

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received AUG 12 1985

date entered SEP 12 1985

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic  THE PEMBROKE MILL (preferred)

and/or common The Emerson Mill

**2. Location**

street & number 100 Main Street n/a not for publication

city, town Pembroke, vicinity of Suncook

state New Hampshire code 033 county Merrimack code 013

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Emerson Mill Association, Gavin A. Ruotolo, General Partner

street & number P.O. Box 310

city, town Scarborough, n/a vicinity of state Maine 04074

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Merrimack County Courthouse  
Merrimack County Registry of Deeds

street & number 163 North Main Street

city, town Concord, state New Hampshire 03301

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Suncook Cultural Resource Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1983  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Concord, state New Hampshire

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## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

---

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Pembroke Mill, built in 1860 by the Suncook Manufacturing Company, is an elegant example of Renaissance Revival style mill construction. Sited on the north bank of the Suncook River, it is 4 stories tall on the river side (southwest elevation) and 3 stories tall on the northeast elevation. The entire mill is contained in one rectangular, flat roofed, symmetrical brick structure, highlighted by twin, flat roofed, privy towers on the river side and a monumental, elaborately ornamented stair tower (campanile) on the northeast elevation. Besides this tower, the main renaissance detailing is found in the corbeled cornice and in the segmentally arched, radiating voussoirs which top each of its 290 windows.

Each of these windows has a granite sill and multipaned sash. The configuration of the sash varies according to the proportion of the window. The fenestration pattern is regular laterally on all sides of the structure. Vertically, the height of the openings varies, reflecting stylistically the height of the story. The vertical fenestration pattern is shortest at the basement level, tallest on the 1st story, decreasing proportionately on 3rd and 4th stories. Most of the windows have been filled with brick or wood panels.

The southeast elevation faces the Main Street of the village of Suncook. This elevation has become the primary facade during the last two decades since the offices of the Emerson Lounge Company located here. The building is 3 stories tall and 6 bays wide on this elevation. The entry is located in the 3rd bay of the basement, sheltered by a gable roofed porch, c. 1970, supported by square posts. The "Colonial" door features a semi-circular fanlight and vertical panels. It is flanked by artificial corinthian pilasters, topped by a broken-scroll pediment. A metal fire escape angles from the ground to the 3rd bay, 2nd story and then at another angle up to the 2nd bay, 3rd story. There are diamond shaped, cast iron tie-rods at the story levels, on the wall surface between each bay.

The northeast elevation is 3 stories high and 26 bays wide. Because the ground level is 6'± below the level of Front Street to the rear, this is the most difficult elevation to view. The length of this elevation is increased by a 2 story wing which was added to the northwest side in 1879. This wing is distinguishable only in height, as it was treated with identical fenestration and cornice work. It is supported by a foundation of large, cut-granite slabs.

The focal point of this elevation and indeed, of the structure, is the 5 story, square stair tower (campanile). The first stage of this campanile is 4 stories tall and 2, asymmetrical bays wide. These bays consist of tall, narrow, arched windows, balanced by wide, arched doors at each level. The graduated vertical pattern is repeated here rising to an elaborately corbelled cornice topped by a corbel table which highlights the eaves of a slate roofskirt. These details support a belvedere which features a series of recessed arches formed by corbeling which flares dramatically to the crown of the tower. Another corbel table repeats the cornice detail at the eaves. The tower is topped by a pyramidal, grey slate roof and copper finial.

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Detracting somewhat from the beauty of the stair tower is another, square 3 story elevator tower, built c. 1931, which is engaged on its northwest side. The flat roof of this tower ends at the first stage of the stair tower. It makes some aspirations to sympathetic design in its 2 tall, narrow windows which are topped by flat, radiating voussoirs.

Facing the rear (northwest) Elevation the separation between the wing and the main block is more evident. The wing being approximately 50' wide to the 70' of the mill. The wing has a flat, unpenetrated wall surface rising to a very slightly pitched gable. A concrete loading dock, c. 1945 provides access to a utilitarian freight entry. A corrugated metal hood spans the entire elevation. Visible here too, is the rear of the main block. This elevation is 4 stories tall on the southwest.

