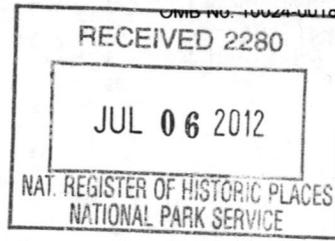


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



532

### 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 GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY-ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING

other names/site number Agfa-Ansco, General Aniline and Film (GAF), Anitec

#### 2. Location

street & number 16 Emma Street [ ] not for publication

city or town Binghamton [ ] vicinity

state New York code \_\_\_\_\_ county Broome code 007 zip code 13905

#### 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.)

Rush A. Purpant DSHPO  
Signature of certifying official/Title

6/29/12  
Date

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) \_\_\_\_\_

for Signature of the Keeper  
Alexis Liberman

date of action  
8/22/12

GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY - ANSCO CAMERA  
FACTORY BUILDING

Name of Property

BROOME County, NEW YORK  
County and State

**5. Classification**

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

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

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

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	2	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

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

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

**BROOME COUNTY INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES MPDF**

0

**6. Function or Use**

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

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

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/  
Manufacturing Facility

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INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION  
COMMERCIAL/TRADE

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**7. Description**

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

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

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foundation concrete

walls brick

roof membrane

other

**Narrative Description**

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

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

**Name of Property**  
**Broome County, New York**  
**County and State**

The General Cigar Company - Ansko Camera Factory Building is located on the east side of Emma Street, just north of Main Street, on Binghamton's west side.<sup>1</sup> The site is adjacent to the rail lines of the Erie Railroad (E.R.R.) and Delaware, Lackawanna & Western (D.L. & W.) Railroads, which run east-west through this neighborhood. Much of the development and growth in this portion of Binghamton did not begin until the rail lines, developed in the second half of the nineteenth century, were laid. These rail lines spurred the growth of numerous factories along their lines. When General Cigar Company constructed the factory on Emma Street in the 1920s, some buildings were already located in this neighborhood; however, the completion of the factory spurred the construction of stores and residences in the surrounding area. While many of the factory's employees could walk to work, the new building also featured parking areas, as the automobile became an increasingly popular mode of transportation in the late 1920s. Today, the building is still surrounded by a relatively dense neighborhood of mixed residential, commercial and industrial uses. The boundary was drawn to include the entire current tax parcel for the property, which largely corresponds to the original historic boundaries of the property. The property consists of the large main factory building and a historic power house building, both contributing buildings, and two non-contributing buildings, a non-historic boiler house toward the north-east side of the property and a garage at the south-east end.

The General Cigar Company-Ansko Camera Factory Building is a four-story with basement rectilinear factory building constructed in 1927-28. The building is twenty bays long and five bays wide and features an intersecting four-bay-wide, four-story wing at the center. The slightly wider primary façade of the building faces west. A two-story addition was constructed in 1950 on the north side of the building adjacent to the rail lines. Two elevator towers are located on the north elevation, towards the west and east ends of the building, and a stair tower is on the east elevation. A loading dock is located on the main building's south elevation, towards the east end of the building. At the crossing of the central wing and the main body of the building is a recessed, fifth-story rectangular mass, which once housed the building's complex environmental controls.

<sup>1</sup> The Ansko company had many different names throughout its over 100 year history; however, it is commonly referred to as Ansko. These names are noted on the cover page of this document, but for convenience the name Ansko will be used in reference to the company. A more thorough company history, including all name changes, is noted in the associated Multiple Property Documentation Form *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York*.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

**Name of Property**  
**Broome County, New York**  
**County and State**

Surmounted on this additional story is steel framework that supports the building's original 40,000-gallon cylindrical water tank. Overall the building measures approximately 62-feet wide by 402-feet in length and contains approximately 130,000 square feet of space, including the basement and upper four floors of the original building.

The building was constructed with a raised, cast-concrete foundation, a steel structural system with wood floors, and brick-clad walls with a concrete beltcourse above the first floor that wraps the entire building. The building's main entrance is located on the west elevation, just south of center. It features a prominent surround of tan-colored stone. In a vague nod to classical architecture, stylized and simplified pilasters are present between the second and third floors on the west façade and along the south and north elevations. These pilasters feature simple concrete bases and capitals. Below the fourth floor is a slight molded brick cornice, again highly simplified. The two-story north addition is also constructed with a steel frame and features a brick-clad appearance, without any pilasters or decoration. The building retains nearly all of its original metal-framed industrial windows, which are characterized by large square openings filled with numerous small fixed panes and one center operable awning sash. The large north addition complements the original appearance of the building, with a series of large metal-framed industrial windows around the roughly rectangular shaped unit.

The main General Cigar Company - AnSCO Camera Factory Building features an interior typical of a still-operating industrial building, with minimal detailing, functional, fire-resistant and durable materials, and numerous non-permanent interior partitions separating various tenant spaces. The building is entirely leased and includes an unusual mix of uses, including an electroplating business in the basement, storage on upper floors, and an art gallery located at the fourth floor. The entrance lobby from Emma Street is one of the more "designed" spaces, featuring a wide cast-in-place concrete stair with metal pipe railing to the building's first floor. The lobby contains walls of painted brick, flush steel fire doors, and acoustical tile ceiling. The basement of the building houses an electroplating company, and has a concrete floor, brick walls, exposed steel structural columns, and a dense network of various ducts and pipes at the ceiling. This basement space is filled with a variety of industrial machinery and components used in the electroplating process. The first floor features wood tongue-and-groove flooring, painted brick walls, steel columns and a wood-plank ceiling supported by wide-

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 3

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

flange steel beams. Various pipes and ducts lace the ceiling of this level, as well. A large historic freight scale is located toward the west end of the first floor, and the building retains an original freight elevator along the north side of the building. The interior is divided with modern partitions and is used for storage. The east wall of the building reveals a unique feature of the building. Here, the windows are paired, or layered, with an exterior window and matching interior window unit mounted to give a few inches of space between the two units. The reasoning behind this unusual window configuration may stem from the architect's carefully designed environmental controls, giving the windows an insulating quality. Some interior walls retain cork tiles, which likely were installed for thermal insulation and sound absorption in the noisy industrial factory spaces. The fourth floor of the building houses a highly finished art gallery. This area features a black lacquered wood floor, and the walls and ceiling are painted white. The art gallery preserves the industrial character of the building by leaving the steel structural skeleton and various pipes and ducts at the ceiling and at some walls exposed. Large full-height drapes cover the windows in the gallery space, but detailing is otherwise kept at a minimum. Overall, the interior of the main factory building retains much of its original materials and appearance as an industrial building, highlighting the flexibility and versatility of the open-plan industrial building, which now accommodates activities ranging from electroplating to showing fine art.

Also located on the site is a small raised one-story brick-faced steel framed power house building with intact brick chimney with metal straps. This building measures approximately 36 feet wide by 52-feet long and historically contained two large boilers to provide steam heating. There were also spaces for an engineer's room and a transformer room. The site also includes two non-contributing modern metal shed buildings. A large asphalt paved parking area is located on the south side of the building.

The General Cigar Company - AnSCO Camera Factory Building remains a significant landmark in the area, its prominent water tower a long-time feature of the skyline.

GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY - ANSCO CAMERA  
FACTORY BUILDING

BROOME County, NEW YORK  
County and State

Name of Property

**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:**

1927- 1950

**Significant Dates:**

1927-28, 1938, 1950 (addition)

**Significant Person:**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation:**

N/A

**Architect/Builder:**

Alfred Freeman, General Cigar Co. architect

Bowie-Clark Construction Co., contractors

**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.
- 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 1

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

**Name of Property**  
**Broome County, New York**  
**County and State**

**Summary**

The General Cigar Company - Ansko Camera Factory Building is significant as an exceptionally intact example of early twentieth century industrial architecture that is associated with two of Binghamton's most important industries, the cigar manufacturing trade and the camera and film industry. Constructed in 1927-28 for the General Cigar Company, the building was designed by New York City-based architect Albert Freeman. General Cigar Company was one of the country's largest cigar manufacturers. Opening this factory in Binghamton was a tremendous boost to the local economy and a continuation of the city's thriving cigar manufacturing industry of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. After General Cigar closed during the Depression, the building was purchased by the nationally prominent Ansko camera and film company in 1937. During this pre-World War II era, the Ansko company was at the height of its growth and technical prowess and was expanding and modernizing its operations in Binghamton. As a part of this upgrading, the company transferred its camera and photographic equipment manufacturing operations from an older factory building into what was still heralded as a modern, efficient factory building on Emma Street some ten years after its original design and construction. The General Cigar Company - Ansko Camera Factory Building was the home of the Ansko's camera manufacturing operations for several decades before its decline in the post-war decades. In its later years, the Ansko company was "the only domestic manufacturer to compete with Kodak in offering a full line of photographic materials and equipment."<sup>2</sup> The period of significance spans the initial construction of the building in 1927 to the date of the last major addition to the building, the two-story addition added in 1950.

The enormous building was constructed with a steel frame and reinforced concrete and incorporates several features necessary for the production of cigars, including highly insulated spaces and double windows. The reuse of this factory building, transitioning from cigar factory to camera factory, reflects the flexibility and versatility of steel-framed industrial buildings as containers for space. Reused once again after the closing of the Ansko plant, the building now houses a variety of industrial operations and storage, and also an art gallery

<sup>2</sup> Bergmann Associates, *The First Ward Redevelopment Plan for the City of Binghamton, New York*, report (Rochester, Nov 2010), 5, <http://www.cityofbinghamton.com/userfiles/file/First%20Ward%20Redevelopment%20Plan/Drafts%20of%20pre-nomination%20study/Final%20Document%20-%20Sec%201.pdf>.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 2

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

space, reflecting how versatile the building is even nearly a century after its initial design and construction. It remains virtually unchanged since the period of significance.

