

4828

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Farwell Brothers Store
Other names/site number: O.J. Farwell & Son
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)



2. Location

Street & number: 37 Gordon Hill Road
City or town: Thorndike State: Maine County: Waldo
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
 national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

<u>Kirk F. Mohney, SHPO</u>	<u>11/14/2019</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government
Government	

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

[Handwritten Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

12/30/2019

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE / department store

COMMERCE / warehouse

INDUSTRY / mill

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

CULTURE / museum

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

FOLK VICTORIAN

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation - stone, concrete, wood. Walls - clapboards. Roof - metal. Other - brick.

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Farwell Brothers Store was a family run business comprised of with a store, grain mill and lumber shed located in Thorndike, Waldo County, Maine. The small rural village is centered around the intersection of State Routes 139 and 220, and the Belfast and Moosehead Lake Railroad. Collectively known as the Farwell Brothers Store, the three, gable front wood frame buildings are located, one behind the other, along the northeast side of the rail line. Route 139 is north of the buildings and is lined with widely spaced one and two story commercial or residential buildings. The three contributing Farwell buildings are clapboard sided with metal roofs. The one-and-one-half-story store is 15' from the edge of the road on a field stone foundation. The two-story mill has a cupola, a concrete foundation and is connected to the rear of the store by a 4' enclosed hallway. A one-story lumber shed on a wood pier foundation is separated from the mill by 8'. The railroad siding to the southwest is 15' to 20' from the sides of the buildings. A gravel parking lot is to the northeast of the store building with grass to the north and east of the other two buildings. A small, recently constructed, non-contributing wood frame shed is in this grass covered space. The large commercial store and lumber shed have open floor plans while the mill has numerous grain bins, chutes, and equipment to facilitate processing grain for animal feeds. The buildings have little architectural decoration. Significant features are related to their commercial use like the storefront, store counters, cupola, grain

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handling bins, and open storage areas. Their linear juxtaposition along the railroad siding and relation to each other is also character defining. The store is almost completely intact from its last use in 1960. The mill has lost several chutes and some rooms have been altered, but it has high integrity compared to other similar mills which are usually greatly altered.

Narrative Description

Setting

The village is located on a flat area at the west side of the town boundary near Halfmoon Stream, State Highway 202, State Highway 139 and the Belfast and Moosehead Lake Railroad. The village is centered around the connection point of major roads, a railroad and a water body. The two highways form a "T" intersection west of the Farwell Store and the railroad cuts across both legs to create a right triangle around which the village businesses have historically clustered. Large commercial buildings are widely scattered around the intersection and railroad tracks. There are a number of vacant lots due to demolished buildings which include the railroad depot and freight shed.

The store sits on an angular lot with the store front in an acute angle created by State Highway 139 and the railroad tracks. There are three tracks to the southwest of the buildings the main line in the center with a siding on either side of it. The lot is a little less than an acre in size and is largely grass covered with a small gravel parking area off the highway which was raised at some point making the road and shoulder higher than the floor level of the store along the north corner of the building. See Figure 2 for a general overview of the site and building locations.

Buildings

The three contributing buildings are each 25' feet wide, separated from each other by a few feet and are aligned gable end to gable end in a string running northwest to southeast. Buildings lengths decrease moving to the southeast with the store at 72' long, the mill at 60' and the shed at 32'. Each of the buildings has a steep sloped metal roof and wood clapboard siding. The ridge height rises from the one-and-one-half story store to the two-story mill and then drops to the one-story shed at the southeast.

1. Store – ca. 1872, Contributing

The entire building sits low to the ground with all doorsills only several inches above grade. All sides have wood clapboard siding with narrow, flat wood trim at the windows, doors, corners and eaves. The simple box cornice has a moderate overhang constructed of flat stock. The steeply sloped roof is covered with rusted sheet metal.

The northwest facing façade of the story-and-one-half store is three bays wide with a double door centered between two-over-two, double-hung wood windows. There are two upper windows of the same style in the gable end. The wood doors have a single light set high in each leaf. A sign between floors reads, "FARWELL GENERAL."

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The northeast wall has unrelieved clapboards in the north third, two separate six-over-six, double-hung wood windows in the center third and two doors in the east third of the wall. The out swinging, board and batten, pedestrian door has the flat side to the exterior and a single light centered in the door. Near the east corner, the sliding door is also of pedestrian scale with flat, matched boards to the exterior and no light. The door is mounted on an exterior slide rail which has a wood box housing extending to the north. The two-brick-wide chimney rises one-third of the distance along the ridge from the façade. Two abandoned downspouts remain on the building at the center point and east end, but no other sign of a rainwater system exists.

The southeast side of the store building is separated from the mill by four feet and connected by a lightly built ca. 1960 enclosure at the center of each building. The enclosure is drop siding with an asphalt shingle roof. There are two six-over-six, double-hung wood windows at the upper story with the remainder of the side as previously described.

The southwest side of the building is parallel to the railroad siding and has a failing fieldstone foundation causing the wood frame wall to sag and bulge outward. The clapboard wall is interrupted by three single sash windows, one at the center and the other two at the south end. All three windows were originally ten lights in a single horizontal sash. Muntins have been damaged and lights broken. As a result, the existing repaired sashes are now seven-light, five-light and ten-light from north to south. Damaged muntins have been removed to accommodate the larger replacement panes. This side is otherwise as previously described.

