

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional 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 GREENVILLE, NC TOBACCO WAREHOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT

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

2. Location

street & number EIGHTH, NINTH, TENTH, ELEVENTH, TWELFTH, FICKLEN, PITT, AND WASHINGTON STREETS not for publication NA

city or town GREENVILLE vicinity NA

state NORTH CAROLINA code NC county PITT code 147 zip code 27835

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide X locally. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Allen J. Cross SHDD 4/17/97  
Signature of certifying official 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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
_____ entered in the National Register	_____	_____
<u>See continuation sheet</u>	_____	_____
_____ determined eligible for the	_____	_____
National Register	_____	_____
<u>See continuation sheet.</u>	_____	_____
_____ determined not eligible for the	_____	_____
National Register	_____	_____
_____ removed from the National Register	_____	_____
_____ other (explain):	_____	_____

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)	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	6	1 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	0	1 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	1	0 structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0 objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	7	2 Total

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

NA

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE / TRADE: WAREHOUSE

INDUSTRY: PROCESSING

INDUSTRY: INDUSTRIAL STORAGE

COMMERCE / TRADE: WAREHOUSE

INDUSTRY: PROCESSING

INDUSTRY: INDUSTRIAL STORAGE

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: INDUSTRIAL ITALIANATE

ART DECO

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

CONCRETE BLOCK

roof ASPHALT

other METAL, TILE, SYNTHETICS

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

SEE ATTACHED

Name of Property

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

INDUSTRY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1905 - 1947

Significant Dates

1905

1907

1930

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary Location of Additional Data

X State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository:

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 10.4

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet) X See continuation sheet.

1	_____	_____	_____	3	_____	_____
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title BETSY GOHDES-BATEN

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date JANUARY 30, 1997

street & number 2737 CIRCLE DRIVE telephone 919-489-6368

city or town DURHAM state NC zip code 27705

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

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

name SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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

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

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District  
Pitt County, NC

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### General Physical Description:

The Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District in Greenville, North Carolina, is a polygonal district of 10.4 acres located south of the City's central business district at the intersections of Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, and Ficklen Streets with the CSX (formerly Norfolk and Southern) Railroad tracks (CS#1 [Contributing Structure]). Within the district are six contributing buildings, one contributing structure, one non-contributing building, and one non-contributing site. The focus of the district is its six contributing buildings, all enormous sales warehouses, processing factories, or storage warehouses constructed during the early twentieth century when Greenville rose to prominence as a major marketing and processing center for flue-cured tobacco. These are: the Prichard-Hughes Warehouse (CB#1 [Contributing Building], ca. 1905, with ca. 1923 addition); the Dail-Ficklen Warehouse (CB#2, ca. 1911, with ca. 1923, 1947, and 1963 additions); the Export Leaf Factory (CB#3, 1914, with 1928, 1932, and 1938 additions); the E. B. Ficklen Factory (CB#4, ca. 1916, with additions ca. 1923, ca. 1925, ca. 1945, and ca. 1950); the Gorman Warehouse (CB#5, 1927); and the Star Warehouse (CB#6, 1930). Once part of a more extensive group, these buildings form the largest and best preserved collection of early-twentieth-century tobacco-related resources surviving in Greenville; the others have been demolished or altered beyond recognition as historic buildings. Equally important though less prominent in appearance than the buildings, a system of CSX (formerly Norfolk and Southern) Railroad tracks (CS#1, 1907) provided the incentive around which the historic district developed. With the exception of the Gorman Warehouse (CB#5), all contributing buildings have long facades adjacent to the railroad. Elsewhere in the district, the Greenville Produce Company Warehouse (NCB#1 [Non-contributing Building]), does not yet meet the age requirements for listing in the National Register and a small vacant lot, (NC Site #1 [Non-contributing Site]), once the location of factory housing, serves as an informal park where workers meet at lunch time. Neither of the non-contributing resources provides a distraction from the tobacco industry buildings, and the district is eligible for listing in the National Register for its local significance to the city of Greenville. It meets the requirements of Criterion A for its contributions to the commerce and industry of Greenville, and Criterion C for the architecture of its important intact grouping of eclectic tobacco-industry buildings. The period of significance begins in 1905, when the earliest contributing building is thought to have been constructed, and continues through 1947, the last year for which the district is eligible for listing in the National Register.

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The district encompasses one city block and contiguous portions of six others variously bounded by public streets, the CSX Railroad tracks (CS#1), and the perimeters of several contributing buildings. Portions of Eighth Street, Ninth Street, and the perimeters of the E. B. Ficklen Factory (CB#4) form the north boundary; portions of Washington Street, Greene Street, and the perimeter of the Dail-Ficklen Warehouse (CB#2) form the east boundary; portions of Twelfth and Eleventh Streets, and the perimeters of the small park (NC Site #1) form the south boundary; and portions of Greene Street, the CSX Railroad tracks (CS#1), Pitt Street, Ficklen Street, and the perimeters of the Prichard-Hughes and Gorman Warehouses (CB#1 and #5) form the west boundary.

The district is narrow, in many places no wider than the dimensions of a contributing building, for adjacent land has unrelated uses or is vacant. Residential neighborhoods and vacant lots on the south, vacant lots, a gas station, and a convenience store on the east, several churches and a commercial sector on the north, and vacant lots and contemporary commercial buildings on the west further serve to define the district and distinguish the contributing buildings from their surroundings.

Within the district, the contributing buildings abut streets and sidewalks busy with workers going about their various jobs and with vehicles and pedestrians traveling to and from many destinations. Ninth Street, an east-west arterial, divides the southern two-thirds of the district, laid out in a north-south-oriented grid, from the northern third where Eighth and Ficklen Streets, short pass-throughs oriented in a northwest-southeast direction, form forty-five degree angles at their junctures with Washington and Ninth Streets.

Except for the Gorman Warehouse (CB#5), all contributing buildings have long facades adjacent to the CSX Railroad tracks (CS#1). The railroad travels through the district in a north-south direction for two blocks along Pitt Street and turns west between Tenth and Ninth Streets to join a spur line that extends in a curve southwest from the E. B. Ficklen factory and the Star Warehouse (CB#4 and #6). The two sections of track come together in a V that is situated between Ninth and Ficklen Streets on the western boundary of the district, and tracks travel west for a short distance outside the district before turning north-south again to parallel the former Atlantic Coast Line Railroad tracks. The tracks of both railroads are infrequently used, only an occasional train still serves the U. N. X. Chemical Company now housed in the E. B. Ficklen Factory and Star Warehouse (CB#4 and #6).

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Landscaping in the district provides some relief from the mass of buildings and pavement. At the corner of Eleventh and Greene Streets, workers frequently meet for lunch on a lawn-covered vacant lot (NC Site #1) across from the Export Leaf Factory (CB#3). Across the street, a row of dogwoods grows on a thin strip of lawn adjacent to the Export Leaf Factory (CB#3), and a few trees and shrubs have been planted around the Prichard-Hughes Warehouse (CB#1). On Tenth Street, a number of crepe myrtle bushes, luxuriant with purple flowers in the summer, decorate the front of the Export Leaf Factory (CB#3). Other plant growth is voluntary; weeds sprout along the foundations of many buildings and along the railroad right-of-way, and a vine erratically climbs the east and west facades of the Dail-Ficklen Warehouse (CB#2).

The district's six contributing buildings are one- to three-stories in height, rectangular or polygonal in form, with hip or gable roofs, and of fire-proof construction. The Prichard-Hughes Warehouse (CB#1), the Dail-Ficklen Warehouse (CB#2), the main block of E. B. Ficklen Factory (CB#4), and the Export Leaf Factory (CB#3) have thick plank or concrete floors and heavy timber supports characteristic of slow-burn construction, while the Gorman and Star Warehouses (CB#5 and #6) and the rear wing of the E. B. Ficklen Factory (CB#4) have concrete floors and steel truss supports. The primary building material, brick, was used for construction of industrial buildings with great frequency in Greenville during the early twentieth century after a series of devastating fires near the present historic district. Four of six contributing buildings, the Export Leaf Factory, the E. B. Ficklen Factory, the Gorman Warehouse and the Star Warehouse (CB#3, #4, #5, and #6), have exterior walls that are entirely made of brick, and the Prichard-Hughes and Dail-Ficklen Warehouses (CB#1 and #2) respectively incorporate brick to a lesser and greater extent. Metal, too, plays a significant visual role. It is found throughout the district on loading doors and ventilators, and is especially notable on four tanks and a network of connecting pipes on the roof of the Star Warehouse (CB#6) and a water tank on the south facade of the Export Leaf Factory (CB#3). Wood and concrete block are also present; the Prichard-Hughes Warehouse (CB#1) is of frame construction (although recently covered with artificial siding), and a wing joined to the Dail-Ficklen Warehouse (CB#2) is partly of concrete block construction.