**A History of Industry in Broome County<sup>3</sup>**

Industry has played a key role in shaping and defining the culture of Broome County since the earliest settlement began in the region in the late eighteenth century. With its prominent role as a transportation center for the region, first from its prime location on the Susquehanna and Chenango Rivers and later as a railroad hub, the city of Binghamton became the home of many of Broome County's prominent industries. As the nation moved into the twentieth century, Broome County became home to several nationally and internationally prominent companies that left an indelible mark on our lives today. After World War II, industry began a slow decline in the region, following national trends, and many of the area's stalwart companies were forced to close their doors or relocate elsewhere, meaning thousands of lost jobs. Today, Binghamton and Broome County are using this proud legacy of industrial history for new growth and development, using it as a basis for historic preservation projects and heritage tourism.

During its early history, from the late eighteenth until the mid-nineteenth centuries, logging and timber were the region's dominant industries, making use of the region's vast forested land. Rafts of logs, lashed together, were floated down rivers and streams from the interior areas of the county to the markets in Binghamton and beyond. When this sector dried up by the 1850s, other significant industries emerged in the county. Binghamton was the center of a thriving woodworking and furniture making industry in the mid-1800s. The city's dominant industry during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was the cigar manufacturing industry. During this era, Binghamton was second in the nation only to New York City in cigar production.

By the dawn of the twentieth century, shoe manufacturing became one of Broome County's most prominent industries. The Endicott-Johnson company, located in Johnson City and Endicott, just west of Binghamton, grew into a massive company that included numerous tanneries and shoe-making factories. The company gave

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the history and development of industry in Broome County, please refer to the associated Multiple Property Documentation Form *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York*.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 3

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

shape to the Johnson City and Endicott communities, establishing them as planned factory towns and shaping their growth and development. EJ, under leader George F. Johnson, became well known for its paternalistic welfare capitalism program, known as the "Square Deal," which was an agreement between workers and management intended to maintain the peace and stall unionization. The company had a tremendous influence over the daily lives of its employees, offering things like insurance, medical care and even houses to workers, and a wide variety of entertainment and recreation was available as well. Company plays, bands and sports teams were among the many activities and groups associated with Endicott-Johnson.

Broome County also had thriving technology and aerospace industries in the nineteenth century, becoming a center for invention and new technologies in the twentieth century. Now a household name for computers and software, the International Business Machine (IBM) company has roots in Endicott, at its Plant No. 1, which it established in 1905. Here, IBM established not only a sprawling complex of reinforced concrete factory buildings at North Street and McKinley Avenue (extant, National Register eligible), built largely between the 1900s until the 1940s, but a research laboratory and school building to train and educate the workers and salespeople. In Endicott, IBM made significant developments in technology, data processing and computer technologies. Broome County was also home to the Link Aviation company, which pioneered flight simulation to train pilots safely and effectively. The Link Trainer was an important invention as it pioneered what we now call "virtual reality," creating a machine that simulated the process of another machine. Link Trainers were widely used to train pilots during World War II, and flight simulation is still used to train commercial, military and private pilots today.

After World War II, many of Broome County's largest and most prominent companies began to slowly decline. This was part of a national trend in post-war America, as companies struggled to compete with emerging foreign markets. Many companies were forced to reduce their workforce, close their doors all together, or relocate manufacturing overseas in order to stay in business. Locally in Broome County, the three largest companies, including IBM, Endicott-Johnson and AnSCO, all suffered in the second half of the twentieth century. As IBM became an international company, the factory in Endicott became outdated and outgrown, and by 2004 the company had sold all of its Endicott properties, maintaining a minimal presence in the community. Endicott-

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 4

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

Johnson failed to keep pace with growing footwear trends after World War II and also faced stiff foreign competition. After the death of company visionary George F. Johnson in 1948, EJ underwent a series of different leadership changes, which resulted in cuts and changes to the company. After selling off various departments in the 1990s, Endicott-Johnson closed its doors in 2004.

**History of 16 Emma Street**

The industrial building at 16 Emma Street was constructed by the General Cigar Company in 1927-28. General Cigar Company began as the United Cigar Manufacturers Co. in 1906 in New York City, eventually taking the name General Cigar Company in 1917. At the time of the construction of the Binghamton facility, General Cigar Company operated forty-one factories and thirty-six warehouses in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin.<sup>4</sup> The company operated distributing branches and retail stores in 103 cities in twenty-three states and the Hawaiian islands.<sup>5</sup>

Negotiations to attract the General Cigar Company to Binghamton began in June 1926 by Jay B. Wiles, manager of the chamber of commerce. Binghamton won out over forty other cities also vying for the \$30 million dollar company. Attracting what was said to be the largest cigar manufacturer in the world at the time was surely a shot in the arm for Binghamton's ailing cigar industry, which suffered a decline following the 1890 cigar strike and by the 1920s was waning in significance.<sup>6</sup> In order to entice the company to set up operations in the area, the chamber of commerce worked out a deal that established a 50-50 partnership between the chamber (through the Greater Binghamton Industrial Corporation, a holding company established for this project with funds from the chamber's industrial development fund) and the General Cigar Company, with both entities sharing the

<sup>4</sup> The General Cigar Company constructed a factory in Evansville, Indiana in 1902. That building has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2000, see NRHP Reference number 00000212.

<sup>5</sup> "General Cigar Co. to Build New Factory on Site Purchased at Main and Emma Streets," *Binghamton Press*, January 24, 1927, Second sec., <http://fultonhistory.com/Newspaper4/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale%201927.pdf/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale%201927%20-%2000682.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> For additional information on Broome County's cigar industry and the cigar strike of 1890, see Jennifer Walkowski, "Rise of the Factory Economy (ca. 1850s-1910s)," *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York Multiple Property Documentation Form*, report (Buffalo: Clinton Brown Company Architecture, 2012), E-12-E-25.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 5

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

burden of purchasing land and constructing the factory.<sup>7</sup> The General Cigar Company would lease the building and would purchase all interest in the property within ten years.<sup>8</sup>

On March 11, 1927, a three and one-half acre parcel at the corner of Emma and Main Streets in Binghamton was purchased from the Larrabee-Deyo Motor Truck Manufacturing Company for \$50,000.<sup>9</sup> This was an ideal location, as the site was adjacent to rail lines to its north that enabled the company to have easy access to raw materials shipped via train directly to the building and also allowed for ease in shipping out the final products.<sup>10</sup>

The General Cigar Company brought in its in-house architect, Alfred Freeman, to design and construct the Binghamton factory. A graduate of Cornell University's architecture program and a New York City-based architect, Freeman also designed the Frank Bros. Building at 588 Fifth Avenue in New York City (ca. 1916) as well as a high school in his hometown of Plymouth, Pennsylvania (1913, later the Junior High School, extant). Freeman also is identified as the architect of the A. Sulka & Co. Building, at 661 Fifth Avenue in New York City, which was commended for its "handsome façade" by noted architectural critic Lewis Mumford in his essay "The Sky Line" of 1937.<sup>11</sup> Working with Freeman, the General Cigar Company brought in local labor and suppliers to build the new factory. This included the Bowie-Clark Construction Company of Binghamton, with A.W. Bowie serving as lead contractor for the project.<sup>12</sup>

Ground was broken on June 15, 1927 for the modern new factory, which was designed to be 60-feet wide by 402-feet in length, with a full basement with four upper floors containing a total of 130,000 square feet. An adjacent power plant building, measuring 36 feet by 51 feet in size, was built just to the north of the main factory. The power house was designed to house two large boilers to provide steam heat, with spaces for an

<sup>7</sup> The industrial development fund was raised through credits provided by area business and professional leaders, with the actual cash coming from four local commercial banks. "General Cigar Factory Walls Rise Steadily," *The Binghamton Press*, September 7, 1927: 16.

<sup>8</sup> "C. of C. Aided in Financing of Cigar Factory." *Binghamton Press*. June 2, 1928: 15.

<sup>9</sup> For information on the Larrabee-Deyo company, refer to *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York Multiple Property Documentation Form*, pages E-15 and E-29.

<sup>10</sup> "General Cigar Co. to Build New Factory on Site Purchased at Main and Emma Streets."

<sup>11</sup> Robert Wojtowicz, *Sidewalk Critic: Lewis Mumford's Writings on New York* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000), 199.

<sup>12</sup> "General Cigar Factory Walls Rise Steadily."

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 6

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

**Name of Property**  
**Broome County, New York**  
**County and State**

engineer's room and a transformer room. Typical of industrial facilities of this era, the interior of the main building was designed to house elevators, stairways, and lavatories as well as rest rooms for the workers. The "casing room" (where tobacco leaves are moistened) and the "sweat room" (a room where tobacco is fermented) were to be located in the basement, as was tobacco storage, while upper floors were to house machinery and storage. The first floor contained offices at the west end, with a cafeteria and locker room as well as additional machinery and production space also on this level. The second floor housed cigar-making machinery, while the third floor was as a stock room. Huge bins were kept on this floor, filled with various grade of tobacco. On the fourth floor were the wrapping, banding, packing, labeling and shipping departments.<sup>13</sup> Familiar with the design of other cigar factories, Freeman was especially sensitive to the special needs of the cigar manufacturing industry. He designed the windows and doors to be essentially air-tight, creating a special heating, humidifying and ventilating unit on the roof of the main factory building. This system allowed for a carefully controlled environment within the factory, maintaining a constant humidity in the building necessary for the tobacco and cigar making process.<sup>14</sup>

Construction of the building was completed by March of 1928. Initial plans had called for the installation of one hundred machines in the Binghamton factory; however, in April of 1928, it was decided that an additional thirty machines would be ordered, raising the anticipated annual output to 175 million cigars.<sup>15</sup> The factory had been built on north portion of the parcel. While this was convenient to the rail lines, it was also intentionally located by the General Cigar Company, which anticipated the construction of an additional "sister" factory building of equal size and design to the south, as well as a large, approximately 60-foot-by-200-foot warehouse, on the site.

<sup>13</sup> "New Plant of General Cigar Co. Already Producing 100,000 Cigars Daily," *Binghamton Press*, June 2, 1928, 14.

<sup>14</sup> "General Cigar Factory Walls Rise Steadily."

