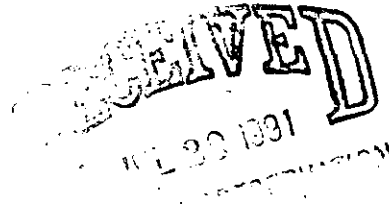


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 18). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Cambria City Historic District
other names/site number n/a

2. Location

street & number Chestnut, Power and Broad Streets n/a not for publication
city, town Johnstown n/a vicinity
state Pennsylvania code PA county Cambria code 021 zip code 15906

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

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

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>197</u>	<u>66</u>	buildings
		sites
<u>1</u>		structures
		objects
<u>198</u>	<u>66</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

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.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.

- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling
 Domestic/multiple dwelling
 Religion/religious structure
 Social/meeting hall
 Industry/manufacturing facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling
 Domestic/multiple dwelling
 Religion/religious structure
 Social/meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Vernacular urban house form

(1,2,3,4 and 5 bays)

Second Empire

Queen Anne

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
 walls Vinyl and aluminum siding
 wood
 roof asphalt
 other brick
 asbestos shingles

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Cambria City Historic District is a neighborhood of modest vernacular working class homes, a small business district and a notable collection of churches and church-related buildings. Other notable historic structures include a former brewery, public school, bottling plant, slaughter house, firehall and steel truss bridge. Cambria City is built on a narrow street grid, three blocks wide and ten blocks long, with intersecting alleys providing access to the rear of properties. A few buildings survived the 1889 flood, but most structures were built between 1890 and 1920. The streetscapes are residential in scale, based on vernacular one to five bay, two-story houses. Larger two to three story apartment buildings, commercial structures and churches are highlighted against this uniform background of small scale, tightly packed housing. Late nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural styles, including Second Empire, Victorian Gothic, Romanesque and Arts and Crafts, are also represented in the neighborhood's more distinguished buildings: churches, large commercial blocks and several residences. Although there has been a widespread loss of cosmetic exterior details, the essential vernacular characteristics of Cambria City's housing and commercial structures are unchanged. Building setbacks, streetscapes massing and fenestration patterns, all essential in defining Cambria City's historic ambiance, have survived intact.

The district, which comprises nearly the entire Cambria City neighborhood, is situated one-half mile northwest of Johnstown's central business district on the south banks of the Conemaugh River. It is bounded on the west by a scrap steel yard. The south boundary is Broad Street, Cambria City's business district. This street feeds both state routes 403 and 56 north, major thoroughfares to Pittsburgh and points north of the city. The Conemaugh River forms the north and east boundaries of the district. North of the district, across the Conemaugh, lies Minersville. To the East is Bethlehem Steel's Lower Cambria Works. Minersville is another neighborhood built for workers employed at the lower Cambria Iron Company. The Lower Cambria Works is a clearly visible landmark from the east end of Cambria City.

Within the district, large brick apartment buildings and the

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Minersville bridge dominate the eastern end of the district. Chestnut Street is the central spine of the district, the major residential street with small closely set homes, running from First to Tenth Avenues. Cambria City's ten churches are evenly distributed, with at least one per block between Third and Tenth Avenues. Three of these are significant church complexes, consisting of a large house of worship, rectory, school and related buildings.

The Cambria City Historic District is composed of 263 buildings and one structure. Of these 66 are noncontributing. The vast majority of buildings were constructed between 1890 and 1920. Nearly 90% of the buildings were built before 1941.

An important characteristic defining Cambria City is its urban settlement pattern, a grid of streets and intersecting alleys with houses packed on small lots. Alleys at the rear of properties provide access for garages and outbuildings. Buildings are also set closely to the street's edge bordering the sidewalk and there is a uniform facade line along the street. Although buildings are closely set, few share common sidewalls. A result of this high density development is a lack of open space and landscaping. Public space for recreation is limited to several small playgrounds and open lots. Demands for more parking space from businesses and churches and flood damage in 1977 has increased the amount of open space significantly in recent years.

