

FORM A - AREA

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA. 02108

Form numbers in this area	Area letter
D-20 - 1 to 4	
D-20 - 5, 6, 8	
D-20 - 11, 14	
D-20 - 12, 13, 19	507

Photo (3x3" or 3x5")
Staple to left side of form

Photo number Mills 2-9a
2a
1a
6a

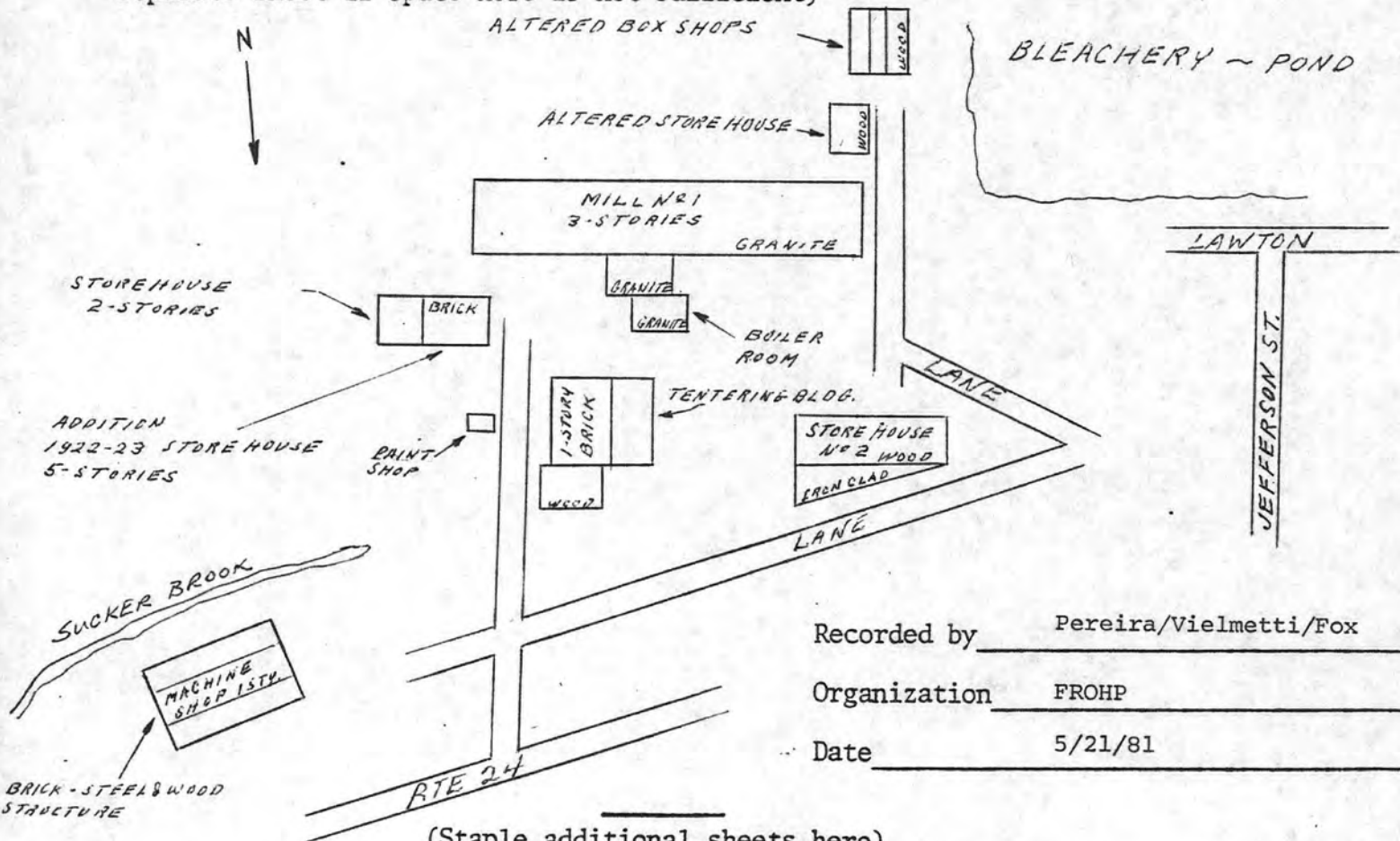
Town Fall River, Mass.

Name of area (if any) Fall River Bleachery

Jefferson Street

General date or period 1872 - 20th century

Sketch map. Draw a general map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets (including route numbers, if any) and indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient)



Recorded by Pereira/Vielmetti/Fox

Organization FROHP

Date 5/21/81

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Describe physical setting, general character, and architecturally significant structures).

The Fall River Bleachery is located in the southern section of the city on what was originally a more than 50-acre site just west of South Watuppa Pond. The complex has lost most of its visual distinctiveness because of 20th century changes, but is of architectural importance because of its unique function and the technology employed in construction of the water supply system. The site retains an almost rural quality and relationship with the water sources which were the principal reason for locating here. The buildings are surrounded on two sides by the bleachery ponds, which in the 1870's were fed by Sucker Brook and another spring-fed stream. Sucker Brook was chosen because it flowed at a steady rate from Stafford Pond, which had the purest water in the Fall River area. The main building was constructed shortly after the company's founding in 1872 from general plans drawn by Spencer Borden, the organizer and first treasurer. Mr. Walter J. Paine served as the architect, with masonry work done by Slade W. Earle and carpentry and joinery by Obadiah Pierce. Granite was quarried on the site. A level was determined for the ponds, which had to be created, and the site for the bleachery (CONTINUED)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Explain development of area, what caused it, and how it affected community; be specific).