<sup>15</sup> While it was hoped that 130 machines could be installed in the building, later reports indicate the Emma Street factory utilized 122 cigar making machines. Other machinery included 125 stripping machines, anticipated to expand to 200 machines, and 5 foil wrapping machines. "General Cigar Factory Machines Will Be Tried Out This Week," *The Binghamton Press*, April 23, 1928, 3.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 7

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

**Name of Property**  
**Broome County, New York**  
**County and State**

As constructed, the building was touted as the second largest and most modern cigar factory in the world, a close second behind the General Cigar Company's factory in Kingston, Pennsylvania.<sup>16</sup> It was planned that the Binghamton factory would operate 130 machines and employ between 1,500 and 2,000 workers, turning out 175 million cigars annually. The company's "White Owl" and "William Penn" brand cigars, noted as among its most popular brands, were manufactured at the Binghamton facility. The opening of the new \$550,000 factory was celebrated with a luncheon and meeting held at the Arlington Hotel, followed by a tour of the new building, on May 5, 1928.<sup>17</sup>

Despite enormous expectations, growth was slow. In June of 1928 the company was operating 30 of the 122 machines, with many still awaiting installation in the factory. About 250 workers were producing about 100,000 cigars a day. By the end of 1928, 400 employees were on the payroll, and by the end of 1929 the total figure was 900, due to the installation of additional machines.<sup>18</sup> This was a far cry from the projected 1,500 workers producing 175 million cigars.

Nevertheless, the construction of the new factory on Emma Street was a significant real estate and business achievement for Binghamton, and it generated a great deal of growth and development in the surrounding area and in Binghamton in general. Well publicized in the newspapers at every step of the construction process, the investment created a boom of new buildings being constructed nearby. It was reported in 1927 that a new gas station, house, stores and apartment buildings were going up further north on Emma Street and on Lake Avenue in the surrounding area.<sup>19</sup> Other Binghamton companies also benefited from the arrival of the General Cigar Company. The National Cigar Box company, located at 320 Water Street in Binghamton, became the supplier of cigar boxes for the General Cigar Company. The increased demand allowed the National Cigar Box Company to construct a new two-story addition to its existing factory building.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>16</sup> "Cigar Factory Nearly Ready for Machines," *Binghamton Press*, March 29, 1928, 3.

<sup>17</sup> "Opening of New Cigar Factory Is Celebrated," *Binghamton Press*, May 5, 1928, 5.

<sup>18</sup> "General Cigar Co. Will Increase Force When Machines Are Set," *Binghamton Press*, January 25, 1930, 20.

<sup>19</sup> "Cigar Plant Causes Boom in Vicinity," *Binghamton Press*, September 28, 1927, 18.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 8

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

General Cigar Company designed and built the Binghamton factory at 16 Emma Street at an interesting turning point in American history. During the late 1920s, when the building was conceived and constructed, the country was in the midst of the so-called "Roaring 20s," an era marked by extreme industrial and commercial growth and unprecedented optimism in the future. The General Cigar Company appears to have shared in this enthusiasm, believing that the current boom in business, manufacturing luxury goods like cigars, would only increase in the coming decades. Newspaper articles note the company's plans to hire additional workers and build an additional factory building and warehouse at the Emma Street site almost immediately after the construction of the original facility. In fact, it was noted that the expansion of the factory was anticipated to occur before 1933. Many articles written in 1927 and 1928 indicate that architect Freeman was already at work designing the "sister" factory for Binghamton.<sup>21</sup> However, stymied by the Great Depression, which crippled American industry and business beginning in 1929, none of these plans came to fruition.

While the Great Depression had an impact on the General Cigar Company, shelving plans for an additional factory building and perhaps slowing the anticipated growth of the Emma Street building, it appears that the Binghamton factory remained open into the early 1930s. In January of 1930, the holdings of the General Cigar Company were noted as being twenty large factories, employing 12,000 workers, and forty warehouses.<sup>22</sup> Compared to the 1927 estimate of forty factories employing 15,000 workers, it appears that the company had to sell off or close some of its facilities due to the Depression.

Despite the unprecedented economic challenges created by the Great Depression, the Chamber of Commerce and the General Cigar Company remained optimistic about the future of the company in Binghamton. At the end of 1930, General Cigar Company was forced to reduce the workforce to about 800 workers and cut employee hours to less than full-time. However, by January of the following year, all 122 cigar making machines had been installed and new orders were increasing, allowing the factory to return to full-time schedules, hire an additional 200 workers and employ about 1,000 workers total. While a significant employer

<sup>20</sup> This addition has since been removed, although the older portion of the building remains standing. "National Cigar Box Firm Will Build Addition," *Binghamton Press*, August 14, 1928, sec. 2, 11.

<sup>21</sup> "Opening of New Cigar Factory is Celebrated."

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 9

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

in the Binghamton community, these figures are a far cry from the 1,500 to 2,000 workers anticipated by the General Cigar Company when they first undertook the project. During this time it was noted:

*With the return of normal business conditions, expected by the chamber officials in the near future, the hope is expressed that the General Cigar Co. will carry out its plans for doubling the size of the local factory and the construction of a large warehouse.<sup>23</sup>*

However, despite the optimism and hopes of the local community, General Cigar Company closed its Binghamton factory by 1936. While the initial agreement with the chamber of commerce was that the company would lease the site with the intent to purchase the property, by 1937 this appears not to have occurred. Likely facing the economic and financial hardships of the Depression, coupled with the general decrease of the cigar industry following World War I, the General Cigar Company opted not to purchase the Emma Street factory and ceased operations in Binghamton sometime around 1936.<sup>24</sup> After the ten-year lease agreement expired on March 1, 1937, a lawsuit against the General Cigar Company was filed on behalf of the Greater Binghamton Industrial Corporation, petitioning for the partition and division of the site or the sale of the property and suing for back taxes. The suit also named as a defendant the Endicott-Johnson company, which was noted as having temporarily leased the building in 1937.<sup>25</sup>

On August 11, 1937, Ansco, the nationally significant local camera company (then operating as the Agfa Ansco) acquired the Emma Street factory building. Company vice-president Rudolph Worch announced Ansco's plans to move its camera manufacturing operations from the Corliss Avenue plant in Johnson City, NY (where they were located in the former Marshall Furniture Company building that Ansco had operated since 1900) into the modern factory building at 16 Emma Street before the end of the year. Ansco purchased the factory from the Greater Binghamton Industrial Corporation and the General Cigar Company for an estimated \$300,000.<sup>26</sup> Only

<sup>22</sup> "General Cigar Co. Will Increase Force When Machines Are Set."

<sup>23</sup> "General Cigar Co. to Start Full Blast Again Monday With 1,000 Employees," *Binghamton Press*, sec. 2, 11.

<sup>24</sup> The General Cigar Company appears to have continued in business up to the present day. Information on the current company is available on its website at <http://www.cigarworld.com/about/history.aspx>.

<sup>25</sup> "Factory Sale Here Sought in Lawsuit," *Binghamton Press*, March 4, 1937, sec. 2, 21. Endicott-Johnson does not appear to have very strong ties to the Emma Street building, and its use and occupation of the building are unknown. For additional information on EJ, refer to "The World Comes to Work: The Rise of Endicott-Johnson (ca. 1900s-ca. 1920s)," *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York Multiple Property Documentation Form*, E-25 – E-30.

<sup>26</sup> "Ansco to Make Cameras in Its New Building," *Binghamton Press*, August 12, 1937, 5.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 10

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

a few days later, Ansco began negotiations for the sale or lease of the Corliss Avenue factory with the Ozalid Corporation of New York City, manufacturers of sensitized papers and a subsidiary of Agfa Ansco. By early January of 1938 the new Ansco factory on Emma Street was running at full production, employing about 400 people, reaching 550 by the end of the year.<sup>27</sup>

The Ansco company maintained operations at the Emma Street plant for several decades, producing the company's wide variety of cameras and equipment.<sup>28</sup> A 1939 promotional booklet issued by the Ansco company touts its operation of a large, modern plant for the manufacture of cameras and photographic equipment, noting that "here the processes are more mechanical and less chemical than film or paper manufacture," such as occurred at the company's large Charles Street factory.<sup>29</sup> Steel, brass, nickel, leather, glass, wood and paint were among the many materials utilized for production in the Emma Street factory. One of the company's primary departments was the press shop, which housed numerous massive presses and punches used to stamp out the metal parts for the camera bodies and other components. Once the parts were stamped out, they moved on an assembly line, described as being a long table with hundreds of workers, to be welded or riveted together. The next step involved lacquering the bodies with spray guns before being dried in ovens. Sub-assembly lines assembled smaller components before being passed to the main production line, responsible for assembling the cameras. Lenses and shutters were the last to be mounted on the camera, before each unit was tested and inspected. Finally, the tested cameras were boxed and readied for shipping.

At the Emma Street factory, the Ansco company manufactured both professional and amateur cameras. Professional lines produced at the company include the Universal View and Commercial models. Amateur camera lines included the inexpensive Cadet box cameras, the Agfa Memo 35mm miniature camera, the Shur-Shot, Plenax, Readysset and Clipper models. Also made at the Emma Street factory were many different

<sup>27</sup> "New Camera Plant Starts Full Production With 400 Workers on Job," *Binghamton Press*, January 6, 1938, sec. 2, 11.

<sup>28</sup> While this registration documents the history of Ansco's camera manufacturing, the Ansco company also played a key national and international role in photographic films and papers. For more information on the company's prominence in these fields, please refer to the associated Multiple Property Documentation Form *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York*.

