

SC 2836



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters
other names/site number Camillus Mills
related multiple property listing _____

2. Location

street & number 54 West Genesee Street N/A not for publication
city or town Camillus N/A vicinity
state New York code NY county Onondaga code 067 zip code 13031

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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

___ national ___ statewide X local

Roger Paul Muehly Date 6-18-2018
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
DSHPD

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Alexis Chernobay Date of Action 8/28/18
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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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	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/factory

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/warehouse

COMMERCE/TRADE/office building

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/office building

COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Early 20th C. American daylight industrial
building

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: BRICK, CONCRETE

roof: CONCRETE, MEMBRANE

other: CAST STONE (ROOF COPING)

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Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

Built in 1925, the Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters is located at 54 West Genesee Street in the Village of Camillus, Onondaga County, New York. The building is a two-story, L-shaped brick and concrete building that originally housed the offices and warehouse operations for the cutlery company after it relocated from New York City. The building was expanded in 1940 to include polishing/finishing work and an employee meeting/lunch area. In 1973, a new rear wing was constructed and warehouse operations were shifted into it to accommodate shipping of the final product. The original two-story daylight factory was built of brick and concrete and was emblazoned with "CAMILLUS CUTLERY CO." on its front corners. The headquarters building survives as built with a high degree of integrity. It was once connected by a bridge to a large factory to the east, in which most of the manufacturing process took place. That factory was destroyed by fire in 2013; the connecting bridge was taken down during the fire to prevent it from spreading to the nominated property. That connection is recalled with the permanently shuttered historic metal fire door.

The nominated building retains historic cast concrete sills throughout the entire building and two-story pilasters, cast stone copings and continuous concrete lintels in the 1925 section. All windows are replacements; however, they replicate the original windows in size and configuration, as they are large multi-lights with metal frames/muntins. The interior of the building consisted of a large, open floor plan with no office divisions; the reuse left the concrete and wood ceilings exposed and incorporated concrete support columns and natural lighting. The building also retains two historic metal staircases and has replaced in-kind concrete floors on the first level due to brownfield remediation. With its current mixed use of commercial and residential, the building retains its industrial feeling along with its strong association to the village as a former company town. It also retains integrity in terms of materials, location and design as well as setting, being sited at the end of the commercial heart of the village. The building was vacated in 2007 and was recently rehabilitated into mixed used commercial and residential space (offices, café, apartments) using historic preservation tax credits

LOCATION AND SETTING

The Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters is located at 54 West Genesee Street, also known as West Main

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Street, in the Village of Camillus, Onondaga County, New York. Immediately surrounding the building is a mix of business and municipal buildings with residential areas on the outskirts. Camillus is considered a bedroom community for nearby Syracuse with highway access located west and north of Genesee/Main Street, making it an easy commute into the city. Much of Camillus is hilly, and the nominated property is located on low, flat ground near Nine Mile Creek, which flows through the village. The Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters is located in the south end of a 2.49-acre parcel with a large, asphalt paved parking area at the north end providing access to Newport/Camillus-Warners Road. To the east is a 1.97-acre parcel that contains the concrete footprint of the former factory that was destroyed by fire in 2013. A concrete curb and sloping lawn is between the site and the paved parking lot for Camillus Mills. The drive is the location of an infilled feeder canal.

GROWTH/PROGRESSION OF BUILDING

Essentially a large, two-story L-shaped building, the factory achieved its present configuration in three building campaigns. The original wing of the Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters was built in 1925 to provide office and warehouse space for the cutlery factory, which was located between Nine Mile Creek and an Erie Canal feeder. The headquarters building was constructed on the western bank of the feeder creek and connected to the factory via a conveyor belt. The feeder was later abandoned and filled in, allowing the nominated building to grow northward with large concrete block additions in 1940 and 1973, for a total of approximately 45,800 square feet space in the entire building. The three sections of the two-story building are united by a flat roof with terra cotta coping and similar windows throughout. A personnel bridge was used to connect the 1940 addition with the factory even after the feeder canal was filled in and converted to a roadway. The business closed in 2007, and the main factory burned in 2013. The brick and concrete block building was renovated in 2017 to include 29 apartments and approximately 8500 square feet of commercial space.

South Elevation/1925 Section

The original 1925 structure fronts onto West Genesee Street. The 1925 portion of the building is a rectangular, reinforced concrete structure with brick spandrel walls. The south façade is three-bays wide, with wide, flat, concrete piers separating the full-width run of windows on both levels. The windows are tripartite, multi-light (each five panes wide and five panes high) with aluminum frames and muntins. The windows are fixed in the commercial spaces (first floor) and have awning panels on the second floor living spaces. The concrete lintels and sills create continuous horizontal bands throughout the 1925 exterior. The façade corner piers are emblazoned with original vertical painted signage announcing “CAMILLUS CUTLERY CO.”

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The original Main Street entrance is a non-historic, but compatible, single glass and metal door located in the right (east) bay and provides access to a stairwell. A single-door entrance to the office space was added in the middle bay and is also metal and glass to be compatible with the rest of the façade. The new entrance and middle window bay are sheltered by a flat, steel canopy suspended by anchors bolted to the second story lintel. Similar canopies have been installed at the other major entrances. These canopies are new features, added to provide protection over the entrances, and are purposely flat in design so as to minimize any obscuring of the original exterior historic features. A metal and glass carriage style lamp is between the doors and is not original to the building.

East Elevation/1925 Section

The east side of the 1925 portion is similar to the façade, but with five-bays separated by concrete piers. Windows in this elevation are similar replacement windows. The windows in the southern two bays on the first floor and the first bay on the second floor are paired, divided by brick piers, with the remaining windows the same as those on the façade. A double door entrance in the center bay is framed in cast concrete and is sheltered by a steel canopy with pendant lights. This was originally the main entrance to the building, but is now limited access to retail space currently occupied by a café.