The major architectural feature of the district is the working class housing built for employees of the local mines and mills. These vernacular urban type houses are two-story balloon frame structures, rectangular in plan, with side or front gable roof and a rear L wing. Original exterior sheathing is narrow "Dutch lap" clapboard, often replaced with shingles or a synthetic horizontal siding made of aluminum or vinyl. These houses are built as mostly singles and doubles and some multi-unit structures, in one, two, three, four and five-bay varieties or prototypes. By far the most widespread is the two-bay single family house with either front or side gable roof. Closely set rows of these houses dominate Chestnut Street. The next most numerous is the four-bay double house with two separate entrances on the front elevation. The placement of entrance doors has at least three variations: doors placed side by side, flanked by two window bays; doors flanking the two centered window bays; and alternating window and door bays. Either placement preserves the symmetry of the building's front facade. Two other less numerous prototypes are three and five-bay houses, the latter almost always built as a multi-unit building.

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A cross-gable on the front elevation is a popular addition to the five-bay type, and sometimes seen in three and four-bay houses. The one-bay house, sporting a center doorway with single second story window, is the least popular. The most common roof type is the side gable, followed by the front gable, and a very few gambrel roofs. Dormers are also observed in a few side gable houses.

Cambria City's houses were built with few architectural details. Most decorative are the window and door lintels, adorned with applied sawn ornament in floral and geometric designs, corner blocks or brackets and topped by a raised molding. Other characteristic features include a transom window over the entry door and wood stick supported door canopies. These details, in concert with characteristic narrow "Dutch lap" clapboard siding, create a simple, yet dignified, facade composition. Architectural ornament reflecting major architectural styles is rare in the district. One example is the fanciful Queen Anne porch at 817 Chestnut Street, with intricate spoolwork, star cutouts and brackets. Colonial Revival inspired porches with doric columns are also represented in a few buildings.

An example of a two-bay vernacular house is 309 Chestnut Street, with unusually well-preserved details, including door and window lintels and incised moldings. A three-bay type is found at 308 Sixth Avenue, with original clapboard siding, modest window and door trim and a transom window over the front door. The house at 212-212 1/2 Chestnut Street represents the four-bay double prototype. This example has original clapboard siding and molded door and window trim with floral motif corner blocks.

There are only a few residences in the district which were built with any stylistic pretensions. Reflecting the Queen Anne style is the large multi-family dwelling at 301 Chestnut Street, with a hip roof, projecting gables and wrap around porch featuring doric columns and turned balusters. Several smaller Queen Anne inspired houses are located at 517 Power and 318 Broad Street. Both have a projecting two-story canted bay, decorative shingle patterns and applied sawn ornament.

The other primary residential building type is the multi-story apartment building, usually constructed of brick. The Second Empire style Victor and Etella Faith House, at 120-124 Chestnut Street, is one of Cambria City's most striking buildings, with its irregular shape, mansard roof, corbelled chimneys and stone sills. Other apartment blocks include two adjoining structures at 324 and 322-324R Second Avenue. Both feature decorative brickwork and a

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wood cornice with dentils and consoles. Brick row houses are rare in Cambria City. The example at 617-618-619R Chestnut Street has modest, turn of the century trim, including brick corbelling.

Cambria City's business district is concentrated on Broad Street between Second and Eighth Avenues. There is also a scattering of shops and warehouses on the residential streets. The business district is primarily composed of residential scale buildings of the two-story vernacular type and two and three-story commercial structures. Many businesses continue the traditional mixed use pattern of sharing space in vernacular housing units. Examples include a barbershop, bar, craft shop and insurance agency. Typical of this type is Lech's Bar at 416 Broad Street, a two-bay residence with a business on the ground floor. There are also several large mixed use blocks which continue a century old tradition. The Fifth Avenue Hotel, 500 Broad Street, dates from 1889 and houses a restaurant and apartment. The three-story Second Empire structure features a mansard roof with dormers and corbelled chimneys. Two other mixed use blocks built in the same style are located at 200 and 602-604 Broad Street. Both three-story blocks were constructed before the turn of the century and house ground floor businesses with apartments on the upper levels. The S. C. Pollack Building at 314-316 Broad Street, dating from 1905, is a three-story brick commercial building with segmental brick arched windows and a stepped brick cornice. The former Cambria Fire Hose and Ladder Company at 624 Broad Street, built ca. 1890, currently houses a medical clinic. The fire tower and exterior proportions of the building are intact. Recently constructed buildings on Broad Street, including several financial institutions and a funeral home, maintain one-story building dimensions which are compatible with the existing streetscape.