<sup>29</sup> Quoted from *The Story of Agfa Ansco: 1842-1939* (Binghamton, NY: Agfa Ansco, 1939), 22.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection 8 Page 11**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

accessories such as tripods, filters, filter holders and other attachments.<sup>30</sup> Production at the plant must have been prosperous, necessitating construction of a two-story addition on the north elevation of the building in 1950. The new space housed the shipping and raw material storage on its first level with an expanded employee cafeteria and locker room area on the second.<sup>31</sup>

In the mid-twentieth century, the Ansco company began to lose its share of the camera, film and photographic papers market, and the company struggled to maintain its workforce. In August of 1941, 100 workers from the Emma Street plant were laid off due to metal shortages precipitated by World War II.<sup>32</sup> With the Ansco laborers unionized by the Local 22615 of the Photographic and Chemical Workers Union, AFL, beginning in the 1940s, tensions appear to have been rising between labor and management. In 1946 the Union Mine Workers started a campaign to organize Ansco's production and maintenance workers.<sup>33</sup> More layoffs came in 1949, affecting approximately 1,700 camera, film and paper workers.<sup>34</sup> In August 1950, over 1,900 hourly paid Ansco workers at all the company's Binghamton plants, including the Emma Street camera plant, went on strike as members of the International Chemical Workers Union, AFL. The mid-century appears to have been a tumultuous period in Ansco history, especially at the Emma Street factory, as workers demanded additional benefits and higher wages, coupled with the company's struggle to maintain profitability. However, despite these internal difficulties, the Emma Street camera plant continued to churn out cameras and equipment; in February of 1948 Ansco produced a record 150,989 camera units and production for the year totaled more than two million units.<sup>35</sup>

Facing rising labor costs and increasingly stiff competition from foreign manufacturers, Ansco began to manufacturer fewer of its camera models at the Emma Street plant. Companies in Japan, India and China began producing cheap electronic devices, including cameras, in the post-World War II era. These units could be

<sup>30</sup> *The Story of Agfa Ansco: 1842-1939*, 24-25.

<sup>31</sup> Based on the 1918 – updated to 1950 Sanborn fire insurance map, sheet 32.

<sup>32</sup> "Agfa Concentration on New Defense Work Indicated; 100 Laid Off," *Binghamton Press*, August 16, 1941, 3.

<sup>33</sup> "Campaign to Organize Ansco Is Started by Lewis' UMW Union," *Binghamton Press*, April 19, 1946, 10.

<sup>34</sup> "Forrestal Sees More Ansco Layoffs, Attorney General Expects Rehiring," *Binghamton Press*, 1 July 1949: 5.

<sup>35</sup> William L. Camp, "ANSCO Chronology," *Bill's Photo History*, March 12, 2004, accessed November 14, 2011, <http://billsphotohistory.com/3.html>.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 12

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

manufactured and sold at a lower price than American-made products, due in part to the cheaper labor costs in these countries. Under the ownership of the General Aniline & Film Company (GAF) and allied with the German Agfa company, Ansco began retailing an increasing number of German-made cameras. In October 1951 the company introduced five new camera models made at the Agfa Camera Works, Germany. Throughout the 1950s Ansco continued to introduce an increasing number of German-made products, reducing the needs of the American-based Emma Street factory. In 1960 Ansco began selling a 35mm camera, the Anscomark M that was imported from Japan.<sup>36</sup>

The Ansco company continued its slow and gradual decline throughout the 1960s and 70s. The Emma Street factory was said to have about 200 to 250 workers in 1968, a dramatic reduction of more than half the workforce of 550 workers noted in 1938. In 1977, GAF decided to withdraw from the consumer photography industry and closed the consumer film departments in Binghamton. As a result, 1,100 workers were laid off, and it appears that Ansco's Emma Street factory was closed at this time.<sup>37</sup>

**A History of the Ansco Company<sup>38</sup>**

The Ansco Company was once one of the nation's leading manufacturers of cameras and photographic films and papers during the twentieth century. The company's roots date back to an era of great experimentation in the nascent field of photography, which emerged in the early 1800s. During the mid to late nineteenth century, photography developed from just a novelty or a toy to become a more serious art form. As artists began to push the boundaries of what camera equipment and photographic films could do, Ansco developed new and more sophisticated photo products as well.

During much of the twentieth century, Ansco operated two primary factory locations in Broome County. The Charles Street factory complex (also nominated) produced the photographic films and papers and also contained

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> For additional information on the history of the Ansco company, see *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York Multiple Property Documentation Form*, E-35 – E-38, E-41 – E-42.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection 8 Page 13**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

administrative and research facilities.<sup>39</sup> A large warehouse, located at 219 Clinton Street near the Charles Street facility, built 1957-58, was also used by Ansco in its later phases. A separate factory on Corliss Avenue in Johnson City, which later relocated to 16 Emma Street in Binghamton, manufactured cameras. Other sites include a factory in Afton, Chenango County, NY (built 1916, demolished 1935), and a former New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG) building (determined eligible for listing), now expanded into the Engineering Innovation Center and used by Binghamton University, in Vestal.<sup>40</sup> This building was constructed in 1958, designed and built by the Austin Company, to serve as the new administration building. In the later phases of its history, the Ansco company built the Art Moderne building at 18 Park Street/25 Ozalid in Johnson City in 1947.<sup>41</sup> Other buildings may have had minimal ties to Ansco; however, its primary factory sites were the Charles Street factory for films and papers and the Corliss Avenue, later Emma Street, factory for cameras.

The Ansco company began in Binghamton in 1898 as the Westcott Photo Specialty Company, located at 170 Washington Street, founded by Melvin DeVer Westcott to manufacture a special type of paper used for photography, marketed as the "Monarch Brand." Following Westcott's death in 1899, the E. & H. T. Anthony & Co. of New York City acquired the company in 1900.<sup>42</sup> After acquiring the Westcott company, the Anthony company moved all its photographic papermaking to Binghamton, renaming the company the Monarch Paper Company. In 1900, the Monarch Paper Company relocated from the Washington Street location to facilities located at 29-31 Charles Street. In 1901 the company became the Anthony & Scovill Company after a merger with the Scovill & Adams Company. In 1907 the firm was again renamed, as Ansco, merging the two former names into a new moniker.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>39</sup> The Charles Street factory was a large complex of related buildings along the central spine of Charles Street, spanning several acres and neighboring streets. For more information on this factory site see Ansco Company Charles Street Factory Buildings nomination and the associated Multiple Property Documentation Form *Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York*.

<sup>40</sup> The Afton plant was built to manufacture film-grade nitrocellulose, a primary ingredient in flexible film base. However, shortages of nitrocellulose during World War I severely affected Ansco. The newly built Afton plant was never used because by the time it was completed, film-grade nitrocellulose became available to the civilian market at a very low cost as the war was winding down, rendering the plant unnecessary. Michael R. Peres, *Focal Encyclopedia of Photography: Digital Imaging, Theory and Applications, History, and Science* (Oxford: Focal Press, 2007), 42-43.

<sup>41</sup> More information on this building can be found in the Johnson City Historic District nomination, listed 2011.

<sup>42</sup> "Melvin DeVer Westcott," Westcott Family Genealogical Forum, January 8, 2010, <http://genforum.genealogy.com/westcott/messages/973.html>.

<sup>43</sup> William L. Camp, "ANSCO Chronology," Bill's Photo History, March 12, 2004. <http://billsphotohistory.com/3.html>.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 14

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

The early decades of the twentieth century appear to have been very successful and profitable for Anasco in Broome County. In 1910 the company enlarged its Charles Street factory, and in May of that year, Anasco purchased the former Marshall Furniture Company plant, located on Corliss Avenue in Lestershire (now Johnson City). Production of cameras commenced at this site in October of 1910. During the early decades of the 1900s, the Anasco company grew and expanded, enlarging its primary Charles Street factory. Finally, in 1916 the company's primary stockholders held a vote, approving the transfer of Anasco's headquarters from New York City to Binghamton.<sup>44</sup>

Despite introducing several popular cameras in the 1910s, by the 1920s, sales and profits were lagging for Anasco. As an attempt to stimulate new growth and profits, in 1928 Agfa, a unit of the large German chemical conglomerate I.G. Farben, acquired Anasco, becoming known afterwards as Agfa-Anasco. In May of 1928, Agfa-Anasco, revitalized with the injection of European money into the company, began making significant upgrades in its facilities in Broome County, constructing massive new buildings at the existing Charles Street factory.

With this new influx of capital and energy, the 1930s were more successful for the Agfa-Anasco company. Despite the devastation of a 1935 flood to the film factories on Charles Street, the company continued to grow both its product lines and its Broome County facilities. In the mid-1930s the Anasco company was investing in its factories in Binghamton and undertook new modernization and upgrade projects for its paper and camera divisions. At the Charles Street paper plant, new state-of-the-art reinforced concrete buildings were constructed. Meanwhile, the company acquired the former General Cigar Company Building at 16 Emma Street in 1937 and moved production from the older Corliss Avenue buildings in Johnson City to the more modern facility on Emma Street.<sup>45</sup>

The German control that had helped a struggling Anasco emerge more successful in the 1930s soon proved problematic. In late 1939, Agfa-Anasco's holding company became known as General Aniline & Film Company (GAF), at which time Agfa-Anasco became a subsidiary of GAF. After the United States entered World War II

<sup>44</sup> Refer to the 1918 Sanborn map for Binghamton, Sheet 37.

<sup>45</sup> Camp, "ANSCO Chronology."

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 15

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

**Name of Property**  
**Broome County, New York**  
**County and State**

in 1941, Agfa-Ansco was considered "enemy property" and the company was seized by the federal government. Federal agents were stationed at the company to supervise operations. As at other companies during the war, production was shifted to more military-related products. Camera production was halted, and Agfa-Ansco manufactured optical devices such as sextants and range finders. In 1942, the company introduced the first color film that could be user-processed to the American market. However, all of the material went towards governmental uses and was not available to the general consumer. Later that year, the company was put under control of the Alien Property Custodian (APC). In 1944 the name "Agfa" was dropped from the company moniker, and the company adopted a new red-white-and-blue color scheme as an attempt to Americanize the business.<sup>46</sup>

Under government control during World War II, the company stagnated. Ansco returned to manufacturing amateur cameras and films in 1945, updating versions of its cameras that it offered before the war while introducing several new models. However, the company was beset with internal discord. Under government control, leadership appointments were awarded based on political connections and influence rather than on merit, and the company went through a string of directors. A growing sign of the times, Ansco cameras were increasingly made overseas, in places like Germany, Japan and Hong Kong, and were of average quality. It was not until 1965 that the company was relinquished from governmental control, being taken over by General Aniline & Film Company (GAF) in 1967.<sup>47</sup>

Several factors beginning in the 1970s made it increasingly difficult for GAF to compete in the market. In this decade, GAF sold its photographic division, splitting it into two divisions. By the 1980s it became increasingly difficult for GAF to compete with the Kodak company's hold on the film industry, and in 1981 the Binghamton GAF plant was purchased by Andlinger & Company. The company was split into two separate units, one of which was the Ozalid company. The other company was the Anitec Image Corporation, which maintained the production of photographic film and paper. As Anitec the company continued operations for over a decade,

<sup>46</sup> Camp, "ANSCO Chronology." Also, Charles Browne, *Ansco: Cameras, Construction & Community* (Binghamton, NY: Roberson Museum, 2002), 11-12.

