

FORM A - AREA

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

Form numbers in this area	Area letter
N-23-1/2/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11	479

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

Photo number MP-4-12

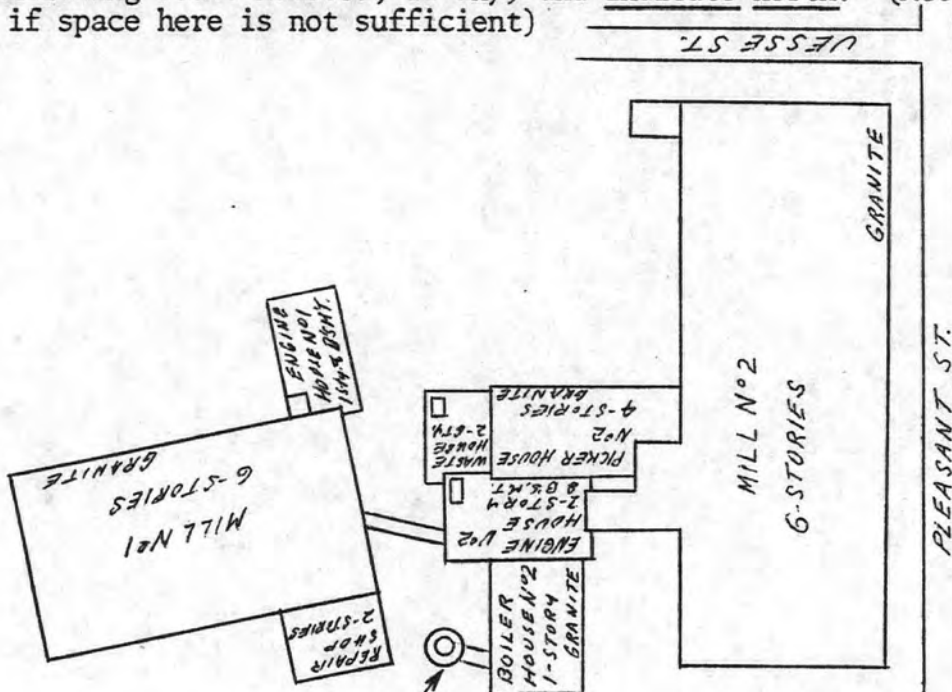
Town Fall River, Mass.

Name of area (if any) Union Mills

Pleasant Street

General date or period 1859-1890

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 6/25/81

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

The Union Mills complex contains one of the earliest remaining mills in Fall River, dating from 1859. Located on the east side of the Quequechan River, the Union was one of the first in the city to be powered by steam and was the first mill to be built above the falls, a change made possible by the new steam engines and made necessary by the fact that all suitable locations near waterfalls were by then fully occupied. The 1859 mill was designed by Josiah Brown, the first builder of local mills who can be considered a professional designer. Brown was self-educated and had traveled to Europe for study and observation. He was assisted in this early effort by Wm. C. Davol. Brown later designed the Robeson, Border City, Fall River Manufactory and Montaup, of which the first two survive. The Union, originally 5½ stories high, is of the narrow mill type and measures 160' X 70'. It was constructed of irregular granite ashlar with parged joints, in a style vaguely reflective of Italianate influences. As was typical of granite mills of the period, walls at the base were over 3 feet thick and floor timbers were 12" X 16" supported on heavy iron columns. Except for changes in the roofline, (Cont

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

The Union Mills Company, incorporated in 1859, was the first Fall River textile company to be financed by community stock subscriptions. The idea of a mill corporation owned by shareholders was conceived by Hale Remington, who invited others to participate including S. A. Chace, the company's first president, and David Anthony, the first treasurer. Capital of \$175,000 was raised from twenty subscribers, all described as "gentlemen" with holdings from \$1,000 to \$2,000. The original 1859 print cloth mill, among the first in the city to be powered by steam, had a capacity of 15,000 spindles. During the war the enterprise was sufficiently profitable to allow construction of a second mill of 30,000 spindles in 1865 without any increase in capital or assessment of stockholders. During the financial troubles of 1879, the property was sold to creditors and reorganized as the Union Cotton Manufacturing Company, capitalized at \$750,000. A third mill brought capacity to 89,608 spindles and 2,122 looms. During peak years of production following World War I, capacity reached 110,816 spindles and 2,837 looms with 900 employed in the production of print cloth and wide goods measuring 30 million yards annually. The Union Mills paid cash dividends which averaged 20.7 percent between 1911 and 1925, a record equalled by only one other Fall River mill. Within a few years, however, Fall River's mill economy collapsed and the Union closed in 1929. Buildings are presently used for retail space, light manufacturing and storage.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- Phillips' History of Fall River, Fascicle II, p. 126  
Fall River and Its Industries, p. 121-123  
History of Bristol County, MA, p. 316-317  
American Wool and Cotton Reports, 1920 Handbook  
HABS No. Mass-981, New England Textile Survey, 1970-71  
1920 Corporate Millyard Plans  
Mill Architecture in Fall River, p. 189, 193, 194  
Barlow Insurance Plans; No. 4098; 1876  
The Cotton Textile Industry of Fall River, Mass., by Thomas Russell Smith, (King's Crown Press, 1944), p. 78, p. 133  
Fenner's History of Fall River (1911), p. 72-73