Store interior

The first floor is one large room with a small narrow storage room at the southeast. The main room is the full 25' width of the building by 64'. The flooring is hardwood strip flooring, the side walls flush boards and the ceiling beadboard. A cased central beam is set below the ceiling and supported on four cased wood posts. The chimney is in the second bay although sections of it have collapsed into the basement. The wood stove, sole source of heat, is still in its original location northwest of the chimney. There are built-in floor to ceiling shelves on the exterior walls with display and service counters running the full length of the long walls. Shelves and display cases also run the length of the center of the room. Patron circulation is the two central walkways with staff access to the two long corridors between exterior shelves and counters. Exposed knob and tube wiring still runs the length of the ceiling in two rows, but modern surface wiring added ca. 2000 is also present. At the southeast end of the room, there is an opening at the center to the narrow storage room. To the northeast of the storage room door is the access door to the basement.

The storage room extends the width of the building and is 8' across. It is open framing with a door to the mill at the center of the southeast wall. In the north corner of the storage room is a straight run stair to the second floor.

The second floor is two rooms of exposed framing with a partition separating the northwest third of the space from the southeastern two-thirds. The side walls rise 2' above floor level to the heavy timber wall plate. The wall plate is supported by 8"x8" posts with matching rafters.

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Common rafters, 2" x 8", complete the roof frame which has no purlins or ridge beam. A tie beam extends from post to post several inches above floor level at most bents with 4' long steel rods from wall plate to tie beam providing additional rigidity. The center bent has a heavier tie beam and a modified king post truss above it. The "king post" is actually a 1" steel rod suspended from the apex and descending through the tie beam to support the first floor ceiling beam below. Between the center truss and the dividing wall to the northwest is a large wood wheel to drive a windlass for hoisting material from the first to second floor. Patched infill indicates a former hatchway. The northwest room of the second floor is open space. The entire second floor has a wide board floor but the remainder of the space is open to the framing.

The basement of the store is accessed through the door near the store room. No stairs exist. Access is by ladder. The low ceiling, rubblestone walls, and exposed framing are currently exposed to damp due to the negative drainage around the building as a result of the raised road to the north. The southwest wall has caved in in some areas and support posts are deteriorated as a result of the wet dirt floor. Supplemental support posts have been added.

Store integrity

The current store building is almost untouched since 1961 when it closed. Minor repairs have been made to broken window panes and doors. The largest current threat to integrity is deterioration due to water damage at the foundation level. The southwest foundation and exterior wall need repair, but the building maintains integrity relative to its period of significance.

2. Mill – after 1896 ca. 1915 Contributing

The façade of the side-gabled mill faces northeast with only a few inches of the 1970s concrete foundation visible between the first course of clapboard siding and the lawn. The building has flat wood trim at windows, doors, corners and the box cornice. There is a crown molding as the cornice transitions to the sheet metal roofing on the steep pitched roof. A hip roofed cupola sits astride the ridge over the northern third of the building.

Fenestration from north to east across the first floor is a six-over-six, double-hung wood window, a flush board exterior mounted sliding wood door, a modern nine-light steel door, a one-over-one, double-hung wood window, another nine-light door and two more one-over-one windows. A low, railed deck provides access to the center door with the other two doors eighteen inches above grade with no steps. The oversized sliding pedestrian door has a boxed in wood housing to cover its operating mechanism from the weather. The center swinging door has a similar wood housing indicating an earlier sliding door was replaced. The second-floor side wall is unrelieved clapboards up to the wide frieze board. At the narrow overhang of the roof there are brackets supporting a half round gutter. There are no downspouts. The gutter returns along each gable end of the mill before ending at about the center of the wall. The open-ended gutter shoots the water in the general direction of the railroad side of the building where the grade is slightly lower.

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The hip roofed cupola has two six-over-six, double-hung wood windows on the façade. Clapboards and simple trim as previously described cover the walls. The roofing though is three-tab asphalt shingles.

The southeast wall of the building has flat vertical wood boards across the lower six feet of the wall. Above this level the wall is clad in wood clapboards to the gable peak. There is a single fifteen-light pedestrian door near the peak. The door previously provided access to a wood fire escape that was built after the period of significance and has since been removed. The view of the cupola on this side has no fenestration but is otherwise as previously described.

The southwest side of the building has approximately three feet of the concrete foundation exposed due to the lower grade on the track side of the building. From south to west at the first-floor level are a pair of one-over-one, double-hung wood windows, two sliding, oversized pedestrian doors, and a six-over-six, double-hung wood window. Neither sliding door has steps to grade. Their threshold is roughly at the level of a boxcar's or truck's floor. Each of these exterior flat doors has a wood housing as previously described to protect the metal wheels and rail. As on the other eave side, there is no fenestration above the first floor. Above this level, the two sides are mirror images of each other.

The northwest side of the mill is separated from the store by four feet and connected as previously described. The side wall of the mill is clapboards with a single six-over-six, double-hung wood window near the peak. The appearance is as otherwise described.

Mill interior

First Floor

The first floor of the mill consists of a large room in the northwest two-thirds of the space with five smaller rooms at the southeast end. See Figure 3. The electrically powered grain mill and distribution chutes are centered in the large main room as part of a vertically oriented mechanical core. See Figure 4 for a general example of the vertically integrated processing in a ca. 1920 elevator. In the Farwell Mill, power and grain distribution is concentrated in the center with storage and processing space surrounding it. While the ceiling/second floor framing and sheathing is continuous, grain chutes and elevators consisting of hollow wood tubes that are square in cross section extend up from the grain mill on this floor to the grain bins and processing equipment above. Two 12" x 12" beams running northwest to southeast along the length of the building divide the width of the space into three bays and are supported along their length at 12' intervals. The joists above are 2" x 12". The flooring in the room is wood planks laid tight. The side walls are a mixture of older and more recent horizontal boarding laid tight.

The five rooms in the southeast third of the first floor include a small office, a kitchen and a larger display room. A closet and a toilet are accessed from the small office. These rooms were altered in the 1970s and have painted plywood ceilings, painted wide pine board floors and painted flush board walls. Most walls are laid horizontally but vertical boarding is present on some walls.