<sup>47</sup> Camp, "ANSCO Chronology." Also, Browne, 12.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 16

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

although in 1998 the company was purchased by International Paper, a division of the Eastman Kodak Company. Only forty days following the purchase of the Anitec company, International Paper announced the closure of the Binghamton factory.<sup>48</sup> The former Ansco camera facility on Corliss Avenue (originally the Marshall Furniture Company, 1890s), in Johnson City was demolished in 2009.<sup>49</sup>

**Industrial Architecture**

Industrial architecture is a broad category which includes many types of buildings that once served as factories, manufacturing plants, machine shops, and other types of functions. New York State passed a law on factory regulation in 1914 that defined a "factory" as any place where goods or products were manufactured or repaired, cleaned or sorted. Buildings such as mills, workshops, manufacturing businesses and all associated buildings, sheds and structures were included in this definition. The term factory can be used to describe a single building or to an entire facility of composed of any number of structures, and the term is synonymous with industrial architecture.<sup>50</sup>

The earliest industrial buildings typically featured simple, utilitarian designs based on function and needs dictated by interior production.<sup>51</sup> Industrial buildings of the nineteenth century relied on the natural elements for interior illumination, ventilation and even for the power to drive the belts and shafts, which in turn operated machinery. As a result, industrial buildings are often constructed in phases, with additions added to the building as need dictated and typically featured numerous window voids. Industrial buildings were typically not thought of as true "architecture" in the nineteenth-century, and in fact many architects lacked interest in industrial architecture due to the financial and economic limitations and a belief in the lack of artistic possibilities in their design. Factory design was often a mix of common empirical engineering based on rationalized, technological planning. Prior to the development of specialized engineers or architects, early factory design also involved a

<sup>48</sup> Browne, 14.

<sup>49</sup> "Broome County, NY," Former Industrial Site in Endicott- Johnson Corridor to Be Demolished, November 23, 2009, <http://www.gbroomecounty.com/countyexec/former-industrial-site-endicott-johnson-corridor-be-demolished>.

<sup>50</sup> Betsy H. Bradley, *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 7-8.

<sup>51</sup> This bias is still present among historians and scholars, as there are few comprehensive studies of industrial architecture available. One of the best sources is Betsy Bradley's *The Works*, from which much of this discussion is taken.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 17

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

bit of luck and trial and error by builders and craftspeople.<sup>52</sup> As a result, most nineteenth-century industrial buildings were designed as anonymous collaborations between industrialists, engineers, local carpenters and mill builders.

Fires were a major concern of nineteenth-century industrial buildings, which often featured heated boilers to drive machinery, gas lighting and volatile compounds. As a result many industrial buildings were built utilizing fire retardant materials. Resistance to fire would be a major driving force behind the development of new construction methods and materials in industrial architecture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

One of the most common industrial construction methods in the nineteenth century in New York State is brick or stone with heavy timber framing, a method broadly known as mill construction for its early and widespread use in the construction of fabric and textile mills in Massachusetts and New England in the early 1800s. Later in the century the use of iron or steel framing became more popular, as technology advanced and allowed for improvements in fire resistance. These types of buildings were generally long and narrow and typically featured numerous windows along the elevations, maximizing interior illumination and ventilation. Sometimes skylights or rooftop monitors were used to illuminate upper floors. Exterior features could consist of external fire escapes and ladders, loading bays (sometimes raised or covered), hoists, and other functional features. Flat roofs were popular, and could be used to accommodate water tanks and elevator penthouses.<sup>53</sup>

By the end of the nineteenth century other materials were also introduced to industrial architecture. The use of structural iron as a building material was introduced to industrial architecture as early as the 1820s, used in the framing and as structural columns in textile mills. Cast iron was frequently used for columns, preferred over wrought iron for the fact that it would develop a surface patina of rust that would not compromise its structure, while wrought iron would rust more thoroughly leading to structural deficiency. As early as the 1870s builders introduced the use of unglazed, hollow terra cotta tiles into industrial construction. Often used in tandem with steel or iron framing, this system was used in exterior curtain wall construction, either exposed or covered with

<sup>52</sup> Bradley, 14-15.

<sup>53</sup> Bradley, 137-138.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 18

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

stucco or brick. The interior air spaces of the hollow terra cotta tiles allowed for insulation, and the system was noted as more heat and moisture proof than brick.<sup>54</sup>

One of the next major milestones in industrial architecture was the development and refinement of steel reinforced concrete. This building system was initially pioneered by Earnest Ransom, who, at the end of the nineteenth century, invented a method for embedding steel rods into concrete as a means of creating a solid, fireproof system of construction. This new structural system could then support concrete floor slabs, eliminating a wood structural system which was highly susceptible to fires and collapse in industrial applications. While this new structural system eliminated the threat of fires it also had the added benefit of creating large, open floor plans with flexible interior spaces, which could later be configured with partitions depending on the needs of the company within. Reinforced concrete structural systems were also modular, meaning they were composed of a repetition of equally sized units or "modules." Modularity made them less expensive and easier to construct since components could be manufactured of equal size and shape and quickly installed on site, with little customizing of individual features or elements, therefore reducing expensive hand-building labor. Nonstructural walls were inserted in the space between the concrete columns and, since they were non-load bearing, could be comprised solely of industrial metal-sash windows, occasionally with a narrow spandrel of brick, allowing light to flood the interior spaces. This construction system was popularized by Detroit-based architect Albert Kahn, who showcased the technology in his landmark Packard Automobile Plant in Detroit, built between 1903 and 1911. Kahn and his contemporaries, including the Boston-based firm of Lockwood, Green and Company, built reinforced concrete industrial buildings across the country. During this era, industrial architecture began to emerge as a distinct architectural and engineering field requiring specialized designers, elevating industrial architecture out of the realm of anonymous local builders working by trial and error and into practice as a specialized and scientific field.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Bradley, 137 – 139.

<sup>55</sup> Refer to Reyner Banham, *A Concrete Atlantis: U.S. Industrial Building and European Modern Architecture, 1900-1925* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986), 31.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 19

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

**Name of Property**  
**Broome County, New York**  
**County and State**

The use of steel reinforced concrete for industrial architecture was widely used throughout the 1910s and 1920s and was common for several decades afterwards. During the 1930s the use of steel framing, often clad in brick or terra cotta tile, became more popular for industrial buildings. While structural steel had been used for industrial buildings beginning in the late nineteenth century, by the turn of the twentieth century steel began to replace cast iron as a structural material. Steel offered great tensile and compressive strength, allowing for stability, wide spans, and resistance to the vibrations of machinery. Steel could be manufactured into standardized members, quickly assembled on site. Riveting replaced the earlier bolts as a fastening system, but by the 1920s, welds were used to connect steel members, a small but significant improvement that created stronger connections between steel members, allowing for lighter frames. Similar to reinforced concrete, steel skeletons offered nonstructural walls that could feature multiple large windows, large and flexible open interiors that could be adapted for a variety of different uses, and also an improved level of resistance to fire. Steel columns and beams could be encased in poured concrete to provide resistance to fire, or could have concrete sprayed on to them, a material sometimes known as Gunite. As electrical technology improved, the need for exterior illumination was less critical, and smaller windows could be utilized. Likewise internal environmental systems improved, creating better ventilation that helped to reduce the risk for fires. Internal sprinkler systems, utilized since the 1880s, also became more common place.<sup>56</sup>

The General Cigar Company - AnSCO Camera Factory Building is an excellent example of the type of simple, functional industrial architecture that was being designed and built in the early twentieth century. This steel framed industrial building was designed using the most modern technology available at the time to build factory buildings that maximized the useable interior space. The factory building on Emma Street typifies the generic, flexible design of factories as containers for a process within, making it as functional for making cigars as producing camera equipment. Using a structural steel skeleton, the building could contain large, open interior spaces free of partitions unless necessary. Machinery, which was rapidly developing and changing in the late 1800s and early 1900s, could be moved, changed, and replaced without making complex and costly changes to

<sup>56</sup> Bradley, 150-154.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 20

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

the architecture of the building. The building at 16 Emma Street also reflects improvements to fire resistance in industrial buildings.

The General Cigar Company - AnSCO Camera Factory Building also reflects a growing pride and recognition of industrial buildings as architecture. While factory buildings were often built by anonymous builders and engineers through most of the 1800s, industrial architecture became an increasingly complex and specialized field in the 1900s. In this period it became more common for architects and engineers to specialize in industrial architecture. Like Albert Kahn, who popularized the use of reinforced concrete for industrial buildings, industrial architecture became increasingly appreciated for its specialized construction and design. Here at 16 Emma Street, newspaper articles celebrate the architect of the building, Alfred Freeman, as an experienced specialist in designing modern cigar factory buildings.

**Conclusion**

The General Cigar Company - AnSCO Camera Factory Building is an excellent and highly intact example of an industrial building built by the nation's leading manufacturer, the General Cigar Co., to mass manufacture cigars. It also has strong ties to the nationally significant AnSCO camera and film company and was the long-time home to the AnSCO company's camera and camera equipment production. Architecturally, the building reflects the adaptability and flexibility of open-planned steel framed industrial buildings, making it highly suitable for such different uses as manufacturing cigars and cameras.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 1

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome 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

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome 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

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Section 9 Page 3

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 4

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

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*Binghamton Press.* "New Plant of General Cigar Co. Already Producing 100,000 Cigars Daily." June 2, 1928.

