

## PROPERTY REPORT

Property ID: **1170015032**

**Property Name:** Washington Piece Dyeing & Finishing Company (Ashley-Bailey Silk Co.) **Ownership:** Private  
**Address:** 48-56 Putnam ST **Apartment #:** **ZIP:** 07524  
**Nearest cross street:** River **Second cross street:** Warren  
**Distance to property:** 0 ft **Compass Direction:** 270 degrees

### PROPERTY LOCATION(S):

County:	Municipality:	Local Place Name:	USGS Quad:	Block:	Lot:
PASSAIC	Paterson		Paterson	2901	1, 2, 13

### Property Photo:



**Old HSI Number:** **NRIS Number:** **HABS/HAER Number:**

### Description:

The Washington Piece Dyeing company complex was begun in 1880 as the Ashley-Bailey Silk Company, which expanded the complex to its current footprint by approximately 1910. The company went out of business by 1915 and the plant, which consisted as a series of interconnected 2 to 3 story brick textile mills and additions was broken up into a series of tenant mills, the most prominent of which was Washington Piece Dyeing at the western end of the block. The complex presents itself as a series of closely interconnected buildings (aka workspaces) with mid-20th-century infill. The only accessible elevations are those facing Warren Street on the south and Putnam Street on the north.

### Setting:

The industrial complex is located on the western half of the block bounded by Warren Street on the north, the Erie Railroad corridor's elevated tracks on the west, and Warren Street on the south. Historically, the setting developed as a mixed-use neighborhood of mills and workers' housing with the mills generally set within a block or two of the Erie Railroad corridor. Immediately south of the Washington Piece Dyeing Company is the Sipp Machine Company complex.

**Survey Name:** Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills

**Property ID:**

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**Principal Investigator:** Patrick Harshbarger

☐ (Primary Contact)

**1170015032**

**Organization:** Hunter Research, Inc.

Registration  
and Status  
Dates:

National Historic Landmark?: ☐

National Register:

New Jersey Register:

Determination of Eligibility:

Certification of Eligibility:

SHPO Opinion:

Local Designation:

Other Designation:

Other Designation Date:

☒ Eligibility Worksheet included in present survey?

☐ Is this Property an identifiable farm or former farm?

Location Map:

Site Map:



#### BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Author:	Title:	Year:	HPO Accession #: (if applicable)
(None Listed)	"Fire Destroys Silk Mill." New York Times, Jan. 31	1904	
(None Listed)	Ashley & Bailey Silk Mill, West York, Pa. National Register Nomination.	2010	
Nelson, William	History of Bergen and Passaic Counties, New Jersey.	1882	
Heusser, Albert H.	A History of the Silk Dyeing Industry in the United States	1927	
Scranton, Philip	Silk City	1987	
Hyde, E. B.	Atlas of Passaic County, New Jersey	1877	
Robinson, E.	Atlas of the City of Paterson, New Jersey	1884	
Robinson, E.	Atlas of the City of Paterson and Haledon, New Jersey	1899	
Mueller, A. H.	Atlas of the City of Paterson, New Jersey	1915	
Sanborn Map Company	Insurance Maps of Paterson, New Jersey	1887	
Sanborn Map Company	Insurance Maps of Paterson, New Jersey	1899	
Sanborn Map Company	Insurance Maps of Paterson, New Jersey	1915	
Sanborn Map Company	Insurance Maps of Paterson, New Jersey	1931	

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**Additional Information:**

**More Research Needed?** ☒ (checked=Yes)

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**INTENSIVE-LEVEL USE ONLY:**

**Attachments Included:**

0	Building	0	Bridge
0	Structure	0	Landscape
0	Object	1	Industry

**Historic District ?** ☐

**District Name:** not applicable

**Status:**

**Associated Archeological Site/Deposits?** ☒

(known or potential sites. If Yes, please describe briefly)

Potential industrial archaeology (interior and mill yard)