A small number of business concerns are located in residential sections of Cambria City. Several are former hotels occupied by both businesses and housing today. The two-story frame building at 224 Chestnut Street has a canted corner entry door, indicating it was built with a ground floor business. The four-story European Hotel, 315 Third Avenue, was constructed ca. 1923. It continues to serve as a tavern today, with housing units above. Several industrial buildings also survive in Cambria City. The former Germania Brewery, at 201-211 Sixth Avenue, was constructed in 1907. This 50,000 square foot U-shape brick building with center courtyard ranges from two to five stories in elevation. The office section features fleur de lis and pilaster decoration applied to a two-story bay window. The August and Louisa Mayer building at 714 Cambria Place was built as a slaughterhouse in 1908. It is a

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two-story brick structure with arched window and door openings. A date stone set in the cornice identifies the owner, alongside carvings of a butchers knife and meat cleavers. The two adjoining warehouses at 407-411 Third Avenue were part of the former Goenner Brewery and later home of the Tulip Bottling Company. Built between 1913 and 1949, the structures are faced with brick and feature stepped and corbelled brickwork.

A notable engineering landmark is the Minersville Bridge, built by the Cambria Iron Works in 1914. It occupies the traditional location of a bridge linking Cambria City with Minersville and Cambria Iron's Lower Works. This truss bridge, constructed of steel with a span of 270 feet, is one of many city bridges built by the Cambria Iron Company.

Ten churches, representing the district's diverse ethnic heritage, are dispersed throughout the neighborhood. Fully half are large architect-designed structures, with Gothic Revival, Romanesque Revival, Second Renaissance Revival and Byzantine Revival styles represented. With few exceptions, each of the ten churches retains its own unique interior features including statuary, stained glass windows, murals and other items reflecting the congregation's ethnic heritage and the history of the parish.

The oldest of the five major churches in Cambria City is St. Casimir's Polish Church, 501 Power Street, constructed in 1907. The Romanesque Revival design is characterized by a rough rock-faced stone exterior and round arched openings. The cruciform plan has twin entry towers and an octagonal cupola at the crossing of the nave and transepts. Other elements include peaked corner buttresses, arcaded brickwork and a statue of St. Casimir over the entry portal.

Immaculate Conception, 308 Broad Street, is the district's only Victorian Gothic Revival church. Built in 1908, it is a side-steeple church with belfry and spire. The polychromatic exterior combines yellow brick walls and brownstone trim carved into weatherings, lintels and finials with crochets. A tripartite entry portal fashioned in stone includes grouped pilasters, steeply pitched lintels and gargoyles. There are also leaded stained glass windows with Gothic tracery.

The largest congregation in Cambria City is St. Stephens Slovak Church located at 414 Fourth Avenue. It was completed in 1911. The Second Renaissance Revival design structure is bold in execution, with a variety of oversized architectural ornament.

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Details include rusticated stone walls, heavily molded arches and belt courses, statuary in facade niches and balustrades around the towers. Twin copper topped, two-stage towers flank the central nave. Stained glass windows, including clerestory windows, light the interior of this basilica plan church.

St. Columba is located at 916 Broad Street. Constructed in 1914, this Romanesque Revival style church features a basilica plan incorporating a 75 foot side tower. The exterior's delicately applied surface treatments include red brick walls highlighted by brickwork panels and inset tiles in bands and geometric motifs. In keeping with the style, there is a pantile roof and a heavily molded rose window centered over the entry portal. The entry is flanked by decorative Corinthian pilasters supporting a masonry canopy with statuary.