The overall size and interior design of each building suit its purpose as a sales warehouse, processing factory, or storage warehouse. The Gorman and Star Warehouses (CB#5 and #6) are massive one-story structures, each covering half a city block or more to supply the large floor areas necessary for tobacco sales. Parapeted entrances enhance both structures; the Star Warehouse (CB#6) has a stylish Art Deco

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entry with English bond brickwork and tile insets, and the Gorman Warehouse (CB#5) plain raised parapets at gable ends. The enormous size and interior layout of the Export Leaf and E. B. Ficklen Factories (CB#3 and #4) accommodated processing plants where tobacco was sorted, redried, and packed into hogsheads (large barrels that contained approximately 1,000 pounds of tobacco) for shipping or storage. On the exterior, each is decorated to convey a positive corporate image. The one-story Export Leaf Factory (CB#3) is divided into dozens of evenly spaced bays by stone capped pilasters, while the one- to three-story E. B. Ficklen Factory (CB#4) has rows of segmental-arched windows and high raked parapets with prominent painted lettering identifying the company. The Prichard-Hughes and Dail-Ficklen Warehouses (CB#1 and #2) are by comparison to the other buildings, smaller and simpler structures. Intended as storage space for aging tobacco, their dimensions were largely determined to suit the size and arrangement of hogsheads.

### Integrity Statement:

During the period of significance, growing businesses and improvements in technology required new or enlarged facilities, and extensive additions and alterations were made to all contributing buildings in the historic district except the Star Warehouse (CB#6). Since 1947, modifications to the contributing buildings have been relatively few; a brick-and-concrete block wing was joined to the Dail-Ficklen Warehouse (CB#2), a brick wing was added to the E. B. Ficklen Factory (CB#4), artificial siding and replacement windows were installed on the Prichard-Hughes Warehouse (CB#1), windows around the Gorman Warehouse (CB#5) were filled with brick and concrete block, and skylights were removed from the Star Warehouse (CB#6) and large storage tanks set up on its roof. As the needs of the tobacco industry changed in the 1960s and 70s, processing and storage facilities were shut down in Greenville, and sales warehouses constructed at the outskirts of the City. In the historic district, the Gorman Warehouse (CB#5) alone continues to house a tobacco business; the other buildings are currently used for a miscellaneous variety of industrial and commercial functions. Notwithstanding these changes, the district conveys the appearance of an early-twentieth-century tobacco marketing and processing center, and with the above-mentioned exceptions, its six contributing buildings are intact, seeming much as they were when they served various tobacco enterprises.

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**Inventory List.** (CB = Contributing Building, NCB = Non-contributing Building, CS = Contributing Structure, NC Site = Non-contributing Site).

The following inventory list is keyed to the accompanying 1" to 200' G.I.S. map titled *Tobacco Warehouse Historic District Greenville*.

1. **CB#1. Prichard-Hughes Warehouse.** Northwest corner Eleventh Street and CSX Railroad tracks, ca. 1905 and ca. 1923.

The only surviving frame structure and one of the earliest tobacco industry buildings remaining in Greenville, the Prichard-Hughes Warehouse, appears first on a 1905 Sanborn map as the George S. Prichard Tobacco Company Stemmer and Prizery. The two-story building with entries on both gable ends is distinguished by a prominent ventilator along its roof ridge and, on visible facades, has five bays on the south gable end facing Eleventh Street, and fifteen bays on the east eaves side facing Pitt Street. Massive supporting timbers and plank floors characteristic of slow-burn construction are found on the interior, and a central lift, depicted on the 1905 Sanborn map, remains in place. Subsequent to the Prichard Company, the Hughes-Meade Company, ca. 1911, and the Hughes-Thomas Company, ca. 1916, utilized this building as a prizehouse. By 1923, Sanborn maps show that the John E. Hughes Company had enlarged the frame warehouse to its present 174' by 110' dimensions, adding a small one-story frame office to the north facade and a narrow flat-roofed brick prizehouse with segmental-arched windows and stepped parapets on the north and south ends to the west facade. Hughes installed two large interior metal fire doors to separate the brick and frame structures, for the latter then became a tobacco storage warehouse. After 1926, the building was used for processing and storage by the W. C. Thomas Tobacco Company until 1935, and for storage alone by the Greenville Storage and Inspection Company until 1948, and by the E. B. Ficklen Tobacco Company (after 1963 a part of Carolina Leaf Tobacco) until 1964. The Bostic-Suggs Furniture Company purchased the building that year, and it has since been used as a furniture warehouse in association with the firm's sales operations in a nearby building. Recent renovations have included replacement of windows throughout the building and the installation of artificial siding on the frame warehouse and office wing. These renovations have somewhat diminished the building's architectural integrity. However, the structure continues to convey its significance because its original roof form, fenestration and surviving rare frame type remain intact.

2. **CB#2. Dail-Ficklen Warehouse.** Tenth Street at the junction of the CSX Railroad tracks, ca. 1909, ca. 1923, 1947, and 1963.

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Pitt County deeds identify the oldest brick building in the Tobacco Warehouse Historic District as the Pitt County Union Warehouse, owned and operated by W. H. Dail, Jr., and C. O'H. Laughinghouse. The building is found first on a 1911 Sanborn map, then called Dail's Tobacco Storage Warehouse. It is a small structure oriented along a north-south axis that is well set back from Tenth Street and has two interior divisions. Subsequent Sanborn maps show that the E. B. Ficklen Company occupied the building in 1916, and had added by that year a loading platform (now gone) adjacent to the railroad tracks on the west facade, and by 1923, a third and front section to the south facade of the warehouse to provide maximum accessibility from Tenth Street. The Liggett and Myers Company acquired the warehouse in 1924, and operated a storage and shipping facility on the site until, in 1977, the Dixie Supply Company, a wholesaler of plumbing equipment, purchased the property.<sup>1</sup> Ownership of the warehouse was thus consolidated with that of a one-story brick building fronting on Ninth Street constructed in 1947 for the Greenville Freezer Locker Company that had been enlarged and joined to the warehouse by an L-shaped brick-and-concrete block connector in 1963.<sup>2</sup> The entire brick-and-block wing was renovated in 1986 when the property was sold to the R. E. Michel Company, a distributor of heating and cooling equipment that currently has its sales offices there and uses the Dail-Ficklen Warehouse for storage.<sup>3</sup>

Large painted letters identify the LIGGETT & MYERS TOBACCO CO. on the front of the one-story, rectangular, 151' by 132' Dail-Ficklen Warehouse. The building is otherwise relatively plain. Exterior brick walls are without ornament, laid flush in a 5:1 common bond, and rise to form low parapets, stepped on the south and north facades, that conceal a shallow gable roof. Fenestration is chiefly segmental-arched loading docks; these are secured by metal-clad doors and variously placed to access three internal storage units of slow-burn construction. Six motor freight docks, two per storage unit, are arranged so that pairs on the east facade serve the middle and rear units, and singles on the east and south facades serve the front unit. Five rail freight docks on the west facade are opposite corresponding east-facing docks, although the pair serving the central unit has been bricked in. Other fenestration includes three pairs of rectangular nine-over-nine sash windows and a six-panel entry door with a four-light transom that serve a small office at the southeast corner of the building and a new vehicular entry on the north facade.

An L-shaped brick-and-concrete block wing that houses the offices of the R. E. Michel Company abuts the warehouse on the north facade. A one story structure measuring approximately 73' by 143', it is painted white and decorated with prominent signage

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for the Michel Company. Fenestration is minimal, however, and the height and positioning of the wing do not overwhelm the early-twentieth-century warehouse.

