

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 1 1975
DATE ENTERED SEP 5 1975

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Waterbury Brass Mill Archaeological Site
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Idlewood Avenue, Hamilton Park

CITY, TOWN Waterbury VICINITY OF #5-Ronald A. Sarasin

STATE Connecticut CODE 09 COUNTY New Haven CODE 009

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME City of Waterbury, Connecticut

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN STATE
VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. City Hall

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN STATE
Waterbury Connecticut

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Connecticut Statewide Inventory of Historic Resources

DATE 1975
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Connecticut Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN STATE
Hartford, Connecticut

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The site of the old Waterbury Brass Company is located at the end of Idlewood Avenue in the southeast corner of Hamilton Park. Surrounding it are green fields with baseball diamonds and tree-filled open spaces. Interstate 84 is an unfortunate intrusion on the south side of the site, although the Mad River, once the power source for the mill, also flows along the south side.

The only building remaining on the site (also on the south side) is a much altered circa 1870 storage building now used by the Park Commission. It is a one story brick structure laid in common bond and is approximately 65 feet by 24 feet. The four windows on the south elevation are covered with vertical, hinged planks, most likely as old as the building itself. Four windows on the north face of the building have been bricked in at a later date.

An open granite pit, which formerly held one of the two waterwheels is located northeast of the casting shop. It is surrounded by an iron fence put up in 1925 to preserve the entire water wheel. The two iron hubs of both wheels remain on the site (although, as of May 7, 1975, they were removed for sandblasting and a coat of paint).

Immediately east of the enclosed pit is a wall of the stone dam once used to trap the water needed to power the mill. Above it is the outline of the canal trench which conveyed the water. When the dam was opened, the water flowed from the canal trench, through the mill race, to the water wheels.

At the request of the Brass Mill Restoration Committee, a local group organized to preserve the site, the Connecticut Archaeological Survey, Incorporated conducted survey and excavation work at the Waterbury Brass Company site in Hamilton Park. Two field crews worked at the site October 13th and October 27, 1974. Primary goals of the survey were: 1) To determine the location and existing condition of various building foundations and 2) To recover any cultural material which might aid in the historic restoration of the mill. The survey is completed and the following report is hereby submitted:

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Feature #1-Rolling Mill Building Site

This was the largest building in the mill, containing the two large water wheels, as well as the rolling and wire drawing machinery. An analysis of the material found in this building is as follows:

Feature #1: Interior southeast corner of building. This is allegedly the area where wire was drawn. A surface collection was made in this area yielding small pieces of wood, glass, brick, coal, slag, nails and other miscellaneous metal objects. Excavations were made by 3" levels to a depth of 4 feet. No stratification was evident, the area having been filled at the time the building was razed. Massive stone blocks were still in place, presumably the foundation blocks for the wire drawing machinery. Heavy metal rings were attached to these blocks.

Feature #2: Tailrace-Wheel #2: This feature includes both sides of the tailrace for wheel #2. In an effort to locate the pillow block supports, the west side of the tailrace was excavated to a depth of 3 feet, but the precise location of the blocks could not be determined. North of wheel #2, just outside the fenced enclosure, a test pit was dug exposing both walls of the tailrace to a depth of approximately 8½ feet. The bottom of the tailrace could not be established because of extensive water seepage into the excavations. The full depth of the excavation consisted of earth and rubble fill remaining from the demolition of the building. Several different types of fire brick were found, primarily from brickyards in New York and New Jersey.

Feature #3: Tailrace-Wheel #1: The tailrace for wheel #1 was first test-pitted, then excavated. The axle of the wheel was still in place, although the pillow blocks appeared to have been disturbed. The north wall of the tailrace was excavated to a depth of 30 inches. Along the top of this wall were found support beams for the axle and many nails, pieces of glass, brass foundry slag, wire, some leather, and the bowl of a clay pipe. Further excavation revealed a tunneled exit flume running northwest from the railrace. This flume was constructed of cut stone in a full arch and apparently ran the length of the Rolling Mill. Map #2 indicates that, when the mill was in operation, a stone floor covered the flume. At present, a portion of the parking lot covers it.

