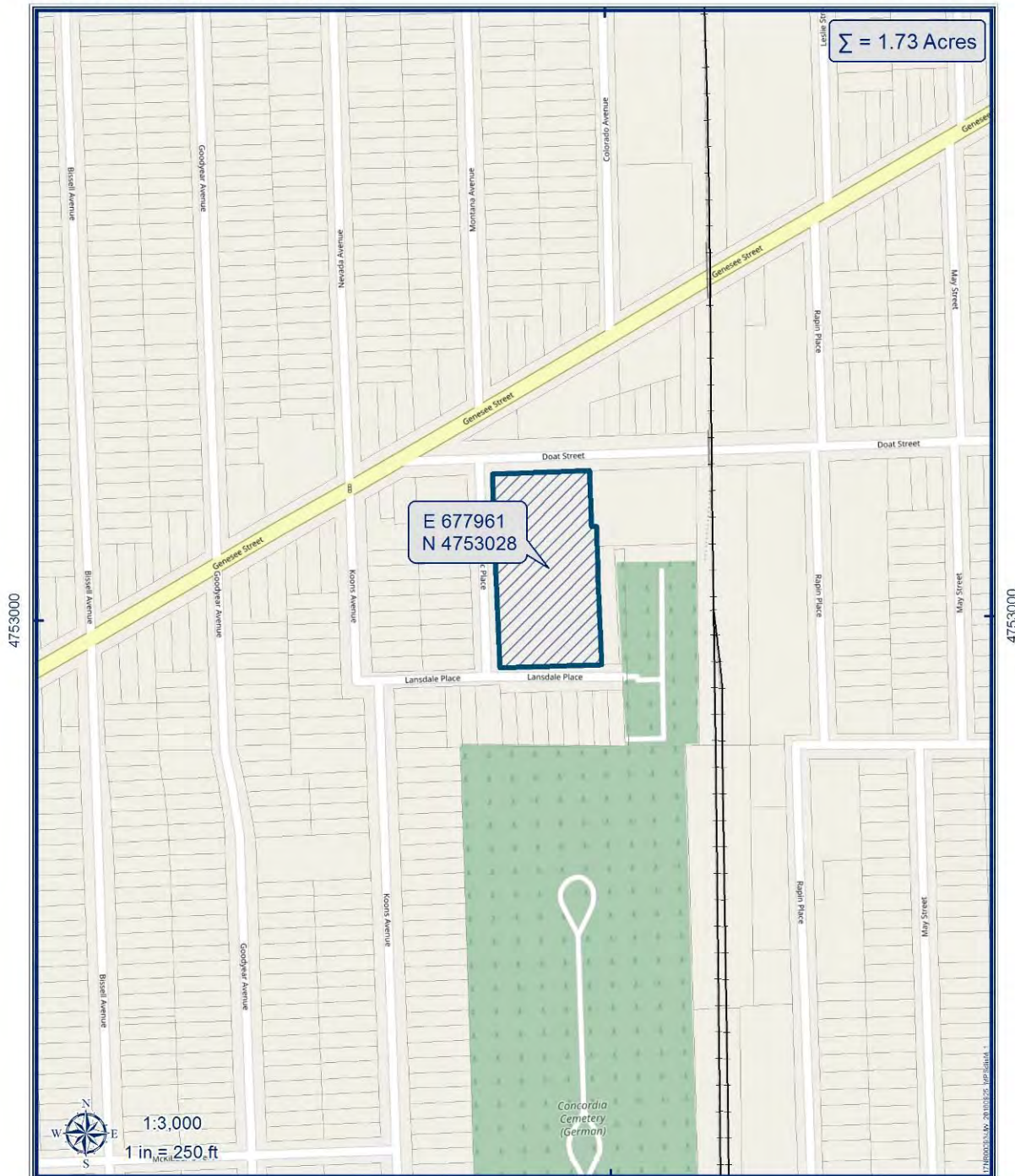
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 4

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

Monarch Knitting Company Factory  
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

19 Doat Street  
Buffalo, NY 14211



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter

0 90 180 360 Feet



Monarch  
Knitting  
Company  
Factory



NEW YORK  
DIVISION OF  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation  
Division for Historic Preservation



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 5

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
**County and State**

Monarch Knitting Company Factory  
City of Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

19 Doat Street  
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Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter

0 90 180 360 Feet

Monarch  
Knitting  
Company  
Factory

NEW YORK  
STATE OF  
CONSTITUTION  
Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation  
Division for Historic Preservation

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 1

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

List of Photographs

Name of Property: Monarch Knitting Company Factory  
City or Vicinity: Buffalo  
County: Erie  
State: NY  
Name of Photographer: Derek King, Michael Puma  
Date of Photographs: September 2017  
Number of Photographs: 13

NY\_Erie County\_Monarch Knitting Company Factory\_001  
North and east elevations, camera facing southwest

NY\_Erie County\_Monarch Knitting Company Factory\_002  
North and west elevations, camera facing southeast

NY\_Erie County\_Monarch Knitting Company Factory\_003  
West and north elevations, camera facing southwest

NY\_Erie County\_Monarch Knitting Company Factory\_004  
West and south elevations, southwest corner, camera facing northeast

NY\_Erie County\_Monarch Knitting Company Factory\_005  
South elevations, showing boiler house, camera facing northwest

NY\_Erie County\_Monarch Knitting Company Factory\_006  
South and east elevations of boiler house, east elevation of dye house, facing northwest

NY\_Erie County\_Monarch Knitting Company Factory\_007  
East elevation of dye house, boiler house, smokestack, camera facing southwest

NY\_Erie County\_Monarch Knitting Company Factory\_008  
Interior, first floor, camera facing north

NY\_Erie County\_Monarch Knitting Company Factory\_009  
Interior, second floor, camera facing southwest

NY\_Erie County\_Monarch Knitting Company Factory\_010  
Interior, first floor garage, camera facing east.