### 3. CB#3. Export Leaf Factory. 301 West Tenth St., 1914, 1928, 1932, and 1938.

In 1914, shortly after the dissolution of the American Tobacco Trust, the Export Leaf Tobacco Company located a purchasing office and processing plant in Greenville.<sup>4</sup> The large tobacco exporter, then headquartered in Richmond, VA, purchased scrap and common leaf in Eastern Belt markets, redried it, and shipped it to China. The company's initial Greenville facility, a large brick prizery and cooperage, is pictured on a 1916 Sanborn map as covering the western half of a city block bounded by Tenth, Eleventh, Greene, and Pitt Streets. As business grew, the company expanded its Greenville facility, in 1928, purchasing and remodeling the adjoining ca. 1923 Southern States Tobacco Warehouse to increase redrying capacity, in 1932, adding more redrying space, and in 1938, constructing the northeast section of the building fronting on Tenth Street.<sup>5</sup> In 1974, the H. A. Haynie Company purchased the Export Leaf Factory and has used it since to house a polyester processing plant.<sup>6</sup> Its current use has little impact, and the building is perhaps the best preserved of all the tobacco buildings that remain in Greenville.

When the 1938 addition was completed the Export Leaf Factory was, as it is presently, a gigantic 282' by 226' brick structure of slow-burn construction that covers an entire city block. Within the building, there are eight major divisions separated by brick firewalls and metal doors. Thick exterior walls of red brick, laid in 6:1 common bond, rise to a multi-level parapet to protect a shallow, many-gabled roof dotted with skylights. Long exterior walls are divided into a series of regular rhythmic bays by pilasters ornamented with rectangular limestone insets and caps. Except where there are pedestrian entrances or loading docks, each bay contains two segmental-arched openings fitted with a rectangular three-over-three double-hung window, or on the south facade, two rectangular openings, each with a large eight-over-twelve double-hung window. Though the building is generally uniform in appearance, each facade differs slightly. On the east, there are eighteen bays, including a center one recessed for two loading docks. On the north, there are thirteen bays that include the entrance to a small office at the northeast corner of the building. On the west, there are fifteen bays that adjoin a long railroad platform that runs the length of the facade facing the CSX tracks. On the south, there are eleven bays adjacent to a rectangular utility wing that contains a cylindrical 20,000-gallon metal water tank serving an interior sprinkler system and a tall yellow brick smokestack with black tile decoration on its

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cap erected by "M. W. Kellogg and Co. Chimney Builders, New York" that once vented smoke from a coal furnace used to heat the leaf dryers.

**4. CB#4. E. B. Ficklen Factory.** 115 Ficklen St., ca. 1916, ca. 1923, ca. 1925, ca. 1945, and ca. 1950.

In 1902, a small wooden structure that had been the B. E. Parham Prizery and Stemmary was purchased by E. B. (Edward Bancroft) Ficklen after the dissolution of his partnership with T. E. Roberts of Virginia. At that time the building reportedly housed a room into which trucks loaded with tobacco were driven and steam piped in until the leaf was properly cured. A Proctor and Swarts redrying machine was added shortly and a separate brick wing constructed for drying equipment by 1916. Alterations and additions made by 1925 brought the three-story main block of the factory to its present size. High raked parapets and a prominent painted sign, E. B. FICKLEN CO., INC. ESTB. 1896, on the main, southwest elevation identify and distinguish this three-story 48,404 square foot rectangular building. It is constructed of brick laid in a 5:1 common bond, and has a prominent gable roof that has been recently covered with a light-colored composition material. Rows of two-over-two segmental-arched windows break its mass on all three levels, and on the first floor are arranged to accommodate various pedestrian and vehicular entries and loading docks. On the long southeast facade, shallow pilasters further relieve the mass of this huge building, dividing it vertically into six approximately equal bays.

Additions made by 1945 completed the large rectangular one-story wing of 17,206 square feet on the northwest side of the main block. Intended to house three Proctor steam dryers, it is made of brick laid in a 5:1 common bond and has fenestration of the same style as the main block, though only on the front facade. A long enclosed drive at the northwest end of the building allowed ten trucks loaded with tobacco to enter.

A metal-clad firedoor at the rear of the main block led to a two-story brick receiving warehouse of approximately 25,000 square feet constructed ca. 1950 on Eighth Street. This building has a low gable roof, a shallow raked parapet, and like the main block, large painted letters identifying the E. B. Ficklen Company.

E. B. Ficklen, and later his sons, James and Lewis, operated one of Greenville's largest and most successful leaf dealerships for many years with both domestic and foreign clients. In 1964 the Ficklen Company and three other tobacco companies merged to form the Carolina Leaf Tobacco Company. The factory building was sold in 1974 to

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Northrup King, and by that company in 1984 to the U. N. X. Chemical Company, a manufacturer of agricultural and industrial chemicals.

### 5. CB#5. Gorman Warehouse. 215 West Eleventh Street, ca. 1926.

Designed to provide maximum floor space for marketing tobacco, the one-story 380' by 150' Gorman Warehouse is made of brick-faced tile and fills the western half of a city block bounded by Eleventh, Twelfth, Greene, and Washington Streets. The building is mottled in appearance where weathered red brick is intermittently exposed through white paint. Long walls dominate each facade. Segmental-arched windows have been filled with brick on the north and west facades, and rectangular windows have been filled with block on the east facade. Existing fenestration is minimal. There are two doors that serve an office on the north facade, symmetrical vehicular entrances at either side of the north and south facades, and six loading docks spaced irregularly along the west facade. On the interior, floors are concrete, and steel trusses support a shallow-pitched double-gable roof punctuated by 156 skylights. Gable ends on the north and south facades are concealed by raised parapets. Single tobacco leaves, angled decoratively at both ends of the parapet on the south facade, are the only painted ornaments on the building. A long narrow brick wing, original to the building, adjoins the east facade, and its exposed wall is divided by a grid of simple pilasters. A Sanborn map with paste-over updates to 1958 reveals that a large receiving warehouse (not in the district), thought to have been constructed about 1942, once filled the remainder of the block east of the present structure.

J. N. Gorman came to Greenville in 1896, and was a partner in several successive tobacco-related ventures including the Gorman, Campbell Company, the Gentry and Gorman Sales Warehouse, and the J. N. Gorman and Sons Sales Warehouse before, constructing this building as Gorman's New Tobacco Sales Warehouse in 1926. Gorman operated another tobacco sales warehouse in Metter, Georgia, and in 1929, was killed in an automobile accident while traveling there to attend a stockholders' convention.<sup>7</sup> Subsequently the Greenville warehouse was operated by Gorman's sons, R. W., T. M., and E. C. Gorman, until 1936, then by O. L. Joyner, Jr., Matt Long, and Jack Moyer until 1942, then by O. L. Joyner, Jr., and Gus Forbes as the Victory Warehouse until 1975, and then by Larry and William Hudson and partners as Hudson's Warehouse until recently. Now called the 531 Planters' Warehouse and leased by the Hudson family to James Mills who continues to hold tobacco sales there, the building is the sole structure in the historic district that is used for its original purpose.

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**6. CB#6. Star Warehouse. 200 West Ninth St., 1930.**

Greenville's fourth tobacco sales warehouse was opened at the site of the present brick building in 1896 by C. D. Rountree and Wiley Brown. The one-story frame structure, called the Star Warehouse, then also housed a prizery. After Rountree and Brown, the Star was operated solely as a sales warehouse, and enlarged ca. 1911 by the Farmers Consolidated Tobacco Company, an early tobacco growers' marketing cooperative. When the cooperative dissolved, Guy V. Smith and Bruce B. Sugg took over the Star's operations in 1914, expanding the building in 1917 with a frame addition, and again in 1918 with a large brick addition. The present building was constructed in 1930 after a fire destroyed the earlier structure.<sup>8</sup> Messrs. Smith and Sugg operated or leased the Star Warehouse until it was sold to the U. N. X. Chemical Company, a manufacturer of agricultural and industrial chemicals, in 1975.

A stylish Art Deco entry facade distinguishes the mammoth one-story Star Warehouse, an irregular heptagon-shaped building of 76,000 square feet that conforms to the angular intersections of Eighth, Washington, Ninth, and Ficklen Streets and abuts a ca. 1950 wing of the E. B. Ficklen Factory on Eighth Street. A heptagonal hip roof follows the shape of the building, rising to a central plateau where four large cylindrical metal tanks connected by a network of pipes are installed. Skylights have been removed and the roof recently covered with a light-colored composition material. Facing Ninth Street, the distinctive entry facade is made of dark red brick laid in an English bond is divided into eight bays by pilasters ornamented with stone caps. Surmounting the fenestration on each bay is a diamond-shaped tile inset encircled with brick. Elsewhere on the building, walls are lighter colored brick, laid in a 5:1 common bond, and except on the short Eighth Street facade, have four-course corbelled cornices. Simple pilasters divide the walls into multiple bays that contain segmental-arched windows or loading doors.

