

PHO 368444

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED 10 1976
DATE ENTERED JUL 6 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

**

Bridgewater Woolen Mill

AND/OR COMMON

Bridgewater Mill Mall

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

U. S. Route 4

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Bridgewater

— VICINITY OF
CODE

Vermont

COUNTY

CODE

Vermont

50

Windsor

025

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Bridgewater Mill Mall, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER

U. S. Route 4

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Bridgewater

— VICINITY OF

Vermont

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the Town Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Bridgewater

Vermont

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey

DATE

1973

— FEDERAL STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Montpelier

Vermont

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Bridgewater Mill complex, formerly known as the Bridgewater Woolen Company and since 1975 known as the Bridgewater Mill Mall, is located near the center of Bridgewater village, bounded on the north by U.S. Route #4 (the main street through the village) and on the south by the Ottawaquechee River. The mill complex is oriented along an east-west axis parallel both to the highway and the river. The mill buildings stand on the narrow flood plain of the river at the base of an abrupt bank which rises about twenty feet to the general level of the highway and the village. The eastern part of Bridgewater village actually lies in the adjoining township of Woodstock; with the addition of the first east wing of the complex (Building 'E') in circa 1920, the mill was extended across the town boundary into Woodstock.

The first textile mill on the site was probably built in 1828 by Benjamin F. Southgate. The origin of the oldest and central building in the present complex, Building 'A', is not definitely known. One theory holds that Building 'A' is actually the Southgate mill from 1828; another relates its origin to reconstruction of the Southgate mill (in circa 1853) after a fire which occurred in 1852. In any case, several other buildings have been added at various times to the central building, resulting in the present complex. Textile production continued in the complex until 1973, when the Bridgewater Woolen Company abandoned operation.

Early in 1975, a new locally-owned corporation bought the complex, and undertook a comprehensive project to renovate and adapt its major buildings into a multi-use shopping and light industrial center. The corporation intends to preserve strictly the existing architectural integrity of the exteriors of the buildings, and limit actual alteration to the interior floor plans, subdividing the large open floors into smaller spaces suitable for shops and offices. Since the beginning of the project, a few minor twentieth-century one-story outbuildings, which stood along the south side of the complex, have been demolished.

The Bridgewater Mill complex now consists of nine connected buildings and a free-standing chimney. A group of four 3 (or 3½) story, wood-frame buildings ('A', 'C', 'D', and 'E') with clapboard sheathing and six-over-six double-hung sash generally set in pairs gives the mill complex its predominant character. Except for a two-story brick building ('B') on the south side, the remaining buildings, standing on the south side and east end of the complex, are one story high.

The mill complex is focused on Building 'A', the oldest and architecturally most distinguished building within it. Building 'A' stands 3 1/2 stories above a coursed rubble masonry foundation and is rectangular in plan, measuring about 41 feet (set back to 34 feet on the third floor) by 76 feet, oriented parallel to the street. It is framed in pegged post-and-beam construction, sheathed with clapboards, and capped by a gable roof. On its north elevation, Building 'A' presents a two-story, gabled main entrance to the street. Above the second floor, continuous shed dormers extend the full length of both the north and south elevations. On the south gable end, double-door loading bays occur both on the second and third floors.

See Continuation Sheet 7-1

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Atop the gable roof of Building 'A' stands a massive square louvered cupola rising from a low two-stage base. Both the base and the main body of the cupola display corner pilasters (repeating the form on the building itself) surmounted by projecting cornices. The cupola is capped by a hip roof with metal cresting along its perimeter and a weathervane at its apex. The cupola has been adopted as the symbol of the Bridgewater Mill Mall.

The next oldest building in the Bridgewater Mill complex (although again the date is uncertain) is Building 'B', which is attached to Building 'A' at its southwest corner. The only brick structure in the complex, Building 'B' stands two stories above a coursed rubble masonry foundation in a rectangular plan of about 30 feet by 55 feet, oriented parallel to Building 'A'. Most of the five window bays across its south elevation are surmounted by segmental relieving arches. Brick parapets rise above the shed roof both on the east and west elevations.

