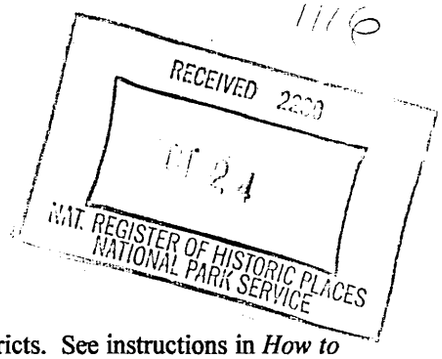
NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 10024-0018



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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Willard Manufacturing Company Building

other names/site number Leader Evaporator Company Building

2. Location

street & number 25 Stowell Street
not for publication ____
city or town St. Albans vicinity N/A
state Vermont code VT county Franklin code 011
zip code 05478

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide X locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Wayne C. Temple National Register Specialist 10-23-06
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

__V__ 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): _____

Edson H. Beall 12-6-06

for

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

__X__ private
_____ public-local
_____ public-State
_____ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

__X__ building(s)
_____ district
_____ site
_____ structure
_____ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:	Sub:
INDUSTRY	manufacturing facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:	Sub:
WORK IN PROGRESS	

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
roof Rubber
walls Weatherboard
Aluminum
other

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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)

X 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 wo a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose componen 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.)

Property is:

_____ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

_____ B removed from its original location.

_____ C a birthplace or a grave.

_____ D a cemetery.

_____ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

_____ F a commemorative property.

_____ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY

Period of Significance 1896-1956

Significant Dates 1896
1942

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)
_____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
_____ previously listed in the National Register
__X__ previously determined eligible by the National Register
_____ designated a National Historic Landmark
_____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
_____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data
__X__ State Historic Preservation Office
_____ Other State agency
_____ Federal agency
_____ Local government
_____ University
__X__ Other
Name of repository: St. Albans Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _____

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	651324	4963460	3			
2				4			

_____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kempton T. Randolph / Historic Preservation Consultant

Organization _____ date 8/21/06

street & number 1193 Lovely Road telephone 802-426-3134

city or town Marshfield state VT zip code 05658

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)
name Willard Mill Housing LP, c/o Housing Vermont Inc.

street & number 123 St. Paul Street telephone

city or town Burlington state VT zip code 05401

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 req is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time fo 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.0. Box 37127, Washington 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Physical Description

The Willard Manufacturing Company Building is a large, flat-roofed, two-story, timber-framed industrial building situated at the northeast corner of Stowell and Allen Streets in St. Albans, Franklin County, Vermont. Constructed in 1896, the original rectangular, flat-roofed mill building stretches over 200 feet along Stowell Street, dwarfing the residential and mixed-use commercial surrounding neighborhoods. Built to house the Willard Manufacturing Company's extensive garment fabricating operations, the building retains its typical late 19th century industrial features, such as large 3/6/3 wood sash for interior illumination and ventilation, novelty exterior wood siding, and an open floor plan. The greatest alterations to the building came with changes in occupancy. The George H. Soule Company, makers of maple sugaring equipment added a garage addition to the building and reconfigured the interior office space in the 1940s, and the Leader Evaporator Company added a modern single story steel framed addition to the north side of the building in the recent past. Although alterations, such as aluminum siding, and recent additions have masked and marred some of the original character of the Willard building, the structure still retains a high degree of its integrity of design, location, setting, materials, feeling, association, and craftsmanship. Most importantly, the building remained in use as a manufacturing facility until early 2006, and provides a rare glimpse into a little-altered 19th century industrial space.

Set on a limestone masonry foundation, the original block of the Willard building measures roughly 200 by 65 feet and is oriented with the narrow ends of the building on roughly an east-west axis. The exterior of the building is dominated by the repetition of large window openings, the majority of which are filled with original 3/6/3 and 3/9 light, wood, double-glazed sash in varying condition. The top 3 lights on all windows functioned as a transom that tilted in to ventilate the hot air near the ceiling, while the lower 3 lights on most sash slid up to allow cool breezes into the space. The rails and muntins of the sash all have two rabbets cut in them for the mounting of a second pane of glass on the inside of the sash, although it appears few were ever double glazed. Aluminum siding covers the original wood novelty siding of the building, which is visible on several areas of the exterior where the modern siding has been removed. Flat stock trim surrounds the window and door openings on the exterior. The building's cornice is punctuated by slightly projecting rafter tails, which have a similar appearance to decorative brackets and give the building a vaguely Italianate style.