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**Conversion Problem?** ☐ **ConversionNote:** 27

*Date form completed:* 9/7/2012

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☐ (Primary Contact)

## INDUSTRIAL BUILDING ATTACHMENT

**Common Name:** Washington Silk Dyeing and Finishing (Warren and Putnam Streets)

**Historic Name:** Ashley & Bailey Silk Company

**Present Use:** Industrial, light industrial

**Historic Industry:** Textiles

**Construction Date:** 1880 **Source:** Maps

**Construction Start Date:** 1880 **Construction End Date:** 1910

Building ID:

**Style:** ☐ Vernacular?

**Exterior Finish Materials:** Brick, Common Bond

**Physical Condition:** Fair

**Foundation Materials:**

**Remaining Historic Fabric:** Medium

**Roof Finish Materials:**

**Length:** 400 **Stories:** 3

**Structural System:**

**Width:** 220 **Bays:** 45

**Roof System:**

**Equipment/Machinery:**

**Transportation Links:** ☐ airstrip ☐ loading dock ☐ slip  
(checked if applicable) ☐ dock ☐ rail siding ☐ other

### Exterior Description:

This interconnected industrial complex, originally a silk mill and silk dye works, developed within its current footprint between 1880 and 1900 as a series of attached buildings and workspaces. Today, the principal visible facades are on the north side of Warren Street and the south side of Putnam Street, with the interior spaces and the east and west elevations inaccessible due to adjacent development and infill. This form describes the two facades, working west to east along Warren and Putnam Streets. A chronology of development is based on atlas maps dating from the late 1870s to early 1930s.

At the west end of the Warren Street façade is a 1-story, 13-bay, monitor-roofed brick building that was built between 1900 and 1914 as a dye house. Most windows on this and all subsequently described elevations have segmentally arched lintels and stone sills. Window openings have been uniformly infilled with stucco with loss of original frames and sashes. There are also numerous modern rolling metal loading bay doors added at ground level.

Abutting the east end of the previously mentioned dye house is a 3-story, 5-bay brick mill that represents the earliest section of the complex, built in 1880 as a silk mill. It has segmentally arched windows with stone sills with the center bay occupied by mill doors and a hoist. The next section to the east is a 3-story, 9-bay, side-gabled brick mill that was built between 1889 and 1899 for weaving and winding of silk. It has a corbelled cornice and segmentally arched windows. Preceding eastward, the next 3-story, 4-bay, front gabled mill was built between 1889 and 1899 for weaving of silk. Finally, at the eastern end of the façade is a 3-story, 13-bay, brick mill with an ell-shaped plan forming a courtyard off of Warren Street. Within the courtyard is a loading dock with canopy. This mill was built between 1889 and 1899 for weaving and "card cutting," probably referring to the design and punching of jacquard loom cards.

Moving to the west end of the Putnam Street façade at the corner of Putnam and River Streets is a 2-story, 4-bay, side-gabled building that was the office, which included housed vaults for storing the of silk. Moving eastward from the office is a 3-story, 4-bay, front-gabled mill with overhanging eave that is the north end of the original 1880 Ashley and Bailey silk mill. Continuing eastward is a 2-story, 6-bay, side-gabled building that was built between 1889 and 1899 for finishing and folding. Next to the east is a 1-story, 3-bay brick building with stepped parapet, built between 1900 and 1915 as a machine shop. At the east end of the façade is a 3-story, 3-bay, front-gabled building that is the north end of the a silk mill built between 1889 and 1899 for weaving.

Not itemized in the above are several interior buildings that were not accessible to surveyors but that are visible in aerial photos and

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shown on historic maps. These include a boiler house and a series of a monitor-roofed buildings facing on the Erie Railroad corridor. These buildings were built between 1915 and 1931, as well as an inner courtyard that was infilled after 1931.

**Interior Description:**

The interior was not available for inspection.