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Second Floor

The straight run of stairs to the second floor is along the exterior southwest wall. At the first floor, the stairwell is enclosed by a stud wall sheathed in horizontal laid boards. A simple 2" x 4" railing encloses the second-floor stairway. The second floor like the first has two main areas. To the southeast is one large room currently used as an auditorium. To the northwest, the second floor is divided into an open workspace, three grain bins and a central mechanical core. See Figure 3 for a sketch floorplan. The auditorium is three steps up from the larger room reflecting the taller ceiling height below the auditorium. The room is finished with flush butted wood boards laid horizontally on the 5' tall sidewalls, up the sloping underside of the roof rafters and across the flat ceiling under the collar ties. The floor is butted pine boards. A short stair leads to an exterior door in the gable end of the building. This secondary exit is no longer functional as the exterior fire escape stair has been removed. At the northwest end of the room a ladder leads to a door which provides access to the third-floor catwalk.

The space on the second floor not occupied by the auditorium has three grain bins on the exterior walls surrounding mechanical equipment in the center of the room. There are two bins along the northeast wall and one at the northwest corner. Constructed of tightly butted horizontal wood boards, these bins were originally accessible only from above with no openings at the second-floor level. Doors were cut into each of the grain bins in the 1970s to provide easier access to the storage space. The open workroom and the grain bins are open above as they were originally configured. There are several areas of the wood sidewall which are worn by repeated abrasion from grain being dropped into the bin from one of the gravity-fed distribution chutes.

The mechanical core on second floor is surrounded by the bins and walled off from the open workroom by horizontal laid flush board walls. This enclosure contains the elevator mechanism, the belt driven power system, grain chutes and other moving components. This space was and still is only accessible by trap door from the floor above.

Third Floor

The third floor is from the eave level up under the open rafter framing. Flooring is only present along the northwest gable wall and through the middle of the building. See Figure 3 for a sketch floorplan. The area over the grain bins from the building sidewall to 8' in, is open as is the area over the auditorium and work room. A ladder in the auditorium provides access to the 4' wide catwalk on the third floor. The third floor is mainly for circulation, to check bins from above, access the central mechanical core, access stairs to the fourth-floor mechanicals and reach the winnowing room between the northwest gable and the mechanical core. The catwalk has vertical 2" x 4" studs from floor to rafter without a railing on the side toward the center of the building. On the side of the catwalk toward the grain bins along the northeast wall, the studs are sheathed in flush boarding to a height of 3' to allow for maximum grain storage.

The winnowing room at the northwest end of the third floor is a relatively small space containing a mechanical winnower next to the central mechanical core and a chaff room in the north corner of the room under the eaves. The chaff room is a 4' x 8' space studded on the two interior sides and covered with fine screening material on those walls. Chaff from the

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winnowed grain could be contained in the chaff room after the grain was winnowed it was routed through the central core to the appropriate holding bin or bagging station.

Fourth Floor

The fourth floor is the 10' x 10' space under the cupola. This top level of the mechanical core of the mill is not enclosed as it is on lower floors. The floor is reached by a fixed wood ladder constructed of 2" x 4" lumber. The floor once reached is mostly occupied by pulleys, gears, chutes to the lower levels and a sheet metal diversion mechanism. The diverter allows a metal pipe to be rotated to various distribution chutes that use gravity to direct grain to a lower level. Most grain handling chutes and storage bins are wood when possible. The diverter, 90 degree connecting bends, and the elevator chains and buckets are the main uses of metal in the grain moving system. The pulleys, gears, electric drive motor, and the grinding mill of the power and processing systems are metal.

Mill Process

The mill received grain from railroad cars on the siding to the west or from local farmers on the east side. Taking advantage of gravity, the grain was unloaded into bins in the basement and raised from there mechanically for processing or mixing. The central core of the building contained the electrical motor, grain mill, drive belts and the chutes housing the chain elevator. Driven by the belts connected to the electric motor, the chain elevators lifted the grain through the wood chutes to the fourth floor at the cupola level where they could be distributed by gravity to various work stations or holding bins. Grain was diverted to the third floor winnowing and grading room if necessary. It could also be directed to holding bins on the second floor or moved to the first-floor grist mill. Once ground, the grain could be bagged immediately or moved back to the second floor for storage before final bagging or additional processing/mixing to produce animal feed. The Sprout Waldron mill, still present on the first floor, could grind wheat, corn and other grains to varying consistency depending on the customer's requirements. Once processed and bagged, grain was stored on the first floor until moved to a customer's truck or wagon.

Mill Integrity

The mill has been altered more than the store since the end of the period of significance when the business closed in 1960. The main exterior changes include replacement steel pedestrian doors and the southeast gable end door. The 1970s concrete foundation also significantly altered the building below ground although this change is largely unseen. Interior changes to the former working spaces have a larger impact on the integrity of design, materials and workmanship. The 1970s changes to the southeast rooms on the first and second floors removed original material and changed circulation patterns, but the larger space around the central mechanical core that was retained largely intact conveys the most important aspects of the design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association of the mill. While doors have been cut into the grain bins, the original uses of the spaces are readily identifiable, and the main elevator mechanical chutes and systems are largely in place. The setting and location are also intact. The location along a train siding that was integral to the store/mill use is intact and recreational passenger trains still use the tracks seasonally. The mill retains good integrity and conveys its significance and appearance during the period of significance. It also represents a

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relatively scarce property type and is one of the best known examples of an early twentieth century grain and feed mill in Maine.

3. Lumber Shed – ca. 1920 Contributing

The 25' x 32' shed is set low to the ground on stone and wood pier foundation. Its gable end is 10' from the gable end of the mill building and like that building extends from northwest to southeast along the railroad track. The one-story building is clapboarded on all sides with simple flat wood trim. There is a closed eave with moderate overhang on all sides and a sheet metal roof. In 2018 at the southwest side of the building, a platform for railroad passengers was built next to the building. The platform's floor is roughly 2' above grade at the rail siding yet still requires four steps at the building to reach floor level.