Currently the main entrances to the building are located on the east elevation, and are accessed from a shallow raised deck several feet above grade with a set of short stairs on either end. The windows on this facade are smaller than the large windows that light the main manufacturing floor along the majority of the building. A mixture of historic double hung 6/6 wood sash and modern replacement double hung 1/1 sash fill the window bays. Seven bays punctuate the first floor of the east facade. The deck runs under the left most five bays with the entrance doors filling bays 1 and 5. The doors are wood paneled with large glass panes in their upper halves, and both are topped with hinged transom lights, the one in bay 1 having been boarded over. Bay 2 through 4 and bay 6 house windows, with bay 2 being of the modern replacement type. A wooden overhead loading door fills the northern most bay on the first floor. The second floor has six window bays. Bays 1 and 2 are in line with first floor bays 2 and 3 and are filled with replacement sash. Bay 3 is centered over the second first floor entrance door and also has replacement sash in it, and bays 4 through 6 are clustered next to bay 3 and retain historic wood sash. Mounted above the southern most entrance door half way between the two floor hangs a sign with the words "Leader Evaporator Co. Inc." arched over the company's logo of a maple sugaring house nestled in a sugar bush. "G. H. Grimm Company" and "Lamb Naturalflow" are written in smaller type below the logo.

Thirty-four bays punctuate the southern elevation of the Willard building, which is separated from Stowell Street by a thin strip of turf. The separation of the production floor from the office and break areas at the east end of the building is clearly visible from the exterior window configuration and arrangement. The eastern most three bays along the first floor and eight on the second are of the smaller size present on the building's eastern elevation. All of these sash are of the newer replacement type, except for that in the fourth bay in on the second floor, which is of the older 6/6 type. The windows in bays 7 and 8 on the second story sit slightly elevated from the other small windows, their bottoms level with the larger production floor windows as a result of their relatively recent transformation. Photographs of the building from the early 20th century show the large type windows extending the full length of the southern facade. The downsizing of the fenestration on both this facade and on the east, as well as the 6/6 wood sash probably date from the 1940s when offices were added to the east end of the building by the George H. Soule Company. Affixed to the building halfway between the two floors at the far east end of the facade is a wooden sign roughly three bays wide that simply reads "Leader Evaporator Co. Inc."

The original 3/6/3 sash fill the remaining 28 bays on the first story and 26 on the second. The rhythmic fenestration pattern of the facade is halted two bays short at the western end of the first floor by a windowless concrete vault that occupies this corner of the building. The foundation

along this elevation is gradually revealed from east to west as the grade drops several feet over the 204-foot length of the building. The uncut mortared limestone foundation laid up in rough courses is revealed up to roughly six feet at the building's western end. The foundation wall is broken up by six pane divided light sash with the same fenestration pattern as the windows on the upper stories. A second concrete vault in the basement directly below that on the first floor also abruptly ends the rhythm of the foundation sash two bays short of the west end of the building. Historic photographs show that the main entrance to the building was originally located on the southern facade. Topped by a pent roof overhang supported on diagonal brackets, the pair of entrance doors once occupied the eighth and ninth bays in from the western end of the building. Some type of masonry stairs with railings led up from ground level to the doorway, although no evidence of this entrance remains visible on the exterior. What may be the original doors are located in the office space on the building's second floor.

Continuing around the building to the western elevation, the fenestration pattern that mimicked that found on the majority of the southern facade is now obscured by vertical corrugated metal siding and a one-story garage addition. Historic photographs of the building before the addition of the garage wing show the elevation to have contained six window bays with large 3/6/3 sash on each floor, while four windows perforated the foundation, one under the outer most and inner most two bays.