**7. CS #1. System of CSX (formerly Norfolk and Southern) Railroad Tracks. Pitt Street and between Ninth and Ficklen Streets, 1907.**

Constructed along the eastern periphery of a small group of tobacco industry buildings in 1907, the CSX (formerly Norfolk and Southern) Railroad tracks travel through the district in a north-south direction for several blocks along Pitt Street and turn west between Tenth and Ninth Streets to join a spur line that extends in a southwest oriented curve from the E. B. Ficklen factory and the Star Warehouse (CB#4 and #6). At their juncture, the two segments of tracks form a V that is situated between Ninth and Ficklen Streets on the northwest boundary of the district. The

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tracks travel west outside the district for a short distance before turning north to parallel the former Atlantic Coast Line Railroad tracks.

The location of the CSX (formerly Norfolk and Southern) Railroad tracks provided the impetus around which the Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District eventually developed. With the exception of the Gorman Warehouse (CB#5), all contributing buildings have long facades adjacent to the railroad. Once providing a vital transportation link from the district's warehouses and processing factories to numerous destinations around the country, the railroad tracks are now infrequently used. An occasional train still serves the U. N. X. Chemical Company presently housed in the E. B. Ficklen Factory and Star Warehouse (CB#4 and #6).

### 8. NCB#1. Greenville Produce Company Warehouse. West Ninth Street, ca. 1950.

Built over a foundation of concrete that is six feet high, the Greenville Produce Company Warehouse is a one-story, L-shaped, brick building with a flat roof that is concealed by a parapet capped with terra cotta coping. The main block measures approximately 120' by 54' and the ell, 54' by 24'. Decorative pilasters and metal casement windows are placed irregularly around the exterior. The building is non-contributing because it does not yet meet the age requirements for listing in the National Register.

### 9. NC Site #1. Vacant Lot. Southwest corner, Eleventh and Greene Streets.

A 119' by 60' lawn-covered vacant parcel of land, once the location of factory housing, now serves as an informal park where employees of the districts' various businesses meet at lunch time. The small lot is non-contributing and does not distract from the tobacco industry buildings.

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#### Endnotes for Section 7 :

1 Pitt County Deed Book, V-14, p. 217 and E-46, p. 807.

2 Personal interview with Dewey Page, former owner of Dixie Supply Company, 28 August 1996.

3 Page interview; Pitt County Deed Book 129, p. 46.

4 Pitt County Deed Book U-10, p. 513.

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5 *Reflector*, 12 August 1938. Sanborn Maps show the building as complete by 1929 but the newspaper is likely the most reliable source.

6 Pitt County Deed Book K-42, p. 351.

7 *Reflector*, 5 January 1929.

8 *Reflector*, 16 August 1937.

9 Jenkins, J. S., *Viewing Greenville and Pitt County*, Greenville, 1965, typescript document in collection of Joyner Library, East Carolina University, p. 6.

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### Statement of Significance:

The Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District in Greenville, North Carolina, is a small polygonal district of 10.4 acres located south of the City's Central Business District at the intersections of Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, and Ficklen Streets with the CSX (formerly Norfolk and Southern) Railroad tracks (CS#1 [Contributing Structure]). Within the district six contributing buildings are: the Prichard-Hughes Warehouse (CB#1 [Contributing Building], ca. 1905, with ca. 1923 addition), the Dail-Ficklen Warehouse (CB#2, ca. 1911, with ca. 1923, 1947, and 1963 additions), the Export Leaf Factory (CB#3, 1914, with 1928, 1932, and 1938 additions), the E. B. Ficklen Factory (CB#4, ca. 1916, with additions ca. 1923, ca. 1925, ca. 1945, and ca. 1950), the Gorman Warehouse (CB#5, 1927), and the Star Warehouse (CB#6, 1930). Various sales warehouses, processing factories and storage warehouses, these buildings form the largest and best preserved collection of early-twentieth-century tobacco-related resources surviving in Greenville; the others have been demolished or altered beyond recognition as historic buildings. Today, however, except for the Gorman Warehouse (now the 531 Planters' Warehouse), none are used for tobacco-related enterprises. Equally important though less prominent in appearance than the buildings, a short segment of the Norfolk and Southern (now CSX) Railroad tracks (CS#1, [Contributing Structure], 1907) provided the incentive around which the historic district developed. With the exception of the Gorman Warehouse, all contributing buildings have long facades adjacent to the railroad tracks. Elsewhere in the district, the Greenville Produce Company Warehouse, (NCB#1 [Non-contributing Building]), does not yet meet the age requirements for listing in the National Register and a small vacant lot, (NC Site #1 [Non-contributing Site]), once the location of factory housing, serves as an informal park where workers meet at lunch time. Neither of the non-contributing resources distract from the tobacco industry buildings. The Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District meets the requirements of National Register Criterion A for the local significance of its contributions to the commerce and industry of Greenville from 1905 when the George S. Prichard Tobacco Company prizerery and stemmery (the Prichard-Hughes Warehouse) is thought to have been constructed until 1947, the last year for which the district is eligible for listing in the National Register. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a steep decline in the price of cotton followed by an increasing demand for tobacco produced an unparalleled expansion of tobacco farming in the Coastal Plain region of North Carolina that simultaneously propelled Greenville to prominence as a large and important marketing and processing center for tobacco. The tobacco industry spurred growth in other sectors of Greenville's

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economy, and during the period of significance, the City's population grew from less than two thousand to an estimated fifteen thousand people. The Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District is additionally eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for the local significance of the eclectic architecture of its early-twentieth-century tobacco buildings. Tobacco-related architecture in North Carolina was based on slow-burn construction developed ca. 1822 in New England by Zachariah Allen. Heavy plank floors, massive structural timbers, brick walls, and metal-clad doors were utilized to contain the spread of fires, and Industrial Italianate and Art Deco stylistic features were employed to break the mass of long exterior facades. The size and design of tobacco buildings in Greenville additionally reflected the functional requirements of selling, drying, and storing tobacco, and the contributing buildings were altered often during the period of significance to provide more space and accommodate improvements in technology. Since 1947, modifications to the buildings have been relatively few; a brick-and-concrete block wing was joined to the Dail-Ficklen Warehouse (CB#2), a brick wing was added to the E. B. Ficklen Factory (CB#4), artificial siding and replacement windows were installed on the Prichard-Hughes Warehouse (CB#1), windows around the Gorman Warehouse (CB#5) were filled with brick and concrete block, and skylights were removed from the *Star* Warehouse (CB#6) and large storage tanks set up on its roof. Notwithstanding these changes, the six contributing buildings in the Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District are excellent examples of early-twentieth-century tobacco industry buildings, and with the CSX (formerly Norfolk and Southern) Railroad tracks (CS#1), have made considerable contributions to the economic development of Greenville that give them a uniquely important place in the City's history.

### **Narrative History, Commerce and Industrial Context:**

Cotton, long considered the agricultural staple of the Coastal Plain region in North Carolina, had declined in price to 4.5 cents a pound when, in 1885, Leon F. Evans, a Pitt County farmer, proposed raising tobacco as an alternative. Evans was no doubt aware that James B. Duke of Durham had installed two Bonsack rolling machines in a new factory to expedite his family's already successful cigarette production the year before cotton prices bottomed. The rising popularity of cigarettes assured a demand for tobacco, and Evans, together with A. A. Forbes, G. F. Evans, Jacob Joyner and T. J. Stancill, engaged J. T. Seat of Nash County to grow an experimental tobacco crop in Pitt County.<sup>1</sup> The experiment produced satisfactory results, and the five men planted the County's first commercial crop in 1886.<sup>2</sup> That crop exceeded expectations, and

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Evans was awarded a wagon for selling the "best" tobacco on the Henderson Market, a prize perhaps bestowed to encourage further tobacco production in Pitt County.<sup>3</sup>

Pitt County farmers at first patronized sales warehouses in Wilson, Henderson, and Oxford. Their slow laborious trips with horse-drawn carts or hogsheads fitted with axles were incentives to establish markets nearer home, and in 1890 when a branch line of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad (later incorporated into the Atlantic Coast Line) connected Greenville and Kinston, R. J. Cobb constructed Greenville's first tobacco sales warehouse.<sup>4</sup> The appropriately-named Greenville Tobacco Warehouse opened on Ninth Street in 1891 to fifty-seven buyers who purchased 225,000 pounds of tobacco in three days.<sup>5</sup>

Quick to realize the potential of a tobacco market, David J. Whichard, progressive editor of the *Greenville Reflector* (later the *Daily Reflector*)<sup>6</sup>, boldly headlined an article in that newspaper calling for: "two more warehouses with a corresponding number of prizeries."<sup>7</sup> Whichard maintained: "There is no reason why this town could not be made one of the best tobacco markets in the State."