Clearly visible is an elevator tower, located on the northeast corner of the 1925 portion, which was added at a later date but prior to 1940, as shown on a company site plan. The tower bricks are laid in common bond in contrast with the running bond used in the rest of the 1925 portion of the building. Two horizontal bands of concrete extend from the lintel bands on the original structure across the tower, providing a visual unification of these elements. The tower features similar coping to the rest of the building.

West Elevation/1925 Section

Like the rest of the 1925 portion, the west elevation of this section consists of two bands of windows on both the first and second floors, divided into five bays by cast concrete piers. Windows have continuous bands of cast concrete forming sills and lintels. All windows are similar to the rest of the building. This portion of the building abuts an adjacent asphalt paved parking lot for the building to the west (currently a bank). The ground level has a metal guard rail to protect the building from any potential parking mishaps.

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1940 Addition

Added in 1940, the section adjacent to the north end of the original 1925 building consists of an ell-shaped, steel frame structure with concrete block walls. When viewed from the east, the addition extends one-bay before turning east for three bays and continues north for another three bays. The one-bay portion contains two, paired multi-light windows with cast concrete sills in the second floor and an entrance in the first floor, indicated by a suspended metal canopy. The entrance consists of a glass and metal door with a clear glass transom and sidelight to the left (south). The entrance is flanked by two fixed fifteen-light windows with cast concrete sills. A concrete walk leads to the entrance, which accesses the main lobby for the building. On the north side of the ell are two sets of the replacement tripartite windows, the same as seen in the rest of the building, and one single window in the second-story. The west corner of the addition has decorative quoining created with lighter colored concrete.

On the east side of this addition are two former upper level openings that have been permanently closed; one with a fixed door and concrete blocks and the other with a fixed door and a plate glass window. The concrete foundation on this side of the addition was originally exposed due to the lower grade, and formerly a double door located at basement level provided access to the building. Traces of the original second-story bridge to the main factory building are currently visible as discolorations in the concrete and necessary patches/infill, and the grade has been raised to be even with the rest of the parcel. A former basement door has been removed and replaced with a low, multi-light window, with the original lintel of a row of concrete-brick headers in place. An original exterior fixture (possible fire bell) was retained and the rest of the northeast wall has replacement factory-style windows in keeping with the overall appearance of the building.

Partially hidden by foliage, the west elevation is visible from the adjacent property's parking lot and is roughly divided into five bays. Four bays contain tripartite windows on the second floor, with the southernmost bay containing a three-by-five fixed-light window looking into the second floor of the stair well. A former first ground level opening accessed the first floor of the stairwell and is now in-filled with concrete. The first-floor windows along this wall are more variable than those along other walls and include a fixed window with six large panes, which replaces a former doorway. The lintel for this former doorway and some of the adjacent windows (as well as the in-filled stairwell opening) consist of the narrow concrete headers which were used on the eastern fire doors. A small mechanical unit is located on the roof. It is sided with vinyl and is not visible from Main Street.

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1973 Addition

Only visible from the parking lot, the north end of the building consists of the 1973 addition. It is roughly three bays long and two bays wide, with groupings of three large multi-light windows with cast concrete sills in the first and second floors. The windows are identical to the tripartite, multi-paned, replacement windows used elsewhere. The north elevation faces the rear parking lot and has adjacent landscaping consisting of non-historic low stone walls and plantings. An entry consisting of a single, glass and metal door is sheltered by a smaller scaled version of the suspended steel awning used elsewhere on the building. A fixed multi-light window is located directly above the door. The west side of the 1973 addition was slightly narrower than the 1940 addition, which created a small one-bay ell of the 1940 addition extending west from the 1973 addition. The 1940 ell has a grouping of three windows with a continuous sill in the second story. The west side of the 1973 addition consists of three bays of windows as seen in the rest of the building. Although clearly not historic, the addition is compatible with the rest of the building.

INTERIOR

Originally, the entire building was large, open space with few permanent divisions; those included the office partitions on the first floor of the 1925 building. Currently, the building retains that open feeling with exposed ceilings, unobstructed windows and divisions limited to corridors and common walls between apartment units. Wherever possible, historic features are incorporated into commercial and living spaces; features include mushroom columns, exposed steel beams, wood and concrete ceilings, and exterior wall surfaces. The southeastern corner of the original building houses the stairwell with the original steps of poured concrete. The inside bannister is an original pipe rail which has been upgraded for safety code compliance. Metal railings were added to the exterior walls in keeping with the industrial appearance.

After rehabilitation, the main entrance to the interior was shifted from the West Genesee façade to the 1940 ell in the east side of the building. The main entry is through the lobby, which has a polished granite floor, exposed I-beams, rafters and utility conduits in the ceiling. A display of Camillus Cutlery products and historic information panels decorates the lobby walls. To the left (south) of the lobby is the main commercial space, separated from the lobby by a metal and glass partition and door. The commercial space is open with low cubicle workstations and enclosed offices in the southern portion. The concrete ceiling and conduits are exposed, with a partial drop ceiling extending the length of the room. The prominent concrete “mushroom”

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columns were left freestanding or partially exposed in divider walls in the eastern and southern portions. The columns on the western exterior wall are square and have short triangular braces extending into the room.

The second commercial space in the 1925 portion is a currently a café, which also features extant historic industrial details. This space is narrow and long, extending between the columns and the exterior wall for most of the eastern portion of the original building. The columns are engaged in the walls and pendant lighting has been added consistent with the industrial theme of the building. One of the engaged mushroom columns is prominently displayed behind the main counter near the entrance.

The remainder of the interior is composed of one bedroom apartments, with the exception of meeting rooms located immediately north of the lobby. The eastern meeting room has exposed I-beams and rafters and industrial-style pendant lights. Central hallways run the length of the additions and provide access to the apartments, which in the additions, are long and narrow. The hallways are carpeted over the cement floors and have sheet rock walls. Wood ceilings and utility conduits are left exposed and several tops of mushroom columns are visible in the hallways.