NY\_Erie County\_Monarch Knitting Company Factory\_011  
Interior, first floor, north entry, camera facing north.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 11 Page 2

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

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NY\_Erie County\_Monarch Knitting Company Factory\_012  
Interior, first floor, original office partitions, camera facing northeast.

NY\_Erie County\_Monarch Knitting Company Factory\_013  
Interior, first floor, dye house, camera facing northeast



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 3

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

Additional Information



**Figure 1:**

1895 map of Buffalo showing the eighteenth ward. The future site of the Monarch Knitting Company Factory is noted with a red arrow.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 4

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State



**Figure 2:**

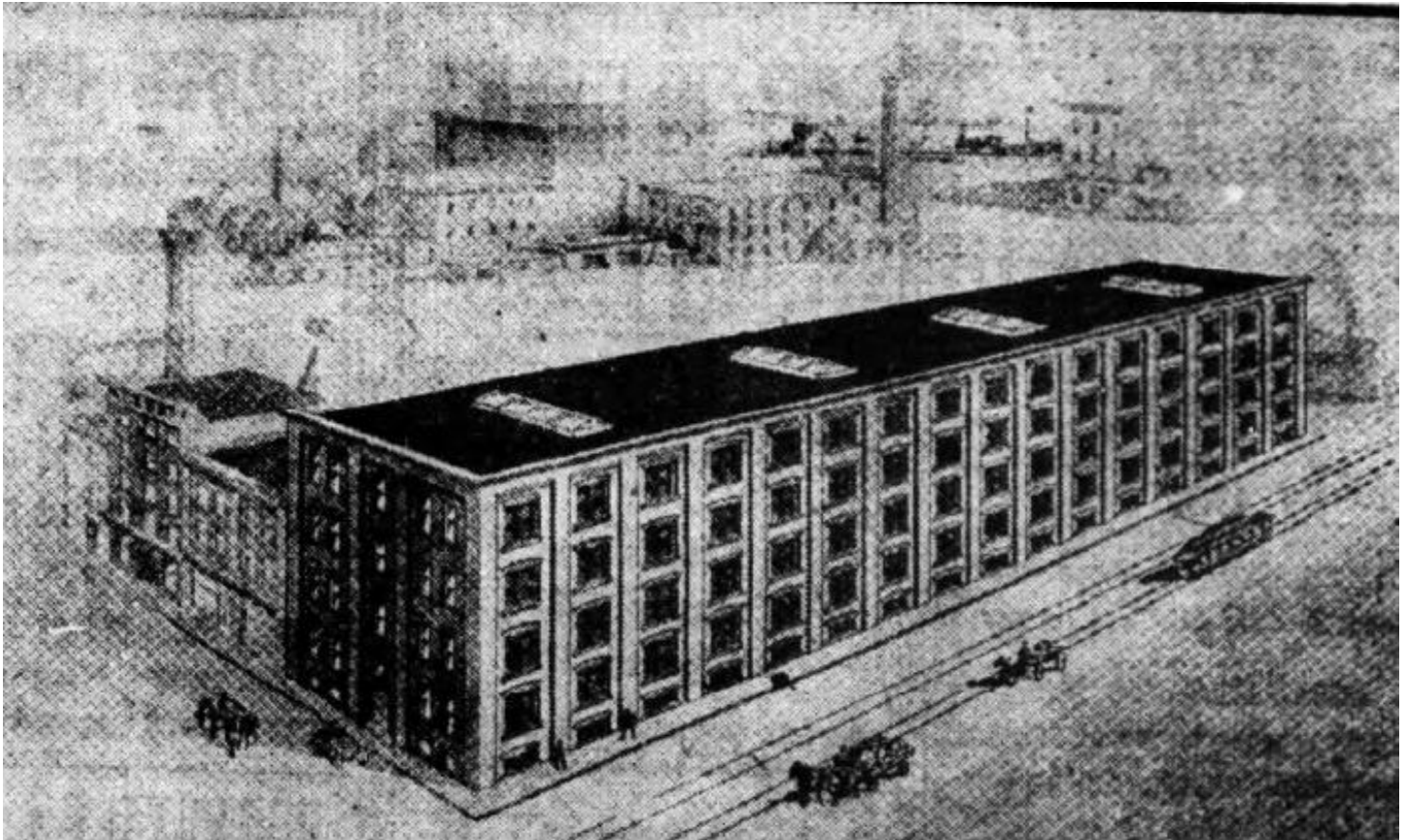
1909 map of Buffalo showing the twelfth ward. The future site of the Monarch Knitting Company Factory is noted with a red arrow.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 5

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State



**Figure 3:**

Drawing of the Monarch Knitting Company from 1913, just prior to the building's completion. The drawing shows skylights that would have provided additional light to workers on the building's fourth floor. Sketched in the background are several small factories that were built alongside the tracks of the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad.