[http://fultonhistory.com/Newspaper%204/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale%201928.pdf/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale%201928%20b%20-%20201852.pdf#xml=http://fultonhistory.com/dtSearch/dtisapi6.dll?cmd=getpdfhits&u=7fc7dc1d&DocId=5578353&Index=Z%3a%2fFulton%20Historical&HitCount=13&hits=9+a+2c+3c+55+56+59+1da+232+c37+ca4+ca5+ca6+&SearchForm=C%3ainetpubwwwrootFulton\\_New\\_form.html&.pdf](http://fultonhistory.com/Newspaper%204/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale%201928.pdf/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale%201928%20b%20-%20201852.pdf#xml=http://fultonhistory.com/dtSearch/dtisapi6.dll?cmd=getpdfhits&u=7fc7dc1d&DocId=5578353&Index=Z%3a%2fFulton%20Historical&HitCount=13&hits=9+a+2c+3c+55+56+59+1da+232+c37+ca4+ca5+ca6+&SearchForm=C%3ainetpubwwwrootFulton_New_form.html&.pdf)

*Binghamton Press.* "Notes Given at Time General Cigar Plant Was Built Being Settled." July 1, 1937.

[http://fultonhistory.com/Newspaper%204/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale%201937.pdf/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale%201937%20-%20204588.pdf#xml=http://fultonhistory.com/dtSearch/dtisapi6.dll?cmd=getpdfhits&u=351acdb6&DocId=5657556&Index=Z%3a%2fFulton%20Historical&HitCount=6&hits=66+67+69+6c+511+77d+&SearchForm=C%3ainetpubwwwrootFulton\\_New\\_form.html&.pdf](http://fultonhistory.com/Newspaper%204/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale%201937.pdf/Binghamton%20NY%20Press%20Grayscale%201937%20-%20204588.pdf#xml=http://fultonhistory.com/dtSearch/dtisapi6.dll?cmd=getpdfhits&u=351acdb6&DocId=5657556&Index=Z%3a%2fFulton%20Historical&HitCount=6&hits=66+67+69+6c+511+77d+&SearchForm=C%3ainetpubwwwrootFulton_New_form.html&.pdf)

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 5

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome 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

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The 3.29 acre parcel is located on the east side of Emma Street, just north of Main Street, in the city of Binghamton. The north boundary is adjacent to rail lines. The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary reflects all land currently associated with the building at 16 Emma Street. These boundaries also correspond to the original historic property associated with the building.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 1

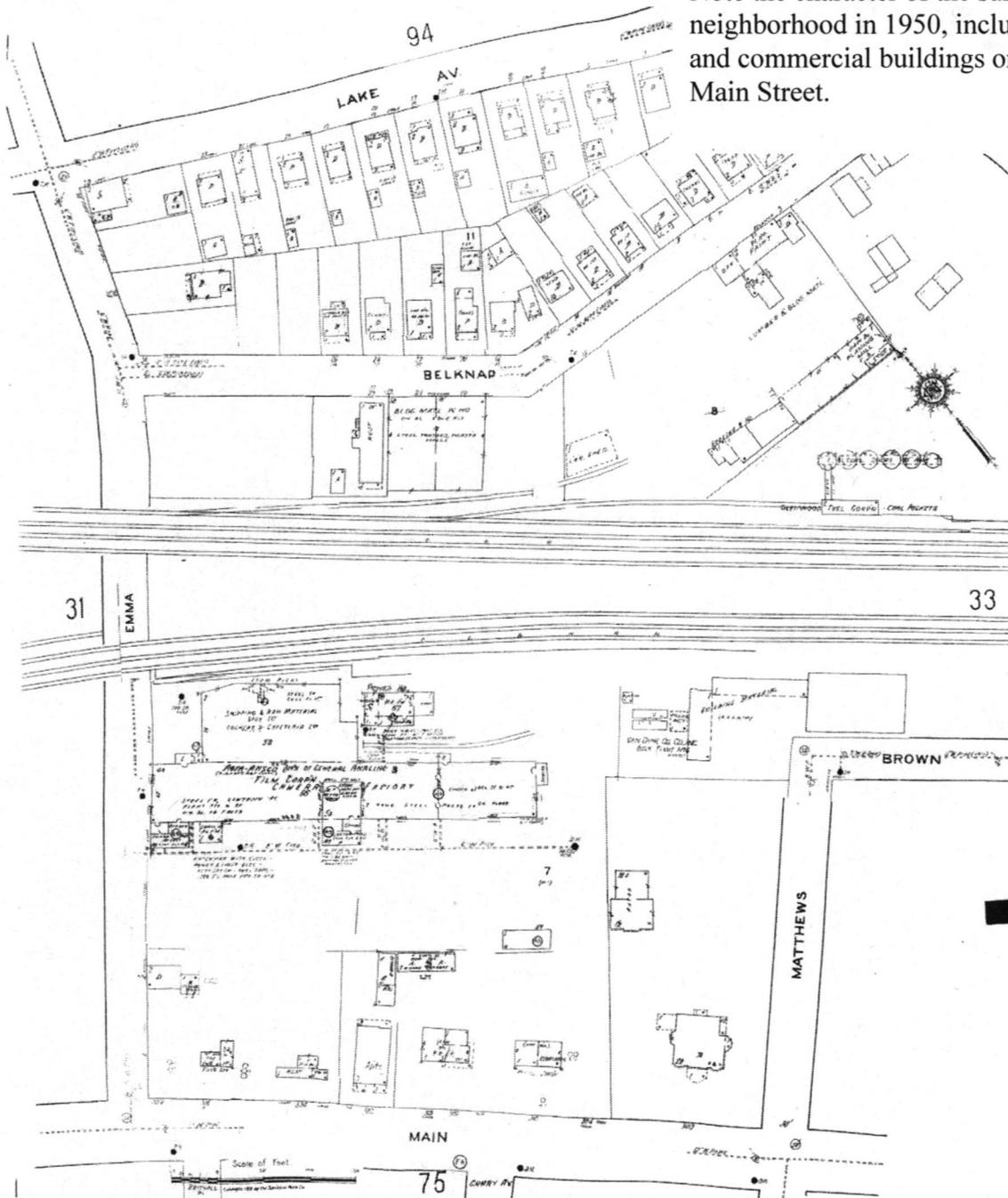
**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

Additional Information

Sanborn Map, 1918- Updated to 1950

Note the character of the surrounding neighborhood in 1950, including several houses and commercial buildings on Lake Avenue and Main Street.





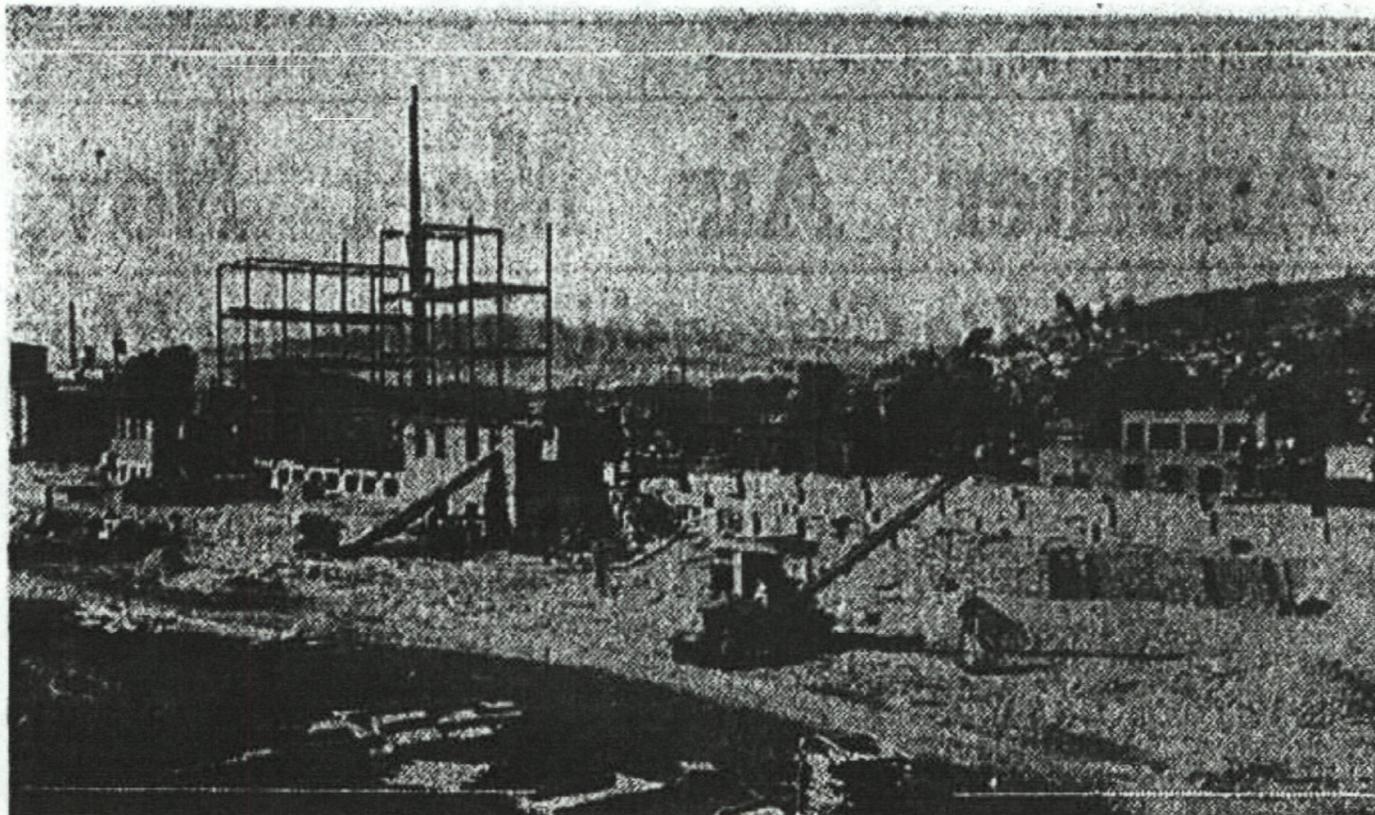
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 3

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State



**“Progress Made on New Cigar Factory” (September 7, 1927).**  
From *The Binghamton Press*, 7 Sept. 1927: 16.

This newspaper image shows the initial construction of the concrete foundation, some of the steel skeleton being built and other work.