The first-floor large open spaces are now divided into apartments beyond the 1925 portion of the building. A typical one-bedroom apartment layout consists of a hallway leading past a den and bathroom through a galley kitchen into a full-width living room lit by a bank windows. The walls are sheet rock and the floors are typically polished concrete. Where possible, the original wood plank or concrete ceiling was retained behind the exposed utility conduits. Apartments in the 1940 addition incorporate the mushroom columns into the design, retain the high ceilings in the living room areas, steel support beams and trusses, and exterior square beams with triangular braces.

Second Floor

The second floor of the building is composed of apartments that are generally similar to those described for the first floor, though some have multiple floor finishes (including tile) and some units have visible steel ceiling joists, as well. Some of the second-floor apartments feature the mushroom columns, with portions of the “caps” emerging through the upper walls into the hallway. The original brickwork of the elevator tower is exposed in the second-floor elevator lobby. Access to the roof and its mechanical structures are gained via a new, limited

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access stairwell on the second floor that replaced an original metal ladder and trapdoor to meet code. There is another original metal and concrete stairwell in the north end of the building, in the 1973 section.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

INDUSTRY

Period of Significance

1925-1963

Significant Dates

1925, 1940, 1963

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Thompson & Binger, Co. Inc. (builders)

Period of Significance (justification): The period begins in 1925 with the move of the headquarters from New York City to Camillus and the initial construction of the headquarters building. The period ends with 1963, when the business was sold to an international conglomerate, ending the period of local ownership.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

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

The Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters building is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of commerce, industry and social history and under criterion C as an excellent example of an early twentieth century daylight factory. The company was the major employer in the village for over a century, making the village a classic example of a company town. Although the large factory associated with the cutlery production burned, the headquarters was an important component of the operation and it carries a strong symbolic connection to the company and to the village's industrial past. After moving its headquarters from New York City to Camillus in 1925, Camillus Cutlery constructed the first section of the nominated building, an example of a contemporary daylight factory, which was characterized by reinforced concrete construction, concrete slab floors, large, industrial windows, and open floor plans providing for flexible interior spaces which could be partitioned to suit the needs of the company. The building was designed by Thompson & Binger (1917- 1928), civil engineers, with offices in Syracuse and New York City. The firm was known for specializing in concrete construction. The building was later expanded twice as demand for the product rose. During its existence at 54 Genesee Street, Camillus Cutlery made high quality pocket knives with a worldwide distribution and major domestic clients that included the Boy Scouts of America and the United States Navy. Early in its history, when the company needed specialized skills in knife production, it recruited a number of highly skilled workers from Germany, which made up much of the labor force and helped the village to grow. Along with providing for its employees, the company contributed to the community in general by establishing a local fire department, public library, and a community bank. Now rehabilitated into commercial and residential space, the building retains its industrial character through its fenestration of large spaces for natural lighting and interior industrial features that include wood ceilings, concrete floors and mushroom support columns. The period of significance runs from 1925, date of the construction of the first section of the building, through 1963 when the company was sold.

Developmental history/additional historic context information

In his 1878 history of Onondaga County, New York, Professor W. W. Clayton described the village of Camillus in glowing terms:

The village is situated in a picturesque spot in the valley of Nine-Mile Creek. It is on the "Old Road," or Auburn branch of the New York Central Railroad, distant nine miles from the city of Syracuse. A "side cut" or "feeder" of the Erie Canal extends to the village and the Nine-Mile

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Creek supplies an excellent water-power, which attracted settlers and began to be utilized for mill purposes at an early period...The village of Camillus was incorporated in 1852.”

His description of the village in 1878 continued:

Camillus contains four churches, viz: Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist Episcopal, and Roman Catholic; one store of general merchandise, E. Duane Sherwood; one grocery, provision and notion store, Sidney H. Cook, Jr.; one hotel, kept by Philo Bromley; two groceries and meat markets, kept respectively by Abram Otman and Messrs. Gee & Thompson; two drug stores, James Pattan’s and C. F. Safford’s; the former has been in the drug business since 1845; harness and shoe shop. There is one physician in the village, John O. Slocum, M.D., brother of Major General H.W. Slocum...Chapman & Green have an establishment in the village for the manufacture of clay smoking pipes. It is doing quite an extensive business, giving employment to from twenty to twenty-five persons.

His description indicated that the village was small, hemmed in by surrounding hills and farm country. Camillus (named after General Marcus Furius Camillus of ancient Rome) was always a small community, first settled in 1799 and reported to have only two frame houses in 1808, a log school and both a grist and a saw mill. With the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, residents pushed for a feeder canal, which brought the construction of new mills, but the population remained small, reaching a total of only 552 residents in 1860. One of the new mills was the Novelty Steam Mills, which produced underwear until roughly 1880, when it was sold and became a chair factory. Mills came and went, often being destroyed by fire, until 1894 when Charles Sherwood bought the abandoned Novelty Mills site with the intention of building a penknife factory. This event had a direct connection to the beginning of the Camillus Cutlery Company.

Prior to Sherwood’s plans, a distant event eventually had an impact on the village of Camillus. In 1876, 21-year-old Adolph Kastor first opened his German-made knife distribution business in New York City. Kastor came to America from Germany in 1870 and began working in his uncle’s hardware supply business, Bodenheim, Meyer & Company. Young Kastor worked his way through the ranks and became versed in the import knife trade. His uncle’s company floundered in the 1870s, was restructured as Meyer and Kastor in 1873, and eventually closed in 1876. Adolph Kastor saw his opportunity and opened A. Kastor and Company a few weeks later. His business prospered for twenty years until the Dingley Act of 1897 placed high duties on imported steel products, and tariffs literally doubled the rates on certain imported knives. Subsequently, Kastor began to look for an opportunity to produce knives in America.

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Back in Camillus, Sherwood encountered his own difficulties with his pocket knife factory, located on a sliver of land between Nine Mile Creek and the adjacent Erie Canal feeder. Sherwood had hoped to capitalize on the 1890 McKinley Tariff. Calling on the assistance of his craftsman brother-in-law, Daniel Bingham, Sherwood planned to produce English-style knives. Unfortunately for Sherwood, he opened his manufactory the same year that the Cleveland administration reigned in protectionism with the more moderate Wilson-Gorman Tariff of 1894, which slightly lowered the U.S. tariff rates, making it more viable for foreign manufactures to market their goods in the United States. This change put Sherwood's small business in jeopardy and he decided to lease it to a Rochester-based firm, Robeson Cutlery, in 1896. After two years, Robeson left the business and Sherwood resumed control. In 1902, Kastor, the knife distributor from New York City, and Sherwood, the knife producer from the village, joined forces in what became a boon to the fortunes of the small Central New York community of Camillus.