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Fall River, Mass.

Form No:

N-23-1/4/6

Property Name: Union Mills

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Continuation)

the Union is representative of the early period of Fall River mill architecture. The cotton machinery was built by Marvel, Davol & Co. of Fall River and Wm. Mason of Taunton. The engine by the Corliss Steam Engine Co. of Providence was of the type which was to become famous throughout the manufacturing world. One of its advantages was that the exhaust steam could be used for dressing the loom warps and in winter for heating the buildings. The Union was the first mill in Fall River to be heated in this manner. The contract with the Corliss Company stated that the mill could either pay a fixed sum or the amount saved in energy over a period of time, and the management quickly paid the stipulated amount because the economy was so marked. This type of engine was used in most subsequent factories until the Globe Yarn Mills #2 of 1886-7. In 1865 a second granite mill, 282' X 72', and ells were constructed, along with a cotton storage house and office. In 1878 a third brick mill was built, and in 1890 a separate engine house and boiler house were added to Mill #2, and all three mill buildings were altered with the removal of their gable roofs and addition of an upper story, overhanging bracketed cornice and low-pitched roof. Nine buildings remain including Mill #1 and one ell, Mill #2 and picker house, boiler house and engine room, a brick storage house and a later engine room attached to Mill #1. Most of the buildings are granite, giving the complex a unity of materials in addition to its early feeling;

The Union Mills Complex is one of the city's earliest remaining mills, associated with a prominent local architect, and reflects the monumental granite architecture of the period. It also represents a substantial period of post-war industrial expansion, and thus meets criteria A and C of the National Register.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received 1/5/83  
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 9 of 10

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Fall River Multiple Resource Area  
State MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- |                                      |                                     |        |                            |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|----------------------------|
| 81. St. Joseph's Orphanage           | Substantive Review                  | Keeper | <u>2/16/83 [Signature]</u> |
|                                      |                                     | Attest | _____                      |
| 82. St. Louis Church                 | Entered in the<br>National Register | Keeper | <u>2/16/83 [Signature]</u> |
|                                      |                                     | Attest | _____                      |
| 83. St. Mary's Cathedral and Rectory | Entered in the<br>National Register | Keeper | <u>2/16/83 [Signature]</u> |
|                                      |                                     | Attest | _____                      |
| 84. St. Patrick's Church             | Entered in the<br>National Register | Keeper | <u>2/16/83 [Signature]</u> |
|                                      |                                     | Attest | _____                      |
| 85. Stafford Mills                   | Entered in the<br>National Register | Keeper | <u>2/16/83 [Signature]</u> |
|                                      |                                     | Attest | _____                      |
| 86. Union Mills                      | Entered in the<br>National Register | Keeper | <u>2/16/83 [Signature]</u> |
|                                      |                                     | Attest | _____                      |
| 87. Valentine-French House           | Entered in the<br>National Register | Keeper | <u>2/16/83 [Signature]</u> |
|                                      |                                     | Attest | _____                      |
| 88. Wampanoag Mills                  | Entered in the<br>National Register | Keeper | <u>2/16/83 [Signature]</u> |
|                                      |                                     | Attest | _____                      |
| 89. Winslow, Luther Jr., House       | Entered in the<br>National Register | Keeper | <u>2/16/83 [Signature]</u> |
|                                      |                                     | Attest | _____                      |
| 90. Woman's Club of Fall River       | Entered in the<br>National Register | Keeper | <u>2/16/83 [Signature]</u> |
|                                      |                                     | Attest | _____                      |

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Union Mills (Fall River MRA)  
Bristol County  
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 115/83-15  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2.7.84  
Date Due: 2/3/83 - 2/19/83  
Action:  ACCEPT 2/16/83  
Entered in the RETURN  
National Register REJECT  
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
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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 \_\_\_\_\_

UNIT 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 NRA, Ma

MP-4-12

Union Mill

n/w Mill # 2

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000279