The facilities requested were not long in coming; several months later the *Reflector* reported: "In a few days, the frame of the building of the Eastern Warehouse will be going up. . . also a three-story prizery and large stables for patrons."<sup>8</sup> When 1892, Greenville's second selling season, brought 1,225,000 pounds of leaf tobacco to market, an increase of one million pounds from the year before, the newspaper began a weekly column to keep the town abreast of developments in the tobacco industry.<sup>9</sup> Its "Tobacco Department" soon reported that leaf from ten eastern North Carolina counties had been sold in Greenville's two warehouses.<sup>10</sup>

When an impressive 2,225,000 pounds of tobacco were auctioned at the 1893 Greenville market, again exceeding sales of the previous year by one million pounds, the *Reflector* enthusiastically predicted: "Greenville will become in tobacco-selling Eastern Carolina what Danville is to Southside Virginia!"<sup>11</sup> In 1895 the first ongoing enterprise in what is now the Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District was established as Greenville's fourth sales warehouse, the *Star*, opened for business in a small frame structure on Ninth and Washington Streets (this building was much altered and eventually replaced by CB#6). That year, and the year following, two entrepreneurs subsequently influential in the growth and development of the City's tobacco industry came to Greenville; J. N. Gorman (who later constructed CB#5) to purchase the R. W. Royster Steam Prizery, and Edward Bancroft Ficklen to join T. E.

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Roberts in forming the Roberts and Ficklen Tobacco Company.<sup>12</sup> The *Reflector* provided a candid glimpse of the Roberts and Ficklen firm's operations:

The Hooker and Bernard five-story prize house occupied by Roberts and Ficklen has been converted into a stemmery and began operation this morning. The building is one of the largest here. A large annex on the west side of the building contains the steam drying and ordering rooms and the power house. The first floor contains the business office, receiving, packing, and shipping rooms. The second floor has the picking and stemming rooms, and the third, fourth, and fifth floors are used for hanging and air drying. In the stemming rooms, from seventy-five to one hundred hands, mostly women, work. The firm is one of the strongest buyers on the market. Mr. Ficklen is held in high esteem by the trade . . . his large plant gives strength to the market and adds much business to the town.<sup>13</sup>

Coincidentally, within a week of this commentary, the *Reflector* noted the completion of a frame building on what is now Ficklen Street for the B. E. Parham and Company Stemmery.<sup>14</sup> Within a few years, the E. B. Ficklen Tobacco Company replaced the Roberts and Ficklen firm, occupying this building, and eventually incorporating portions of the interior into the present E. B. Ficklen Factory (CB#4).<sup>15</sup>

In Greenville, the Sanborn Map Company's 1896 series was first to include tobacco industry buildings. Four sales warehouses, nine prizehouses, and a hogshead factory are depicted along Ninth Street and Dickinson Avenue several blocks west of the district being nominated. Prizehouses predominated, many equipped with steam coils to facilitate the redrying process. All were of frame construction, and inevitably fire broke out. A small conflagration in 1901 destroyed several modest tobacco buildings. In 1903, a larger one on both sides of Ninth Street at the intersections of Clark and Pitt Streets destroyed almost two blocks of prizehouses, stemmeries, and small dwellings. Two years later, in 1905, a more disastrous fire in the same locality destroyed four prizehouses, two sales warehouses, several small buildings, and 500,000 pounds of tobacco.<sup>16</sup>

Whatever the cause of such frequent fires, some relief may have been felt when the *Reflector* announced on 21 March 1905: "The days of kerosene lamps are a thing of the past. The town now rejoices under the brilliance of electric lights."<sup>17</sup> A Sanborn map for the same year is the first to show the frame George S. Prichard Tobacco Company Prizery and Stemmery (the Prichard-Hughes Warehouse CB#1) at the southeast corner of Eleventh and Pitt Streets, one block south of the area ravished by

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fire. As the earliest contributing building in the Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District, its appearance marks the beginning of the period of significance.

Throughout the period of significance, but particularly in the early years of the twentieth century, tobacco sales provided much excitement in Greenville. Frequently an entire farm family accompanied a crop to auction and spent most or all of the cash received in town before returning home. Retailers invited farmers by way of newspaper advertisements to "Drop around and say 'hello' . . . your friends here . . . want to see you and would feel hurt if they knew you were in town and had run off without greeting them. Come into our stores, talk to our business people and get acquainted all around!"<sup>18</sup>

The rise of the tobacco industry in Greenville had many beneficial economic effects; a tobacco board of trade was established to oversee operations of sales warehouses and ensure that all were treated fairly. This board pushed for improved roads and rail connections, and better transportation, in turn, supported more economic growth.<sup>19</sup> By 1907, when the Norfolk and Southern Railroad constructed a line through Greenville and East Carolina Teachers' Training School (now East Carolina University) was established, the town's central business district was thriving.<sup>20</sup> Josephus Daniels, editor of *Raleigh's News and Observer*, lavished praise: "Greenville grows by day and night. No town in the State has grown more in the past ten years!"<sup>21</sup>

Simultaneously with these improvements, an early and important effort to form a tobacco growers' marketing association to secure more equitable prices for farmers began in 1903 when the Farmers' Consolidated Tobacco Company was formed. This cooperative acquired two sales warehouses in Greenville, one of which was the Star (predecessor of CB#6). Sanborn maps of 1911 reflected the cooperative's success; a large frame addition that essentially doubled the Star's floor space permitted the very first Pitt County Fair to be held inside. Additional warehouses were opened in Wilson, Kinston, Robersonville, North Carolina, and Maysville, Kentucky, before internal differences ended the company in 1912.<sup>22</sup>

With the coming of the Norfolk and Southern Railroad, the area that became the Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District began to develop, if slowly at first. A Sanborn map of 1911 shows that W. H. Dail, Jr., operated a newly-constructed brick storage warehouse (the Dail-Ficklen Warehouse CB#2) at the southwest corner of Tenth and Pitt Streets; a spur line of the railroad was extended to serve the E. B. Ficklen Factory (with modifications CB#4) on what is now Ficklen Street, and the

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Hughes-Meade Company Prizery and Stemmary had replaced a short-lived George S. Prichard Company in the Prichard-Hughes Warehouse (CB#1) at the corner of Eleventh and Pitt Streets.

After 1911, however, several nearly simultaneous events triggered the phenomenal growth of Greenville's tobacco industry. The American Tobacco Company Trust, a conglomerate of the nation's largest cigarette manufacturers that had dominated virtually every branch of tobacco manufacturing in the United States, had been disbanded by court order. With the Trust no longer a major tobacco buyer, competition increased and prices rose. Many dealers, manufacturers, and exporters hurried to establish processing factories and storage warehouses in market towns with good transportation facilities.<sup>23</sup>

Within three years, the advent of World War I brought about a change in consumer smoking preferences. American cigarettes had contained Turkish and domestic tobaccos, but as the war escalated supplies of Turkish tobacco, grown in the Middle East, were at first restricted and then virtually impossible to obtain. Partly to encourage acceptance of a necessary change in cigarette flavor, the government supplied cigarettes made from a blend of domestic tobaccos to the troops. At about the same time, an emerging market of women smokers further increased cigarette sales. Tobacco prices on North Carolina markets skyrocketed from thirteen cents to thirty-five cents per pound in a very short period.<sup>24</sup>

At the dissolution of the Trust, the Liggett and Myers, American, and R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Companies emerged as the dominant domestic cigarette manufacturers. The Liggett and Myers and American Tobacco Companies promptly acquired facilities in Greenville, and the Hughes-Thomas Company, then successor to the Hughes-Meade Company in the Prichard-Hughes Warehouse (CB#1) counted the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company among its clients by 1918 before that firm, too, opened a factory in town.<sup>25</sup>

Despite high profiles, the "big three" purchased only ten percent of the tobacco grown in North Carolina. Sixty percent of the crop was purchased by exporters, and of this, approximately one-half went to the United Kingdom and one-fourth to China. Two major firms served this market; the Imperial Tobacco Company of Great Britain and Ireland bought high-priced, high-quality leaf for the British market, and the Export Leaf Company, a subsidiary of the British-American Tobacco Company, bought common or scrap tobacco primarily for the China trade. Both operated large factories in Greenville by 1916 when a Sanborn map shows that the Export Leaf Company had

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constructed a large brick prizery (one half of CB#3) that occupied half a city block between Tenth and Eleventh Streets.