St. Mary's Greek Catholic Church, 411 Power Street, is set apart from all the other churches with its Byzantine Revival design. The 1922 cruciform plan structure is distinguished by twin domed towers flanking the entrance and a larger central dome, each topped with a lantern. The exotic exterior finish includes tile roofing, intricately patterned brickwork, inset tiles, porthole openings in the towers and low relief floral ornamentation on capitals and arches flanking the entry. The interior has large vaulted ceilings, windows encircling the base of the dome and a delicately fashioned baldachino over the altar.

The remaining five churches within the Cambria City Historic District are small, vernacular brick church forms. St. Emerich's Catholic Church, 412 Sixth Avenue, is the largest of this group. Built in 1913, it has a twin tower design, yellow brick exterior, and round arched stained glass windows. The other four churches are all center steeple designs. St. Rochus Croatian Catholic Church, at 314 Eighth Avenue, dates from 1901. It has brick buttresses and a rounded apse at the rear end of the church. Holy Cross Lutheran Church, the only non-Catholic church in Cambria City, is located at 711 Chestnut Street. Constructed in 1914, it is a brick structure with a stone faced facade. St. George Serbian Orthodox Church, 307 Chestnut Street, has pointed arched openings and corbelled brickwork and dates from 1911. The Hungarian Reformed Church, built at 824 Chestnut Street in 1902, features round arched openings and a circular window over the entry portal.

Fraternal halls and clubs were formed by ethnic groups to provide social activities and to offer insurance to its members. Immaculate Conception Church Hall was originally the Mannechor

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Singing Society Hall. Located at 208-210 Chestnut Street, and built between 1895 and 1911, the vernacular brick and frame building was built in three sections. The Dom Polski Building, 306 Power Street, is the most famous of the group. The Saint Casimir's Society #531 of the Polish Roman Catholic Union was founded in 1892. Prominent local architect Walter Myton designed this stylish structure in 1915. Craftsman and classical revival details include stucco and half timbering and a center entryway framed by pilasters and sidelights. Croatian Hall, "Hrvatska Dvorana," is located at 612 Broad Street. It is home to the St. Rochus Catholic Church Lodge #5 of the Croatian Fraternal Union of America, founded in 1894. The rectangular, red brick building was constructed in 1920. The First Catholic Slovak Band Hall at 716 Chestnut Street was built between 1913 and 1949. It is a utilitarian masonry building with brick outer walls, a gable roof, and metal frame windows. The last of this group is the Catholic War Veterans Building, Post 954. Built ca. 1950, the building at 705 Chestnut Street is a one-story cinder block structure with brick facing.

Thirty-four of Cambria City's noncontributing buildings were built after the district's period of significance. The other half of the noncontributing buildings are historic but have lost integrity as a result of excessive alterations. A succession of serious floods, in 1889, 1936 and 1977 resulted in the rebuilding and redesigning of many buildings. Although most buildings survived the two more recent floods, ground floor damage resulted in repairs which were not always compatible with original building materials and design. Replacement of old windows and doors was widespread. Asbestos and asphalt shingles, and later aluminum and vinyl siding, replaced original narrow "Dutch lap" siding. Architectural details and porches were removed from many buildings. The first story of many commercial buildings was altered with modern replacement windows, metal or brick storefront sheathing and modern signs.

Replacement of siding, windows, doors or signs with modern equivalents is not sufficient to classify a building as noncontributing. Cosmetic alterations alone, in this neighborhood of largely vernacular buildings built with limited architectural detail, does not seriously threaten the architectural significance of Cambria City's building stock. Houses at 309 and 609-611 Chestnut Street have had new exterior sheathing applied and new additions to the rear of the buildings, but still contribute to the ambiance of the entire neighborhood. The brick block housing Our Sons Family Restaurant, at 800 Broad Street, has a modern metal sign and aluminum facing typical of many businesses on Broad

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Street. Many of the storefront alterations on Broad Street diminish the quality of the buildings, but they are often reversible.