Alfred Kastor knew when he purchased the company that the one-story Camillus factory with its 20 workers would be insufficient for the scale of production and distribution that he envisioned. A typical week's output for that period was about 1,500 pocket knives. He set to work enlarging the business by hiring Archimedes Russell, one of the most prominent regional architects of the time, to design a three-story, 5,000 square foot factory north of the existing structure. This was the first of several new buildings built between the canal and creek during the early twentieth century. The 1911 Sanborn maps shows that factory complex had already filled this narrow strip of land with six major buildings and several outbuildings. By 1910, the business employed about 200 workers and produced about 75,000 knives a year. In 1917, 300 people and steady improvements to the machinery and infrastructure allowed the company to produce about 36,000 knives a week. Though many of these knives were marketed to the general public, the company's increased output capabilities enabled it to win a government contract to supply servicemen with pocket knives before and during the First World War.¹

With the purchase of the factory in 1902, Kastor began recruiting skilled knife workers from Germany, mostly from Solingen, to take permanent positions with Camillus Cutlery. Many of Camillus Cutlery's employees were German immigrants brought by Kastor to replicate the high quality of German-produced blades. In 1904, the company fought a legal battle to allow nine skilled German employees to remain in the United States after they were arrested by federal officials for perceived violations of the alien contract labor law. The men were held in

¹ Alfred Lief, *Camillus: the Story of An American Small Business* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), 41-42.

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custody on Ellis Island, but the company was able to have the case moved to federal court, rather than be heard by the commissioner of immigration, resulting in a positive outcome.²

Housing this influx of people in a small village was a challenge that the company met by building a dormitory for male workers near the factory that became known as “Germania.” In addition to housing, the building became a social center for the workers in their off-hours, with its library (complete with German-language literature), dance hall, bowling alley, and movie projector. Germania quickly became a social center for the village as well as the factory. By 1920, the dormitory was being leased out as a boarding house and a formal social club known as the Germania Club, consisted of several members of the community as well as factory workers.³ By 1920, the factory employees numbered 300 that represented a “cross-section of America—folk of not only English and German extraction but also Russian, Polish, Hungarian, Scandinavian” and others.⁴

In 1908, the company began building freestanding homes for factory families in the village, some of these families being immigrants sponsored by the company. However, the company manager stated that the location made commuting to the plant difficult and that it was difficult persuading builders to see the merit of new construction in a one-factory community.⁵ The company took matters in hand, building twelve new houses in 1911 and continued the construction program for the next decade.⁶ In addition to housing, other efforts by the Camillus Cutlery Company contributed to continued growth in the village, establishing the company as an economic, social, and cornerstone of the community. The efforts of the plant’s manager, Moritz Mayer, to electrify the facility enabled the entire village to electrify in 1910. Historians of the company also noted that the village’s first modern fire department was formed by factory workers. The company’s logo, which represented crossed swords, was engraved on knife blades and later became incorporated into the village’s official seal. Camillus was proud to be a company town and welcomed visitors by announcing that the village was home to the famous knife factory.

Even though the factory was in Camillus, the company headquarters was located in New York City. After World War I, the company responded to local pressure to move its headquarters to Camillus. In 1925, a new building was constructed on the west bank of the canal feeder where there was more room for the factory to

² “Germans Accused of Violating Immigration Law Spend Night Locked up At Police Station,” *Syracuse Post-Standard*, April 16, 1904, 6.

³ “Change in Club Management,” *Marcellus Observer*, December 15, 1920, 1.

⁴ Lief, *Camillus*, 46.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 39.

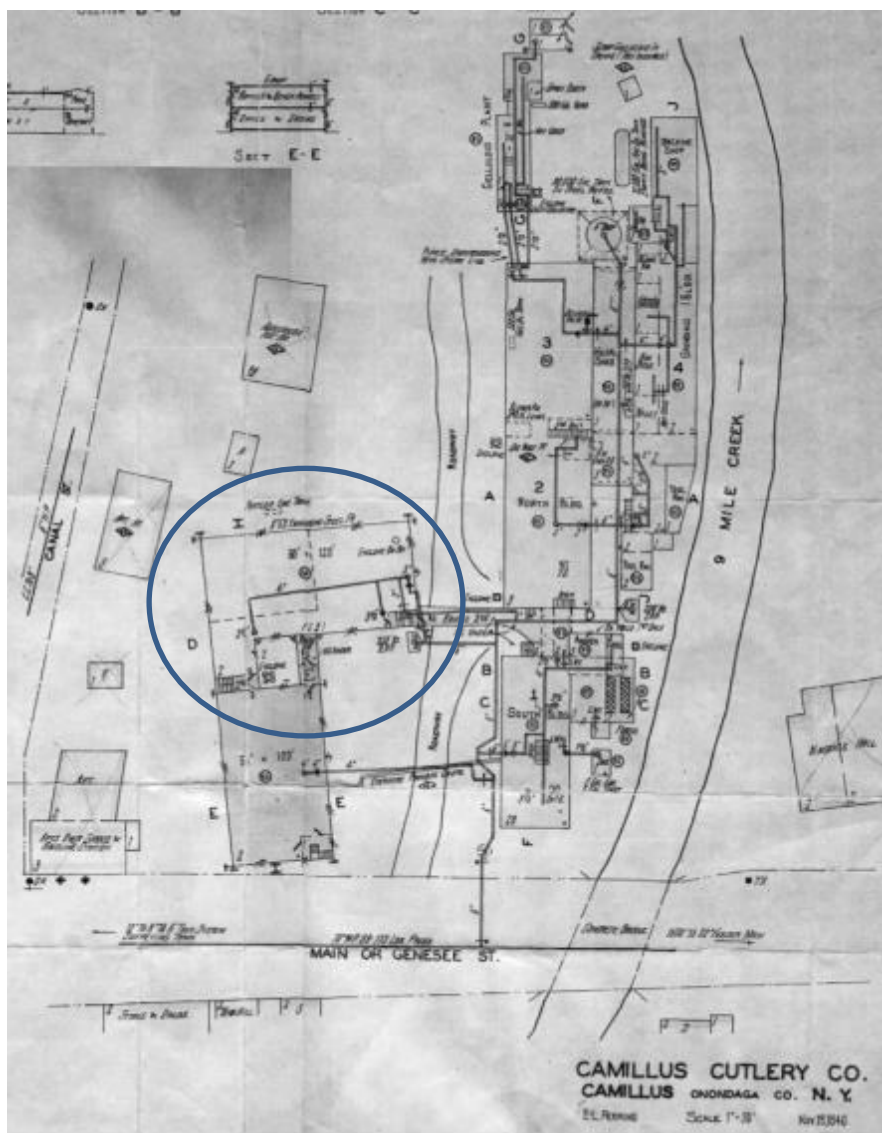
⁶ “Not Enough Houses. Camillus Cutlery Can Not Enlarge Without Building Homes,” *Rome Daily Sentinel*, February 17, 1911, 1.