Moving to the north elevation of the main block, the vast majority of the fenestration has been masked by standing seam vertical corrugated metal siding. From interior evidence, this facade once had an almost identical appearance to the southern elevation, with twin repeating courses of large divided light windows. However, only three pairs of the original large style sash remain visible from the exterior, all of them on the second floor. One pair sits at the far western end of the facade, one pair remains roughly in the middle, and the other pair is visible at the eastern end of the production floor. Four smaller window bays with 6/6 sash define the 1940s office space at the far eastern edge of the second story. On the western end of the first floor five small window bays with 3/3 sash are visible, and are actually truncated original 3/6/3 sash. Ten window openings are present in the foundation along the western end of this elevation, with the two eastern most having been boarded over. The remainder of the first floor elevation to the east of the five window bays is obscured by a large, single-story, modern steel-framed addition. Near the middle of the north elevation a concrete block chimneystack rises along the outside wall to approximately five feet above the roofline. Also visible just under the roofline is an original exterior sprinkler system intended to protect the building from potential fires originating at the Fonda Lumberyard that originally occupied the adjacent space directly to the building's north.

This lumberyard was the origin of the massive 1895 fire that swept St. Albans a year prior to the construction of the Willard factory.

Two major additions have been added to the Willard building since its construction. A single-story, flat-roofed, trapezoidal, five by three bay garage wing on the building's western end was constructed circa 1940, most likely as part of the facility upgrades made by the George H. Soule company. The addition is steel framed and set on a concrete foundation. Originally clad in weatherboards, the garage wing is currently covered with aluminum siding matching that on the south facade of the main block. The five window bays along the addition's southern elevation contain large 6/6 double-hung wood sash. Three overhead garage doors are symmetrically positioned in the addition's west facing facade, the door in the first bay being slightly taller than the other two. Only the door in bay 3 is of the older wooden type, the others being modern steel doors. A long, faded horizontal sign is mounted over bay 2 that reads "Leader Evaporator Co. Inc. / St. Albans. Vermont." The addition's northern facade does not run parallel to that of the main block, but is slightly askew due to the difference in width between the west end of the addition and that of the main building. Four of the five bays on the northern facade contain 6/6 sash. Another older wooden loading door fills bay 2, however this bay only extends to the top of the concrete foundation, and not to ground level as those on the western facade do. On the roof of the garage addition, a rectangular shaped, gable roofed enclosure projects a third of a story up from the east end of the wing and meets the main block. This projection houses an I-beam track for a one-ton hoist. The track continues into the main block nearly half its length.

Much of the first floor on the north elevation of the main block is obscured by the most recent addition to the Willard building. Here, a single-story, shallow-sloping, shed-roofed, steel-framed addition begins one third of the way in from the block's western end and ends roughly 25 feet beyond the building's east end. The addition is approximately one-and-a-half times wider than the main building and is constructed of steel trusses set on a concrete slab foundation. Clad with metal roofing and vertical corrugated metal siding, the addition contains several loading doors and a small entrance on its west facade, several small windows and numerous vent hoods along its northern elevation and an additional metal overhead door and entrance on its eastern facade. An earlier, single-story, one-bay, shed roof addition on the far eastern end of the main block's north elevation is engulfed by the modern steel framed addition. The eastern facade of this addition, the only remaining visible, contains an overhead wooden loading door, an air vent, and is sheathed in vertical metal siding.

The entrance to the Willard building located on the southern end of the eastern elevation opens into a square lobby walled off from the rest of the production floor. An open stairway with landing runs around the far left corner of the room, and doors leading to the break room and the main work floor are located in the far and right hand walls, respectfully. Both the offices upstairs, the break room and this stairwell were constructed during the 1940s as the ownership of the building changed hands and the George H. Soule company came to occupy the building. These significant alterations remain remarkably intact, and little changed other than the paint colors. All of the interior addition is characterized by simple machined wooden elements, such as baseboards, door casings, and a chair rail; two-paneled wood doors; vertical v-beaded fiber wallboard above the chair rail; cast iron hot water radiators; and a tiled ceiling ringed with a simple crown molding. The most conspicuous decorative element from this period is the staircase newel post and balustrade constructed of varnished quarter-sawn oak. The lines of the railings and posts are very square, and the posts slightly taper giving the whole an austere Mission Style appearance somewhat out of sync with the rest of the decor.

The stairway leads up from the entrance room to the offices and product showroom on the second floor. From the top of the stairs, a hallway runs north, leading to several offices along the east wall of the building, and bathrooms at the far end of the hall. Another hall also runs west from the top of the stairway. This leads to several more offices and to a large open showroom, the walls of which are lined with deep display shelves. An L-shaped sales counter occupies the southeastern corner of the showroom. From the north and west walls of the showroom, heavy paneled double doors with ornate Victorian era hardware open to the second floor workspace. These doors may have originally functioned as the main entrance doors to the factory that were once located on the southern facade.