A noncontributing building is defined as one which has undergone alterations which seriously alter the scale, massing and fenestration pattern of the building in addition to cosmetic exterior changes. The house at 715 Chestnut Street has been radically altered in appearance, with smaller modern windows, synthetic siding and an enclosed porch. However, the density of the Cambria City's streetscapes considerably lessens the visual impact of the individual noncontributing structure. The group of noncontributing buildings classified for their post-1941 construction date are for the most part built in scale with the district. One of the largest new structures, Ozog's Funeral Home at 710 Broad Street, is two stories in height and built with the proper setback. Several bank offices constructed in recent years on Broad Street, although modern, are compatible in scale. However, one of these, Cambria City Bank and Trust at 510-516 Broad, and the Sheetz Convenience Store at 400 Broad Street are set back much too far from the street, breaking the continuity of the streetscape. In general, noncontributing buildings in the Cambria City Historic District are diluted in their impact by the density of the district, the compatible scale of most buildings and a generally high level of building maintenance which improves the general appearance of the neighborhood.

In summation, the Cambria City Historic District is a clearly defined neighborhood, set apart from its surroundings by well delineated boundaries including natural and man-made barriers. The buildings within the district reflect a cohesiveness of period design in scale, massing and building profile. Furthermore, the tight knit network of streets and alleys, deep narrow building lots and densely packed buildings survive to reflect its original layout.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage/European
Architecture
Industry

Period of Significance

1854-1941

Significant Dates

1889

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

Various

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Cambria City is historically significant in the areas of cultural/ethnic history, architecture and industry for the period from 1854 to 1941. When the Cambria Iron Company (today Bethlehem Steel Corp.) was established in 1852, Cambria City was one of the major neighborhoods laid out to house immigrant laborers who worked the mills and mines. Cambria City became home to successive waves of immigrants who developed a variety of distinctive ethnic institutions including churches, schools and associations. Today's institutions represent for the most part the last wave of immigrants who arrived from south and east central Europe in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The district's architecture is significant as a collection of vernacular working class housing and as an intact urban settlement pattern. A counterpoint to the mass of vernacular housing is a distinctive collection of ten ethnic churches, half architect-designed, representing a cross section of period styles.

Cambria City was built on a broad, flat flood plain in a narrow valley on the south banks of the Conemaugh River. It was here in 1853, across the Conemaugh River from the fledgling Cambria Iron Works, that David and James P. McConaughy purchased a large tract for the development of worker housing. In the same year they laid out town lots and began selling them to Cambria employees. By 1861, Cambria (known as Cambria City from an early date) was recognized as an independent borough, one of several suburbs which were built up to supply labor to the iron mills and mines.

Cambria City grew on the heels of the Cambria Iron Company, which by 1856 years employed 1,500 workers and by the late 1800s had a workforce of 7,000. The company owned iron mills, coal and coke mines, a railroad, and controlled vast amounts of real estate. Johnstown was a one-company town, with two thirds of the workforce employed in the mills and mines. The vast majority of Cambria City residents held jobs in the Lower Cambria Works accessed by two bridges across the Conemaugh River.

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The Cambria Iron Company actively supported the development of Cambria City as a neighborhood for company employees. Management directed new workers into neighborhoods nearest the mills, including Cambria City, Millville, and Prospect. The Company assisted pastors with parish construction campaigns in exchange for recruitment of new workers. There is speculation that company housing was built in Cambria City, but there is no record of the number of buildings constructed, in contrast to neighboring Minersville, where a number of company-built houses survive today.

Before 1880, the majority of Cambria City residents were immigrant laborers from northern European countries including Germany, Ireland, Wales and Sweden. Three ethnic churches were constructed and Germans formed the Cambria City Mannechor or men's choir, as well as spearheading the formation of a Cambria City fire company. Commercial and retail businesses were built along with residences, including hotels and boarding houses, a brick and cement works and a number of stores. The Pennsylvania Railroad mainline was built along the west boundary of Cambria City paralleling Broad Street, the principal commercial thoroughfare.