The northwest gable end has two six-over-six, double-hung wood windows, one toward the corner nearer the railroad and one near the peak of the gable end. The opposite southeast gable had a single window opening near the gable peak, but the window has been removed and plywood covers the opening. The northeast side has a single sliding wood door mounted on the exterior near the north corner of the wall. The flush board, pedestrian size door is similar to those described previously and also has a wood housing over the metal rail and wheel mechanism. The southwest side of the building also has a single sliding door at the west corner. This door is a modern replacement although there was a similar historic door here based on the deteriorated exterior wood housing for the slide mechanism. In the interior door opening behind the sliding door a modern multi-pane French door has been installed.

The interior is a single open room currently used for storage. The framing studs are exposed on the northeast and northwest side walls and at the southeast gable end wall above the eave line. The southwest and southeast walls below the eave line are sheathed with horizontal wood boards. The floor is matched 2" x 6" boards and the rafter and collar tie framing of the roof is open. The northwest half of the roof framing has collar ties extending from sidewall to sidewall just above the sidewall plate. The southeast half has ties extending from the wall plate to the mid-point of the opposite rafter in a scissor truss configuration.

This shed was constructed later in the business's operating time, but it retains its general appearance and feel from its period of use for lumber storage. Since the period of significance, the sliding doors were replaced in kind, the French door was added inside the sliding door, some interior wall sheathing was added, and the platform was added on the rail side. Even with these changes the shed retains the character defining features of a simple storage shed. The open interior space, utilitarian construction, finishes and layout, and its location relative to the railroad siding and primary buildings provides more than enough integrity to convey its significance.

4. Utility Shed – ca. 1970 non-contributing

The 10' x 12' one-story utility shed is of frame construction with a low slope gable end roof. Horizontal wood boards sheath the exterior with a pair of out swinging vertical board doors at the gable end entry. The foundation is piers on grade and the building has an asphalt shingle

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roof. The building was built in the 1970s and is noncontributing since it was never present during the period of significance. It does blend with the historic buildings but does not appear to be of their period.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce

Architecture

Industry

Period of Significance

ca. 1872 - 1960

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.) (Refer to photographs)

The Farwell Brothers Store is a functionally related group of three commercial buildings located along the Belfast and Moosehead Lake Railroad line in the Town of Thorndike, Waldo County, Maine. The store was built ca. 1872 and served the community from then until 1960 as a general store with the mill building added ca. 1915 and the lumber shed added ca. 1920. The store was owned by O. J. Farwell, and later his sons, from 1875 until 1960. The complex sold groceries, general merchandise, farm implements and feed. The business purchased and traded farm products from local farmers as well. The buildings are locally significant architecturally for their type, period and method of construction. Individually the store and the mill each represent a once common building type designed and built for a specific purpose. Collectively the complex functioned as a commercial hub for the town. The complex is significant in the area of Commerce as a longstanding community anchor in both retail sales and trade or barter of a wide range of agricultural products. The mill is significant in the area of Industry for its manufacture of ground grain and animal feeds. The period of significance extends from the construction date of the store, ca 1872 to its closure in 1960.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Commerce

As defined in the National Register Bulletin 16A, commerce is, “the business of trading goods, services and commodities.” Farwell Brothers Store served that function in Thorndike for eighty-five years under the Farwell name. Buying, selling and trading a wide range of goods and commodities was a central focus of the store. The Farwells also provided services as a custom grain miller, potato dealer, and mortgage holder. The longer the store existed the wider the range of goods and services it provided.

As identified in Chester Lieb’s *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, “Except in rural areas, where many types of edibles were sold under one roof in a general store, specialization was most often the rule.”¹ The city or larger town had a butcher, baker, vegetable stand and grocery while the rural country store usually dealt in food products and more. While there was an occasional meat market or specialty store in Thorndike, merchandise was generally sold at one of the two or three general stores in town. To summarize Gerald Carson in his *The Old Country Store*, the rural general store was a combined grocery, hardware, shoe, confectionary, drug, jewelry, and houseware shop.² In the case of the Farwell Store and many like it, feed store, farm implement dealer, and lumber dealer were among the additional sales areas.

¹ Chester H. Liebs. *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1995. 117.

² Gerald Carson. *The Old Country Store*. New York: Oxford University Press. 1954. 192

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The Farwell Store had a longer life span than many general stores. As noted by Carson in *The Old Country Store*, "The country emporium of general merchandise seemed by the 1870s to have reached a triumphant climax in its long effort to bring the city to the country and to link the country with the city."³ From this high point, the rural general store began to face competition due to better railroad transportation, mail order catalogues in the 1890s and finally increased automobile travel in the 1920s.

Down East Magazine of September 1977, also identified the typical New England country store as a general trading post for all goods and produce but also a social and finance center. The article celebrated the history of the general store while identifying Farwell and D. T. Sanders & Son in Greenville as late surviving examples of the family run general store in Maine. Sanders & Son operated up to 1982 as a traditional general store. While the Farwell Store was not the only store at Thorndike Village for most of its existence, its longevity and family association along with its central place in the community up to 1960 highlight its commercial significance in the local area. The Farwell Store did not continue after the last owner died but was still a vibrant gathering place up to its closure.