"First and Only Sweater Mill in Buffalo," *The Buffalo Courier*, January 12, 1913, 46.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 6

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State



**Figure 4:**

Drawing of the Monarch Knitting Company Factory from 1914. The drawing shows a formal entry on Doat Street and a fire escape on the building's Rustic Place elevation.

"Representative Sweater Mills: The Monarch Knitting Co., Ltd.," *Sweater News* 1, no. 5 (1914): 10.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 7

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State



**Figure 5:**

Drawing of the Monarch Knitting Company Factory from 1914 showing the factory's stair tower and elevator tower and a path for shipping wagons and later cars to travel down.

*Greater Buffalo & Niagara Frontier: Commercial and Industrial Illustrated* (Buffalo: Buffalo Chamber of Commerce, 1914), 36.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 8

Monarch Knitting Company Factory  
Name of Property  
Erie County, New York  
County and State

96 DRY GOODS ECONOMIST

# BISON-KNIT

THE MONARCH KNITTING COMPANY LTD.



**BISON-KNIT PICTORIAL REVIEW**  
*Seaside society forsakes the beach for the paddock. Prize winners before the rail at the Monmouth County Horse Show, Long Branch, New Jersey, July 29th.*

**HIGHLANDS**  
No. 3785—Ladies' sweater coat in Byma collar style, two pockets and mesh. Made from the highest quality of worsted yarns. Sizes 34 to 46. Colors: White, cardinal, grey, navy, burgundy, copenhagen, old rose, russet, kelly or combination of these colors. Prices range on this model from \$40.00 to \$65.00.

**Ready for the Judges**  
Two new **BISON-KNIT** Novelties that have just dashed up to the rail. Out of Buffalo and sired by four big complete factories that attend to every detail of spinning, dyeing, designing and selling. Coats with a pedigree a mile long and bristling with **BISON-KNIT** style, **BISON-KNIT** servicability and **BISON-KNIT** low price.

**RUMSON**  
No. 53712—Ladies' silk fiber sweater coat made in V neck style with two pockets and mesh. Sizes 34 to 46. Colors: Black, white, copenhagen, gold, kelly, cardinal, heliotrope, old rose. Body of solid color with trimming of any of above mentioned colors to match. Coat will be made up solid. Prices of this model will range from \$40.00 to \$65.00.

Why pay jobbers their profit when it is possible to buy direct from the manufacturers? We have accordion stitch silk fibre coats from \$36.00 up and are also showing exclusive novelties in silk, glove silk, and wool, on which we are in a position to make immediate deliveries.

*Our salesmen are now on their way with the new season's lines. Write us for appointments; and to facilitate action please address our Buffalo office*

## THE MONARCH KNITTING COMPANY, Ltd.

Manufacturers, having four big plants and selling direct to the retailer  
**BUFFALO, NEW YORK**  
*CANADIAN MILLS:—Dunsville, St. Thomas and St. Catharines*

Figure 6:

A Monarch Knitting Company Bison-Knit advertisement from 1915 showing two models imposed over a horseracing track.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 9

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

Figure 7:

A Bison-Knit advertisement from 1916 emphasizing the Monarch Knitting Company's attention to style.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 10

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State



**Figure 8:**

A Monarch Knitting Company Bathing Suit Advertisement from 1919.