In the late 19th century, Cambria Iron adopted more advanced steel making techniques resulting in greater mechanization and a need for unskilled workers. The flow of cheap labor from south and east central Europe increased dramatically after 1880, and new immigrant groups inherited ethnic strongholds including Cambria City. By 1880, Cambria City had among the highest percentage of immigrant families at 85%, while citywide the figure was only 40%.

The 1889 Johnstown Flood changed the face of Johnstown and its suburbs, including Cambria City. Cambria City lost two-thirds of its housing and 360 residents in the flood. The neighborhood was rebuilt on the same street and alley grid system McConaughy had laid out in 1854. By 1895, when rebuilding was almost complete, notable changes had occurred. These include the beginnings of a retail district zone along Broad Street and major new commercial enterprises including three breweries, several slaughter houses and a lumber yard and increased residential accommodations with nine hotels. Housing stock was more congested than before the flood, built in compact singles, doubles and triples set close together with narrow common walkways between them.

Cambria City's ethnic composition was fundamentally altered following the flood. German and Irish residents were increasingly replaced by south and east central European groups including Slovaks, Magyars, Poles, Croatians, Serbians, Slovenes, Rusyns,

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Ukrainians, Italians, Greeks and Palestinians. Like immigrant populations before them, the various groups organized associations and built their own churches, parish rectories, convents and schools. Cambria City's ten churches, nine of which are Catholic, were erected during a building spree between 1901 and 1922. Five of these are large architecturally significant church buildings. They include St. Casimir's (1907, Walter Myton, Johnstown); Immaculate Conception (1908, William P. Ginther, Akron, Ohio); St. Stephen (1911, Joseph Molitor, Chicago, Illinois); St. Columba's (1914, John T. Comes, Pittsburgh); and St. Mary's Greek Catholic (1922, John T. Comes). Walter Myton was a prolific turn of the century Johnstown architect who provided fashionable designs for prosperous clients, including homeowners in middle and upper class neighborhoods and commercial and ecclesiastical clients in working class Cambria City. Dom Polski (1915), a club building for members of St. Casimir's, is an Arts and Crafts inspired masonry building designed by Myton. His influence was also evident in at least one commercial building, Hornick's Sporting Goods Store (1905) on Broad Street.

There are a number of significant residential and commercial buildings associated with the history of Cambria City's development as an ethnic enclave and neighborhood housing an industrial workforce. The Second Empire style Victor and E. Faith house (ca. 1895), located at 120-124 Chestnut Street, is currently an apartment house. It served as a steamship agency for local residents and a mail center to communicate with relatives abroad. The Fifth Avenue Hotel (ca. 1889), a residential hotel and bar today, is representative of scores of such enterprises which have served Cambria City over the years. The Minersville Bridge (1914) is one of the area's oldest intact vehicular truss bridges, located at the historic crossing connecting Cambria City with neighboring Minersville and the Lower Cambria Works.

In addition to being populated by workers employed in mill and mining industries, Cambria City was the location of a number of significant industries of its own. A partial list of manufacturers includes a brickworks, slaughter house, bottling company, lumber works and three of Johnstown's six breweries at the turn of the century. The former Germania Brewery, built in 1907, is Johnstown's only surviving brewery complex. It is currently occupied by the Miller Paper Company and, at one time, housed a lumber mill. The former Tulip Bottling Company buildings surviving at 407-411 Third Avenue were constructed ca. 1940. At one time they served as a part of the Goenner Brewery. The August and Louisa Mayer building, dating from 1908, was built to supply two

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meat markets in Cambria City. The owners are remembered in a date stone set in the cornice which also features carvings of butcher's utensils. Several large wholesale warehouses of recent vintage continue a century old Cambria City tradition of operating industrial concerns in the midst of the residential neighborhood.

