

**Additional Supporting Information for  
Raleigh Historic Landmark Designation Application  
of**

**Arkansas Delaware and Vermont Connecticut  
Royster Confectioners Building**

**207 Fayetteville Street  
Raleigh, North Carolina, 27601**

**Prepared by M. Ruth Little  
Longleaf Historic Resources, Raleigh  
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**Architectural Significance: A. D. Royster & Brothers confectioners., ca. 1865, ca. 1892, 2002**

The two-story, load-bearing brick building, twenty-three feet wide and fifty-seven feet deep, at 207 Fayetteville Street sits over a full basement with a stone foundation that probably dates to the antebellum era. In 1865 the building was a general store; by the late 1860s it was owned by A. D. and Vermont C. Royster and operated as a general store. In 1872 it became a candy factory. Although the recent Fayetteville Street Historic District National Register Historic District nomination states that the building was replaced between 1903 and 1914, a definitive newspaper article chronicling the history of the business, written by local historian Susan Iden about 1921, stated that the business was still operating in the original building. "During all these years the store has been remodeled only once, in 1892, although many additions have been made in the rear where the factory is operated."<sup>1</sup> An examination of the Sanborn maps from 1884 to 1914 shows no change to the building's footprint. The 1892 remodeling mentioned by Iden may have replaced the original façade.

The main façade features running bond brick, three one-over-one sash windows in the upper façade with stone sills and lintels, a wide band of mousetooth brickwork above the windows, and a heavy bracketed metal cornice with large corner brackets. The side walls form party walls with the flanking commercial buildings. The rear wall, of red running bond brick, abuts a very narrow alley with no access from the street. The flat roof is covered with tar and gravel.

The interior consists of a full basement, a first floor, and an upper floor. One front entrance leads into the first floor; a secondary front entrance at the right side leads to an enclosed stair to the second floor. Original interior finishes visible on the interior consist of the stone and brick load-bearing walls of the basement, narrow hardwood flooring on the first floor, and wider heart-pine flooring on the second floor. Most of the walls and ceilings have been covered with modern sheetrock. In 2002 the interior was heavily remodeled for the Shanahan Law Group to create contemporary offices. Architects for the remodeling were the Raleigh firm Clearscapes. The original interior partition walls have been replaced by modern partitions.

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<sup>1</sup> Iden, "Royster's Candy Store And Open Forum Unique Institution of Raleigh," *Raleigh Times*, ca. 1921; undated clipping in Florence Jones Scrapbook, N. C. State Archives. [Mf 152]

### Historic Significance: A. D. Royster & Brothers confectioners, 1865-1960

The A. D. Royster & Bro. candy store, 207 Fayetteville Street, gained widespread fame in the upper South in the late 1800s and during the first half of the twentieth century as one of the city's most popular attractions. Founded in 1865 and continuing until 1960, Royster's was one of the longest-lasting businesses in Raleigh. In the last year of the Civil War, a Union sutler named Wierner started a prosperous grocery and confectionary business at 207 Fayetteville Street, in the block between Hargett and Martin streets. Local brothers Arkansas Delaware (Ark) and Vermont Connecticut (V. C.) Royster worked as employees in Wierner's store. A few months after establishing the store, Wierner left the store to the Roysters. In 1872 they converted the store into a candy factory. For the next eighty-eight years, until 1960, A. D. Royster & Bro operated at the same stand, under the same name, a candy factory that was more a city institution than a business house.<sup>2</sup>

The Royster brothers were sons of James D. Royster, an antebellum Raleigh cabinetmaker who was himself the son of David Royster, one of Raleigh's earliest cabinetmakers.<sup>3</sup> J. D. Royster named his offspring for states, including, in addition to the above-mentioned brothers, Wisconsin Illinois, Oregon Minnesota, and Iowa Michigan Royster. These unusual names were printed in the *Ripley's Believe It or Not!* book series for many years.<sup>4</sup>

The brothers initially operated the business house as a general store. Older brother Ark bought fruit in Norfolk, Virginia on the train, carrying a gun to keep his goods safe from thieves. He sent his eighteen-year-old brother V. C. to New York to learn the candy-making business. Beginning about 1873, New York master candy-maker Jim Leonard, and later his brother John Leonard, came to Raleigh with V. C. and spent several years teaching the trade to several of Royster's employees, notably Charlie Spikes, who remained with the firm from 1871 to his death in 1918. Although rheumatism forced A. D. out of the business in 1878, V. C. kept it going for the rest of his life.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Murray, *Wake: Capital County of North Carolina, Vol. 1: Prehistory through Centennial*, 569; Iden, "Royster's Candy Store And Open Forum Unique Institution of Raleigh," *Raleigh Times*, Raleigh, N.C. c. 1921.

<sup>3</sup> Murray, *Wake: Capital County of North Carolina, Vol. 1: Prehistory through Centennial*, 155, 212, 277.

<sup>4</sup> Vermont C. Royster entry, Wikipedia. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vermont\\_Royster](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vermont_Royster). Accessed July 7, 2008.