**Alteration Dates:**

Alteration(s):	Circa Date:	Date Range:	Source:
Physical alteration		1950 to 2000	Infill of mill yard and window modifications

**Architect/Designer:**

*Date form completed:* 10/1/2012

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## ELIGIBILITY WORKSHEET - Properties

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### History:

The complex, now commonly known as the Washington Piece Dye Works, was historically the Ashley & Bailey Silk Mill, established in 1880 and closed about 1915 before being taken over by the Washington Piece Dye Works and a number of other smaller tenants. Peter Bailey, a native of Macclesfield, England, became involved in the silk industry as a boy and when he immigrated to Paterson, working for John Ryle, a man commonly known as the father of Paterson's silk industry. Bailey partnered with Dwight Ashley in 1873, with each man working a loom from a small room on Straight Street. As they increased their business, the partners relocated within Paterson several times before settling on a site on Warren Street near the River Street crossing of the Erie Railroad. There in 1880, they constructed a mill powered from an engine disconnected from the building, but still within the mill property. Shortly after Ashley & Bailey occupied their new mill, a tornado unroofed the building and caused significant damage to the walls. Undeterred, however, Ashley & Bailey quickly repaired the damaged and began adding to the mill complex. The Ashley & Bailey mill was constructed purely for the weaving of goods, with other silk manufacturing processes, i.e. the throwing of silk, carried out at their Fort Plain, N.Y. mill. By 1881 200 employees operated over 30 looms and saw to other tasks about the mill. They also built a silk mill in Marietta, Pa. in 1897, and in West York, Pa. in 1899, and had opened a mill in North Carolina by 1904. The mill at Warren and Putnam Street in Paterson caught fire in 1904 and was nearly destroyed with the exception of the ribbon-weaving department. The extent of the damage is not known, but it appears from historic maps that the footprints of the older mills were retained, suggesting that at a minimum the masonry shells were reused.

Silk weavers struck the Ashley & Bailey mill in 1913, ranking among their grievances the outsourcing work to cheaper labor markets in Pennsylvania and North Carolina. Following the strike, Ashley & Bailey appears to have determined to close its Paterson mill. In 1915, the mill was listed as closed and partially disassembled with a number of the buildings labeled as "machine storage." This suggests that Ashley & Bailey was planning to remove looms and dyeing equipment, probably from Paterson to another mill. By 1915, the two easternmost buildings in the complex had already been leased out or sold to the Argola Silk Company.

About 1918, the Washington Piece Dyeing & Finishing Company occupied the western part of the former Ashley & Bailey plant. Washington was chiefly owned by Herman Geller, a German immigrant, who carried out a general trade in silk dyeing and finishing. There were some improvements made to the works, chiefly in the construction of the monitor-roofed dye houses at the western end of the works. In the 1920s, Geller also opened another plant at the intersection of 1st and Madison Avenues. Washington continued in operation at least until the early 1930s.

### Statement of Significance:

The mill complex, which operated as the Ashley & Bailey silk mills from 1880 to circa 1915 and as the Washington Piece Dyeing & Finishing Company from circa 1918 to at least 1931, is a significant example of mill architecture. It illustrates how silk mills rapidly expanded in the 1880s to 1900s through repetition of the basic textile mill form in order to meet increased market demand. It is also historically associated with one of Paterson's important silk weaving firms that led in the outsourcing of weaving to Pennsylvania and southern mills in the late 1890s, setting up conditions for labor unrest that culminated in the strike of 1913. After the strike, Ashley & Bailey closed the mill, illustrating the response of the larger silk companies to labor conditions in Paterson. The mill was subsequently associated with the Washington Piece Dyeing & Finishing Company, which illustrates the persistence and even growth of this sector of the silk industry in Paterson after the strike.