The Fall River Bleachery is historically significant as the first in the city to undertake this specialized task. The company was organized in 1872 during a remarkable two-year period of growth which saw the establishment of 15 new corporations and 20 new mills. The founder, Mr. Spencer Borden, was the son of a prominent local mill entrepreneur, Jefferson Borden. He was well-trained in the scientific and technical branches of manufacturing, having spent two years in the dye and color department of the American Print Works and several years studying applied chemistry and textile arts in London and Paris. Borden's plan for a bleachery was enthusiastically received by local manufacturers. A 25-acre site along Sucker Brook, called the Howard Farm, was chosen because of the purity of the spring-fed streams. Additional land was later purchased until the bleachery secured the whole valley along Sucker Brook from the lower side of the Job Estes privilege nearly to South Watuppa Lake. The company was capitalized at \$250,000 and stock sold quickly, rising in value to \$110 before the mill was even begun. Jefferson Borden was chosen first president and Spencer Borden first agent and treasurer. The bleachery was built with twelve kiers, or a capacity of 12-13 tons per day, and all the machinery was described as the latest and most desirable. The capacity increased to 50 tons by 1920. The corporation was liquidated in 1938 and the buildings are presently in light industrial use.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Fall River and Its Industries, p. 147-149 (includes early engraving)
Phillips' History of Fall River, Fascicle II, p. 129
History of Bristol County, p. 323
Barlow Insurance Plans, No. 4338, 1876
1920 Corporate Millyard Plans
American Wool and Cotton Reporter, Handbook of 1920

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Fall River, Mass.

Form No:

D-20 - 1 to 4

D-20 - 5, 6, 8

D-20 - 11, 14

D-20 - 12, 13, 1

Property Name: Fall River
Bleachery

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Continuation)

was excavated 13 feet below this point to allow water to fall into the machinery without pumping. Two separate ponds of five acres each were raised. Contemporary accounts describe a very elaborate system of dams, pipes and filters which insured that all water entering the mill, besides being of natural purity, was filtered through two courses of brick and six inches of fine gravel or charcoal. The Barlow Insurance Plan of 1876 shows that, by that date, the complex had five granite buildings: a 2½-story bleachery, measuring 150' X 70', a one-story kier house, 1½-story cloth house, engine house and boiler house, as well as two long, low wooden drying sheds for hanging cloth. Of these all that remains is the bleachery and boiler room, and the former has been altered by the removal of the gable roof and addition of a third story and slightly pitched roof. A number of undistinguished later buildings also stand on the property.

hence non-contributory

The Fall River Bleachery, the first mill company in Fall River formed to undertake the specialized task of bleaching derives its importance from its unique function and technology employed in construction of its water supply system and meets Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received 11/5/83

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 4 of 10

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Fall River Multiple Resource Area
State MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

31. Coughlin School

~~Substantive Review~~

Keeper

2/16/83 *Barbara Dyl*

Attest

32. Crescent Mill

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

33. Davol School

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

34. Davol, William C., Jr., House

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

35. Downtown Fall River Historic District

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

36. Durfee Mills

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

37. Earle, John M., House

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

38. Fall River Bleachery

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

39. First Baptist Church

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

40. Flint Mills

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 *Delores Byers*

Attest

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Fall River Bleachery (Fall River MRA)
Bristol County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 115183-15
Fed. Reg. Date: 2.7.84
Date Due: 2/3/83 - 2/19/83
Action: ACCEPT 2/10/83
RETURN
REJECT
Entered in the
National Register
Federal Agency: _____

☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
☐ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: ☐ technical corrections cited below
☐ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ moved date _____
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	☐ altered

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- _____ summary paragraph
- _____ completeness
- _____ clarity
- _____ applicable criteria
- _____ justification of areas checked
- _____ relating significance to the resource
- _____ context
- _____ relationship of integrity to significance
- _____ justification of exception
- _____ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UMT References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- _____ Maps
- _____ Photographs
- _____ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: 202 272-3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



Fall River MRA, Ma

Mills 2-1a
F.R. Bleachery
NW View



Fall River MRA, Ma

Mills 2-2a

F.R. Bleachery

West n/w



Fall River MRA, Ma

Mills 2-6a
F.R. Bleachery
Tentering Bldg
& Mill #1

n/view



Fall River MRA, Ma

Mills 2-9a

F.R. Bleachery

s/c view of s/side

of Mill #1 & Storehouse

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000279



A. H. LEEMING & SONS, INC.
architectural woodwork by craftsmen

994 JEFFERSON ST., P.O. BOX 2524, FALL RIVER, MA. 02722, (617) 675-2311

RECEIVED

OCT 19 1982

MASS. HIST. COMM.

October 18, 1982

Massachusetts Historical Commission
294 Washington St.
Boston, Ma. 02108
Att: Patricia S. Weslowski, Exec. Dir.

Re: Fall River Bleachery

Dear Ms. Weslowski:

I am in receipt of your notification that our property is located in the Fall River Multiple Resource Area.

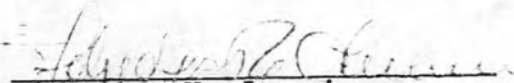
After research and analysis of the implications of our property being elected to the National Register, we herewith object to the listing.

Please acknowledge at your convenience.

Very truly yours,

A.H. Leeming & Sons, Inc.

EHL:gn


Eldredge H. Leeming



member architectural woodwork institute