

DT ENT SEP 27 1985

AREA Cambridge- port	FORM NO.
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**FORM B - BUILDING**

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116

Amendment to the Cambridge Multiple Resource Area (NR:1983)

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PHOTO: (3x3" or 3x5", black & white)  
staple to left side of form

Photo number \_\_\_\_\_

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Town Cambridge

Address 25-27 Mt. Auburn Street  
~~10 12 Arrow Street~~

Historic Name Reversible Collar  
Company Building

Use: Present Commercial, Offices  
Original Factory

**DESCRIPTION:**

Date 1860,1868,1870,1875,1889,1907

Source Deed and Tax Records  
Mill Building Vernacular,

Style Second Empire

Architect S.S. Woodcock, Charles Gannett

Exterior wall fabric brick, wood

Outbuildings None

**SKETCH MAP**

Show property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection. Indicate north.

Map; see attached map. Numbered arrows refer to direction of photographs above.

For map, see attached. Numbers on map refer to direction of numbered photos above.  
Recorded by David J. Eisen

Organization Kruger Associates, Inc.  
Date January 1985

Major alterations (with dates) 1965,  
1970 renovated for offices

Moved NO Date N/A

Approx. acreage Less than one acre

Setting Mixed detached wood frame residential, with two-six story commercial and institutional buildings.

UTM References: 19/325820/4692900

(Staple additional sheets here)

*Valeri Talmage ship*  
*8/1/85*

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Cambridge	Form No:
Property Name: Reversible Collar Company Building 1	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Reversible Collar Building is a well-preserved example of middle and late nineteenth-century industrial architecture. Built between the early 1860s and 1907, it is typical of the mill building vernacular that evolved during this period. The building was a self-sufficient industrial complex complete with enclosed coal yard, power plant, and production floor. Its dignified facades illustrate the changing taste in formal architectural design.

The building has been modified and added to over the past 100 years to accomodate the various manufacturing and commercial concerns that have occupied it. Frame and masonry sections wrap around each other and structural systems abut and overlap. The masonry shell and post and beam structure of all sections, however, remain substantially intact. Building sections are described below in the order of their construction. Together they form a unified complex illustrating the evolving forms of industrial architecture.

Section A: This frame portion, now almost entirely embedded in later construction, appears to be an enlarged version of the original printing factory built on the site in 1862. It is a 4-story wooden post and beam structure.

Section B: Built in 1870, this portion is a four-story, brick bearing-wall structure with wooden posts, beams, and floors. There is a dentilated brick cornice above the third floor with shingled mansard or "French Roof" at the fourth floor. The stylistic feature gives the Mount Auburn Street facade a feeling of dignified urbanity popular in the 1860s and 1870s and marks the transition from gable-roofed to flat-roofed mill construction. An 8-foot by 32-foot, one-story high structure projects out on the west side. It is of solid masonry construction with a brick barrel vaulted ceiling and 25-foot high chimney at the rear. It served as a fire proof engine house.

Section C: This gable-front brick house is one story high with an attic and a full basement. It was built in 1870, probably as the factory office. The rear and side have double-hung wood windows with wood lintels and granite sills. The front facade was rebuilt in 1889 to match the addition built along Arrow Street that year.

Section D: Once freestanding, this engine house, built in 1877, has been almost entirely embedded in later construction. It is one story high. The exposed facade facing Mount Auburn Street has a dentilated brick cornice, segmentally-arched lintels and granite sills. A brick chimney towers 87 feet above the ground. The southern portion of this section is of fire resistant construction with an arched masonry ceiling supported on iron beams. Shafting once entered the main complex from this building, transmitting rotary power to other parts of the factory.

Continued

*Valerie Talmage shpo*  
8/1/85

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Cambridge	Form No:
Property Name: Reversible Collar Company Building 2	

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

Section E: This addition was built in 1889 and stretches 129 feet along Arrow Street. It was designed by S. S. Woodcock and is the first section to be designed by an architect. Woodcock designed a large number of churches, schools and other public buildings in the Boston area between 1855 and 1901. A landscape architect as well as an architect, he was the designer of the Boston Public Garden. The first floor is of brick construction with two frame floors above. The sills and the foundation are of ledge stone. Windows with projecting segmentally-arched brick lintels are evenly spaced along the first floor beneath a dentilated brick cornice. At the western end a large opening leads down by ramp to what was once an enclosed coal yard. Although it is an industrial building, it presents a dignified face to narrow, brick-paved Arrow Street, retaining the nineteenth-century atmosphere of the neighborhood.