Entering the building through the other door on the eastern facade leads directly into the production floor of the Willard building. With the exception of the office space in the southeastern corner of the building, the first floor of the factory is largely an open floor plan. The most striking aspect of the work area is the exposed timber framing that visually dominates the space. Three rows of evenly spaced ten inch square wood posts rise 12 feet from floor to ceiling to support beams that carry the floor joists. These connections are further reinforced by diagonal braces, four of which radiate from each vertical post. Along the exterior walls, a single brace extends from each post into the work area, and smaller vertical studs that support the sheathing and frame the window openings fill the spaces in between these posts. The flooring consists of the original worn softwood planks. In one area at the southwestern end of the first floor is an area

floored in strip hardwood boards. This space may correlate with the layout of the office area during the Willard Manufacturing Company's tenure.

At the far southwestern corner of the floor is an approximately 12 foot square concrete reinforced safe. This fireproof room is accessed through a heavy metal doorway that at one time supported a safe door that is now missing. The frame to the safe is painted black and traced with a thin yellow decorative stripe, and the words "Willard Manufacturing Co." are painted in tri-colored drop shadow lettering stretching across the top of the metal frame. A second pair of metal doors hang just beyond the main doorframe. These are also decorated with yellow line designs and are equipped with a brass T-shaped knob. Inside the room a concrete floor supports wooden shelving and metal vaults spring from iron I-beams running down the length of the vault. Directly below this vault in the basement floor is an identical vault that retains its outer door.

Centered in the far west wall of the first floor, a wooden ramp flanked by stairs along either side descends into the 1940s garage addition from the main workspace. The addition has an open plan concrete floor that rests several feet above the basement level of the main building. Historic sliding wooden loading doors leading into the basement of the main block remain in place, although the concrete slab floor of the addition has made their operation impossible.

The basement of the Willard building is accessed through a doorway from the garage addition. The basement level is mostly open, and like the other floors, has three rows of support posts that rise from footings throughout the space. A concrete vault, nearly identical to that on the first floor fills the far southwest corner of the floor. In the northeast corner, a large concrete cistern occupies a roughly 10 by 20 foot space, and is fed by drainpipes descending from the roof. In the north wall of the foundation, a door leads into a storage area built under the earlier addition to the north side of the building. In the heart of the basement the mechanisms and carriage of a Morse freight elevator original to the building remain in working condition. The works are belt driven by a modern electric motor, and the shaft extends up from the basement through both upper floors. A narrow staircase along the north wall of the basement leads back up to the first floor.

The second floor of the Willard building is laid out in much the same way as the first floor except for the interior office additions from the 1940s. The floor differs structurally from the first floor as three rows of tubular steel posts were used to support the roof rather than the wooden support posts found in the basement and first floors. These metal posts support steel I-beams that run the length of the building. The framing system of the roof is clearly visible from the second

floor. Four sets of rafters running alternating shallow pitches give the roof a W shape, which funnels rainwater and snowmelt to drainpipes in the two crotches that run lengthwise down the roof. A recently built storage mezzanine occupies the southwest corner of the south wall. In the northeast corner of the floor, a large circular vent hood hangs from the ceiling, and may be a remnant of the Fairfield Farms company, that occupied the second floor of the building during the tenure of the George H. Soule company and supposedly manufactured maple products including syrup. The floor also contains the upper pulley mechanisms of the Morse freight elevator, as well as two large openings cut into the floor as passageways for one-ton hoists hung from I-beams mounted to the underside of the roof. Throughout the floor, the exterior sheathing is visible, and much of it, such as that on the roof, is beaded.

The building is heated by a large hot water boiler located in the basement at the base of the masonry flue. On both the first and second floors, a bank of metal pipes that acts as a large radiator runs along the exterior walls just underneath the window openings.