The remaining ten to twenty percent of the tobacco crop was purchased by independent leaf buyers, redried, processed, and sold again.<sup>26</sup> Representative of this group's prosperity in Greenville, 1916 Sanborn maps indicate the E. B. Ficklen Company had added a brick wing to its prizery (with modifications CB#4) and occupied the Dail-Ficklen Warehouse (CB#2).

Sales warehouses in Greenville also increased floor space and services during this period. The Star (predecessor of CB#6), acquired by Guy V. Smith and Bruce B. Sugg after the disintegration of the Farmers' Consolidated Tobacco Company, advertised new facilities in area newspapers. Its 1917, advertisements claimed: "We have recently enlarged our warehouse and are better equipped than ever to look after your tobacco interests from the very start." A sensational year for the Star brought more expansion and advertising in 1918: "In 1917 we made an extension to our warehouse 45' by 60' and for 1918 we are building a brick addition 30' by 210' together with 250 new stalls for teams which makes the Star one of the largest warehouses in the State [of North Carolina]! 1914 -- We began business; 1915 -- business increased 28%; 1916 -- business increased 157%; 1917 -- business increased 350%!<sup>27</sup>

The Sanborn Map Company's 1923 series evidence the Star's brick addition along with other construction in what is now the Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District.

Between 1916 and 1923, the Ficklen Company replaced its frame prizery with a brick building (with modifications CB#4) and enlarged the Dail-Ficklen Warehouse (CB#2) with a brick addition fronting on Tenth Street that increased the storage capacity of that building by one third. During the same period, the Southern States Tobacco Company constructed a brick storage warehouse of two units (later incorporated into CB#3) adjoining the Export Leaf Prizery (one half of the present CB#3). The John E. Hughes Tobacco Company had replaced the Hughes-Thomas firm by 1923, adding a brick prizery and an office to the western facade of the Prichard-Hughes Warehouse (CB#1).

In 1919, with the tobacco industry booming all over North Carolina, the Secretary of State's office granted more charters for tobacco sales warehouses than ever before. Increased tobacco production in the Coastal Plain had concentrated a large segment of the market in the "New" or "Eastern" Belt, and Greenville joined Danville, Virginia,

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and Rocky Mount, Wilson, and Winston Salem, North Carolina, as one of the leading tobacco marketing centers in the South.<sup>28</sup>

Fueled by thriving tobacco markets, Greenville grew dramatically through the end of World War I. The town boasted industrial improvements that included an oil mill, a cotton mill, a brick works, several lumber mills, and a number of machine shops. East and west of town, developers platted large subdivisions and built elegant and stylish homes for newly wealthy industrialists and merchants.<sup>29</sup>

A much-in-demand 1919 tobacco crop sold in Greenville and on other Eastern Belt markets for a record 53 cents per pound.<sup>30</sup> But the following year, overproduction coupled with the end of the World War I to reverse escalating prices abruptly. A huge tobacco crop of 1920 was sold at a reduction of more than fifty percent in price. The selling season in the Eastern Belt began several weeks earlier than elsewhere in North Carolina, and tobacco farmers there were first to receive low bids for their produce. In Greenville warehouses riots nearly ensued. Warehousemen were accused of conspiring with buyers to steal tobacco, and farmers were said to be arming themselves. Violent hands were laid on some of the piles, before buyers were ordered to stop bidding. Afterwards tobacco growers organized and held meetings to devise plans for marketing the crop profitably. Efforts failed, and Greenville warehouses continued the auction system, averaging a meager 20.92 cents per pound for the 1920 crop.<sup>31</sup>

Between 1920 and 1927 as oversupplies and marketing problems continued, tobacco prices never rose above twenty cents per pound. Concerned about farmers, the Federal government proposed buying tobacco surpluses. Legislation to accomplish this was defeated in Congress four times when the aftermath of the 1929 stock market crash dropped per-pound leaf prices to twelve cents in 1930 as sales of all tobacco products faltered. The following year, the "big three" simultaneously increased the wholesale prices of their brand-name cigarettes in a short-sighted attempt to restore profitability, and sales fell further. Tobacco brought an all-time low of eight and one-quarter cents per pound in 1931.<sup>32</sup>

Despite price uncertainties, the marketing and processing sectors of the tobacco industry flourished in Greenville; Sanborn maps of 1929 show eleven large blocks around Dickinson Avenue and Ninth Street filled with six gigantic sales warehouses and nine processing factories, each of which often occupied an entire block with associated prizehouses, storage warehouses, cooperages, and offices. Within what is now the Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District, the E. B. Ficklen

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Company had enlarged its brick prizery, adding a brick stemmery and frame cooper shop (with modifications CB#4); Liggett and Myers occupied the Dail-Ficklen Warehouse (CB#2) though that structure had not otherwise changed; and Gorman's New Tobacco Sales Warehouse (CB#5) had been constructed on the western half of a city block bounded by Eleventh, Twelfth, Greene, and Washington Streets. One year later after a disastrous fire, a new and colossal Star Warehouse (CB#6) was constructed of brick at the site of the structure that was destroyed. In a descriptive tour of the Greenville published at about this time, the *Reflector* emphasized: "The tobacco industry has given the town inspiration and been the principal means of its advancement and progress."<sup>33</sup>

Tobacco was one of seven basic commodities regulated by the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933. Acreage restrictions, guaranteed loans, and later, marketing quotas were instigated. Farmers determined by vote how much tobacco acreage could be planted in a given year, and the Federal government discouraged anyone who had not previously raised tobacco with stringent penalties. Purchasing pools supported by government loans guaranteed prices for tobacco raised on acreage allotments at 90% of a calculated fair market value. Surplus tobacco purchased under this plan was stored for later sales or dispersal. With acreage allotments fixed and a floor supporting prices, tobacco prices recovered and stabilized.<sup>34</sup> In Greenville, sales reached all-time highs, and the town rivaled Rocky Mount and Wilson for the title of "largest tobacco market in the world." A record was established in 1934 when Greenville markets sold 51,188,384 pounds for \$16,077,682.78.<sup>35</sup>

On the eve of the 1937 market opening, the *Reflector* announced: "The town's ten [sales] warehouses have made extensive improvements since the closing of the 1936 season and their operators declare that they are ready for what is expected to be one of the most successful seasons in the history of the market. . . . There is no market in Eastern North Carolina that has superior redrying processing, stemming and storage equipment than is found in Greenville. During the tobacco season, these facilities will employ approximately 6,000 people."<sup>36</sup>

The following year brought more progress in what is now the Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District. The Export Leaf Factory (CB#3), expanded first in 1928 to incorporate the Southern States Tobacco Company's storage warehouse, and again in 1932 for an additional redrying machine, was completed in 1938 by the construction of a large cooper room and redrying plant that filled the remainder of the city block.<sup>37</sup> The China-America Tobacco Company opened a Greenville office in

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the newly-enlarged factory, adding its name to an already impressive roster of leaf dealers in town.<sup>38</sup>

Consumption of cigarettes made another huge percentage gain from 1940-1946 during World War II and its accompanying time of rapid urbanization. With 18 percent of the national cigarette output sent overseas, President Franklin Roosevelt classified tobacco as an essential crop, and draft boards were instructed to defer tobacco farmers to ensure continued output. In Europe, cigarettes were widely used as barter goods by U S Troops, and for two years after V-E Day remained the only stable currency in some parts of Germany, France, and Italy.<sup>39</sup> Cigarette smoking was at an all-time high in 1945 when 267 billion cigarettes were sold on the domestic market. That year brought an improvement that gave the Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District most of its present appearance as the E. B. Ficklen Factory (CB#4) was enlarged to incorporate additional drying machines. Greenville then had over two million square feet of floor space devoted to the handling and processing of tobacco.<sup>40</sup>

In the years after World War II, the tobacco market in Greenville continued as one of the largest in the State.<sup>41</sup> In 1947, the last year for which the Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District is eligible for National Register listing, the City Directory lists eight leaf dealers and eleven sales warehouses. Beginning a trend that would continue, the three newest sales warehouses were located on the outskirts of town.