Section F: Built in 1907, this is the last significant addition to the building complex. It is four stories tall and of brick bearing-wall construction. It has broad, flush, segmentally-arched brick lintels with a pair of double-hung windows in each opening. Sills and foundation are of concrete. The interior has cast-iron columns and steel beams on the first two floors and wood framing above. It replaced an older building on the site that had been demolished. This is a transitional building. It has simpler detailing and broader openings than most nineteenth-century industrial buildings, but still has traditional brick bearing walls rather than the concrete frame that was soon to become standard in industrial construction. Unlike earlier additions, the 1907 section had plans submitted to the Cambridge Building Department. This reflects the increasing public control over private building projects occurring at the time. Charles Gannett is listed as the architect, Mitchell Sutherland as the "mechanic."

The parts of the Reversible Collar Building embody the distinctive characteristics of the types, methods and periods of construction in which they were built. They illustrate the transition from wood to metal framing, from pitched to flat roof construction, from small masonry openings to broad, open masonry framework, from stone sills and foundation to concrete, and from elaborate nineteenth-century facades to the simple functional construction of the twentieth century.

The forms and details are similar to those in other Cambridge industrial buildings of the time. Riverside Press built a mansard-roofed addition to their plant in 1867 that may have been the model for the 1870 addition to Reversible Collar. The Lamb & Ritchie Sheet Metal Factory's 1909 addition uses the same broad segmentally-arched openings with paired double-hung windows used on the Reversible Collar Buildings' 1907 addition. Both the Riverside Press and Lamb & Ritchie buildings, like so many other historic industrial buildings in Cambridge, have been demolished.

*Valerie Talmage shpo*  
8/1/85

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Cambridge	Form No:
Property Name: Reversible Collar Company Building	3

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

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Reversible Collar Building retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, feeling, and association. The people, products, and events associated with the site have made significant contributions to the broad patterns of our history. The building's construction and expansion program are closely tied to parallel developments in Cambridge and American society, illustrating the historic association between architectural, cultural, and economic growth. The building meets criteria A and C for listing on the National Register, with significance at the local level.

The site of the Reversible Collar Building was originally an open homestead and stable on the periphery of old Cambridge. It was first developed for industrial production during the early 1860s. Located between the developing industrial area of Cambridgeport to the east and Harvard College to the west, it was an appropriate site for a printing business. Unlike other industries, printing required large floor areas, rather than convenient transportation. Printers were able to locate away from Cambridgeport and East Cambridge where industrial development clustered around the newly-built railroad tracks and canals.

Allen and Farnham, Printers purchased the property in 1860, and by 1862 they had built an engine house and workshop on the site. In 1865 they sold the property to John Wilson, Eliab Metcalf and Frederick Dakin, the owners of University Press. University Press is the oldest press in the United States, and along with the Riverside and Athaneum Presses, was responsible for Cambridge's return to prominence as a printing center. It is not known whether any of the existing buildings were built for the University Press or for Allen and Farnham, although Section A appears to date from this period.

In 1867, the property was sold to the Reversible Collar Company. The Reversible Collar Company began a 30-year building program that paralleled Cambridge's development as a major industrial power.

The Reversible Collar Company was founded by George Snow for the manufacture of paper collars. The production of paper collars was an important industry in the early 1860s, but declined in the late 1860s with the growing popularity of cloth collars. George Snow responded to the new demand by inventing and patenting a machine for uniting cloth and paper in continuous rolls. The invention allowed for the economical production of quality goods and eliminated the painstaking hand work previously required.

The Reversible Collar Company prospered throughout the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s. It expanded its line of products to include colored, glazed, and enameled paper and cloth-lined paper for maps and wall charts. This was a

Continued

*Value Talmage shop*

*8/1/85*

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Cambridge	Form No:
Property Name: Reversible Collar Company Building 4	

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

period of rapid economic growth in Cambridge and the Reversible Collar Company took advantage of the same rail and port facilities and burgeoning immigrant population that brought prosperity to so many other industrial concerns.