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grow. An elevated conveyer belt connected the new building to the factory, carrying knives and materials over the waterway. In addition to being slightly isolated, the new structure (the nominated building) differed in appearance from the wooden factory buildings. The first floor of the brick building served as an open office space, storage, and a shipping facility, while some final stages of production occurred on the second floor, which was also used as a gathering space. Almost immediately the wider community was invited in to use and enjoy the new facility. On December 4-5, 1925, a community fair and bazaar was held on the upper floor of the new building to benefit the Camillus Free Library.

Shortly after completion, Adolph Kastor retired, leaving his son, Alfred, to run the business. In January, 1927,



the *Syracuse Herald* announced that fully one-quarter of the population of the village of Camillus was employed by Camillus Cutlery and of all the cutlery companies nationwide, half of the most highly skilled cutlery workers were at the Camillus factory. The payroll of the plant was approximately \$8,000 per week and, as a major employer in the village, the economic impact was felt in the wider community. Sheet steel and stainless steel were obtained from the Halcomb Branch of Crucible Steel in Syracuse and some of the cattle bones used to make knife handles were from the Syracuse Rendering Company. In the 1930s, the company's vice-president, William D. Wallace, was also the mayor of Camillus, and the company made strong connections in the community by establishing a public library, a public fire

station, a community bank and the Camillus Helping Hands Fund, a philanthropic organization.

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Alfred Kastor's improvements to production and facilities enabled the company to survive the Great Depression, which cut the knife market in half at its height. In 1940, a concrete block addition was added to the north end of 54 Genesee Street (seen in the map on the previous page). The addition included an enclosed, second story bridge which allowed the passage of people and product over the slightly sunken roadway that had



replaced the now- abandoned canal bed. The addition provided much of the personnel needs, including washrooms on the first floor and a lunch room on the second floor. The lunch room served as a general gathering space used for a variety of business and social purposes, including meetings, presentations, and parties. Historic photos from these events show some of the building's defining details in the background, including its wood plank ceiling and multi-paned windows.

Camillus Cutlery continued to supply knives to the U. S. military and its Allies during World War II. Nearly 15 million knives of varying styles, ranging from traditional pocket knives to bayonets, were produced during the war years. The company also provided bladed tools for the military, including kitchen and surgical knives. The Army and Navy honored the men and women of Camillus Cutlery three times by presenting the "E" award for wartime production. The Army and Navy's "E" award was the highest award given to civilians in recognition for

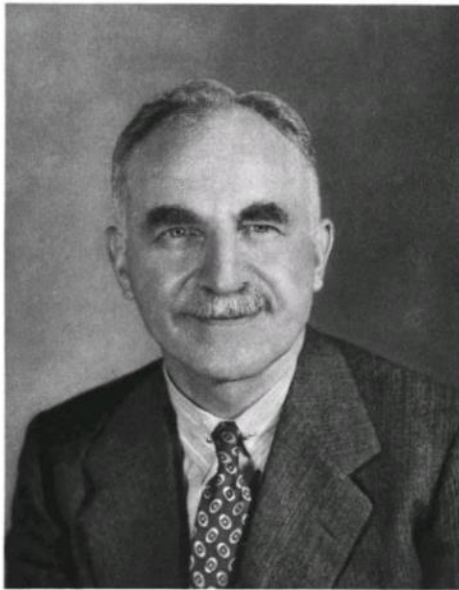
service to the United States Government. After the war, the company offered returning vets their original jobs as well as a \$100 bonus. The company's association with the military was indirectly honored by the American Legion in 1946, when it established the Knifetown Post in Camillus. Later, during the Vietnam Conflict, Camillus Cutlery returned to its tradition of producing knives for servicemen.

Business for Camillus Cutlery began to slip slightly during the mid-twentieth century, due in part to the loss of tariff protections. In 1947, the company began producing pocket knives for the Boy Scouts of America, another lucrative and high-profile customer. During peacetime, the cutlery established many new brands and styles of knives and in 1950, it was awarded the Fashion Academy's Gold Medal award for distinctive design and style

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for its entire line of household cutlery. The president of the academy noted the keen artistry of the craftsmen who designed the company's "Camillus" and "Kitchen Pride" knives. In 1951, Camillus Cutlery was awarded a defense contract for Navy electrician's knives. The company also suffered the loss of the Kastors when Alfred Kastor died in 1963 and the business was sold to Albert Baer, a Manhattan businessman with a worldwide cutlery business.



ALFRED B. KASTOR
President of Camillus Cutlery Company



Alfred Kastor and the company buildings, in the 1940s.