By the beginning of the 20th century, more prosperous second and third generation ethnic families moved out of Cambria City to secondary ethnic neighborhoods, including Moxham and Morrelville, where lots were larger and homes more spacious. Many homeowners who stayed built rental units on the alleys, traditionally a location for storage buildings, outdoor ovens and privies. Building density declined somewhat following the 1936 and 1977 floods. Floods have been disastrous for surviving buildings as well, resulting in widespread refurbishing of buildings with synthetic siding, new doors and windows and the loss of original architectural details. During the 1960s, the city's redevelopment authority demolished all of Cambria City west of Broad Street, with the exception of the former Germania Brewery building. The neighborhood was replaced by several large public and commercial enterprises.

Cambria City compares favorable with several other neighborhoods developed as a result of the Cambria Iron Company's need for employee housing. Minersville, located east of Cambria City across the Minersville Bridge, dates from the late nineteenth century. It is almost entirely residential and its building stock has suffered major changes over the years. Like Cambria City, four-bay double houses are popular, with two-bay singles present in very small numbers. Cambria Iron built a number of one and one-half story frame houses here for its employees after 1889. Unlike Cambria City, porches and raised basements are common. Minersville lacks the variety of religious, cultural and commercial institutions which developed in Cambria City. Secondly, its building stock does not possess the same degree of historic integrity. A third neighborhood developed in the late nineteenth century because of its close proximity to the Lower Cambria Works is Prospect. Located one-half mile southeast of Cambria City, Prospect contains a few mixed use commercial and residential structures, but is primarily residential. Building types include four-bay double and two-bay single building types, also numerous in Cambria City. However, the addition of building wings, enclosing of porches and replacement of original exterior finishes has diminished the architectural integrity of the district. Cambria City's cohesive residential and commercial building fabric create an ambiance unmatched by neighborhoods with a similar

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development history.

Despite facade alterations and the clearing of scattered sites, Cambria City today is the neighborhood with the best preserved collection of vernacular working class homes, associated ethnic/religious institutions and commercial structures in the Johnstown area. Cambria City is also one of the principal neighborhoods associated with the growth of the Cambria Iron Company, the city's largest employer and historically one of America's largest steel producers. Other neighborhoods in Johnstown share some of the same characteristics to some degree, but none can replicate the unique concentration of industrial, ethnic/cultural and architectural resources present in Cambria City.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

See continuation sheet

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 # The Character of a Steel Mill City:
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Four Historic
Record # Neighborhoods of Johnstown, PA (1989)