The next several decades brought many changes to the tobacco industry throughout the state of North Carolina. Following the 1964 Surgeon General's report about the health hazards of smoking, most tobacco companies diversified, eventually becoming large holding companies for a variety of unrelated businesses. Operations were streamlined during the late 1960s and 70s, and older processing factories and storage warehouses were shut down in Greenville and other market towns as new facilities were constructed in manufacturing centers. Tobacco marketing continued strong in Greenville, but sales warehouses were built at the edge of town where land costs were less and newly constructed highways were accessible. By the mid 1970s, all six contributing buildings in the Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District had been sold. With changes in ownership, in most cases, came changes in use. The Prichard-Hughes Warehouse (CB#1), sold to the Bostic-Suggs Furniture Company in 1964, became a furniture warehouse in association with that firm's sales rooms on Tenth Street. The Dail-Ficklen Warehouse (CB#2), sold to the Dixie Supply Company in 1977 and to the R. E. Michel Company in 1986, became a storage warehouse for heating and cooling supplies. The Export Leaf Factory (CB#3), sold to the H. A. Haynie Company in 1974, now contains a polyester processing factory. The E. B.

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Ficklen Factory (CB#4), sold to Northrup King in 1974 and to the U. N. X. Chemical Company in 1984, joined the Star Warehouse (CB#6), sold to U. N. X. in 1975, as a chemical factory. The Gorman Warehouse (CB#5) alone continues to house a tobacco-related business. Sold to William and Larry Hudson in 1975, it is now leased and operated by James Mills as the 531 Planters' Sales Warehouse. Despite changes in use, the buildings have only minor alterations and the district retains integrity as a excellent example of an early-twentieth-century tobacco marketing and processing center.

### Architectural Context:

Tobacco architecture in North Carolina had its roots in an industrial architecture begun in New England when, in 1822, Zachariah Allen developed slow-burn construction. Disturbed by the high cost of fire insurance, Allen employed brick walls, metal clad doors, massive structural timbers, and thick wooden plank floors to slow the spread of fires. When fire broke out, large structural members charred slowly, retaining their structural strength and supporting the building rather than allowing it to collapse inward. Allen formed the Manufacturer's Mutual Fire Insurance Company in 1835 to offer lower rates to industries utilizing his construction methods. Massive brick exteriors, encouraged by the availability of reasonable fire insurance, soon lent themselves to expressive ornament. The inherent decorative capacities of brick combined well with the Italianate and Romanesque Revival styles creating stylized courses that added exuberant decoration to long facades, and rounded arches that dramatized doorways and windows.<sup>42</sup> Virtuoso displays of bricklayers' art reached a zenith shortly before the turn of the twentieth century, and afterward exteriors were generally modified to emphasize a forthright expression of structure.

In Greenville, tobacco industry buildings incorporated Allen's slow-burn construction, and later in the twentieth century, concrete floors and steel truss supports to provide fire protection, while other aspects of their size and design reflected the functional requirements of selling, processing, or storing tobacco. The Gorman and Star Warehouses, like the Pierce and Lee Warehouses in Farmville (NR), had huge floor areas where purchasers could examine tobacco offered for sale, and decorative parapets (the Art Deco style was used at the Star) to enhance entrances to the buildings and better distinguish each business from its competitors. The Export Leaf and E. B. Ficklen Factories (CB#3 and #4) and the Imperial Tobacco Company Factories in Wilson (NR) and Durham (NR) were enormous buildings, divided inside to accommodate the activities of processing factories, and embellished outside

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with decorative brickwork of the Industrial Italianate style. All have rows of segmental-arched windows that create rhythmic arcades on long walls, and are further adorned in whole or in part by pilasters that serve to break massive facades with vertical panels. In contrast to the former two groups, the Prichard-Hughes and Dail-Ficklen Warehouses (CB#1 and #2), like the Brodie Duke Warehouse in Durham (NR) are smaller and simpler structures. These buildings functioned as storage warehouses; they are relatively plain on the outside and have inside dimensions suited to the aging of tobacco in hogsheads.

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### Endnotes for Section 8 :

1 Jenkins, J. S., *Viewing Greenville and Pitt County*, Greenville, 1965, typescript document in collection of Joyner Library, East Carolina University, P. 6.

2 Williams, Thomas A., ed., *A Greenville Album: The Bicentennial Book*, 1974, Greenville, Era Press, p.14.

3 Tilley, Nannie May, *The Bright Tobacco Industry, 1860-1929*, 1948, Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, pp. 143-44.

4 *Reflector*, 1 June 1986, "The Way Greenville Was, Part III: Golden Leaf's Lure."

5 *Reflector*, "Golden Leaf's Lure."

6 The *Greenville Reflector* began publication on a daily basis in 1895, and was thereafter called the *Daily Reflector*. To avoid confusion, citations in this document will use the name *Reflector* alone.

7 Jenkins, p 1.

8 Once purchased by a broker or a manufacturer, leaf tobacco was dried again, sorted by grade, and packed (or prized) into enormous barrels called hogsheads for storage or

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goings of members of the tobacco community. It provides an invaluable record of the development of the tobacco industry in Greenville.

10 *Reflector*, 5 January 1893.

11 *Reflector*, 18 June 1986; Jenkins p.4.

12 Jenkins, pp. 7, 10-11; *Reflector*, 2 December 1895 and 18 June 1986.

13 Jenkins, p. 34.

14 Jenkins, p. 31; *Reflector* 9 August 1897.

15 Jenkins, p. 55 and 59.

16 Cotten, Sallie Southall, *Greenville on the Tar*, 1906, Greenville, End of the Century Club, Collection Joyner Library, East Carolina University, p. 17.

17 Jenkins, p. 68.

18 *Greenville News*, 27 August 1920.

19 Tilley, pp. 220-25.

20 Cotter, Michael, ed., *The Architectural Heritage of Greenville*, 1988, Greenville Area Preservation Association, p. 29.

21 Cotter, p. 30.

22 Cotter, p. 12.

23 Tilley, p.163.

24 Badger, Anthony, Jr., *Prosperity Road: The New Deal, Tobacco and North Carolina*, 1980 Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press. pp. 17-18.

25 Tilley, pp. 281-82.

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26 Badger, pp. 17-20.

27 *Greenville Daily News* 13 August 1918.

28 Tilley, pp. 217-18.

29 Cotter, p. 14; *Reflector*, 16 June 1986.

30 Tilley, 450-55.

31 Badger, p. 21.

32 *Reflector* 16 August 1937.

33 *Reflector* clipping thought to date from 1931.

34 Heimann, Robert Karl, *Tobacco and Americans*, 1960, New York, McGraw Hill, p. 231-32.

35 *Reflector* 16 and 25 August 1937.

36 *Reflector*, 12 August 1938.

37 Sanborn Insurance Maps of Greenville, NC, series for 1929.

38 *Tobacco Directory of the World*, 1938-39, Costa's Directory Company, New York, pp. 70-71.

39 Heimann, p. 242-43.

40 Greenville City Directory, Vol. 7, 1944-45 edition.

41 Cotter, p. 16.

42 Bishir, Catherine, *North Carolina Architecture*, 1990, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill and London, pp. 366-67.

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B43, E42, E46, C44, G16, G18, I53, J35, K37, K42, K43, K50, R34, U10, V14, 129.

### Newspapers:

*Greenville and Daily Reflector*, 5 January 1893, 2 December 1895, 1 June 1986, 16 June 1986, 18 June 1986, 9 August 1897, 5 January 1929, clipping thought to date from 1931, 16 August 1937, 25 August 1937, 12 August 1938.

*Greenville News*, 27 August 1920, 13 August 1918.

### Directories:

Greenville City Directories, Vol. 1, 1916-17, Vol. 2, 1926-27, Vol. 3, 1936-37, Vol. 4, 1938-39, Vol. 5, 1940-41, Vol. 6, 1942-43, Vol. 7, 1944-45, Vol. 8, 1947-48.

*Tobacco Directory of the World*, 1938-39, Costa's Directory Company, New York.

### Maps:

Sanborn Insurance Maps of Greenville, North Carolina, Series for 1896, 1900, 1905, 1911, 1916, 1923, 1929, and 1929 with paste-over updates to 1958.

### Interviews:

Dewey Page, former owner of Dixie Supply Company.

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### Geographical Data:

The Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District is located according to the following UTM reference points:

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A.	18	284620	3942910
B.	18	284880	3942920
C.	18	284700	3942380
D.	18	284520	3942580

### Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries are shown on the enclosed G.I.S. map titled *Tobacco Warehouse Historic District Greenville*. It is drawn at a scale of 1" = 200 feet.