Eligibility for New Jersey and National Registers: ☒ Yes ☐ No

National Register Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Level of Significance: ☒ Local ☐ State ☐ National

### Justification of Eligibility/Ineligibility:

The Washington Piece Dyeing & Finishing Company (Ashley & Bailey Silk Mill) is recommended eligible under Criterion C as an intact and significant example of a ca. 1880-1900 silk weaving mill built and operated by the Ashley-Bailey Silk Company. The mill is also eligible under Criterion A for its association with the patterns of development of Paterson's silk industry and the break-up of integrated mills into tenant mills carrying out discrete operations like weaving and dyeing. It is also associated with the strike of 1913 and the outsourcing of work to Pennsylvania and the South, one of the grievances of the labor movement.

Total Number of Attachments: 1

List of Element Names:

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**Narrative Boundary Description:**

The property is block 2901, lots 1-2, 13, as shown on the 2006 Paterson tax map accompanying this form.

*Date Form Completed:* 10/1/2012

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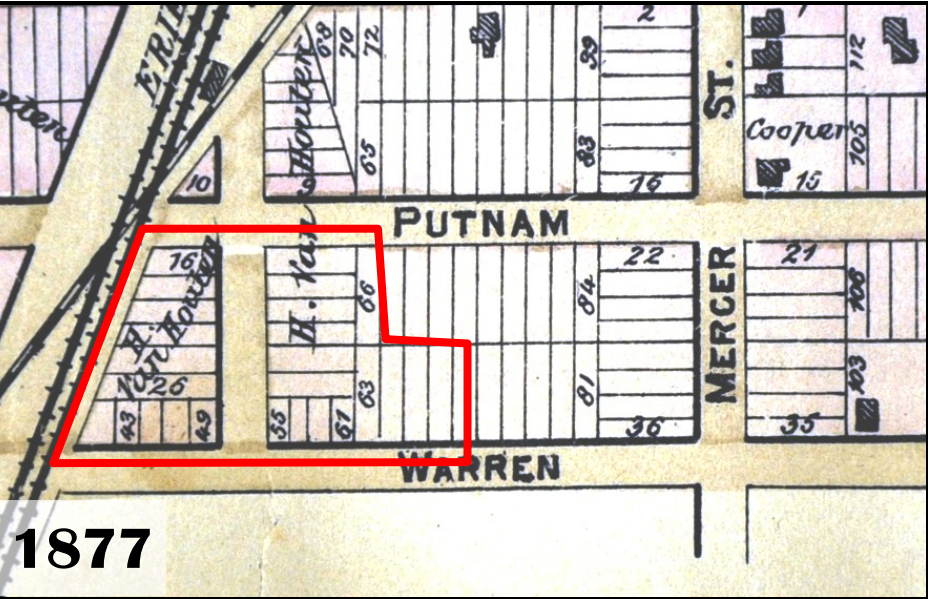
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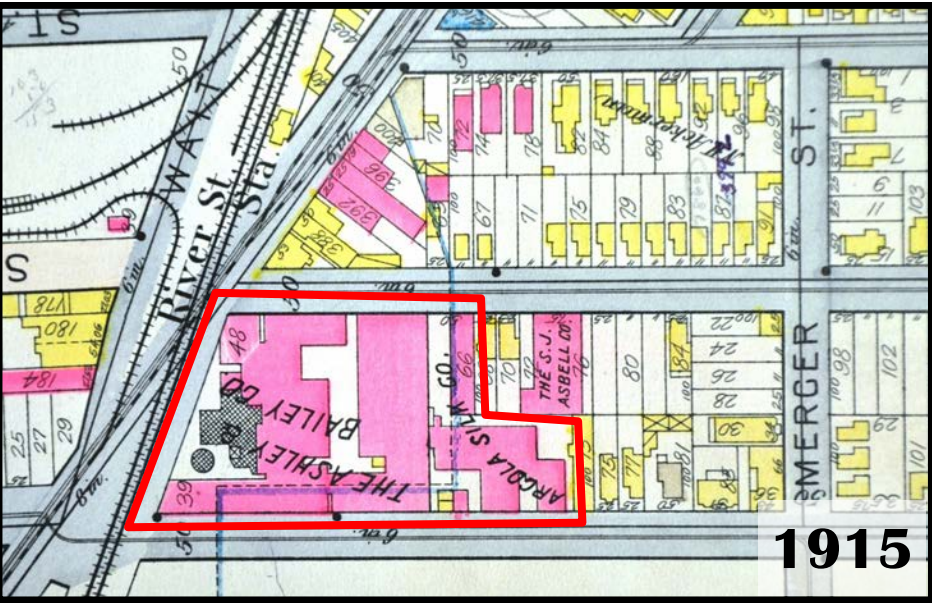
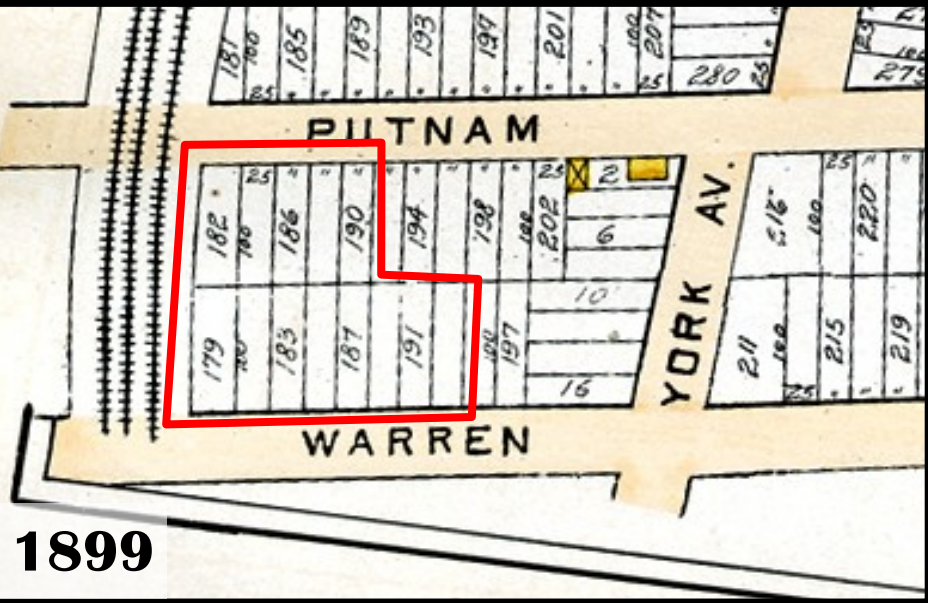
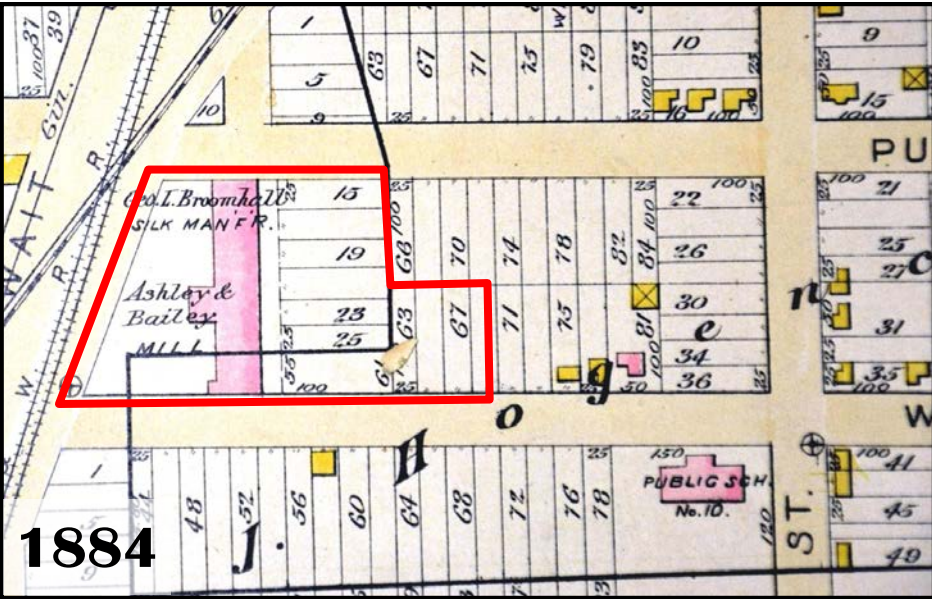
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ASHLEY & BAILEY SILK COMPANY  
(WASHINGTON SILK DYEING & FINISHING)