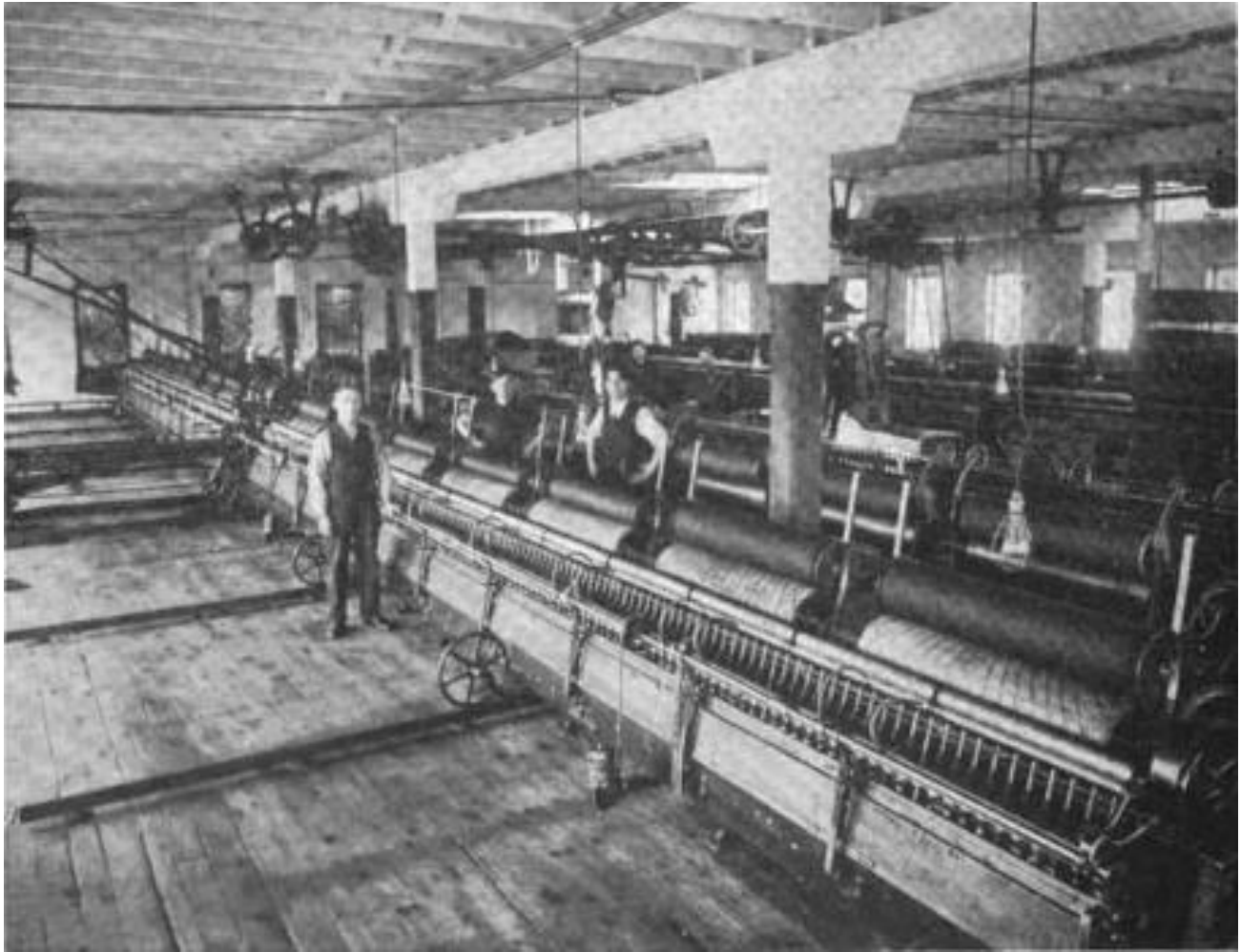


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 11

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State



**Figure 9:**

The spinning rooms of the Monarch Knitting Company Factory in Dunnville, Ontario. Though not a semi-mill constructed building, the arrangement of the factory's machines is likely very similar to the arrangement of machinery in the Monarch Knitting Company Factory in Buffalo.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 12

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State



**Figure 10:**

Engineering Department of the Spencer Lens Company. The windows indicate that this picture was taken on the third or fourth floor of the 1912 portion of the factory building. The Spencer Lens Company repurposed the large open spaces the Monarch Knitting Company filled with knitting machinery for its white-collar workers.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 13

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State



**Figure 11:**  
Forging machines used to shape microscope stands.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 14

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

PAGE 756		WAR SUPPLY CONTRACTS				CUMULATIVE THROUGH FEBRUARY, 1943			
<u>CONFIDENTIAL</u>									
NAME, LOCATION AND PRODUCT OF MANUFACTURER		AGENCY	PRIORITY	VALUE (THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)	AWARD DATE		COMPLETION DATE		
					MO.	YR.	MO.	YR.	
SPENCER LENS CO									
OPTICAL EQUIPMENT	BUFFALO	N		1036	12	40		1	43
OPTICAL EQUIPMENT		N		1965	12	40		1	44
BINOCULARS		N		102		341			842
MICROSCOPES		A		205		142		11	42
OPTICAL EQUIPMENT		N		180		342			
BINOCULARS		N		754		742			443
OPTICAL EQUIPMENT		N		2035		742		10	43
MICROSCOPES		A		55		742			
MICROSCOPES		A		243		842			
ORDNANCE EQUIPMENT		N		1590		942			
MEDICAL EQUIPMENT		A		206		1042			643
OPTICAL EQUIPMENT		N		92		1042			
MEDICAL SUPPLIES		A		59		1142			843
OPTICAL EQUIPMENT		N		727		1242			944
OPTICAL EQUIPMENT		A		363		143			1243
				9692					

Figure 12:

List of the Spencer Lens Company's wartime contracts from 1940 until 1943, showing the company completed nearly \$10,000,000 worth of work for the American military between December 1940 and January 1943. Stacy May, *Alphabetical Listings of Major War Supply Contracts*, vol. 4, War Production Board Statistics Division (Washington D.C.: 1943), 910.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 15

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State



**Figure 13:**

W.E.S. Dyer's design for the Richard L. Wallace wool combing plant in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Dyer's design for Wallace's plant bears a number of similarities to the boiler house he erected in 1918 for the Monarch Knitting Company.

"Advertisement," *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, July 1, 1920, 22.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 16

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State



**Figure 14:**

Knitting machine used by the Royal Bedding Company to knit together cotton for mattresses. Machines like this were similar in size to the looms and weaving equipment used by the Monarch Knitting Company.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