### Boundary Justification:

The boundary is drawn to include the highest concentration of surviving intact tobacco-related buildings within an area in Greenville that retains integrity and is associated with the City's early-twentieth-century tobacco marketing and processing center. The boundary excludes where possible properties that have lost integrity or have no significance.

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Historic District Pitt County, NC

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Photographs: Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District

A. Name of property: Prichard-Hughes Warehouse and Export Leaf Factory, looking north

Location: Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina

Photographer: Betsy Gohdes-Baten

Date: August, 1996

Location of original negative: North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

B. Name of property: Prichard-Hughes Warehouse, south facade looking north

Location: Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina

Photographer: Betsy Gohdes-Baten

Date: August, 1996

Location of original negative: North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

C. Name of property: Dail-Ficklen Warehouse, south facade looking north

Location: Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina

Photographer: Betsy Gohdes-Baten

Date: August, 1996

Location of original negative: North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

D. Name of property: Export Leaf Factory with smokestack, south facade looking north

Location: Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina

Photographer: Betsy Gohdes-Baten

Date: August, 1996

Location of original negative: North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

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E. Name of property: Export Leaf Factory with water tank, south facade looking north

Location: Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina

Photographer: Betsy Gohdes-Baten

Date: August, 1996

Location of original negative: North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

F Name of property: Export Leaf Factory, north facade looking south

Location: Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina

Photographer: Betsy Gohdes-Baten

Date: August, 1996

Location of original negative: North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

G. Name of property: E. B. Ficklen Factory, south facade looking north

Location: Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina

Photographer: Betsy Gohdes-Baten

Date: August, 1996

Location of original negative: North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

H. Name of property: E. B. Ficklen Factory, north facade looking southeast

Location: Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina

Photographer: Betsy Gohdes-Baten

Date: August, 1996

Location of original negative: North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

I. Name of property: Gorman Warehouse, southeast corner looking northwest

Location: Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina

Photographer: Betsy Gohdes-Baten

Date: August, 1996

Location of original negative: North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

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J. Name of property: Star Warehouse, south facade looking northwest

Location: Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina

Photographer: Betsy Gohdes-Baten

Date: August, 1996

Location of original negative: North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

K. Name of property: E. B. Ficklen Factory, southwest facade looking northeast

Location: Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina

Photographer: Betsy Gohdes-Baten

Date: August, 1996

Location of original negative: North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

L. Name of property: System of C. S. X. Railroad Tracks, view looking northwest

Location: Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina

Photographer: Betsy Gohdes-Baten

Date: August, 1996

Location of original negative: North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

M. Name of property: Greenville Produce Co. Warehouse, north facade looking southeast

Location: Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina

Photographer: Betsy Gohdes-Baten

Date: August, 1996

Location of original negative: North Carolina Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
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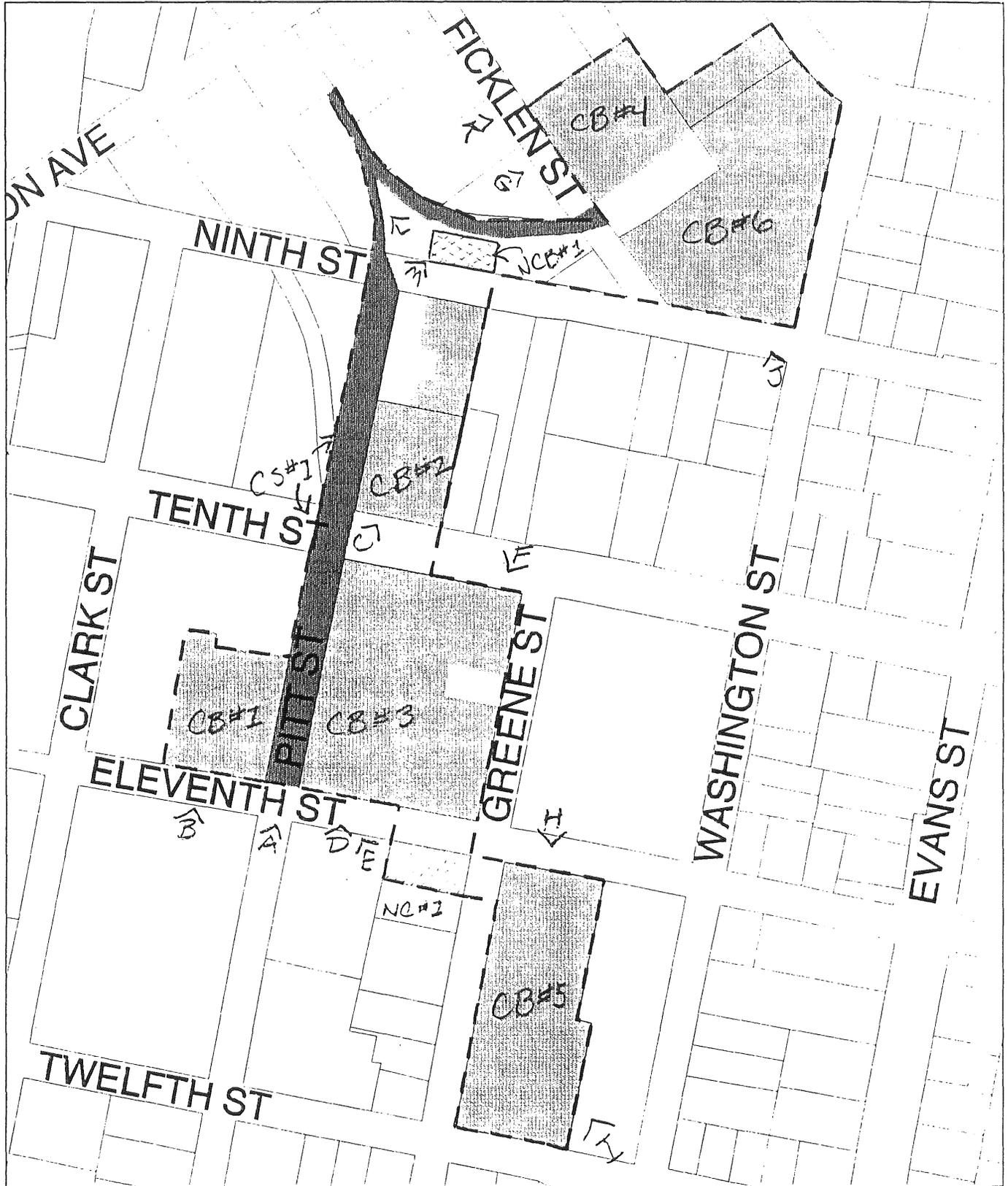
Greenville, NC Tobacco Warehouse Historic District  
Pitt County, NC

### Owners' List

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- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. CB#1. Prichard-Hughes Warehouse             | BISO<br>PO Box 2037<br>Greenville, NC 27835-2037   |
| 2. CB#2. Dail-Ficklen Warehouse                | Michel Real Estate Partnership<br>R. E. Michel Drive<br>Glen Burnie, MD 21061                            |
| 3. CB#3. Export Leaf Factory                   | H. A. Haynie Co.<br>301 West Tenth Street<br>Greenville, NC 27834  |
| 4. CB#4. E. B. Ficklen Factory                 | U. N. X. Chemical<br>PO Box 7206<br>Greenville, NC 27835-7206  |
| 5. CB#5. Gorman Warehouse                      | William and Larry Hudson, etal<br>Hudson's Tobacco Warehouse<br>Route 3, Box 225<br>Greenville, NC 27834 |
| 6. CB#6. Star Warehouse                        | U. N. X. Chemical<br>PO Box 7206<br>Greenville, NC 27835-7206  |
| 7. CS #1. System of CSX Railroad Tracks        | CSX Railroad<br>1 James Center<br>901 East Cary Street<br>Richmond, Virginia 23219                       |
| 8. NCB#1. Greenville Produce Company Warehouse | Issac and Rachel Edwards<br>West Ninth Street<br>Greenville, NC 27834                                    |
| 9. NC Site #1. Vacant Lot                      | H. A. Haynie Co.<br>301 West Tenth Street<br>Greenville, NC 27834  |

# Tobacco Warehouse Historic District GREENVILLE



Prepared By:  
The City of Greenville  
Planning Department  
May 10, 1997

- Contributing Structure
- Non-Contributing Building
- Contributing Building
- Non-Contributing Site