Oscar J. Farwell was an early investor in a general store along the Belfast and Moosehead Lake RR tracks near Thorndike Station. Farwell (1839-1912) was born on a farm in nearby Unity, Maine. By 1870 he was living in Thorndike and identifying as a grocer in both U.S. census records and the Maine State Register. In 1875, he purchased the store building built in 1872 and together with partner John Tilton operated the store from 1875 until Tilton's death in 1899. An early advertisement stated that Farwell & Tilton were, "Dealers in Corn, Flour, Groceries, Provisions, Ready Made Clothing, Dry Goods, Hardware and everything usually found in a First Class Country Variety Store. Country Produce Bought and Sold."⁴ This broad array of merchandise represents the consistent offerings while O. J. Farwell was partnered with Tilton. At the same time there were two other general stores in Thorndike and a fertilizer dealer with several dealers in produce, potatoes, hay and other agricultural products.

O. J. Farwell & Son became the company name when Farwell's son William joined him in 1900. In 1907 with his father's retirement, William and his brother O. J. Farwell, Jr. ran the store jointly as Farwell Brothers. William, known as Bill, and O. J. Jr., known as Dick, ran the store together until Bill's death in 1956. Dick operated the store until 1960 and passed away in February of 1961.

During the brothers' ownership of the store, they expanded their services advertising as a potato dealer in 1915, agricultural implements dealer by 1917 and grist mill in 1922. The mill building was built sometime after 1896 and by 1917 based on photographs and maps. The expanded sales of bulky items suggest it was built around 1915 for storage. Electricity first came to Thorndike in 1915 suggesting the electrically powered milling equipment was added at

³ Carson, 191.

⁴ *Sesqui-centennial celebration, town of Thorndike, county of Waldo, State of Maine, August 9, 10, 1969*. 1969. [Maine]: [publisher not identified], 28.

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that date or after. The building was built by 1917 but may not have been a fully functional grist mill until 1922 when advertised as such.

As Farwell Brothers continued to operate their local competition decreased. There was one other general store in in Thorndike in 1927, and by 1947 Farwell Brothers was the only general store and only feed and grain merchant in town. As stated in the *Down East* article of April 1965, the store, “sold everything from needles to plows; the inventory of well over 4,500 items included the standard merchandise of grocery, drugstore, hardware, feedstore and harness establishments.”⁵ That article goes on to mention associated warehouses, 7,000 to 10,000 bushels of grain ground annually and trading of manufactured goods for farm products.

The store as noted in several mid-twentieth century articles seemed to change little while the world around did. As noted above, Farwell Brothers expanded their dealings in town to deal in most all goods and services needed. While they attempted to serve all needs locally, changes in transportation allowed people to travel further from home to fulfill those needs. Initially the rail line from Belfast to Burnham Junction Maine allowed people from Thorndike to travel to Belfast to shop. As automobile travel increased, passenger rail travel declined. In the 1950s and 60s there was still rail shipment of poultry and other animal feed in and agricultural products out. Grain milling and feed sales remained profitable, but the increase in truck and car traffic allowed people to easily shop further away. While the store operated until 1960, by that time shopping patterns had shifted to the extent that few general stores remained.

Both brothers died childless though each had married. Bill died first, and his interest in the store transferred to Dick. When Dick passed away, his will surprised the town. He had lived a simple life in Thorndike with almost no overnight travel and spending little except on his vehicle. He had accumulated considerable wealth, and his will distributed most of that back to the Thorndike community. The Farwell Trust Fund was set up to benefit specific individuals during their lifetime and to generally lower local property taxes for all. The store / mill property was sold by the Farwell estate and the proceeds added to the trust fund. The store was closed and left largely untouched with a significant amount of stock from 1960 still on its shelves fifty years later. The mill and lumber shed as discussed in Section 7 were altered somewhat to accommodate reuse for storage and office space. All three buildings continue to convey the appearance and feel during the period of significance.

Architecture

Farwell complex is an unusually intact example of a late-nineteenth / early-twentieth century general store which atypically has an associated grain mill. The store building's general construction is a fairly common gable front brace frame building with a single open room. The gable storefront suggests some type of commercial use, but the interior with built-in shelves along the exterior walls and the long rows of service counters are character defining features of the general merchandise store. As Chester Liebs described in *Mainstreet to Miracle Mile*, the general store typically:

conveyed an air of utility—with floors of bare wood, and light bulbs, suspended by lengths of braided wire, dangling from the ceiling. A service counter stretched rearward,

⁵ Isabel Currier. “Farwell’s Farewell.” *Down East Magazine*. April 1965. 15-19.

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and the walls were lined by towering shelves crammed with boxes and cans of food, accentuating the already long, narrow, corridorlike feeling of the salesroom.⁶

While Liebs references food specifically, it conveys the exact sense of the Farwell Brothers Store interior. Similarly, Carson in *The Old Country Store* describes the same deep, narrow store with shelves along walls behind counters. Carson also identifies that, "A store had to be prepared to handle goods of 'a coarse and drossy nature,' of great weight and awkward shape."⁷ He gives specific examples like an exterior gable end pulley to hoist material into the attic or, similar to the Farwell Store, a great wheel in the attic over a trap door to hoist heavy items to the attic. The upper half story storage for overstock, bulk material, and miscellaneous items, the hoisting mechanism and the first-floor configuration all define the architectural significance of the store.

The well-preserved mill building also has a common exterior that suggests barn or general warehouse. The interior milling equipment, storage bins and grain moving system indicate its use and define the historic character of the building as an architectural type. Once inside the mill, the grinding and processing machinery, holding bins and distribution chutes define the space and identify the specialized processing taking place in the building. As identified in the *B. F. Gump & Company Catalogue No. 78 Flour Mill, Elevator and Grain Handling Machinery*, the chain drive elevators within on-site constructed wood chutes was typical. Also typical was the Sprout Waldron electric grist mill, electric motor, belt drive system, and winnowing. Example drawings for mill design in the back of the catalogue outline mill configurations similar to the Farwell mill.⁸ See Figure 4. As described in Section 7, the mill's exterior appearance and construction methods are similar to a barn in many aspects, but this similarity ends on the interior with the presence of the central core of machinery, multiple separate bins and widely distributed chutes. Even with some chutes removed and doors cut into grain bins, the building has small divisions on all floors and chutes in many open spaces. The interior when active and still today does not have the open feel of a barn or storage facility like the associated lumber shed. The elevator and processing machinery in particular strongly conveys the mill building type.