Baer retained a Camillus Cutlery employee, Nilo M. Miori, to manage the company. A change in the economy resulted in the company beginning a slow decline in the 1970s. Some optimism returned in the 1980s, when the company became the exclusive supplier to Sears and worked with Remington Arms on a hunting knife. Nevertheless, business continued to decline and in 2006, the company shortened the work week to four days, resulting in a walkout and strike by the employees. After being locked out for six months, the workers agreed to a 35 percent cut in wages and to pay more for health insurance, but such concessions failed to save the company. In February 2007, the company filed for bankruptcy and decided to permanently shutter the factory, ending Camillus's identity as a company town. The complex remained empty for several years while various developers considered redevelopment options. In February 2013, the main factory was destroyed by a devastating fire, leaving the headquarters building as the last vestige of the Camillus Cutlery Company.

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CRITERION C: Architecture

When built in 1925, the Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters Building represented the most up-to-date industrial construction as an early twentieth century industrial building. The original building was constructed by the firm Thompson & Binger (1917- 1928), civil engineers, with offices in Syracuse and New York City. Gustavus Thompson (1884-1965) was born in Maryland and educated at Baltimore City College and Johns Hopkins University before joining the Trussed Concrete Steel Company in Utica, New York, as a consulting engineer. He relocated to Syracuse in 1913, going into practice with George S. Gildersleeve. In 1915, Gildersleeve took a position with the Trussed Concrete Steel Company in Buffalo, New York, while Thompson remained in private practice in Syracuse. In 1917, Thompson formed a partnership with Walter D. Binger (1888-1979), a civil engineer from New York City, and a 1916 MIT graduate. Gustavus Thompson was president of Thompson & Binger, Inc., and Walter Binger was vice president and treasurer, and the partners maintained offices in Syracuse and New York City. After the firm dissolved, Binger joined another firm and later became an aide to New York City Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia. Thompson remained in the profession and was known for constructing a number of baseball stadiums.⁷

Thompson and Binger took on a number of large projects in both central New York and New York City, specializing in concrete construction. One of their first projects was a large concrete addition to the Endicott Johnson Shoe Company Misses' and Children's Building (1919) located in Johnson City, New York. In Syracuse, they built a large concrete machine shop building for the Continental Can Company (1919). By 1920, the company had buildings under construction in numerous cities in upstate New York State, including Fulton, Utica, Johnson City, Syracuse, Baldwinsville and Little Falls. In 1920, the firm completed a major project in Manhattan, the sixteen-story office building for the Hide & Leather Realty Company. At the time, it was claimed that the Hide and Leather Building was the tallest concrete building in the country.

Given Thompson & Binger's reputation for designing modern concrete industrial buildings, it is understandable that Camillus Cutlery chose the firm for the new headquarters building in 1925. The basic design, concrete structural system, and use of large, multi-paned glass windows on all sides are significant features of industrial daylight factory design. The building consists of a façade unified by concrete pilasters, lintels, and sills with the brick spandrel walls. The historic photos show that the three sides of the original wing were visible from the street as they are today. The early addition of a brick elevator tower followed by a concrete manufacturing wing

⁷ "Engineer, 80, Dies in Troy," *Watertown Daily Times*, January 7, 1965, 10.

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in 1940 expanded the manufacturing potential of the building. These additions were united with the original wing by horizontal concrete bands evoking the latter's sills and lintels. The horizontal banding was omitted from the later additions, but these were screened from street view by the depth of the factory parcel.

The building's second critical feature is its concrete structural system, which created open interior spaces with maximum flexibility for programming. The front section (constructed in 1925) had prominent mushroom columns supporting a large interior span. The first addition was constructed in 1940 and continued to use this support system. The flexibility afforded by the open space in the addition allowed for the creation of a large public use room which was used for employee relaxation and public events. Section details on the 1940 Camillus Cutlery plan give the vertical layout, showing how different processes were conducted on different floors of the building.

The final feature of the building was its lighting. The large multi-paned windows that lined each wall of the façade and rear sections provided abundant natural light to the interior industrial spaces. The consistent use of these windows on all sides of the building unified the original wing and its additions. The current windows replicated the earlier factory originals. The use of awning openings in the new windows provide ventilation, mimicking the original pivoting window panels.

CONCLUSION

In 2013, the Camillus Cutlery Factory burned to the ground in what was described as the worst fire in the village's history. At the time of the fire, plans were underway to develop the factory and headquarters into a medical office facility. Fortunately, due to the efforts of the fire fighters, the headquarters building was undamaged and it was developed into loft housing and commercial space. As the only remaining building of the Camillus Cutlery Company, it is an iconic landmark in the center of the village, serving as a reminder of the economic engine of twentieth century Camillus that gave the village a number of community institutions as well as employment to a significant number of residents. It was a thriving local business and prolific producer of pocket and hunting knives as well as a village social center with events in the upper floor employee room. The building retains a high level of architectural integrity and is still well regarded by the local community for its association with the economic and social life of the Village of Camillus.

Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters
Name of Property

Onondaga County, NY
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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters
Name of Property

Onondaga County, NY
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“Tariff Cut Would Force Camillus Cutlery to Close.” *Syracuse Post-Standard*, June 6, 1950, 6.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: Renaissance Studio, Syracuse (NY)

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.56 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18N</u> Zone	<u>393420</u> Easting	<u>4766109</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is the same associated with the company as in the period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Andrea Zlotucha Kozub and Cynthia Carrington Carter
organization Renaissance Studio date March 30, 2018
street & number 219 Crawford Ave telephone 315-446-1310
city or town Syracuse state NY zip code 13224
e-mail andrealzk@icloud.com and ccarringtoncarter@verizon.net

Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters
Name of Property

Onondaga County, NY
County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

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

Name of Property: Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters

City or Vicinity: Camillus

County: Onondaga State: New York

Photographer: Virginia L. Bartos

Date Photographed: 30 April 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

0001 of 0015: Detail view of West Genesee Street façade of Headquarters building, view looking northwest.

0002 of 0015: View of Camillus Cutlery Headquarters Building, looking north from south side of W Genesee St.

0003 of 0015: South and west elevations, view looking northeast from south side of W. Genesee St.