By 1893, the Reversible Collar Company had outgrown its site, relocated to a new building several blocks away, and sold its building to the Boston Bookbinding Company. With the exception of the 1907 addition, Boston Bookbinding made only minor changes in the building, continuing to occupying it until 1951. Mathieson Higgins Inc., die cutters, bought the building that year. Along with several other manufacturing and printing concerns, they occupied it until 1967.

In the late 1960s the shortage of the office space in the Harvard Square area and the development of industrial areas in the suburbs of Boston combined to make the conversion of the Reversible Collar Building into office space economically attractive. When Mathieson Higgins moved their operations to Woburn, it brought to an end 100 years of manufacturing on the site. The conversion of the Reversible Collar Building to office space was one of the earliest in the area, setting the trend for the numerous factory and mill conversions that have followed.

The Reversible Collar Building is both typical and unique in its relation to other industrial sites in Cambridge. Its growth, gradual decline and conversion mirror the overall growth and gradual decline of Cambridge as an industrial center. Yet it is one of the few industrial buildings in the predominantly commercial and industrial complexes that grew up along the railroad tracks and canals. The Reversible Collar Building is a reminder of the complex origins of the Cambridge community and interdependence of all aspects of cultural life.

*Valeri Taernage skpo  
8/1/85*

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 17 of 17

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Cambridge Multiple Resource Area  
State MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

161. Mead, Alpheus, House

~~Substantive Review~~

Keeper

William H. Braham 4.13.82

Attest

162. Snow, Daniel, House

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

✓ Keeper

William H. Braham 4.13.82

Attest

Determined eligible

163. Wyeth, John, House

~~Substantive Review~~

✓ Keeper

William H. Braham 4.13.82

Attest

164. HOMER-LOVELL House

~~Substantive Review~~

Keeper

Wm. Duhon 12/22/83

Attest

165. Reversible Collar  
Company Building

~~Substantive Review~~

Keeper

Michael Dwyer 9.27.85

Attest

Byes 166. Ash Street Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

167. Berkeley Street Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melamed Byes 5-19-82

Attest

168. Bertram Hall at Radcliffe College

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melamed Byes 5-19-86

Attest

169. Bennink-Douglas Cottages

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melamed Byes 5-19-86

Attest

170. Brabrook, E. H., House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melamed Byes 5-19-86

Attest

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Ref #  
85002663

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Substantive Review

Reversible Collar Company Building (Cambridge  
MRA)  
Middlesex County  
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. AUG 14 1985  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/4/86  
Date Due: 9/12/85 - 9/28/85  
Action:  ACCEPT 9-27-85  
 RETURN  
 REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

*Constructed 1860-1907 it is a  
representative Cambridge  
industrial complex and  
significant for its association*

Recom./Criteria Accept A.C.  
Reviewer Jan Boyd  
Discipline A.C.  
Date 9/27/85  
see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below with the Reversible Collar Company Building.  
\_\_\_\_\_ 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"/> original site    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good      | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        | <input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair      | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed    |                                           |
|                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered    |                                           |
|                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> 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**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM 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: \_\_\_\_\_