The southwest elevation is perhaps the most dramatic because of its orientation to the Suncook River. The structure is 4 stories high on this side, and 26 bays long. (The eight additional bays of the wing, which also face the river, are sub-dominant and not really visible because the wing is recessed. A free-standing metal stack c. 1940 is located at the west corner of the wing.) The twin privy towers located in the 6th and 7th and 23rd and 24th bays highlight this side. These flat-roofed towers have paired, narrow, multi-paned windows in the same vertical fenestration pattern as the major windows.

The interior is standard slow-burn, wood frame mill construction, utilizing massive beams and wooden columns. All surfaces except for heavy wooden floors are covered in paint. The interior spaces are remarkably intact. Some wooden floors are covered in poured concrete slabs.

The two additional structures connected with the property appear to have been constructed sometime during the first quarter of the 20th century. Both are woodframe sheds, and both are in badly deteriorated condition. Shed #1 is 80' x 40' with a gable roof. Both the roof and the walls are sheathed in asphalt shingles. There is a square 10' x 10' opening on the lateral side (north elevation). Shed #2 is also approximately 40' x 80'. The east gable end has an interesting roof detail, i.e. the ridgeline of the gable roof stops about 10' from the wall, and a hip extends to meet the wall. This east wall has a center, 15' garage type door with rectangular panels. The walls of this structure are clapboard, the roof rolled asphalt. There is no fenestration in either building.

The only other noteworthy features of the site are the granite, rip-rap retaining wall which rises 30'± from the river and the cut-granite retaining wall on the Front Street side. All roadwork is asphalt or dirt, and no landscaping is in evidence.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
---	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
--- 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
--- 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
--- 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
--- 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1860, 1879

Builder/Architect Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The 1860 Pembroke Mill in Suncook, New Hampshire is a handsome Renaissance Revival brick textile mill which still retains integrity of design, setting, materials and workmanship. It is architecturally significant as an intact, early, and well articulated example of the Renaissance Revival style. Historically, the Pembroke Mill was the first mill built by the Suncook Manufacturing Company. It is locally significant because of its singular influence on the architectural and economic development of the village of Suncook. The "building boom" which followed the construction of the mill radically changed the character of the small town center, evidenced today by numerous examples of public and commercial brick buildings in the Renaissance Revival style.

### Architectural Significance

The Pembroke Mill is the purest example of the Renaissance Revival style in the village of Suncook. This style is well described by the symmetry and vertical harmony of the fenestration and particularly by the 5 story Campanile. The brick buildings which were inspired by the Pembroke Mill are more vernacular and eclectic in late 19th century fashion.

### Historical Background

The Pembroke Mill has occupied a central position in Suncook's development, both physically and economically, since the mid-19th century. Constructed in 1860, the mill was the first major industrial complex developed on the Suncook River by the powerful Suncook Manufacturing Company, which was incorporated in 1847. The railroad was brought to Suncook in 1852, connecting the small village with markets as far away as Boston, and with immigrant labor from the province of Quebec, Canada.

The site of the Pembroke Mill is on a falls whose hydro-power potential was utilized by small grist and paper mills for more than a century before the Civil War. Recognizing this potential, the Suncook Manufacturing Company amassed the land (including buildings) and water rights upstream and down. In 1860, they formed Pembroke Manufacturing Company and built the Pembroke Mill. The Pembroke Mill "is 273 feet long, 72 feet wide, has 20,000 spindles, and 422 looms, and is run by two turbine water wheels, aggregating 400 horse power, and for auxilliary power has two Corliss steam engines, aggregating 400 horse power. It employs 175 female and 80 male operatives, and the monthly pay roll is \$6,000. It uses 1,000 tons of coal, 2,000 gallons of oil, and 1,200 pounds of starch per annum. It uses 24,000 pounds of cotton, and manufactures 110,000 yards of cloth per week."<sup>1</sup>

In 1865, the Webster Manufacturing Company was organized by the Suncook Manufacturing Company and the Webster Mill was built just upstream. It was a much larger mill complex, employing over 500 people. Unfortunately, this mill burned in 1983.