This type of mill which is essentially a large machine housed in a building is difficult to reuse for another purpose without removal of the machinery. Improvements in efficiency lead to obsolescence of the machinery and reuse of old equipment is not feasible. As a result, this type of grain/feed mill is rarely intact. Based on known examples in Maine, this mill, even with removed grain bins in the basement, doorways into second floor grain bins and some removed wood chutes and accompanying elevators, has the necessary integrity to convey the architectural significance of its type.

Industry

The specialized manufacturing equipment that defines the architectural building type of the mill also helps convey its industrial significance in Thorndike. The town was incorporated in 1819

⁶ Liebs, 117.

⁷ Carson, 210.

⁸ *B. F. Gump & Company Catalogue No. 78: Flour Mill, Elevator and Grain Handling Machinery*. Chicago. Undated but published ca. 1916.

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and had a population of 543 in 1820. The population rose to a high of around 1,000 in 1850 and 60 only to drop to 700 in 1870 and 80. From 1890 to 1970 the average population remained relatively constant around 500. Thorndike was predominately a farming community with limited water power and associated industrial development. A creamery, tannery and sawmill were early businesses, but agricultural production dominated. With the construction of the Belfast and Moosehead Lake Railroad in 1870, Thorndike Village grew around the town's railroad station. Development in that area focused on general stores, agricultural product shipping and sales of agricultural equipment.

Upon completion in 1870, the Belfast and Moosehead Lake Railroad was leased by the Maine Central Railroad until 1925. It operated as a branch line from coastal Belfast to Burnham Junction in the northwest of Waldo County. The railroad provided both passenger and freight service. The freight moving in and out of Belfast often contained lumber, fish products, and manufactured goods. The central section of the county straddled the center of the rail line and moved more raw goods like fertilizer and grain into the area and farm products out. Milk from a creamery in Unity, hay, poultry, potatoes and other farm products from Thorndike and surrounding communities were common products shipped out of these local stations which were a hub for processing the movement of these commodities.

In addition to the agricultural products produced, there were small manufacturing sites to process agricultural output. The Creamery in Unity is one example while the Farwell Mill represents the limited small-scale industrial development in Thorndike which occurred along the Belfast and Moosehead Lake Railroad. Thorndike and other communities in the center of Waldo County had a predominately agricultural base without major sources of water power to power manufacturing. With the arrival of the railroad in 1870, Thorndike was better able to ship its agricultural goods to market and to develop industry.

Some industries like shoe manufacturing required little more than a building near a railroad stop, man power and electricity. Thorndike focused its industry around its agricultural production. When electricity arrived in 1915, the Farwell Mill was able to apply electricity to industrial production of ground grains and animal feeds. During the early twentieth century, farmers across Maine became more specialized and worked to improve their production levels. The mill functioned to provide local farmers with animal feeds for dairy and poultry farms. Local agricultural specialization in these areas spurred the need and continued the demand for development of this industrial production.

Little is known about the day to day operation of the Farwell Mill as few had access to the interior production spaces and none who did are now alive. Business records that survive also provide little help; however, the presence of the Farwell mill in Thorndike represents industry as it evolved locally. Using the available railroad technology to move the raw materials to the mill, local labor was able to process animal feeds. The mill typically ground 7,000 to 10,000 bushels of grain a year.⁹ While not a large industrial enterprise, the mill represents the use of

⁹ *Sesqui-centennial celebration, town of Thorndike, county of Waldo, State of Maine, August 9, 10, 1969.* 1969. [Maine]: [publisher not identified]. 11.

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evolving technology in the form of electricity and elevator processing equipment to manage materials and produce goods for the local market.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (If appropriate.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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http://cpr.org/Museum/BMLRR/BML_Yard_Diagrams/G_BML_Thorndike_Yard_1896.html
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Carson, Gerald. *The Old Country Store*. New York: Oxford University Press. 1954

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<http://cpr.org/Museum/BMLRR/> Accessed October 15, 2019.

Currier, Isabel. "Farwell's Farewell." *Down East Magazine*. April 1965. 15-19.

Day, Clarence A. *Farming in Maine 1860-1940*. Orono, ME: University of Maine Press. 1963.

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Johnson, Laurence A. *Over the Counter and On the Shelf: Country Storekeeping in America, 1620-1920*. Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle Company. 1961.

Liebs, Chester H. *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1995.

Maine Register, State Year-Book and Legislative Manual. Various years 1872 to 1960 Edmund S. Hoyt. Portland, Hoyt, Fogg & Donham or Fred L. Tower Co. or Grenville M. Donham

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Sesqui-centennial celebration, town of Thorndike, county of Waldo, State of Maine, August 9, 10, 1969. 1969. [Maine]: [publisher not identified].

United States Federal Census 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940, Ancestry.com accessed September 6, 2019.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84:
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |

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4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- 1. Zone: 19 Easting: 478130 Northing: 4936162
- 2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
- 3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
- 4. Zone: Easting: Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated property is located on the parcel described by the Town of Thorndike tax map number 11, lot 16.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The above cited boundary reflects the historic and current extent of the Farwell Brothers Store property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Michael Goebel-Bain / architectural historian
organization: Maine Historic Preservation Commission
street & number: 55 Capitol Street, 65 State House Station
city or town: Augusta state: Maine zip code: 04333
e-mail: michael.w.goebel-bain@maine.gov
telephone: (207) 287-5435
date: September 19, 2019

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Farwell Brothers Store

City or Vicinity: Thorndike

County: Waldo State: Maine

Photographer: Michael Goebel-Bain

Date Photographed: May 21, 2019

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_001.tif
Northwest and southwest elevations; facing east.