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acres of property 39

UTM References

A 17 675570 4467700
 Zone Easting Northing

C 17 676200 4467100
 Zone Easting Northing

B 17 676170 4467370
 Zone Easting Northing

D 17 679440 4467630
 Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The Cambria City Historic District boundary is shown on the accompanying map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jonathan E. Daily, Historic Preservation Manager
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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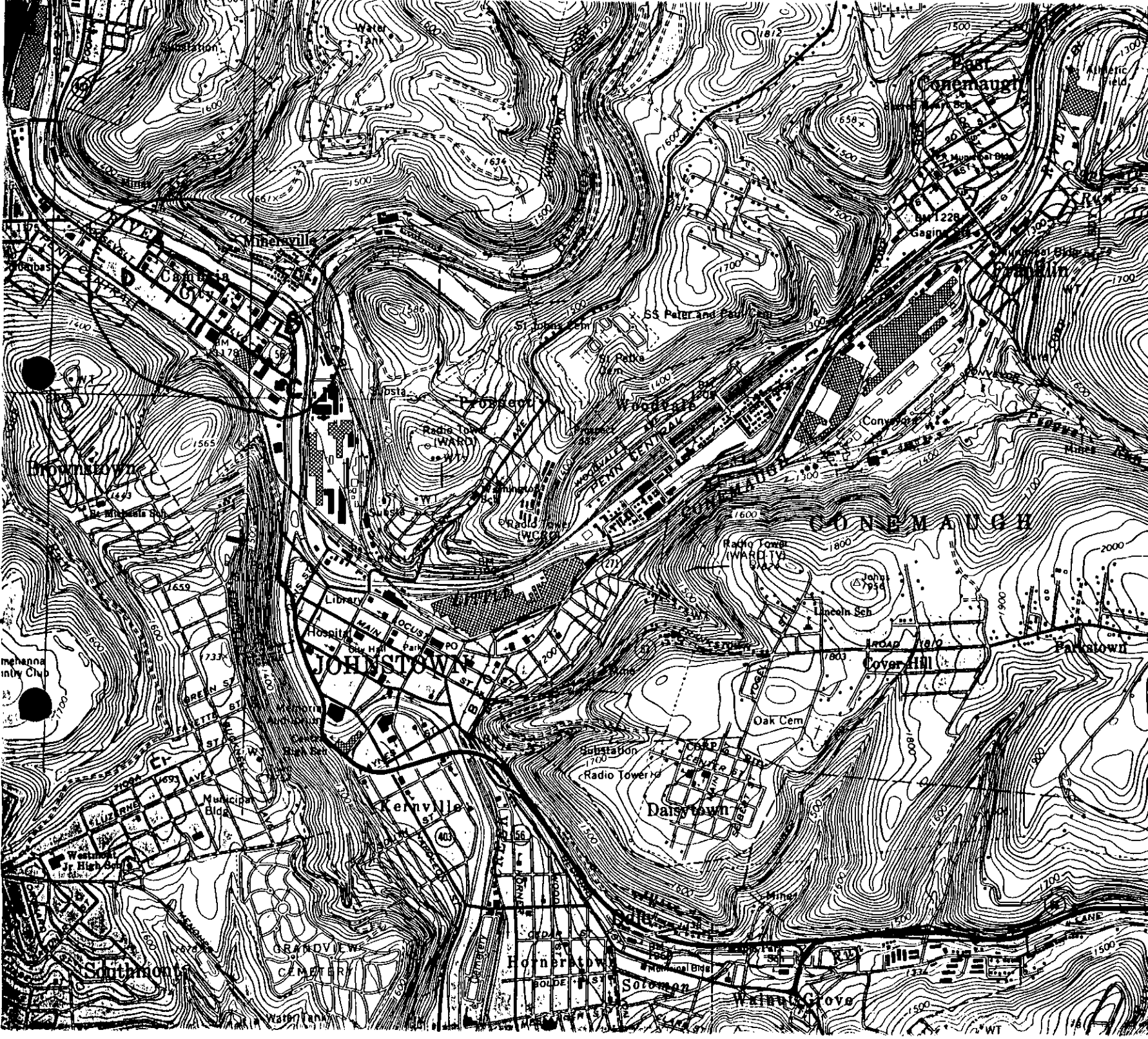
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Boundary Justification

The Cambria City Historic District includes the entire historic Cambria City neighborhood which has survived up to the present day. The district is clearly set off from its surroundings by natural and man made boundaries. To the east and north, the Conemaugh River marks the traditional limits of Cambria City. To the west, Tenth Avenue is the historic barrier beyond which the neighborhood did not grow. The south boundary, Broad Street, although not the original limit of the neighborhood, separates the old and new in Cambria City today. In the 1960s, urban renewal destroyed all the homes and businesses south of Broad Street, which were replaced with modern public and private commercial buildings. The single exception south of the Broad Street boundary is the old Germania Brewery, now the Miller Paper Company building. The otherwise straight south boundary along Broad Street deviates in order that this significant property is included within the Cambria City Historic District. There are five buildings in Cambria City west of Broad Street which are outside the boundaries of the historic district. They are all noncontributing buildings built after the period of significance. They include:

1. A gas station at 104 Broad Street
2. A city maintenance building at 600 Cambria Place
3. A house at 916 Chestnut Street
4. A concrete block commercial structure at 918-924 Chestnut Street
5. A dance studio at 300 Power Street



469
 468
 370 000
 FEET
 467
 20'
 SOUTH FORK 7 MI.
 CRESSON 23 MI.
 (5)
 (GEISTOWN) SCAUP LEVEL 6 MI.
 5264 IV SE, WINDBER 8 MI.
 Cambria City Historic District
 Cambria Codenby - Zone 17 - Johnstown Quad
 A E675570 N4967700 C/E676200 N4967100
 B E676170 N4967370 D/E675490 N4967030
 466