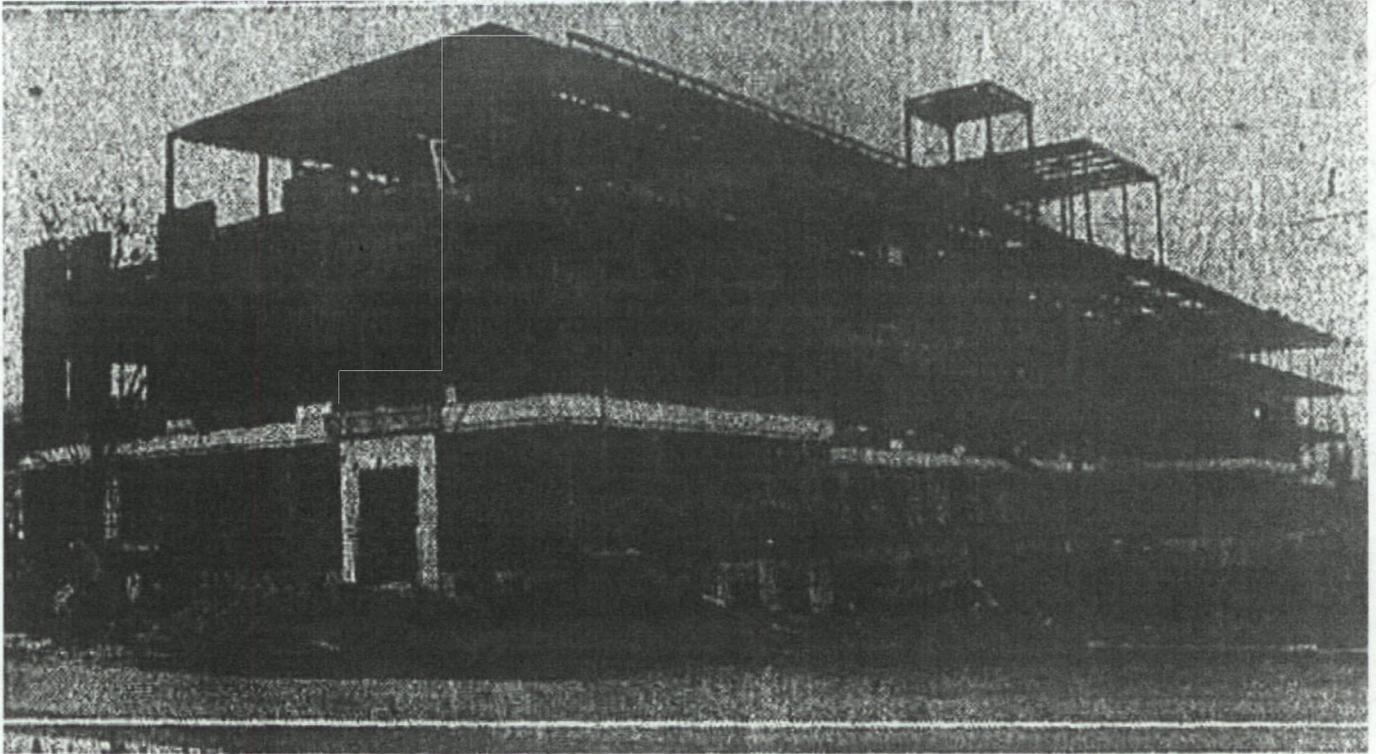
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 4

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State



**“Work Progresses on New Cigar Factory” (October 26, 1927)**

*From The Binghamton Press, 26 Oct. 1927: 12.*

While difficult to see, this newspaper image shows the progress of construction of the new factory building. The light-colored door surround and beltcourse above the ground floor are visible as well as the steel skeleton on upper floors. The construction of this building, the largest of its type in Binghamton and one of the biggest construction projects in the late 1920s, was tracked nearly daily in the newspapers.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 5

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State



**The newly-opened General Cigar Co. factory building on Emma Street (June 2, 1928)**  
From *The Binghamton Press*, 2 June 1928: 14

This image shows the building as it initially appeared upon its opening in 1928. Of note, the large water tank, a signature feature for the building, is not yet installed although the platform on which it will rest is visible in this image.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 6

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State



**“Stripping Machines at Work” inside the General Cigar Co. factory building (June 2, 1928)**

*From The Binghamton Press, 2 June 1928: 15.*

This newspaper image shows the size and type of machinery installed in the building by the General Cigar Co. Note that the open interior, with few structural columns in the workspaces, allowed for rows of machines to be installed. The open layout of the building actually allowed the company to install additional machines than they had originally intended.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

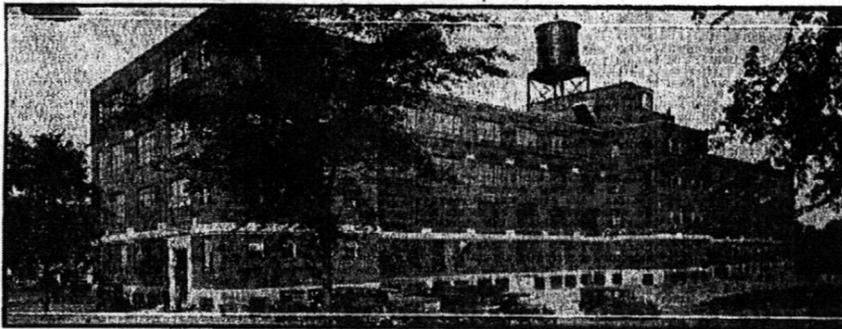
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 7

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State

## Central Station Power for General Cigar Co. Factory



New factory of General Cigar Co. covers nearly 25,000 square feet of ground, and contains 140,000 square feet of floor space

**U**NTIL TEN YEARS AGO practically all cigars made in this country were rolled by hand, whereas today there are but few factories that are not equipped with modern, electrically-driven machinery, resulting in increased production and economies in manufacturing methods.

When the General Cigar Co. considered building a factory in Binghamton, officers and engineers of the company first investigated the reliability and availability of central station electric power. Their findings in this connection assisted them in arriving at a decision to construct the factory now being operated on Emma Street.

Upon signing the contract to purchase central station electric power, a representative of the company said: "Our experience in operating our large number of cigar factories has proven that power purchased from a dependable source is more economical, efficient and convenient than maintaining generating plants in our own factories."

The new Binghamton factory of the General Cigar Co. has capacity for producing 125,000,000 White Owl cigars annually on machines driven by 300 electric motors. When the factory is in full operation 1,200 persons will be steadily employed. The factory is one of the most modern, sanitary and best equipped of its kind in the world.

**BINGHAMTON LIGHT, HEAT & POWER CO.**  
172 WASHINGTON STREET  
BINGHAMTON, N.Y.

### **Binghamton Light, Heat and Power Co. Advertisement (1928)**

From *The Binghamton Press* 26  
Sept. 1928: 27.

This advertisement celebrates the opening of the Emma Street factory, and the Binghamton Light, Heat and Power Co.'s role in supporting production there.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 8

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State



**Anso Camera Works (ca. 1930s)**  
From *The Valley of Opportunity*, 176.

This image shows the Emma Street factory after the Anso company purchased it in 1938. Note the prominent painted signage across the top of the building, as well as the painting of the signature water tower.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 9

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State



**Ansko Camera Plant, postcard image (ca. 1940s)**

This rare color image of the building shows a small guardhouse located just south of the building (at left). Note that it appears some of the factory windows have shades or have been enclosed from inside the building, likely due to light-sensitive camera equipment manufacturing. The industrial sash windows remain intact.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 10

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Name of Property  
Broome County, New York  
County and State



**Aerial view of the Emma Street factory (1951)**  
*From New York State Archives*

This image shows the 1950 addition on the north side of the building (at left).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY -  
ANSCO CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Name of Property

Broome County, New York

County and State

Section number photos Page 1

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Photographer: Jennifer Walkowski and Clinton E. Brown  
Clinton Brown Company Architecture  
653 Main Street, Suite 104  
Buffalo, New York 14203

Date: 2011-2012

Tiff Files: CD-R of .tiff files on file at  
National Park Service  
Washington DC

and

New York SHPO  
PO Box 189  
Waterford, NY 12188

Photo List:

- 0001 - 16 Emma Street, looking north-east from Emma Street (2011)
- 0002 - 16 Emma Street, looking south-east from across railroad tracks (2012)
- 0003 - 16 Emma Street, looking north-west
- 0004 - 16 Emma Street, looking west showing extant power house building
- 0005 - 16 Emma Street, primary entry lobby
- 0006 - 16 Emma Street, basement view
- 0007 - 16 Emma Street, view of first floor
- 0008 - 16 Emma Street, first floor window detail
- 0009 - 16 Emma Street, second floor storage space showing openness of original interior spaces
- 0010 - 16 Emma Street, fourth floor art gallery space

See continuation sheet

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY General Cigar Company--AnSCO Camera Factory Building  
NAME:

MULTIPLE Industrial Resources of Broome County, New York MPS  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Broome

DATE RECEIVED: 7/06/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 7/31/12  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/15/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/22/12  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000532

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 8/22/12 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA AdC

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

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

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

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



THE ELECTRIC CO.