<sup>1</sup>Carter, Rev. N. F., asst. by Fowler, Hon. T. L.. History of Pembroke, New Hampshire: 1730-1895. p. 355.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

(see continuation sheet 3-9-1)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2.16 acres

Quadrangle name Suncook, NH

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	8	2	0	0	3	2	0	4	7	7	8	0	0	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

### Verbal boundary description and justification

(see continuation sheet 4-10-2)

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lynne Emerson Monroe

organization Preservation Company

date January 14, 1985

street & number 121 Water Street

telephone (603) 778-1799

city or town Exeter,

state New Hampshire 03833

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7/29/85

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Keeper of the National Register

National Register

date 9/12/85

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

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One other, even larger venture, was organized by the Suncook Manufacturing Company, the China Manufacturing Company, who built the China Mill downstream in the town of Allentown. This mill, which employed over 800 people, is still in operation.

The influence on the small village of Suncook of the construction of these mills cannot be overemphasized. The population nearly tripled in the decade between 1860-1870 (from 1,313-3,172).<sup>2</sup> Much of this was due to the immigration of French Canadians who left the agricultural recession in Canada to seek jobs in the new mills. This influx, therefore, radically altered the character of the population along with its numbers.

The building boom which accompanied this expansion also left its mark on the community. Most of what is identified today as downtown, was built during this period, and because of the availability of locally manufactured brick, much of this construction, in the Renaissance Revival style, is identifiable as having been influenced by the architecture of the Pembroke Mill.

Suncook was affected heavily by the great depression. The population declined drastically. During this time the Pembroke Mill shut down, but was saved by a citizen's group who bought it in 1938, held it for eight months and sold it to the Textron Manufacturing Company. This company also produced textiles, cotton, as well as the newly developed rayon and nylon synthetic fabrics.

In the 1950's, the Emerson Furniture Company bought both the Webster Mill and the Pembroke Mill. The Webster Mill produced non-upholstered furniture, and the Pembroke Mill produced the well known Emerson Lounges until 1981.<sup>3</sup> During this period the Pembroke Mill became commonly known as the Emerson Mill.

<sup>2</sup>Wilson, Artelia Lyn, Suncook Village, Pembroke, New Hampshire: Cultural Resource Survey, Inventory, And Plan.

<sup>3</sup>Wilson, Artelia Lyn, Suncook Village, Pembroke, New Hampshire: Cultural Resource Survey, Inventory, And Plan.

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THE PEMBROKE (EMERSON) MILL, SUNCOOK, NH

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aldrich, Frank L. "Suncook Today". Granite Monthly: A New Hampshire Magazine. Volume XXIX, No. 1. Concord, NH: Granite Monthly Co. July, 1900.

Carter, Rev. N. F., asst. by Fowler, Hon. T. L. History of Pembroke, New Hampshire; 1730-1895. Volume I: Historical. Concord, NH: Republican Press Association: 1895.

Conway School of Landscape Design. Old Suncook Village Vitalization. 1982.  
(Available at Suncook Town Offices, Suncook, NH)

Sanborn Map Company. Map of Suncook Village. New York: 1929.

Suncook Valley Times. Oct. 15, 1868 - Oct. 17, 1870.

Suncook Weekly Journal. Sept. 13, 1879.

Wilson, Artelia Lyn. Suncook Village, Pembroke, New Hampshire: Cultural Resources Survey, Inventory, and Plan. June 1983-September 1983. Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission.

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Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The Pembroke (Emerson) Mill lies on the parcel designated Village West (V. W.) map, parcel 243 in the tax records of the town of Suncook, New Hampshire. This parcel contains 2.16 acres of land historically associated with the property being nominated. The boundary can be traced as follows:

Beginning at the point on the west side of Main Street where parcels 244 and 243 abut, the boundary proceeds south west along Main Street until it meets the north boundary line of parcel 243-1. Turning northwest, the boundary line traces the perimeter of this parcel to the north bank of the Suncook River. Turning west, the line proceeds along the river's bank until it meets the east boundary line of parcel 242. Turning north, the line traces the boundary of these abutting parcels until it meets the south boundary of parcel 240. Here the boundary turns east and follows the south boundary of parcels 240 and 241, turning north along the north boundary of 241 until it meets Front Street. Turning east on Front Street the boundary traces the south side of Front Street until it meets the northeast corner of parcel 244. Turning southwest and then southeast the boundary proceeds along the perimeter of parcel 244 until it returns to its starting point, at Main Street.