<sup>5</sup> Iden, "Royster's Candy Store..." *Raleigh Times*, ca. 1921; Olds, city editor's column, *The News and Observer*, Raleigh, N.C., Aug. 18, 1883, page 4.

By 1883 business was so brisk that V. C. constructed a large brick extension to the rear of the store to expand candy production, hiring thirty boys to operate the machinery. Several young ladies handled the sales outlet in the front. Two drummers, including Royster brother Oregon Minnesota, peddled Royster candy across North and South Carolina. Later in 1883 the work force had increased to forty boys who produced a daily ton of candy, “most of this being plain, the remainder French and fancy.”<sup>6</sup> The company’s mainstay products were stick candy, “cocoanut,” cream, and peanut candies. V. C. recalled later that “Only ten pounds of chocolates were made in the first order, and it was hard to dispose of that as nobody appeared to want chocolate candy.”<sup>7</sup>

The candy store appears on the first Raleigh Sanborn Map of 1884 as a narrow rectangular two-story brick building wedged into a block of dry goods, milliners, drug stores, and clothing businesses. Raleigh’s 1903 Sanborn map shows the building unchanged from its 1884 appearance. The 1909 and 1914 Sanborn maps show the identical building footprint.<sup>8</sup> No photograph of the original Royster building has been located. However its current façade, of stretcher bond brick with three one-over-one sash windows with stone lintels and sills in the upper façade, a decorative mousetooth brick string course, and an overhanging bracketed metal cornice with decorative end brackets, is a typical commercial façade consistent with a construction date of the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century.

A detailed 1920s history of the business reveals that the Royster candy company was one of the city’s most beloved institutions. About 1921, the year before Vermont C. Royster’s death, Susan Iden, a journalist who chronicled Raleigh’s history for the *Raleigh Times* in the 1920s and 1930s, penned an article entitled “Royster’s Candy Store And Open Forum—Unique Institution of Raleigh.” Iden recounted V. C. Royster’s faithful operation of the business since he joined his brother in the enterprise at the age of eighteen in 1865. Students at Raleigh’s downtown colleges, St. Mary’s, Peace, and Meredith, were frequent customers. Young visitors to the city made a tour of Royster’s candy factory an important stop during their excursions. The irresistibility of Royster’s wares and his congeniality led Iden to describe the candy store as a “candy factory and open

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<sup>6</sup> Olds, city editor’s column, *The News and Observer*, Raleigh, N.C. Nov. 11, 1883, page 4.

<sup>7</sup> Iden, “Royster’s Candy Store...”, *Raleigh Times*, ca. 1921; “; Olds, *The News and Observer*, Aug. 18, 1883, 4; Olds, *The News and Observer*, Nov. 11, 1883, 4.

<sup>8</sup> Raleigh Sanborn Maps, microfilm: 1884, 1903, 1909, and 1914. Olivia Raney Local History Library, Raleigh.

forum combined, where all of the fundamental principles of ethnics, religion, politics, and science are threshed out with any one who wants to stop long enough to argue..." She further recounted that "Chess enthusiasts for many years sat in silence for long hours over the game in the rear of the store. Traveling salesmen are always welcomed, Mr. Royster never being too busy to listen---or talk---as long as the traveling men will linger."<sup>9</sup> While it seems odd today to imagine a small candy factory functioning as a social gathering spot, V. C. Royster's personality and the attractiveness of his product must have been powerful draws. A jar of plaited sassafras candy sticks made in 1871 as an exhibit for the store window during State Fair week by Charlie Spikes, the original master candy maker at Royster's, remained on display in the store until V. C. Royster's death in 1922. It served as the store's lucky "rabbit foot" charm. During the government's sugar rationing in World War I the candy factory's production was limited to sixty pounds a day. One wartime Christmas the state administrator in charge of rationing made a special exemption to allow Royster's to use enough sugar to produce Christmas candy for the city's children. One of the firm's most distinct candies was "bulldozers." Children who fell in love with Royster's unique candies often ordered them for delivery to their adult residences, wherever they had moved, and shipments went all over the world.<sup>10</sup>

The Royster business was listed in the Raleigh City Directories year after year with the following line: "Royster A D & Bro (Vermont C Royster), confrs 207 Fayetteville." ("Confrs" was an abbreviation for confectioners.) V. C.'s son, Wilbur High Royster, joined the firm about 1915. After his father's death in 1922, Wilbur managed the business for another decade, continuing to sell chocolate, peanut brittle, and other candies across the Carolinas and Virginia. In 1932 the family leased the confectionary business to James E. Stathacos, who operated it until 1960 as "Roysters." During the nearly three decades that Stathacos continued the candy business, its listing in the city directories was "Royster's (Jas. E. Stathacos) candy mfrs- 207 Fayetteville."<sup>11</sup>

In 1960 the old candy factory finally closed its doors, although the family retained ownership. In that year the Royster family donated a number of artifacts from the company to the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh, including candy-making equipment of metal and wood, the cash register, and a large trade sign measuring two feet tall and seventeen feet long with "Royster's

<sup>9</sup> Iden, "Royster's Candy Store..." *Raleigh Times*, (ca. 1921).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Raleigh City Directories: 1907-08 to 1960*. Olivia Raney Local History Library, Raleigh; *Raleigh Times*, Sept. 4, 1986, 1 C.