6

THE ELECTRIC CO.  
1000 W. 10TH ST.  
MILWAUKEE, WI 53233

General Cigar Company -  
✓ Anso Camera Factory Bldg  
Broome Co NY  
photo: 0001

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY - ANSCO  
CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Binghamton, NY

Broome County

Photo 1

NY\_BroomeCounty\_GeneralCigarCompany-  
AnsoCameraFactoryBuilding\_0001.tif



General Cigar Company -  
Anso Camera Factory Bldg  
Broome Co NY  
0002

Emma-external-lookings-SE.tif

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY – ANSCO  
CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Binghamton, NY

Broome County

Photo 2

NY\_BroomeCounty\_GeneralCigarCompany-  
AnsoCameraFactoryBuilding\_0002.tif



General Cigar Company -  
Anso, Camera Factory Bldg  
Broome Co NY  
0003

Emma-exter!op-look!ns-NU\* 4! f  
brown:

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY - ANSCO  
CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Binghamton, NY

Broome County

Photo 3

NY\_BroomeCounty\_GeneralCigarCompany-  
AnsoCameraFactoryBuilding\_0003.tif



General Cigar Company.  
AnSCO Camera Factory  
Bldg

Broome Co NY

0004

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY – ANSCO  
CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Binghamton, NY

Broome County

Photo 4

NY\_BroomeCounty\_GeneralCigarCompany-  
AnSCOcameraFactoryBuilding\_0004.tif



General Cigar Company -  
AnSCO Camera Factory Bldg  
Broome Co NY  
0005

Broome: FR | Mary Entrance Lobby \* 41 f

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY – ANSCO  
CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Binghamton, NY

Broome County

Photo 5

NY\_BroomeCounty\_GeneralCigarCompany-  
AnSCOcameraFactoryBuilding\_0005.tif



General Cigar Company.  
AnSCO Camera Factory  
Bldg  
Broome Co NY

0006

basement\_electrophotography.tif

broome

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY – ANSCO  
CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Binghamton, NY

Broome County

Photo 6

NY\_BroomeCounty\_GeneralCigarCompany-  
AnSCOcameraFactoryBuilding\_0006.tif



General Cigar Company.  
Anseo Camera Factory Bldg  
Broome Co NY  
0007

BROWN: 1st floor.tif

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY – ANSCO  
CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Binghamton, NY

Broome County

Photo 7

NY\_BroomeCounty\_GeneralCigarCompany-  
AnseoCameraFactoryBuilding\_0007.tif



General Cigar Company -  
Anso Camera Factory Bldg  
Broome Co NY  
0008

brown: laminated\_window\_detail.tif

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY - ANSCO  
CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Binghamton, NY

Broome County

Photo 8

NY\_BroomeCounty\_GeneralCigarCompany-  
AnsoCameraFactoryBuilding\_0008.tif



General Cigar Company -  
AnSCO Camera Factory  
Bldg

Broome Co NY

0009

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY - ANSCO  
CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Binghamton, NY

Broome County

Photo 9

NY\_BroomeCounty\_GeneralCigarCompany-  
AnSCOCameraFactoryBuilding\_0009.tif



General Cigar Company -  
Anseo Camera Factory  
Bldg  
Broome Co NY

0010

4th-art-gallery.tif

**GENERAL CIGAR COMPANY - ANSCO  
CAMERA FACTORY BUILDING**

Binghamton, NY

Broome County

Photo 10

NY\_BroomeCounty\_GeneralCigarCompany-  
AnseoCameraFactoryBuilding\_0010.tif

General Cigar Company-Ansco Camera Factory  
City of Binghamton, Broome County, NY

16 Emma Street  
Binghamton, NY 13905

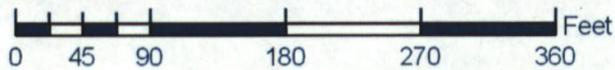


4662400

4662400



1:1,500  
1 inch = 125 feet  
Datum: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N



 General Cigar Company

Tax Parcel Data Courtesy of:  
Broome Co. RPS  
<http://broomegis.co.broome.ny.us>

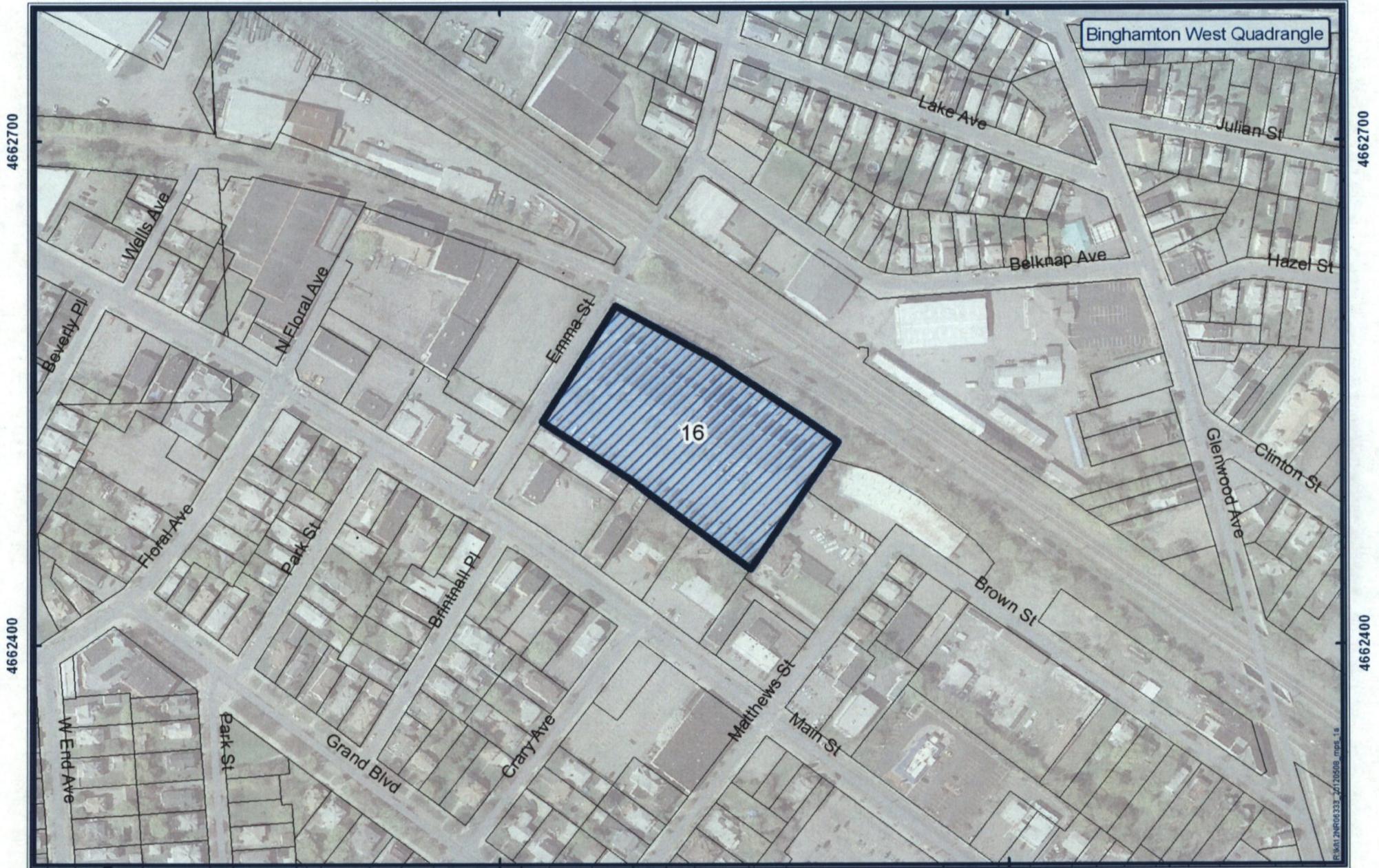


422300

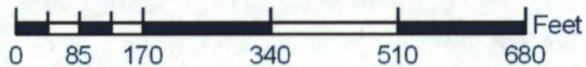
422000

General Cigar Company-Ansco Camera Factory  
City of Binghamton, Broome County, NY

16 Emma Street  
Binghamton, NY 13905



1:3,000  
1 inch = 250 feet  
Datum: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N



 General Cigar Company

Tax Parcel Data Courtesy of:  
Broome Co. RPS  
<http://broomegis.co.broome.ny.us>

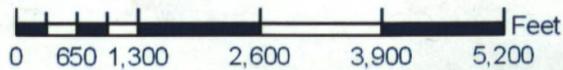


General Cigar Company-Ansco Camera Factory  
City of Binghamton, Broome County, NY

16 Emma Street  
Binghamton, NY 13905



420000  
1:24,000  
1 inch = 2,000 feet  
Datum: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N



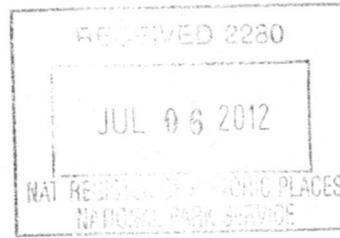
USGS Topo Quadrangle from:  
Services@arcgisonline.com





**New York State Office of Parks,  
Recreation and Historic Preservation**

Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau • Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189  
518-237-8643  
www.nysparks.com



**Andrew M. Cuomo**  
Governor

**Rose Harvey**  
Commissioner

29 June 2012

Alexis Abernathy  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye St. NW, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005

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Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

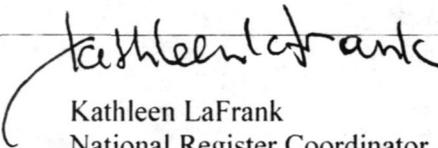
I am pleased to enclose the following National Register nominations to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Industrial Resources of Broome County New York MPDF  
AnSCO Company Charles Street Factory Buildings, Broome County  
General Cigar Factory-AnSCO Camera Factory Building, Broome County  
Hartsdale Pet Cemetery, Westchester County

Thank you for your assistance in processing these proposals. Please feel free to call me at 518.237.8643 x 3261 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

---

  
Kathleen LaFrank  
National Register Coordinator  
New York State Historic Preservation Office