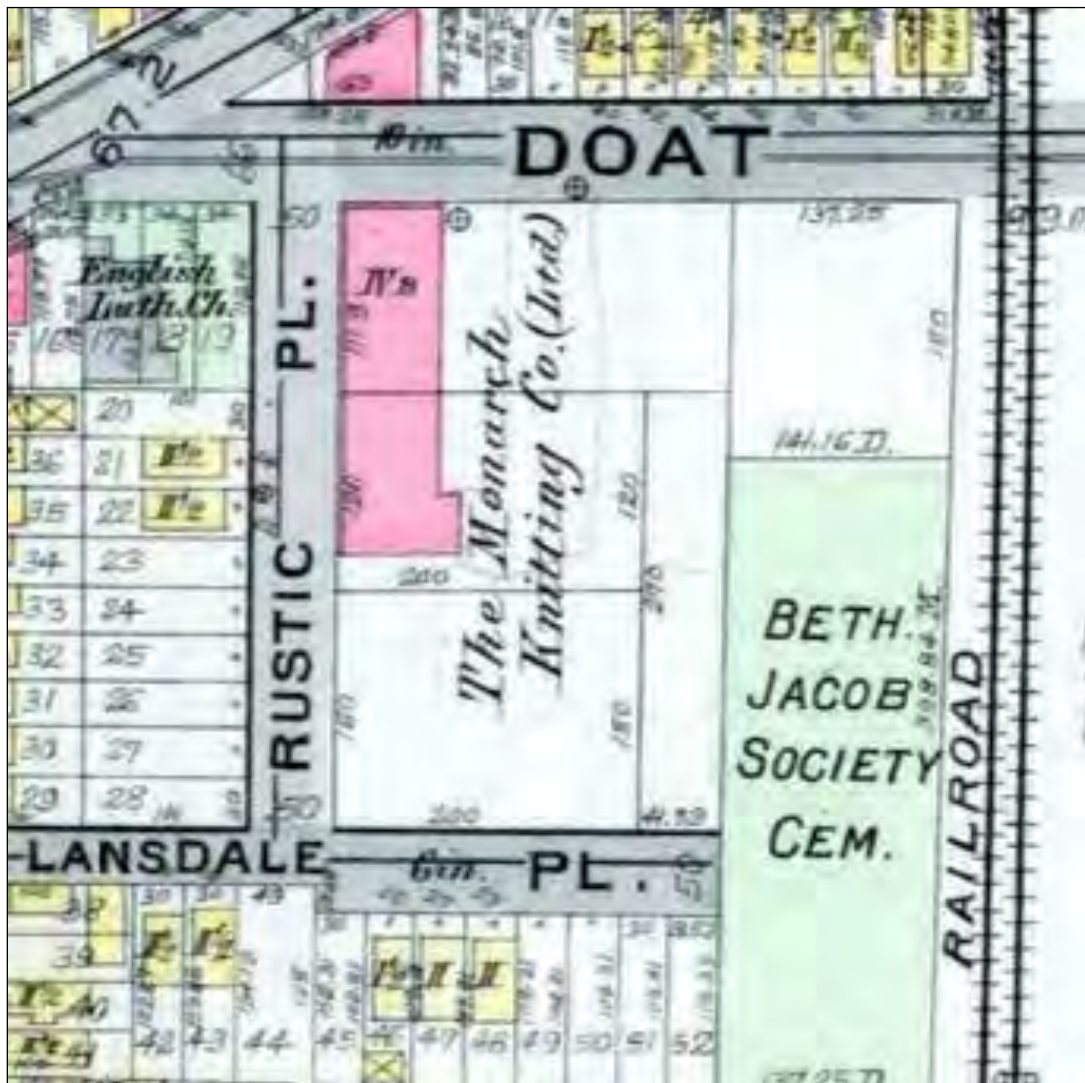
Section 11 Page 17

Monarch Knitting Company Factory

Name of Property

Erie County, New York

County and State



**Figure 15:**

1915 tax map showing the Monarch Knitting Company Factory before the 1916 addition was built.  
*The New Century Atlas of Greater Buffalo*, Vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Century Atlas Company, 1915), Plate 22