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- 2 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_002.tif
Southeast and southwest elevations; facing north.
- 3 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_003.tif
Northeast and southeast elevations; facing west.
- 4 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_004.tif
Northeast elevation of store; facing southwest.
- 5 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_005.tif
Northeast elevation; facing southwest.
- 6 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_006.tif
Southwest elevation of the mill; facing north.
- 7 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_007.tif
Northwest and northeast elevations of lumber shed; facing south.
- 8 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_008.tif
Interior of store; facing northwest.
- 9 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_009.tif
Interior of store; facing northeast.
- 10 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_0010.tif
Interior of store; facing southeast
- 11 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_011.tif
Interior of store attic; facing northwest.
- 12 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_012.tif
Interior of mill first floor kitchen; facing southeast.
- 13 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_013.tif
Interior of mill first floor main room with "Y" shaped grain chute; facing north.
- 14 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_014.tif
Interior of mill first floor main room with chutes and mill; facing northeast.
- 15 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_015.tif
Mill second floor auditorium; facing west.
- 16 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_016.tif
Mill second floor with view up to cupola; facing north.
- 17 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_017.tif

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Second floor grain bin; facing east.

- 18 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_018.tif
View of second floor grain bin from third floor; facing east.
- 19 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_019.tif
Third floor winnowing and chaff room; facing northeast.
- 20 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_020.tif
Machinery in fourth floor cupola room; facing west.
- 21 of 21 ME_Waldo County_Farwell Brothers Store_021.tif
View of lumber shed; facing northwest.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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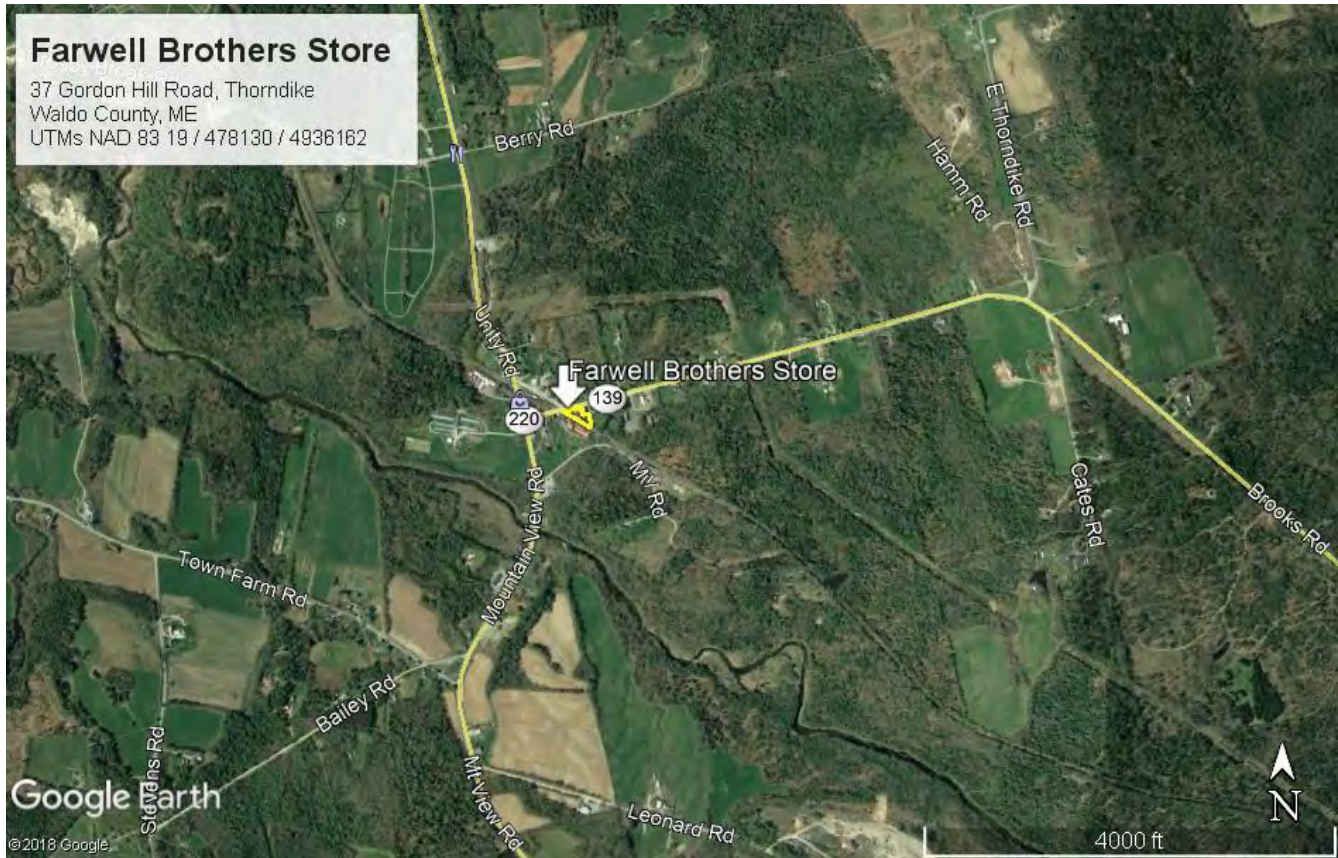