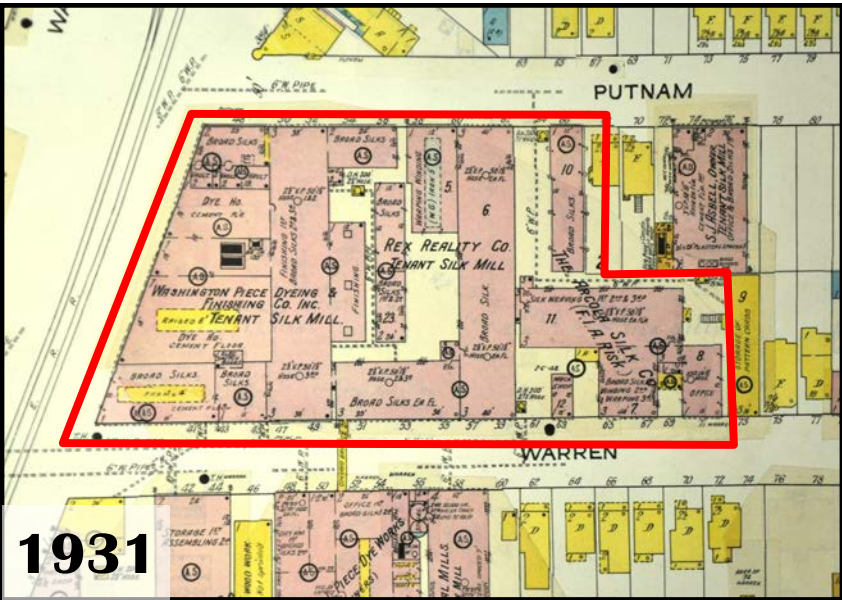


Various addresses, Warren St & Putnam St, Paterson, NJ  
B 2901 L 01, 02, 13  
Site Development Maps 1877, 1884, 1899, 1915

