

## MINNESOTA HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM

HISTORIC NAME: St. Croix Lumber Mills/Stillwater  
 CURRENT NAME: Manufacturing Company

COUNTY: Washington  
 CITY/TWP.: Stillwater

MAR 15 1982

LEGAL DESC.: Block 10, Original town, between spur line  
 tracks and Main Street, north of vacated Linden Street.

ADDRESS:  
 318 North Main

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent _____	Local <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Primary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry
Structure _____	Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State _____	Secondary _____
Object _____	Fair _____	National _____	Others _____
District _____	Deteriorated _____		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes \_\_\_ No  Restricted \_\_\_  
 VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes  No \_\_\_  
 OCCUPIED: Yes  No \_\_\_

PRESENT USE:  
 Commercial space

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1850-1900

ORIGINAL USE: Sawmill power plant, drying  
 kiln, sash factory

ORIGINAL OWNER: Sawyer and Heaton

ARCHITECT/BUILDER:

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: ABS, Inc.  
 c/o Monty Brine  
 106 East Chestnut, Stillwater, MN 55082

ACREAGE: Less than one acre

LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.:

N/A

UTM REFERENCE:

Stillwater, Minn-Wis. 7.5

15 / 515180 / 4989380

FORM PREPARED BY: Tom Harvey

DATE: March 1981

## DESCRIPTION:

The St. Croix Lumber Mills Power House, a prominent feature at the end of Stillwater's Main Street, is situated at the north end of the Stillwater's commercial district. The massive limestone structure was built in 1850 when Sawyer and Heaton built the second lumber mill in the city. Issac Staples purchased the mill in 1869 and gave it a thorough overhauling. The 42 x 44 foot stone and brick power house was retained. The 80-foot high smokestack rests on a fourteen foot square base. The structure originally had a double gabled roof, segmental-arched and rectangular windows, and large arched doorways. Alterations have flattened the roofs and filled the doorways. The smokestack remains unchanged and the stone texture of the building is preserved.

Staples operated the mill until the early 1880s when it was sold to J.H. Townsend and Company, who established a flour mill in the south end of the frame mill structure. In 1888 the Stillwater Manufacturing Company occupied the old lumber mill section for the sash, door, and blind factory. A flour mill remained in the south end. A fire in 1894 destroyed all but the power house. The Stillwater Manufacturing Company built the present attached industrial building around 1900. The four-story asbestos clad building has large industrial windows in the front facade and a solid wall adjacent to the power house.

A flat-roofed, rectangular lumber drying kiln is located on the property immediately northeast of the power house. The front opens onto a frame loading dock. The kiln was built in the 1890s by the Stillwater Manufacturing Company.

## SIGNIFICANCE:

The St. Croix Lumber Mills Power House is the only known industrial structure associated with Issac Staples, one of the city's leading businessmen and an important figure statewide. The massive limestone power house and smokestack are a striking visual relic of the city's days as a leading lumber center. Of Issac Staples' many business interests, timber and lumber milling were the most important. The St. Croix Lumber Mills got its start in 1869 when Staples bought Stillwater's second mill, started in 1850 by Sawyer and Heaton. (The mill had gone through several owners before Staples purchased the property.) The power house is most clearly associated with Staples' St. Croix Lumber Mills.

Staples came to Minnesota in 1853 to locate pine lands as front man for a Maine partnership. With Samuel Hersey and others, Staples established the Hersey, Staples and Company, involved in general merchandise and lumber milling. In 1869 Staples left the partnership to start his own company, the St. Croix Lumber Mills. He was involved in flour milling, real estate, and commercial building as well as farming and stock raising.

St. Croix Lumber Mills/Stillwater Manufacturing Company

Washington Co.  
Stillwater, MN

SIGNIFICANCE - cont.

The Stillwater Manufacturing Company built the large industrial structure adjacent to the power house, which is of secondary industrial significance. A subsidiary of the Minnesota Thresher Company, the Stillwater Manufacturing Company was a sash, door, and blind factory that located on the St. Croix Lumber Mills site in 1888, after operating within the Minnesota State Prison since 1872. The present manufacturing structure was built about 1900, after a fire had destroyed all of the original complex except for the power house.