Quality Candies” in white lettering on a red background. Given its size and shape, this sign must have been mounted on the façade of the shop. The only item on display is the cash register, used in a shop exhibit at the Museum of the Cape Fear in Fayetteville, N.C.<sup>12</sup>

The Royster family—all ten children—were prominent Raleigh citizens. Two brothers, Wisconsin Illinois Royster and Hubert A. Royster were distinguished Raleigh physicians. W. I. Royster returned from medical school in Philadelphia in 1870 and became one of Raleigh’s foremost physicians, helping to create the medical school at UNC-Chapel Hill. Hubert A. Royster took charge of St. Agnes Hospital at the turn-of-the-century and was one of the first Wake County physicians to use the x-ray machine.<sup>13</sup> One of Wilbur Royster’s sons, journalist Vermont C. Royster (1914-1996), grew up in Raleigh and edited *The Wall Street Journal* from 1958 to 1971, earning two Pulitzer Prizes for his political writing.<sup>14</sup>

The Royster family retained ownership of the old candy company until 1984, leasing it to Household Finance Corporation of Raleigh from 1961 to about 1984. In 1984 the last Royster descendant to own the property, Frances C. Royster, an unmarried woman living in Iowa, deeded the building to two attorneys, Clyde E. Simmons and Archie W. Futrell, III.<sup>15</sup> They leased the street level to a photo processing business, and operated attorneys’ offices upstairs for the next fifteen years. In 2001 Simmons and Futrell sold the building to Alvarado & Associates, LLC.<sup>16</sup> The Shanahan Law Group remodeled the interior for its law offices in 2002, using the Raleigh architectural firm Clearscapes for design services. The early twentieth century façade was retained, with the street level entrance doors and display windows replaced with contemporary plate glass designs. The upper brick façade was repainted, but otherwise left untouched. Both the first and second floors were divided into modern office spaces. Today the Arkansas Delaware and Vermont Connecticut Royster Confectioners Building at 207 Fayetteville Street is occupied by a commercial real estate firm.

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<sup>12</sup> *The News and Observer*, Raleigh, N.C. June 1, 1960; author interview with collections manager John Campbell, North Carolina Museum of History, Raleigh, July 8, 2008.

<sup>13</sup> Johnson and Murray, *Wake: Capital County of North Carolina, Vol. II: Reconstruction to 1920*, 295, 307, 494-492; [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vermont\\_Royster](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vermont_Royster).

<sup>14</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vermont\\_Royster](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vermont_Royster).

<sup>15</sup> Wake County Deed Book 3236, page 906: Frances C. Royster to Clude E. Simmons and Archie W. Futrell, III, 1984; property plat in Wake County Map Book 1984, page 159.

<sup>16</sup> Wake County Deed Book 008899, page 02134: Clyde E. and Patricia F. Simmons and Archie W. and Betty Hart Futrell to Alvarado & Assoc., LLC, 2001.

A. D. Royster & Brothers confectioners is one of six commercial houses built from the mid-1800s to the 1930s that survive along the five blocks of Fayetteville Street. The others, which housed hardware, department, and jewelry stores, are the 1874 Briggs Hardware Building, 220 Fayetteville Street; the ca. 1930 Haywood Building (205 Fayetteville Street); the 1935 Efirid's Department Store, 208 Fayetteville Street; the ca. 1910 Boylan-Pearce Department Store, 216 Fayetteville Street; the ca. 1900 Lumsden-Boone Building, 226 Fayetteville Street; and the 1876 Mahler Building, 228 Fayetteville Street.

Royster's 3,500 square foot building constitutes the original candy factory and sales office, expanded in the 1880s and in later years by a rear brick wing that has been demolished since the 1960s. Modern high-rise office buildings have been transforming Fayetteville Street, Raleigh's main corridor, since the 1960s when the candy factory closed. Because the Royster family held onto the old factory until the mid-1980s, and because it has been used as offices since that time, the old landmark still stands. While its brick façade with mousetooth ornament and heavy metal bracketed cornice holds local architectural significance as a typical late-nineteenth-early-twentieth-century Raleigh commercial building, the property's principal significance is as a Raleigh commercial institution where a remarkable Raleigh family produced confectionaries known throughout the upper South for nearly a century. Although the interior has been reconfigured for modern office functions, the building's shell, its façade on Fayetteville Street, and its artifacts preserved at the North Carolina Museum of History represent the tangible presence of the Royster clan with their sugary treats, their humorous double-state names, and their civic contribution to Raleigh. Certainly this sweet little building deserves recognition as a Raleigh Historic Landmark.

## Bibliography

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**Boundary Justification**

The area to be designated is the intact legal parcel of .03 acre (Pin Number 1703780297). The lot is delineated on the attached Wake County Tax Map.