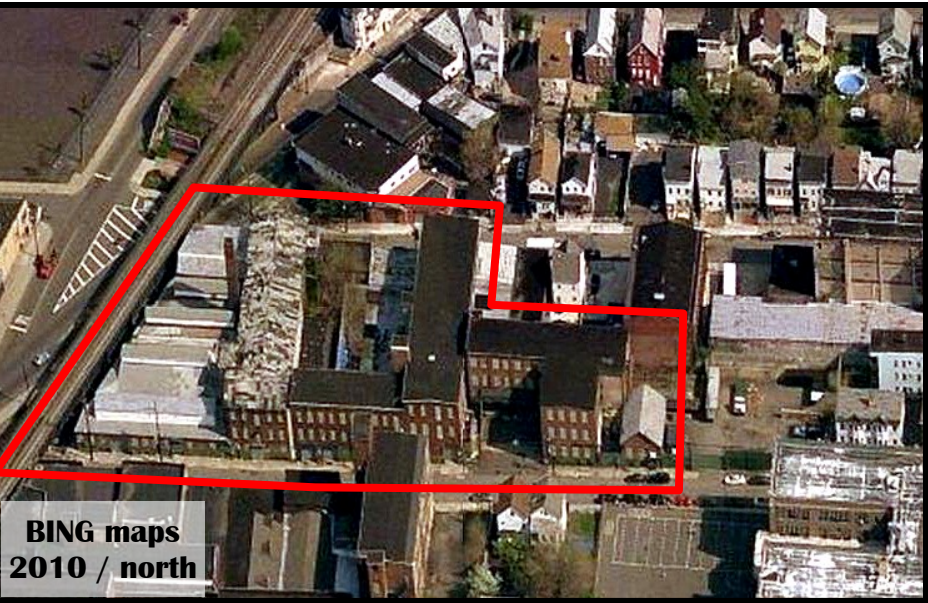
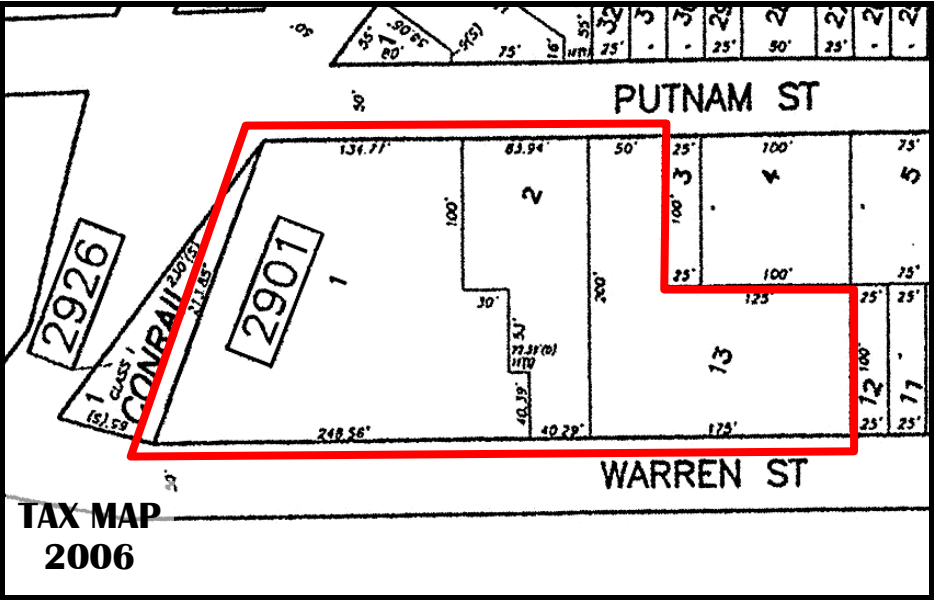




ASHLEY & BAILEY SILK COMPANY  
(WASHINGTON SILK DYEING & FINISHING)



Various addresses, Warren St & Putnam St, Paterson, NJ  
B 2901 L 01, 02, 13  
Site Development Maps, 1931, 2006, 2010





**ASHLEY & BAILEY SILK COMPANY  
(WASHINGTON SILK DYEING & FINISHING)**

Various addresses, Warren St & Putnam St, Paterson, NJ  
B 2901 L 01, 02, 13  
Photographs, historic / contemporary



**ASHLEY 1:** Oblique overview looking NW along and Warren St. showing S elevations of mills.



**ASHLEY 2:** Oblique overview looking NW along Warren St. showing east and south elevations of mills.



**ASHLEY 3:** Oblique overview looking NE along Warren St. showing W and S elevations.



**ASHLEY 4:** oblique overview along Warren St., looking NW.



**ASHLEY & BAILEY SILK COMPANY  
(WASHINGTON SILK DYEING & FINISHING)**

Various addresses, Warren St & Putnam St, Paterson, NJ  
B 2901 L 01, 02, 13  
Photographs, historic / contemporary



**ASHLEY 5:** View looking N from across Warren St. at east end of site.



**ASHLEY 6:** Oblique overview looking along Warren St. from under trestle at corner of Warren and River St..



**ASHLEY 7:** Oblique overview looking NW from across Warren St. showing a Dye House at corner of Warren and River St.



**ASHLEY 8:** Oblique overview looking NE along Warren St. showing south facades of mills.