Probably the third oldest section of the mill complex is Building 'C', which is attached to the west elevation of Building 'A'; it dates from the latter part of the nineteenth century. Building 'C' is another of the group of four principal wood-frame, clapboarded buildings. It stands three stories high on a vertically-faced stone slab foundation and measures about 52 feet by 62 feet (the shorter dimension being parallel to Building 'A'). Its shed roof slopes gently to the west. The north elevation of Building 'C' projects beyond the line of the same elevation of Building 'A'; at the corner of the two buildings stands an attached four-story, wood-frame, clapboarded, rectangular (12 feet by 14 feet) shaft capped by a hip roof.

The two remaining buildings of the predominant group, Buildings 'D' and 'E', were built during a substantial expansion of the Bridgewater Mill complex in the early 1920's. However, both by their exterior clapboard sheathing and fenestration and their pegged post-and-beam construction, they relate directly to their nineteenth century counterparts. Building 'D', which is attached to the west elevation of Building 'C', differs only slightly from the latter: it stands on a concrete foundation in a somewhat larger rectangular plan of about 65 by 80 feet (the shorter dimension being parallel to Building 'A'); its west elevation is marked by triple windows; and its shed roof slopes gently to the east. A square clapboarded, closed cupola rises above an elevator shaft near the southwest corner of the roof. Under the current renovation project, a large wood-truss portecochère with a 30-foot by 42-foot flat roof has been added to protect the main (west) entrance of Building 'D'.

Building 'E', which was the first addition to the east of Building 'A', is the only gable-roofed building in the complex oriented perpendicular to the street. It stands 3 1/2 stories high on a concrete foundation and is rectangular in plan, measuring about 38 feet by 78 feet. Double-door loading bays on the second and third floors of the north gable end open to the street. The boundary line between the townships of Bridgewater and Woodstock passes through Building 'E', parallel to it.

See Continuation Sheet 7-2

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The two wood-frame buildings in the mill complex, Buildings 'F' and 'G', are small one-story, gable-roofed additions to Building 'B'. Building 'F', which might also date from the early 1920's, is stuccoed on the exterior; Building 'G', which has been shortened by partial demolition during the current renovation, is sheathed with clapboards.

The two remaining buildings in the Bridgewater Mill complex differ completely from the others. Building 'H', which is attached to the east elevation of Building 'E', also dates from the 1920's (circa 1927), but its one-story (with nearly full-length monitor) horizontal expanse of about 74 feet by 162 feet and its concrete and steel structure make it a 'modern' industrial building in stark contrast to the almost-contemporary Building 'E'. The final addition to the mill complex, Building 'I', was made in circa 1962; it is a standard one-story, metal-sheathed, rectangular industrial building of about 36 feet by 164 feet.

Since the demolition in 1975 of the boiler plant, the 92-foot circular brick chimney, which was also built in circa 1920, now stands isolated on the river bank across the driveway from Building 'B'. The renovation plan provides for the development of a landscaped park area along the river bank next to the chimney. As a piece of industrial sculpture, the chimney will become the symbolic link between the textile mill of the past and the multi-function village center of the future.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES 1828-1853

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Benjamin F. Southgate (presumed)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bridgewater Mill complex, known until 1973 as the Bridgewater Woolen Mill, possesses particular significance both for its surviving architectural character and for its lengthy industrial history dating from the early nineteenth century. Relating to the latter, the mill complex holds additional significance for having been overwhelmingly the predominant economic base of the town of Bridgewater during most of its existence. The mill company provided most of the employment in Bridgewater, built several of the houses in the village for its employees, generated the first electric power for the village, and gave Bridgewater a national reputation for the high quality of its woolen products.

Although the year of its construction is disputed, the earliest building in the Bridgewater Mill complex is the central 3½-story, wood-frame, gabled-roofed structure distinguished by continuous shed dormers and a massive louvered cupola; it almost certainly dates from the period 1828-1853. Since its construction, several other buildings have been added to the complex and now almost surround it. Nevertheless the central building retains essentially intact its original design, and belongs among the three oldest mill buildings extant in Windsor County which have not been substantially altered (the others being the former Weston Mill, circa 1822, in Bethel and Murdock's Mill, 1845, in Proctorsville). Indeed the Bridgewater Mill may rank as the oldest wood-frame building in Vermont with continuous shed dormers.

Similar to the pattern in other Windsor County towns (cf., the National Register nomination of the Bethel Village Historic District, 1976), the first development in the town of Bridgewater occurred at a site suitable for harnessing water power, in this case of the Ottauquechee River. In 1783, the proprietors of Bridgewater granted two lots to Richard and Isaac Southgate on condition that they build a sawmill and a gristmill within one year. In 1786, after being given an extension of two years, Richard Southgate completed a dam a short distance to the west (upstream) of the present mill and the two specified mills.