Statement of Significance

The Willard Manufacturing Company building at 25 Stowell Street, St. Albans, Vermont, was constructed in 1896 to house the production facilities and headquarters of this rapidly expanding garment producer. The timber framed factory building gains its significance through its association with several of the most prominent manufacturing companies in St. Albans history, as well as for the remarkable integrity of this little-altered late 19th century industrial facility. As it is for much of the city, the story of the Willard building is also inexorably linked with the history of the Vermont Central Railroad. The rail line brought access to markets far beyond the bounds of Franklin County, making possible the location of heavy industry, such as this garment and hosiery manufacturer, in the city. Serviced by a rail spur that branched from the main line, the Willard building was one of if not the largest manufacturing plant in St. Albans at the time of its construction. The Willard Manufacturing Company operated until 1942 when the building was taken over by the George H. Soule Company, makers of maple sugaring equipment, and the Fairfield Farms Company, makers of maple sugar, syrup and other products. Despite several changes in occupancy and the continued use of the structure as a manufacturing facility until early 2006, the factory building retains a high degree of its original character, materials, feeling, and many of its original features, including novelty siding, 12 light double-glazed wood windows, and an operable Morse freight elevator. The Willard building is being nominated to the National Register under Criterion A for the story it tells about the history of manufacturing and industry in St. Albans, Vermont.

Rodney S. Willard, an ambitious Franklin County businessman, was already a named partner in two manufacturing firms by 1882; the Atwood and Willard Company and the Willard and Stevens Company, both producers of various undergarments, suspenders and hosiery items. By persuading the companies to merge under his name in 1886, Willard created the Willard Manufacturing Company, which at that time was located in Swanton, Vermont. Overalls and frocks were the company's mainstay during the early years of operation, but washable garments, swimwear, braziers and the "Puritan garter" were soon added to the factory's catalog. With business booming, the firm decided to relocate its manufacturing operations to St. Albans, Vermont, where a new factory and company headquarters was built in 1896.

Prior to the mid 1800s, the village of St. Albans was a relatively small agricultural community that also benefited from an active shipping port at St. Albans Bay on the shores of Lake

Champlain. But the completion of the Vermont and Canada Railroad line in 1850 connecting St. Albans with Burlington and all points south, would change the course of the village forever. The line was further extended north to Swanton and the Canadian border by 1851, and leased to Vermont Central Railroad. At the same time, a line connecting Swanton with Rouses Point, New York was constructed, and soon after the Missisquoi Railroad running east from St. Albans had made the city the transportation locus of northern Vermont. However, the rapid industrial growth of St. Albans was spurred more by the relocation of the main offices, freight yard, and maintenance facilities of the Vermont Central Railroad from Northfield to St. Albans, than from the increasing rail traffic alone. By 1870 the railroad employed roughly 1750 people in St. Albans, giving the city a strong and steady economic base for further development. With skilled labor attracted to the city and easy access to markets in every cardinal direction, other industrial enterprises expanded in St. Albans throughout the second half of the 1800s. Notable industries include the St. Albans Foundry, established 1840, the Glens Falls Shirt Company, established 1881, and the Willard Manufacturing Company, moved to St. Albans 1896.

With access to rail transportation so vital to industrial operation in the late 1800s, the Willard manufacturing company decided to locate its new building just to the east of the Vermont Central Railroad tracks at the southern end of the city's industrial district. Serviced by a rail spur line running into the heart of this block bounded Stebbins Street to the north, Allen Street to the west, and Stowell Street to the south, Willard had access to national and international markets waiting at their back door. Not only did the railroad provide cheap and convenient movement of materials to and finished products from the company, but the urban population center created by the commercial explosion spawned by the railroad provided a bountiful supply of factory workers. The mostly male-dominated jobs in the rail and heavy industry sector, such as those at the St. Albans Foundry, left plenty of female workers, the main workforce for the garment industry, available for employment.

The plant that the Willard Company built was located in the lot's southwest corner at the intersection of Allen and Stowell Streets. One factor that probably played a large role in locating the building on this particular lot was the involvement of W. Beecher Fonda in the company's board. Fonda also owned and operated the lumberyard and woodworking mill to the north of the building, and appears to have owned the western half of this city block. It is possible that Fonda traded the building site for shares of the company, but the details of the deal are unknown. However by 1900, Fonda held the position of company Vice President. Historically, the land associated with the Willard building had been the grounds of a large estate owned by

A. Houghton in the 1870s, before it was divided and Stowell Street added sometime in the late1800s.

At 204 feet long by 65 feet wide, with over 26,000 square feet of space spread over two floors, the Willard building was and still is massive. For its time, the structure was very modern, and featured several devices to protect it from the most common demise of large timber-framed factory buildings, fire. Sprinklers were located not only inside the first and second floors, but they also ran under the cornice on the north side of the building to protect from city fires spreading to the building. Large, slow-burning wooden posts and joists on the basement and first floors, and tubular steel posts and iron I-beams on the second floor where fires might break out amongst the manufacturing equipment, help protect the strength of the building during a blaze. In 1896 St. Albans was still reeling from a devastating fire one year prior that left blocks upon blocks of the city's core a smoking mess of charred rubble. Coincidently, the source of the infamous fire was the W. B. Fonda Lumberyard, located directly north of the Willard building. With such a large investment located directly south of what was probably viewed as a severe liability in 1896, it is no wonder that the company went to such lengths to safeguard its new manufacturing plant.