Reversible Collar Co. Building  
25 Mt. Auburn St.  
Cambridge, MA

*Cambridge MA*



Reversible Collar Co. Building  
25 Mt. Auburn  
Cambridge, MA

*Cambridge MA*



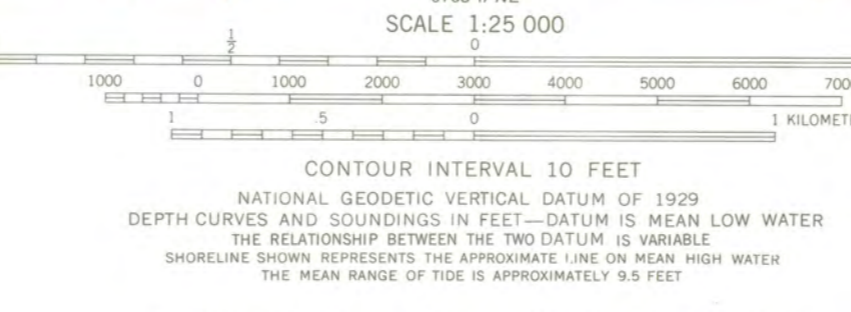
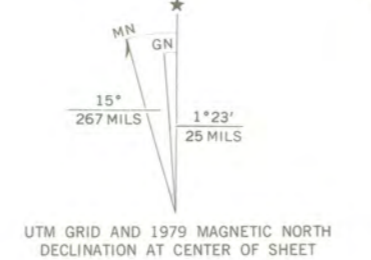
Reversible Collar Co. Bldg. 25 Mt. Auburn St., Cambridge, MA  
 SOURCE: Sanborn Map Co., Inc. Cambridge, Mass. (1982)

SCALE: 1" = 100'0"

Reversible Collar Company  
Building  
25-27 Mt. Auburn Street  
10-12 Arrow Street  
Cambridge, Massachusetts  
Amendment to the Cambridge  
Multiple Resource Area NR: 1983  
UTM Reference:  
19/325820/4692900



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey  
Topography by planetable surveys 1943. Revised from  
aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1970  
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 246  
and 248 (1971). This information is not intended for navigational  
purposes.  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,  
mainland zone  
1,000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,  
zone 19  
Boundaries in tidewater areas from information supplied  
by Massachusetts Department of Public Works  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



**ROAD CLASSIFICATION**  
Primary highway, hard surface ——— Light-duty road, hard or improved surface  
Secondary highway, hard surface ——— Unimproved road ———  
Interstate Route ——— U.S. Route ——— State Route ———

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map. Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with the State of Massachusetts agencies from aerial photographs taken 1975 and other source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979

**BOSTON SOUTH, MASS.**  
N4215—W7100/7.5  
1970  
PHOTOREVISED 1979  
AMS 6768 1 SE—SERIES V814



# DOWSE, INC.

166 NEW BOSTON ST.  
WOBURN, MASS. 01801  
TEL: 935-6400

January 15, 1985

Carol Shull, Chief  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
18th and C Streets, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

Dowse, Inc. recognizes that the following property will be considered for Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts State Review Board at its February, 1985 meeting.

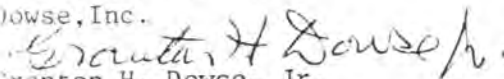
Reversible Collar Building  
10-12-14 Arrow St., 25-27 Mt. Auburn St.  
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dowse, Inc. is aware of both the incentives and disincentives of the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 and other consequences of National Register listing and hereby waives by right the 30 day commenting period.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Dowse, Inc.

  
Granton H. Dowse, Jr.

President

cc: Sarah J. Zimmerman  
Massachusetts Historical Commission



## CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139  
Tel. 498-9011

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
ROBERT W. HEALY  
City Manager

March 12, 1985

Carol Shull, Chief  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
18th and C Streets, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

I recognize that the following property will be considered for Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts State Review Board at its meeting in March, 1985.

Reversible Collar Building  
10-14 Arrow Street and  
25-27 Mount Auburn Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138

I am aware of both the incentives and disincentives of the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 and other consequences of National Register listing and hereby waive by right the 30-day commenting period.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy  
City Manager

RWH/mbf

cc: Sarah J. Zimmerman, Preservation Planning Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission



**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

Office of the Secretary of State  
Michael Joseph Connolly, Secretary

**Massachusetts Historical Commission**

**Valerie A. Talmage**

*Executive Director*

*State Historic Preservation Officer*

July 31, 1985

Carol Shull, Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Dear Ms. Shull:

I hereby request that the Multiple Resource Area nomination to the National Register for Cambridge, Massachusetts be amended to include the following properties:

Reversible Collar Company Building;  
25-27 Mount Auburn Street, 10-12 Arrow Street; Cambridge, Massachusetts.

As the designated State historic Preservation Office 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. The evaluated significance of this property has been voted eligible by the State Review Board. Owners were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30-75 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment. Comments received to date are attached to the nomination forms.

Sincerely,

Valerie A. Talmage  
Executive Director  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

VT/sac  
enclosure

AUG 14 1985