The initial Southgate enterprises proved highly successful, and subsequently a grandson of Richard, Benjamin F. Southgate, took over the business and expanded it. In 1825, Benjamin built a new dam on the site of the present dam (between the original dam and the present mill), and three years later, together with one White, completed a new cotton textile mill on the site of the present mill. During the next quarter-century, the textile business in Vermont generally flourished with the 'wool boom' that swept the state following the introduction in 1811 of Spanish Merino sheep.

One position held locally regarding the date of the central building in the present mill complex maintains that it is actually the textile mill built by B. F. Southgate in 1828.

See Continuation Sheet 8-1

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet 9-1

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 6 1/2

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	8	6	9	2	0	6	0	4	8	2	8	5	5	0
ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING								

B

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Hugh H. Henry, Historic Sites Researcher

ORGANIZATION

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

DATE

April 26, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

Pavilion Building

TELEPHONE

802 828/3226

CITY OR TOWN

Montpelier

STATE

Vermont

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

William B. Pinney

William B. Pinney

TITLE Director, State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE April 28, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Active

DATE

7/16/76

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

Active

Chadwick

DATE

7/1/76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Other sources, however, noting the fire which occurred at the Southgate mill in 1852 and its immediate reconstruction by the townspeople, date the present building from 1853.

In any case, the business survived the fire and continued to expand despite the lack of a railroad through Bridgewater to transport its products. During the Civil War, the Bridgewater Mill produced wool blankets for the Union Army. Either in 1872 or 1885, Frank S. MacKenzie of the adjoining town of Woodstock purchased the mill; subsequently, the MacKenzie signature and thistle trademark of the mill became famous throughout the country.

Soon after the turn of the twentieth century, new owners took over the Bridgewater Mill and introduced a new source of power for it. In 1909, the mill company began generating hydro-electric power at the mill dam for distribution to the mill and the village. During the next decade, the textile business must have increased substantially, for during the early 1920's the mill complex was greatly enlarged by the addition of two major production wings, a new boiler plant, and two Elizabethan Revival buildings across the street containing retail salesrooms, offices, and boarding rooms for employees. That prosperity could not survive the national economic collapse of the 1930's, however, and the mill entered receivership in 1932.

After emerging from receivership in 1940 with the help of funds subscribed by townspeople, the Bridgewater Mill continued operation but was soon confronted by other difficulties. Competition from synthetic fabrics and mills in the southern U. S. and other countries became increasingly strong, until finally in June 1973 (many years later than in the cases of many other Vermont textile mills) the Bridgewater Mill ceased production and was closed permanently. Measured from the onset of the B. F. Southgate mill in 1828, the Bridgewater Mill had achieved a record of 145 years of continuous textile production on the same site.

The final closing of the Bridgewater Mill had a profound economic effect on the town of Bridgewater, which was still essentially a "company town". The mill had provided employment for about 150 persons, compared with the total population in the town of only about 800. To overcome at least part of that effect, early in 1975 a group of area residents formed a corporation which, in turn, bought the mill complex with the intent of renovating it and returning it to active uses.

Accordingly, the corporation has devised a plan to convert the older multi-story frame buildings in the complex into a regional shopping center known as the Bridgewater Mill Mall. The vertical mall will contain the first supermarket in Bridgewater, other stores, a restaurant, the village post office, a village museum, and other offices and services. The more recent one-story east wings of the complex

See Continuation Sheet 8-2

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will remain devoted to light industrial uses. Altogether the renovated complex will form a new village center for Bridgewater, becoming the focus of many kinds of community activity. The project constitutes probably the first adaptation in the state of a large abandoned mill complex into a concentrated and enclosed village center.

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Aldrich, Lewis C. and Frank R. Holmes, eds. History of Windsor County, Vermont. Syracuse, New York: D. Mason and Co., 1891.