Vermont's garment industry as a whole underwent a metamorphosis common to much of the American economy during the second half of the 1800s, as it progressed from a very dispersed cottage type manufacturing system to a larger more centralized, mechanized and standardized industrial system. Foot-powered sewing machines enabled dressmakers and other tailors, most of them women, to operate home-based garment business during the 1800s. As heavy manufacturing turned out cheaper, larger and simpler sewing machines that could be powered by water or steam power systems, and as rail transport made possible cheap and fast shipping and receiving over long distances, garment mills sprang up across the northeastern America. Staffed mostly by farmer's wives and daughters, and immigrant women working for low wages, this segment of the economy began to change the nature of the division of labor in the U.S. as women, previously shunned from the workforce, became wage earners. Garments also made the transition during this period from mostly custom-made, to factory-made garments and with this transition came a simplification and standardization of clothing styles. By the time the Willard Manufacturing Company had relocated to St. Albans, Vermont boasted 14 garment manufacturing establishments. Most of these factories were located in Vermont cities with access to rail, stable banking institutions, and an available female workforce, such as Rutland, Winooski, and St. Albans.

At its peak, the Willard Manufacturing Company employed over 300 people in St. Albans in the fabrication of various garments. Laborers operated the numerous belt-driven stitching, cutting, pressing and other machines on the building's second floor, while packing and shipping operations as well as the company's offices were located on the first. The basement housed fabrics and material supplies that were ferried up to the second floor by a large Morse freight elevator that remains in the building today. Workers toiled by daylight that poured into the building through large mostly 3/6/3 light and several 3/9 light double-glazed wood sash that pierced the exterior walls every few feet along all four sides on both floors. The windows also ventilated the factory. The top quarter of the windows tilted in to exhaust hot air trapped at the ceiling, and the bottom quarter slid upwards on most windows to allow cool breezes to flow into the building while not taking up valuable workspace. The windows were double glazed to provide better insulation in the cold winter months of St. Albans, an unusual feature for 1896. The company's own coal-fueled electric plant provided the power to run the belt system that operated the factory's machinery. Heat was supplied to the building through hot water pipes that ran around the inside of the exterior walls, and probably fed from water heated by the electric generating plant. A cistern in the basement collected rainwater and snowmelt from the roof, which was pumped up to a large wooden pressure tank that sat on top of the building, and is visible in several historic photographs.

The exterior of the factory was so large and prominent that Willard used it as an advertising billboard. Historic photographs show lettering painted all over the building's southern and western facades, and presumably on other sides as well. The name of the company in large capital letters stretched across the southern facade between the first and second floor followed by "Clothing Specialties." "The Great Eclipse Line," was also written in the lower left corner of the facade, a reference to the company's popular line of clothing. Several advertisements for Willard's various garments decorated the building's western facade including "Bicycle Athletic and Summer Clothing," and "Special Garments to Wear at Your Work."

Although the murals that once graced the exterior of the Willard building are masked by several layers of paint and aluminum siding, many traces of the company are still apparent still. The most notable remnant is the large safe in the southwest corner of the first floor, where the original company offices were located. The fireproof concrete lined safe retains the interior pair of its two pairs of vault doors, still with their original coat of paint. A decorative yellow pinstripe motif stands out against the black painted doors, and around the doorframe "Willard Manufacturing Co." is written in red letters emphasized with a green drop shadow effect. While

all traces of the building's original main entrance along Stowell Street has been removed, what are most likely the exterior doors have been reused on the building's second floor. The most obvious and striking artifact of the Willard Manufacturing Company is the building itself and the

unaltered open interior manufacturing floors broken only by rows of 10 inch square framing timbers. The building's hefty skeleton is clearly visible from almost anywhere in the interior, and is as impressive today as it must have been in 1896.