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 18

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

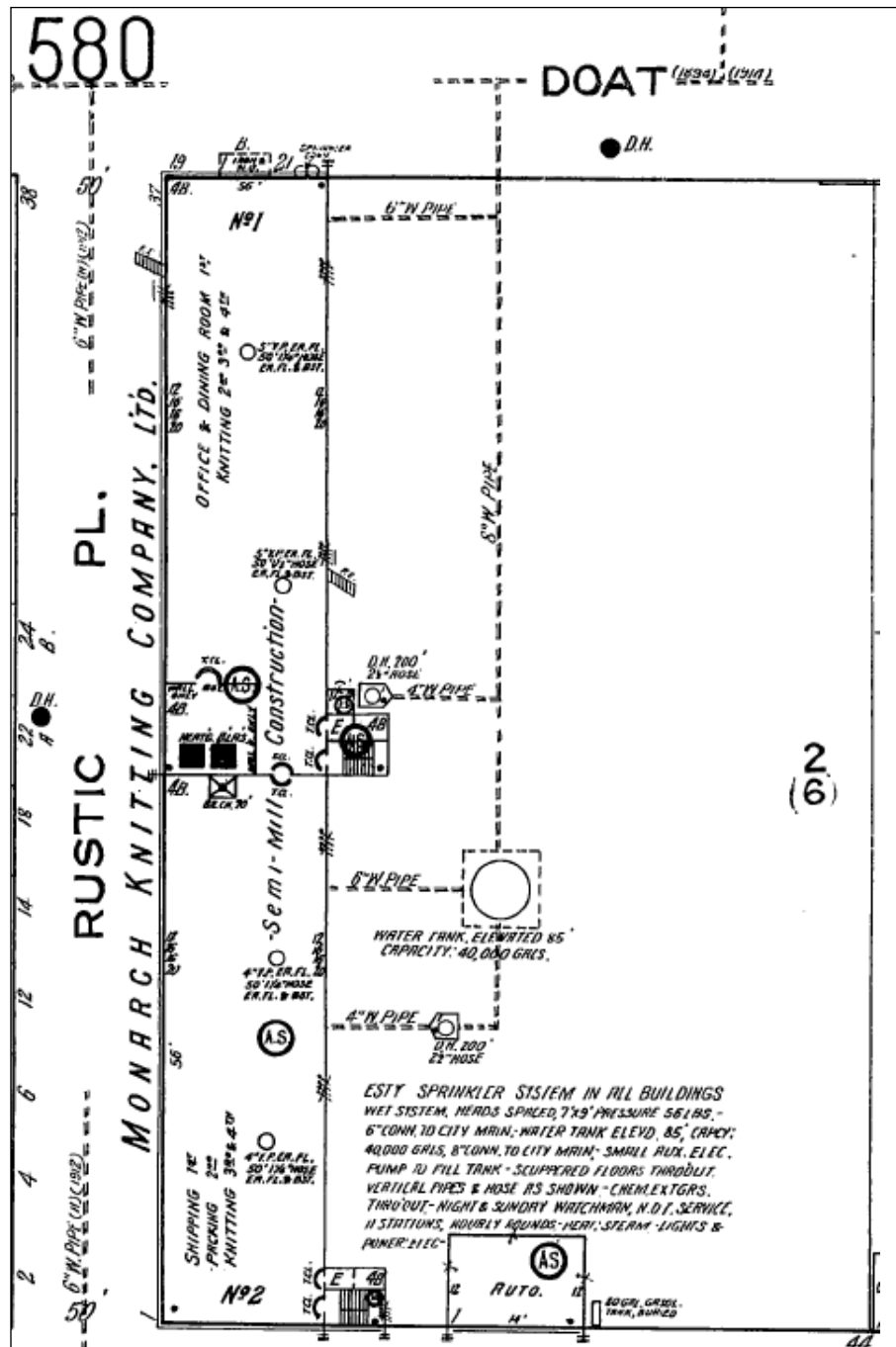


Figure 16:

1917 Sanborn Map of the Monarch Knitting Company. Note the notations on northern building section No.1 (1912) and No.2 (1916). External staircases on the southwest corner of each section and metal fire doors between building section No.1 and No.2 are fire safety features. The map also shows fire escapes on the east and west sides of the original 1912 section of the factory.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 19

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

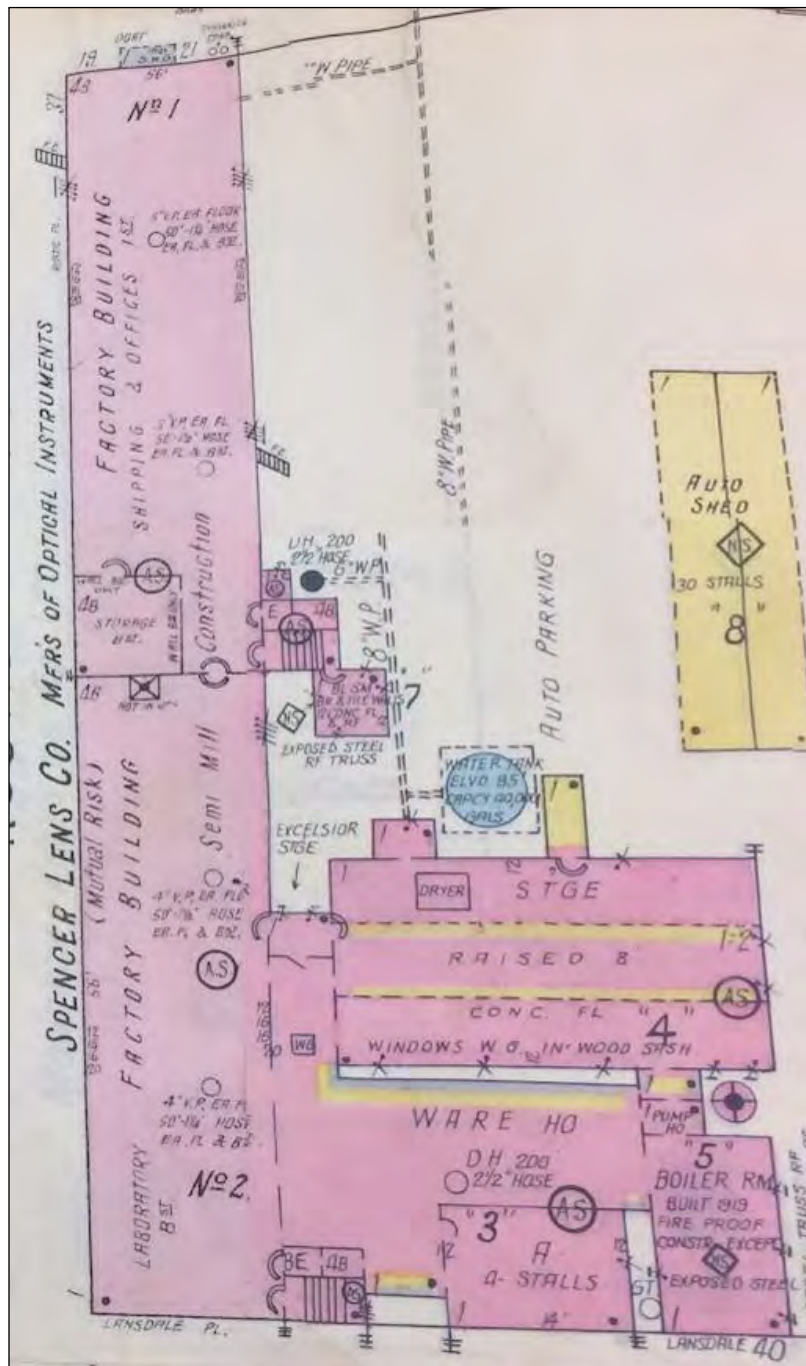


Figure 17:

1937 Sanborn Map showing the Monarch Knitting Company Factory after its purchase by the Spencer Lens Company. Extending off the 1916 factory addition are building section No.3 (1916 garage not extant); No.4 (1918 dye house); No.5 (1919 boiler house) and the warehouse. Fire doors separate the dye house from the 1916 factory building.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 20

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

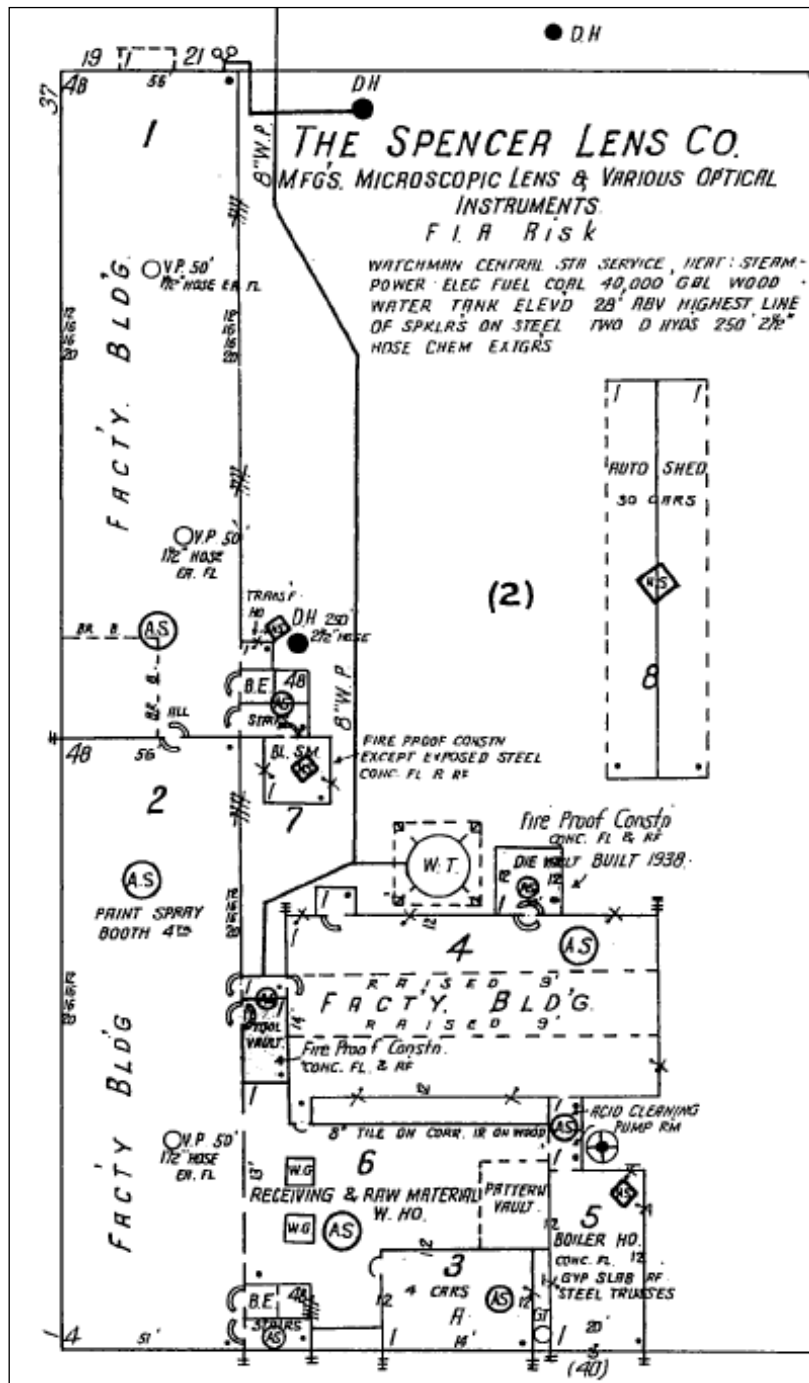


Figure 18:

1939 Sanborn Map. Note the 1938 die vault constructed on the north side of factory building section 4, which replaced a one-story frame building in the same location. Additionally, one portion of the warehouse (building section No.6) has been converted into a tool vault while another has been converted to a pattern vault.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 21