Figure 1

Farwell Brothers Store
Name of Property

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Figure 2

Farwell Brothers Store
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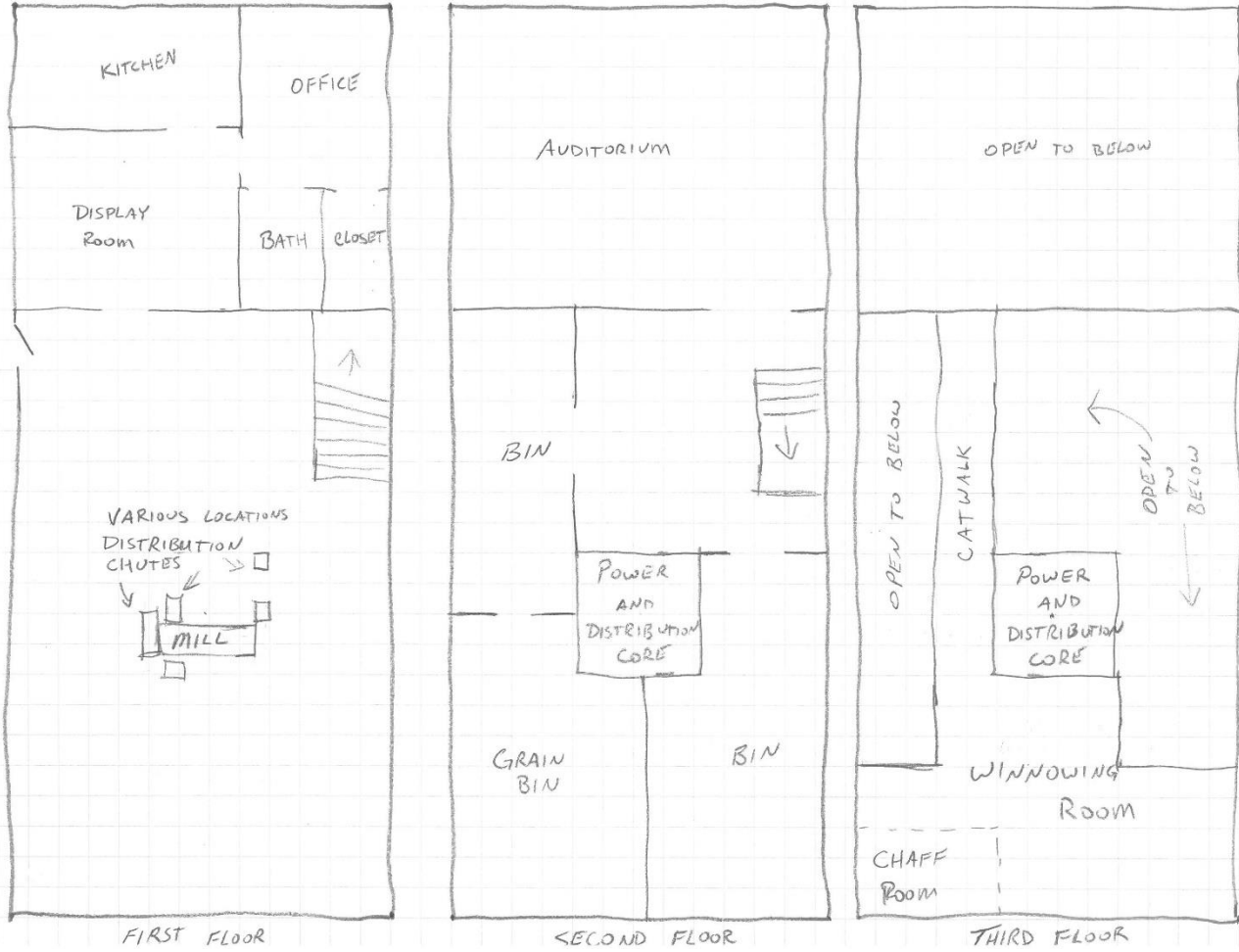


Figure 3 Mill Sketch Floor Plans -- not to scale

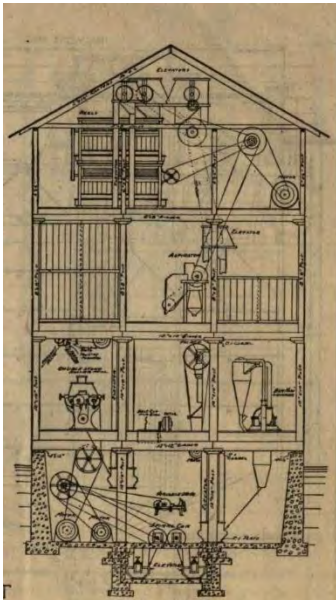


Figure 4 Generic mill cross section showing vertical processing. Processing in the Farwell Mill is consolidated in the center core.









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508-5-1



ROCK CITY



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GOVERNOR

KIRK F. MOHNEY
DIRECTOR

18 November 2019

Alexis Abernathy, Control Unit
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Control Unit:

Enclosed please find four new National Register nominations for properties in the State of Maine and one nomination form with Additional Documentation for the previously listed Richmond Historic District.

Otisfield Town Pound, Oxford County, Maine – submitted on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for Otisfield Town Pound to the National Register of Historic Places. A second CD contains the digital images. A hard copy signature page is included.

Thomas B. Reed School, Cumberland County, Maine – submitted on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for Thomas B. Reed School to the National Register of Historic Places. A second CD contains the digital images. A hard copy signature page is included.

Farwell Brothers Store, Waldo County, Maine – submitted on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for Farwell Brothers Store to the National Register of Historic Places. A second CD contains the digital images. A hard copy signature page is included.

Old Red Store, Hancock County, Maine – submitted on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for Old Red Store to the National Register of Historic Places. A second CD contains the digital images. A hard copy signature page is included.

Richmond Historic District – Additional Documentation, Sagadahoc County, Maine – submitted on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Richmond Historic District – Additional Documentation to the National Register of Historic Places. No additional photos are being provided with the additional documentation. A hard copy signature page is included.

If you have any questions relating to these nominations, please do not hesitate to contact me at (207) 287-5435.