While the Willard Manufacturing Company branched out to include military uniforms during the early 1900s, the company closed in the early 1940s. In 1942 the George H. Soule Company moved into the Willard building where they produced evaporating pans, tanks, arches and other equipment for the maple sugaring industry. They also shared the building with the Fairfield Farms Maple Company that produced maple syrup and other maple products on the building's second floor. Several major changes to the building coincided with the change in occupancy. The largest alterations to the main block of the building came with the movement of the offices from the western end of the first floor to the eastern end of the building's second floor. Several offices, storage rooms, bathrooms and a showroom were partitioned off from the main production floor on the second story, and an oak staircase and lobby built leading up from the new entrance on the east end of the first floor. A break room for employees was also added on the east end of the first floor. Major changes in fenestration also came with the new office space, as the original 3/6/3 windows on the east end of the building were replaced with much smaller 6/6 double-hung wood sash. The relationship between the two companies is unclear, and while they may have both shared the second floor office space and showroom, the G. H Soule Company could have continued to use the old Willard offices on the first floor during their occupancy. Either way, all partitions and traces, other than the flooring outline of the first floor offices have been removed.

At this same time, a one-story garage addition was added to the west end of the building. A large wooden ramp was constructed leading from the Willard building down into the addition, which is set at a lower grade than the main block. A track for a large hoist was built spanning the two structures, necessary for moving the often cumbersome and heavy evaporating equipment off of the production floor and into the shipping area. Another smaller single-story addition was made to the northeast end of the building as well. This may have been used for deliveries, as it was built with an overhead loading door facing the parking area to the building's east. Not many traces remain of the Fairfield Farms Company, except for a large circular metal vent hood hung from the ceiling on the second floor. It is possible that this was one of vents intended for

exhausting from the building the enormous quantities of steam that are created in the boiling of maple syrup.

By the 1970s, the Willard building had been taken over by the Leader Evaporator Company, which continued the tradition of manufacturing maple sugaring equipment at 25 Stowell Street, began by the G. H. Soule Company. The company greatly expanded the production space at the facility with the addition of a nearly 10,000 square foot modern steel-framed, single-story addition to the north of the main block. By early 2006 when Leader Evaporator relocated its facilities to a new production plant in Swanton, Vermont, the company was the only producer of sugaring equipment remaining in the United States.

Bibliography

Armstrong, Margaret B., Caldwell, Pamela J., and Steele, Dorothy C. eds., St. Albans, Vermont, Through the Years, 1763-1963: a Bicentennial History, St. Albans Historical Society, St. Albans, Vt. 1977.

"Kazon Building", West Rutland, Vermont, National Register Nomination, Vermont State Division for Historic Preservation.

St. Albans City Directories, 1895-1945.

St. Albans Historic District, National Register Nomination, Vermont State Division for Historic Preservation.

Maps:

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1884-1940.

Beers, F. W., Atlas of Franklin and Grand Isle Counties., Vermont, 1871.

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The property at 25 Stowell Street, St. Albans, Franklin County, Vermont, is the city lot associated with the building. It is recorded in the St. Albans Tax Lot Map 19, as lot 26084025.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is the land historically associated with the building.

Photographs

All photographs were taken with a 5 megapixel digital camera and printed with a Hewlett Packard HP Photosmart 7850 inkjet printer on HP Premium Plus Glossy Photo Paper using HP Vivera ink cartridges 95, 99 and 92. Please see the attached report from Wilhelm Research on the archival stability of this ink and paper combination.

The following applies to all photographs

Willard Manufacturing Company Building
St. Albans, Franklin County, Vermont
Photographer: Kempton T. Randolph
Date: August 9, 2006
Digital files stored at the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

Photograph 1
South and east elevations of factory along Stowell Street
View looking northwest
Filename: VT_FranklinCounty_Willard1.tif

Photograph 2
South and west elevations of factory showing garage addition
View looking northeast
Filename: VT_FranklinCounty_Wilard2.tif

Photograph 3
North elevation of west end of main block and garage addition
View looking south
Filename: VT_FranklinCounty_Willard3.tif

Photograph 4
North and east elevations of main block and recent addition
View looking southwest
Filename: VT_FranklinCounty_Willard4.tif

Photograph 5
Interior view of first floor showing timber framing and open floor plan
View looking east
Filename: VT_FranklinCounty_Willard5.tif