**Monarch Knitting Company Factory**  
Name of Property  
**Erie County, New York**  
County and State

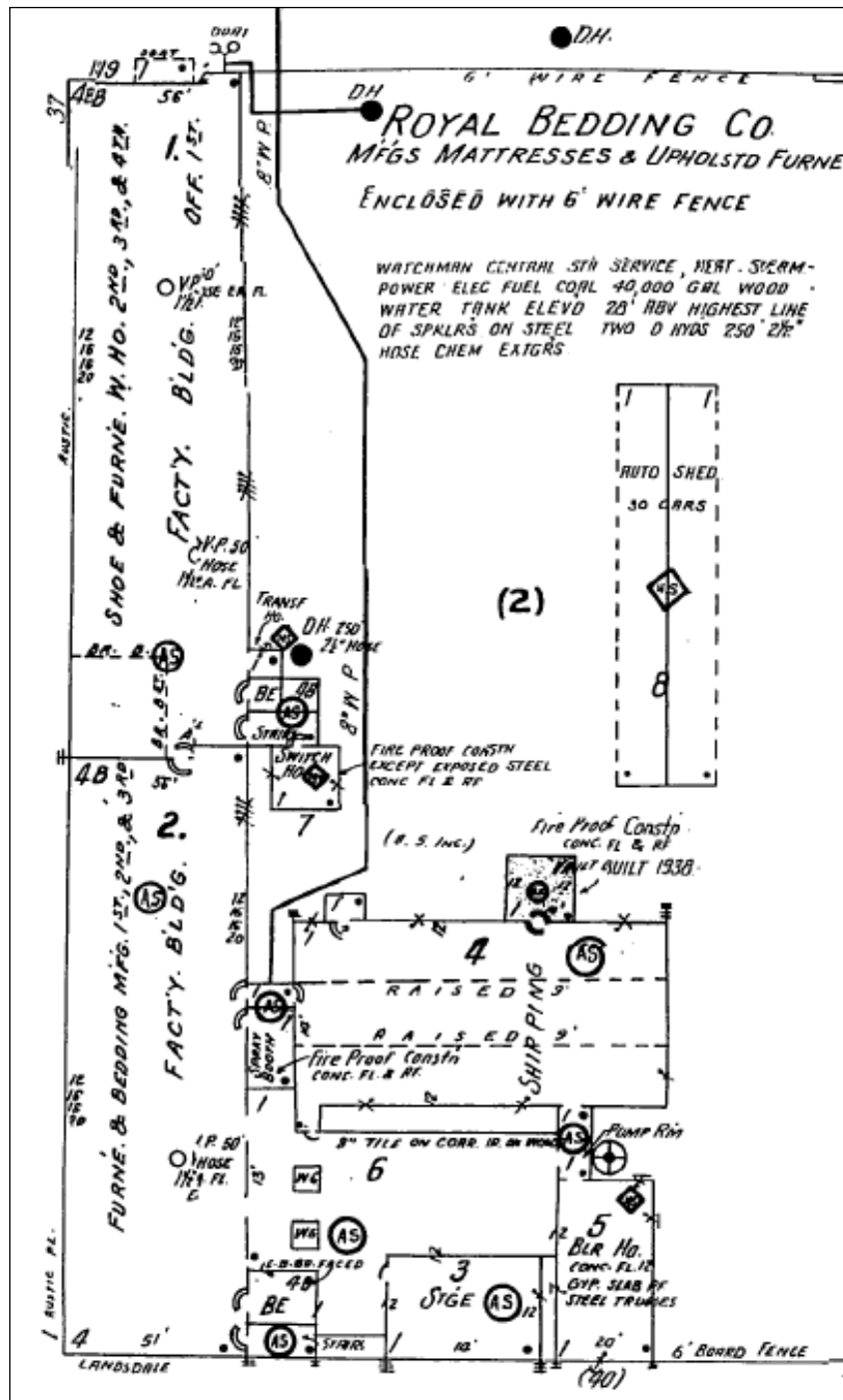


Figure 19:

1950 Sanborn Map showing owned the factory after its purchase by the Royal Bedding Company. The company manufactured mattresses in the 1916 portion of the factory and used the former dye house for shipping. Space in the 1912 portion of the factory was leased to a 'Shoe & Furniture Warehouse.'





411 WALDEN  
& KOONS

BIG MOES TIRES

(716)

KOONS & AUTO  
WALDEN & KOONS  
411-1977  
BIG MOES TIRES









**BIG MOES TIRES**  
Tires & Auto  
Welding Repair  
445-1877

**Patriarch Towing Co.**  
Accident & Recovery Services  
**716-289-5678**  
24 hrs. / 365 days  
18 DOAT STREET, BUFFALO, NY 14203

DOAT  
RUSTIC











































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Monarch Knitting Company Factory

Multiple Name:

State & County: NEW YORK, Erie

Date Received: 1/28/2019      Date of Pending List: 2/12/2019      Date of 16th Day: 2/27/2019      Date of 45th Day: 3/14/2019      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100003432

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL	<input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<input type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> TCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLG	

☒ Accept      ☐ Return      ☐ Reject      3/7/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary  
Comments:

Recommendation/  
Criteria A and C, Industry and architecture

Reviewer Alexis Abernathy

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2236

Date

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



**Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation**

**ANDREW M. CUOMO**  
Governor

**ROSE HARVEY**  
Commissioner

17 December 2018

Alexis Abernathy  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places

Mail Stop 7228

1849 C Street NW  
Washington DC 20240

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following six nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

St. Anthony of Padua Church Complex, Onondaga County (2owners, 0 objections)  
Fort Wood Creek Site, Oneida County  
Monarch Knitting Company Factory, Erie County  
Payne Avenue High School, Niagara County  
Buildings at Niagara and Seventh Streets, Niagara County (1owner, 0 objections)  
Richmond Hill Historic District, Queens County (189 owners, 0 objections)

The Richmond Hill district is located within a certified local government (New York City). In response to our initial letter and copy of the draft, the New York SHPO received a letter from the local commission (New York City LPC) stating that the LPC had concerns about whether or not the district met the criteria (letter enclosed). After receiving this letter, we wrote to and then called the LPC to determine whether the commission believed that the district should not be nominated. In conversation and written communication (also enclosed), the commission's director of research assured me that the commission had no objections to it being nominated to the National Register and would defer to the opinion of the SHPO. Please note that this district also has support from the Historic Districts Council and the New York City Department of Parks. The district is widely supported in the community. There was no communication from the mayor's office. Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank  
National Register Coordinator  
New York State Historic Preservation Office