0004 of 0015: View of property looking south toward W Genesee Street showing partial footprint of factory on left, infilled feeder canal/roadway in center and 1940 & 1973 portions of Headquarters building on right.

0005 of 0015: East elevation of 1940 & 1973 portion, looking southwest from infilled roadway.

0006 of 0015: Detail view showing infilled former connections to factory.

0007 of 0015: View looking east at west ell of building showing current main entrance.

0008 of 0015: Main entrance lobby area showing historic display.

0009 of 0015: View of 1st floor office area (1925 portion), looking south.

0010 of 0015: View of 1st floor apartment (1940 portion), view looking southeast (east side of building).

0011 of 0015: View of 1st floor apartment, view looking west.

0012 of 0015: Detail view of 2nd floor apartment showing mushroom column.

Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters

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0013 of 0015: Detail view of 2nd floor apartment (east side of building).

0014 of 0015: Detail view of 2nd floor hallway showing engaged mushroom column.

0015 of 0015: Detail view of commercial area, east side of 1925 portion.

Property Owner:

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

name N/A
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state NY zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters
Name of Property

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Camillus Cutlery Headquarters Building
Camillus, Onondaga Co., NY

54 Genesee Street
Camillus, NY 13031



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



Camillus
Cutlery
Headquarters
Building

NEW YORK
STATE OF
OPPORTUNITY

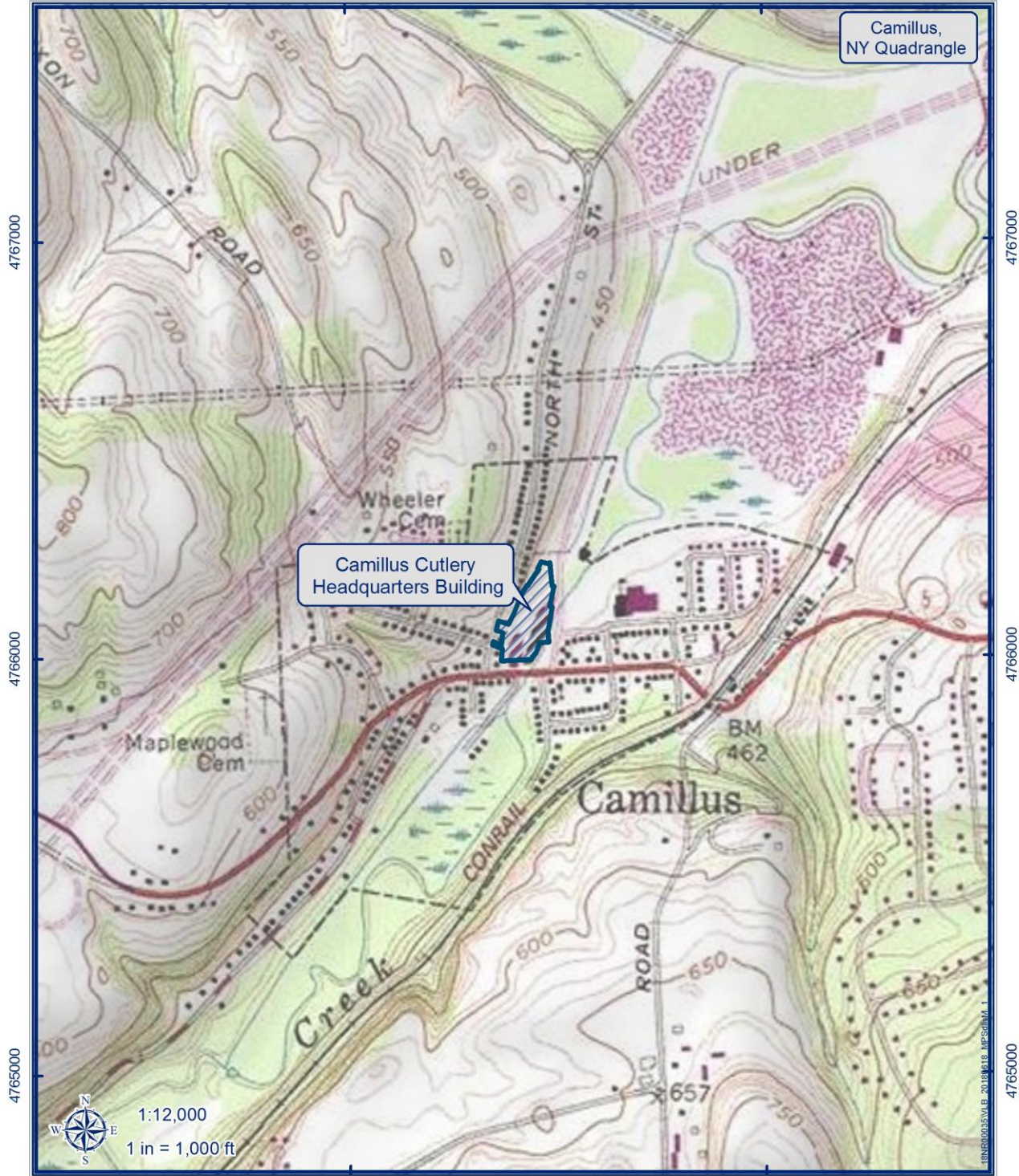
Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation