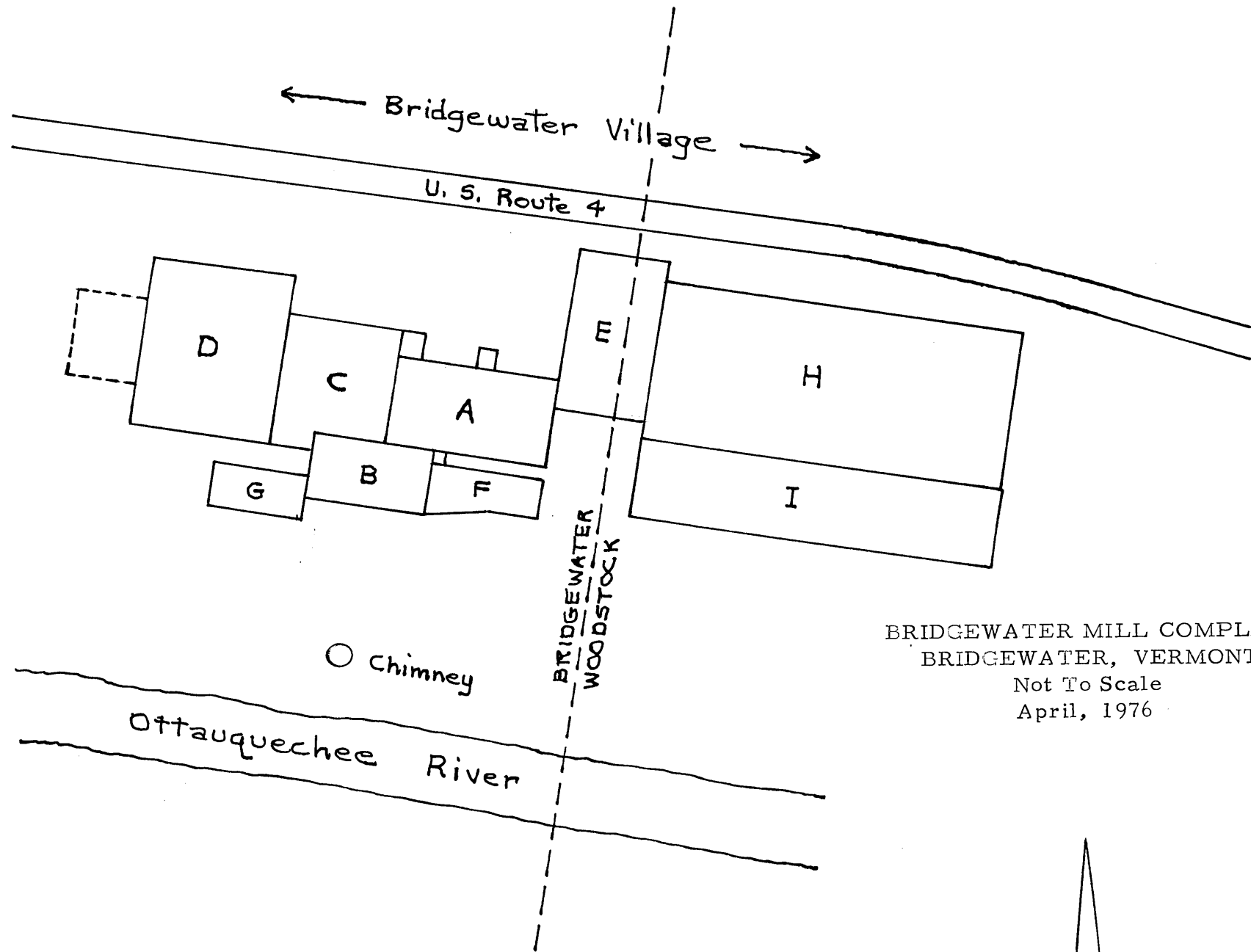
Beers, F. W. Atlas of Windsor County, Vermont. New York: F. W. Beers, A. D. Ellis, and C. G. Soule, pubs., 1869

Child, Hamilton. Gazetteer and Business Directory of Windsor County, Vt., for 1883-84. Syracuse, New York, 1884.

Fisher, Courtney, comp. Bridgewater Woolen Mill - Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey. Montpelier, Vermont: Vermont Division of Historic Sites, 1973.

History Highlights of the Town of Bridgewater - 1779 Through 1959. Burlington, Vermont?: Champlain Festival Committee, 1959.

Personal interview with Sidmond C. Williams, President, Bridgewater Mill Mall, Inc., Bridgewater, Vermont on 20 April 1976.



BRIDGEWATER MILL COMPLEX
BRIDGEWATER, VERMONT

Not To Scale
April, 1976

