

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

SEP 15 1989

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Webster Rubber Company Plant

other names/site number Webster Woolen Mill No. 1 1/2

2. Location

street & number Greene Street

not for publication

city, town Sabattus

vicinity

state Maine

code ME

county Androscoggin

code 001

zip code 04280

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
4	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
4	0
Total	

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

9/8/89

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Alvina Byers

10/16/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Industry/Processing/ExtractionManufacturing Facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Industry/Processing/ExtractionManufacturing Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brickwalls BrickWood: Weatherboardroof Asphaltother

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Situated along the west bank of the Sabattus River and surrounded by residential neighborhoods and small commercial establishments, the Webster Rubber Company Plant is a multi-story complex of brick, frame and concrete block buildings. It originally served as a woolen manufacturing facility, but was converted in 1922 to the production of rubber components for shoes.

The principal element of the plant is a three-story brick building whose nine-bay facade is dominated by a projecting four-story stair tower. This is the original mill building erected here in 1869. Large twelve-over-twelve windows below shallow segmental arches occupy the first story whereas those in the upper levels are narrower nine-over-nine units. A wide two-leaf door located in the tower and surmounted by a granite lintel serves as the main entrance. The corbeled cornice extends below a shallow gable roof. The broad west gable end is punctuated by symmetrically placed nine-over-nine windows, five to a story, a pattern which was probably repeated on the east end but now is obscured by later additions.

Extending across all but a fraction of the rear elevation is a long three-story addition which is, nonetheless, lower than the main block. The existing appearance of the ell only partially illustrates its evolution. The 1902 Sanborn map of the mill indicates that a three-story brick cotton picker house stood where the rear half of the ell is located. It is likely, in fact, that this picker house is still in place. The well articulated appearance of this block with its paneled bays, nine-over-nine windows and its corbeled pedimented roof suggests a nineteenth century date of construction. This building was originally linked to the main block by a narrow passageway. A one-story storage building also stood between the picker house and mill. Between the 1911 and 1931 editions of the Sanborn maps the small storage building was either removed for or incorporated into a two-story brick addition that was built between the picker house and the main building. Sometime later this block was raised to a full three stories. In 1955 the entire ell was doubled in size with a brick addition to the west. Subsequent enlargements include a two-story block as well as a one-story concrete block loading area and an expansion to the manufacturing plant. Fortunately, these later additions lie partially hidden by the change in grade so that the dominance of the original block is undiminished. One further addition to the east side of the main block was made between 1902 and

 See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Industry

Period of Significance

1869 - 1939

Significant Dates

1869
c. 1922

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Webster Rubber Company Plant in Sabattus is a small-scale manufacturing enterprise whose buildings date from between 1869 and the mid-twentieth century. Originally designed for use as a woolen mill, the plant was converted in 1922 to the production of rubber parts for shoes, a function it still maintains. The property's significance derives from its association with the industrial development of Sabattus, and is therefore eligible for nomination to the Register under criterion A.

Sabattus is the principal village in this town of approximately 3,000 persons which adjoins the City of Lewiston. The township, which was formerly known as Webster, was first settled in 1774 and incorporated on March 7, 1840. The availability of water power at Sabattus Village made it a natural choice for the establishment of sawmills and gristmills. At an early date, therefore, the community's development was shaped by this important natural resource. These first mills gave way to a pair of large woolen textile mills that were established by Luther Lombard and Retiah D. Jones. Their first facility, which was later known as Mill No. 1, was erected in 1860 on the site of one of the old sawmills. The subject complex, known as Mill No. 1 1/2, was built nine years later. In 1870 this plant had 30 employees producing 7,000 yards of wool repellants annually. By 1872 Mill No. 1 had become the Webster Woolen Company whereas R. D. Jones maintained a separate operation in the existing facility. Although the town's population had dipped between 1850 and 1860, by 1870 it was on an upswing which was largely maintained into the twentieth century.

The woolen mills dominated the local economy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Mill No. 1 1/2, for example, employed about 100 persons in the early 1890s, and this helped to sustain the numerous small commercial enterprises that had developed to serve the community. In 1922 Mill No. 1 1/2 was acquired by the Pine Tree State Rubber Heal Company and its use shifted from the manufacture of woolen goods to the production of rubber shoe parts. This change was in keeping with a long established manufacturing trend in the Lewiston-Auburn area, a trend such that by the early 1920s Auburn was the nation's fifth largest shoe manufacturing center.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Merrill, Georgia Drew, ed. History of Androscoggin County, Maine.
Boston: W. A. Ferguson & Co., 1891.

Ninth Census of the United States. 1870. Industrial Schedule.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. 1902, 1911, 1931.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 3

UTM References

A

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4	1	1	2	0	0
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4	8	8	5	5	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies the Town of Sabattus tax map 14, lot 9.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary embraces the entire lot historically associated with the manufacturing facility.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk F. Mohny, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date July, 1989

street & number 55 Capitol Street telephone (207) 289-2132

city or town Augusta state Maine zip code 04333

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1911. This one-story brick building was utilized for a drying house. Sometime thereafter a two-story expansion was made to this building.

The interior of the main block is typical of nineteenth century mill construction. Heavy wooden beams spanning the large open spaces are carried by wooden and steel posts, and the roof is supported by timber trusses. While the machinery is now of a type used in processing rubber, much of the early power transfer system of belts and pulleys is still in use.

Attached to the northeast corner of the main mill is the low one-story shed-roofed power plant. This is apparently an early feature since its footprint appears to be included on the plan of the mill which appeared in the 1875 atlas of Androscoggin County and it is located on each edition of the Sanborn maps. However, the Industrial Schedule of the 1870 Census indicates that the power source at that time was water and, therefore, at minimum the chimney stack is a later feature dating to the conversion to steam power. The building has four six-over-six windows on its west elevation and the tall round chimney stack rising from a protruding rectangular base. A door and large window are located on the north side. Mounted atop the building is a more recent metal ventilator. Inside, the power plant is subdivided into a shop, office and the steam boiler room, the latter of which has 1903 and 1927 units, each of which was manufactured by the Portland Company.

There are three weatherboarded wood frame buildings on the property. One of these, a shed-roofed garage, stands to the north of the power house. This appears to occupy the same site as a two-story storehouse building that was shown as standing here on the 1902 Sanborn map. It may be that the upper floor of this structure was removed at some point leaving the present configuration. A one-story custodian's house formerly connected the building to the power plant, but this has been removed. The second building is a long two-story storage house that stands to the west of the garage. The 1902 Sanborn shows that it was used primarily as a wool sorting facility at that time. The shallow gable roofed building has eight six-over-six windows and two doors on the first story of the east side and ten on the second. A somewhat more irregular pattern is utilized on the west side. Attached to the south end is an elevated covered walkway that extends to the second floor of the main stair tower. One of the wooden interior posts in this building carries the builder's plate of Henry Barrett of Weld, Maine. The third frame building is a small gable roofed structure whose use was related to the fire protection system. It stands off of the southwest corner of the storage building.

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Today, the mill continues to produce rubber soles and heels for the shoe industry. It has been known as the Webster Rubber Company Plant since 1925, and is the only one of the two brick mills still in existence.