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Units: Meter



Camillus
Cutlery
Headquarters
Building



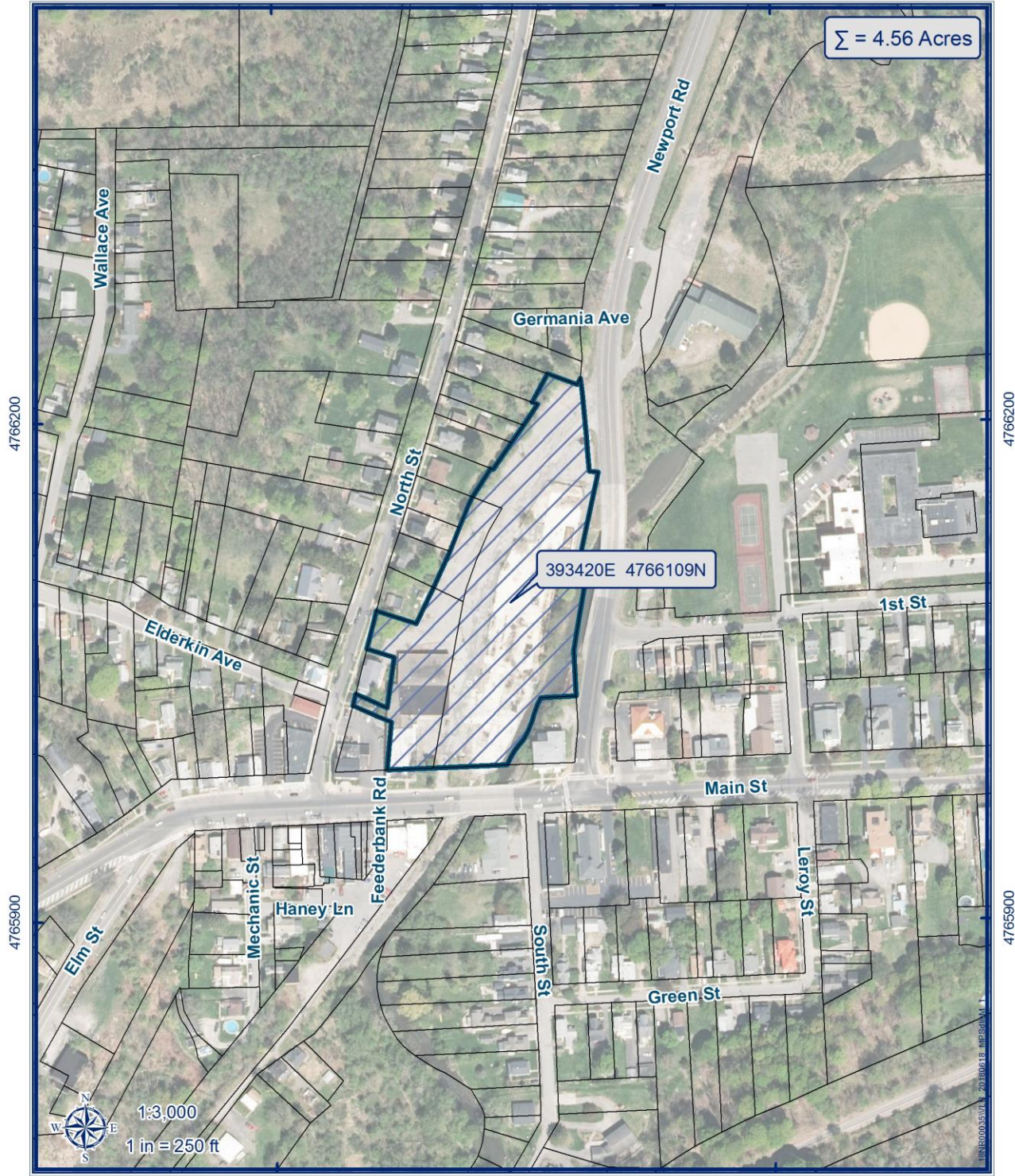
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Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



Camillus
Cutlery
Headquarters
Building





JERRY CO.
JERRY CO.

JERRY CO.

54



CAMILLUS CUTLERY CO.

CAMILLUS CUTLERY CO.

JCT
174





CAMILLUS CUTLERY CO.

CAMILLUS CUTLERY CO.







UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS





NO
PARKING
ANY
TIME

RESERVED
PARKING
3



THE ORIGIN OF THE CARILLUS CUTLERY COMPANY

...

CARILLUS: A COMMUNITY CONNECTED BY CUTLERY

...

A CUT ABOVE: THE ALFRED KASTOR

...

















COLD DRINKS		
RED SOPHIE	12.50	13.75
RED TEA	13.50	14.75
RED TEA LEMONADE	15.00	16.25
HOPEWALE LEMONADE	15.50	16.75
SMOOTHIES		15.00
RED CAPE AU LAIT	15.50	16.75
RED LATTE	14.00	15.25
RED ROCHA	14.75	16.00
RED ROCHA SUSHI	14.75	16.00
RED AMERICANO	15.00	16.25
RED COOPER	15.50	16.75
RED ITALIAN SOPA		14.25
RED CARAMEL TORTONE	14.75	16.00
RED POOR MAN'S ROCHA	14.99	16.25

FREEDOM OF ESPRESSO		
FRESH BREWED COFFEE	12.50	13.75
CAPE AU LAIT	15.00	16.25
ESPRESSO (SOPHIE)	12.50	13.75
EXTRA HOT (DOUBLE)	13.75	15.00
COOPER	15.00	16.25
MATCHATO	15.00	16.25
CAPPUCINO	14.00	15.25
LATTE	14.00	15.25
DOUBLE & LATTE	15.00	16.25
CHAI TEA LATTE	15.00	16.25
ROCHA	14.00	15.25
WHITE CHOCOLATE ROCHA	14.00	15.25
POOR MAN'S ROCHA	13.75	15.00
ROCHA BREVE	14.00	15.25
BREVE	14.00	15.25
CARAMEL TORTONE	14.00	15.25
HOT CHOCOLATE	15.00	16.25
MILK STEAMER	15.00	16.25
TEA	12.50	13.75
AMERICANO	13.75	15.00
ADD A FLAVOR HOT	75c	
EXTRA CHOCOLATE	25c	
ALMOND MILK 75c		
COCONUT MILK 75c		
TOFFEE MILK 75c		



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 7/11/2018 Date of Pending List: 8/13/2018 Date of 16th Day: 8/28/2018 Date of 45th Day: 8/27/2018 Date of Weekly List: 8/31/2018

Reference number:

Nominator:

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 8/28/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria

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



5 July 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 four nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Taylor Flatts, Jefferson County
First Congregational Church of Fairport, Monroe County
Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters, Onondaga County
Colored Musicians Club, Erie County

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