Note: The boundaries of the nominated property have been highlighted in yellow on the attached sketch map (5-10-3).



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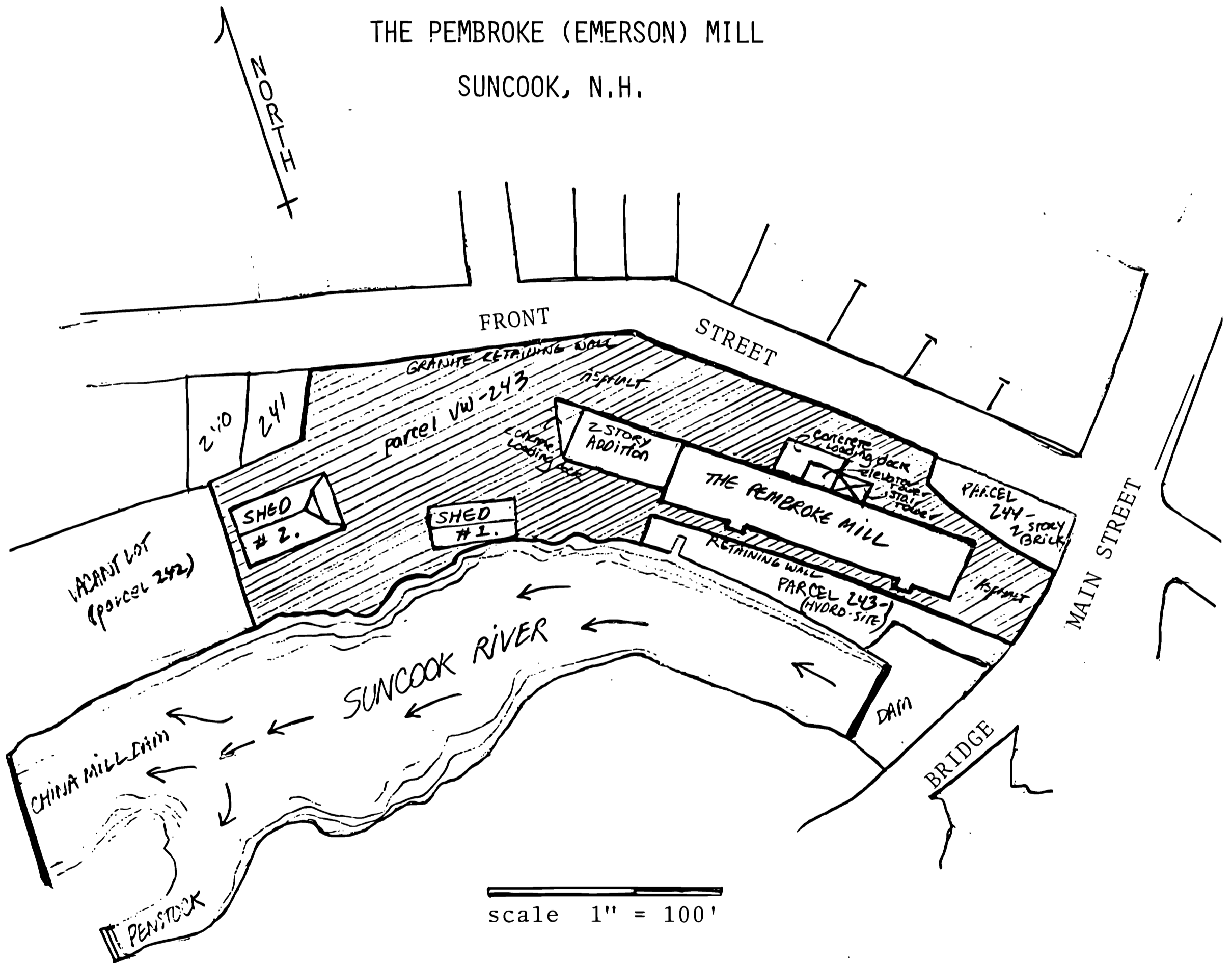
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100 Main Street  
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This letter and supporting photo documentation is to show current conditions of the Pembroke Mill, Suncook, NH, currently being considered for listing to the National Register of Historic Places.

- Exterior changes from original photographs submitted consist of window replacement currently underway.