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Feature #4: Area Outside Northwest Corner of Rolling Mill
Building Site

Although this area has been disturbed by previous Park Department excavation for parking lots, test pits were dug to a depth of 30 inches. A "hot spot" which was apparently a scrap pile from stamping operations was discovered, containing 600 pieces of scrap plugs, cutouts, pins, rings, and imperfect stampings.

Feature #5: Spinning and Finishing Building Site

This building is located some 20 feet southwest of the Rolling and Wire Mill. Portions of the north and west walls were located, as well as several interior walls. Both sides of the north exterior wall were excavated to a depth of four feet ten inches. The wall was apparently dry masonry with a three-course brick cap. Condition of the interior face of this wall indicated no basement had been present on this side of the building. Part of the north exterior wall and the entire east wall are contained within the I-84 enclosure fence.

Feature #6: Foundry Building Site

This building was apparently constructed by excavating to a depth three feet, erecting a dry stone exterior wall and filling the interior with large stone which would serve as support for the heavy foundry equipment.

The survey did, in fact, locate the foundations of the four largest mill structures and, although extensive surface disruptions had occurred, the impact on subsurface remains had been superficial. At the time the rolling mill was razed (c. 1904-05), both the exit flumes and the basement portions of the buildings were filled with rubble. There is certainly enough cultural material in this rubble to warrant further archaeological excavations if any historical reconstruction is contemplated. No items of machinery or large sections thereof were located, presumably having been scavenged either by the mill's successors or by the scrap metal drives of two wars.

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In summary, a significant amount of cultural material was recovered from a rather limited survey. Further excavations will undoubtedly yield an even more comprehensive picture of the mill.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1846

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Israel Holmes

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Waterbury Brass Company site is significant as one of the earliest surviving brass mill sites in the City of Waterbury, a city which became world famous for brass manufacture during the nineteenth century. Its ruins and its history are a fascinating legacy to the City of Waterbury and the Naugatuck Valley. The Waterbury Brass Company and other brass mills developed from a series of circumstances which occurred in the late eighteenth century. At this time in history, the economy of Connecticut was primarily agricultural. The Naugatuck Valley was well settled, but agricultural development was limited. Minerals were plentiful in the area, and from the beginning of the settlement were used by individuals to make tools and other small items. In the late 1700's, men such as Henry Grilley and his brothers brought the method of manufacturing continued to improve and in 1811, the partnership of Leavenworth, Hayden and Scovill was formed (later, the Scovill Manufacturing Company), establishing the first brass company in Waterbury.

The brass industry grew and became increasingly versatile. Brass was used in the manufacture of clocks, plated ware, cards, brushes and machinery. In 1846 the Waterbury Brass Company was set up by Israel Holmes, who used Timothy Porter's mill rights on the Mad River to secure power for his operation. The Waterbury Brass Company had the distinction of being the first new business to roll brass and was also the first to be incorporated. In 1852 the company bought the rights to H.W. Hayden's new process of spinning brass which made the manufacture of round products possible. The Waterbury Brass Company went on to become the largest manufacturer of brass kettles in the United States. About 1855 they were producing about 85% of the country's rolled brass and brassware at the Mad River site.

Israel Holmes left the Waterbury Brass Company in 1853 to set up another brass concern known as Holmes, Booth and Hayden, outdoing his old firm in size. In 1899 the Waterbury Brass Company became part of the larger American Brass Company and continued to be a major producer until 1905, when the mill stopped and the building housing the waterwheel was dismantled.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Anderson, Joseph, The Town and City of Waterbury, Connecticut, from the Aboriginal Period to the Year 1895, Price and Lee, Co., New Haven, 1896.

Bassett, Homer F., Waterbury and Her Industries, Lithotype Printing and Publishing Company, Gardner, Mass., 1892.

Connecticut Archaeological Survey, Inc., "An Archaeological Survey of the Waterbury Brass Company Mill" (CAS File 5001), December 16, 1974.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA *1 acre*

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 10

UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Christine B. Brockmeyer, Consultant

ORGANIZATION Connecticut Historical Commission DATE May 15, 1975

STREET & NUMBER 59 South Prospect Street TELEPHONE (203) 566-3005

CITY OR TOWN Hartford STATE Connecticut

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE *John W. Shannick*

TITLE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER DATE 5/22/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE <u>9/8/74</u>
ATTEST: <i>W. Smith</i>	DATE <u>SEP 4 1975</u>
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

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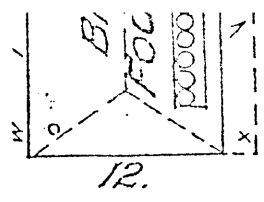
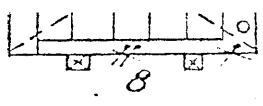
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To emphasize the impact that the brass industry had on the town of Waterbury one need only know that in 1895 there were eighteen brass mills of significant size in the country and that six of those were located in Waterbury. In addition, five more of the eighteen were located in the Naugatuck Valley.

Over 5,000 Waterbury residents were employed by the brass mills in the late 1800's, for the mills were Waterbury's primary source of income. During the 19th century, the town expanded greatly because of the mills, which provided such a sound economic base.

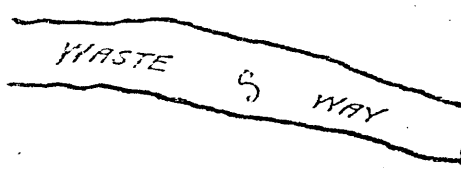
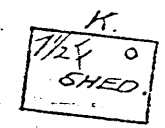
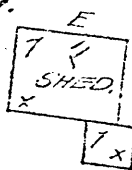
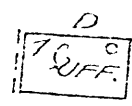
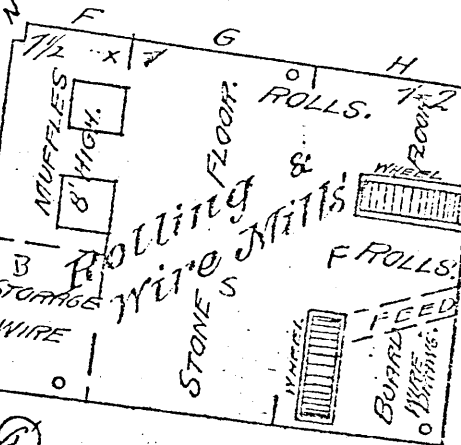
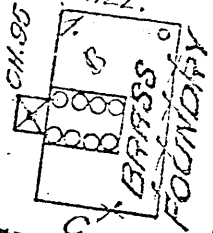


Mad River

A
1 COAL SHED. 1/2
B
WOOD SHED. 1/2

WATERBURY BRASS CO. EAST MILL

NIGHT WATCHMAN. NO HOSE.
HEAT STOVE. LIGHT HEROSENE. POWER WATER
FUEL COAL. WORKMEN MOSTLY LIVE NEAR
MILL.

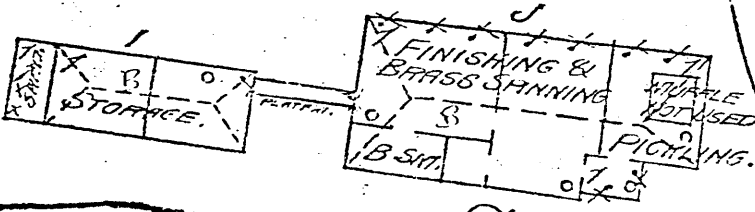
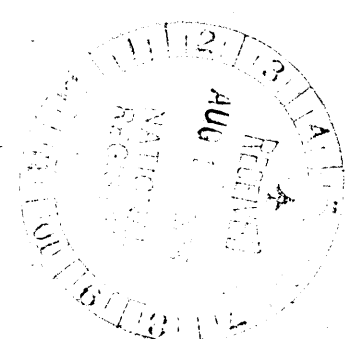


ROAD

FOOT OF

RACE

FOOT OF



Mad River

No exposure

1/4 Miles S.E. of City Hall.

MAP