

FORM A - AREA

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA. 02108

Form numbers in this area

N-24-1

Area letter

480

Photo (3x3" or 3x5")
Staple to left side of form

Photo number MP-3-34
MP-4-14/15/17

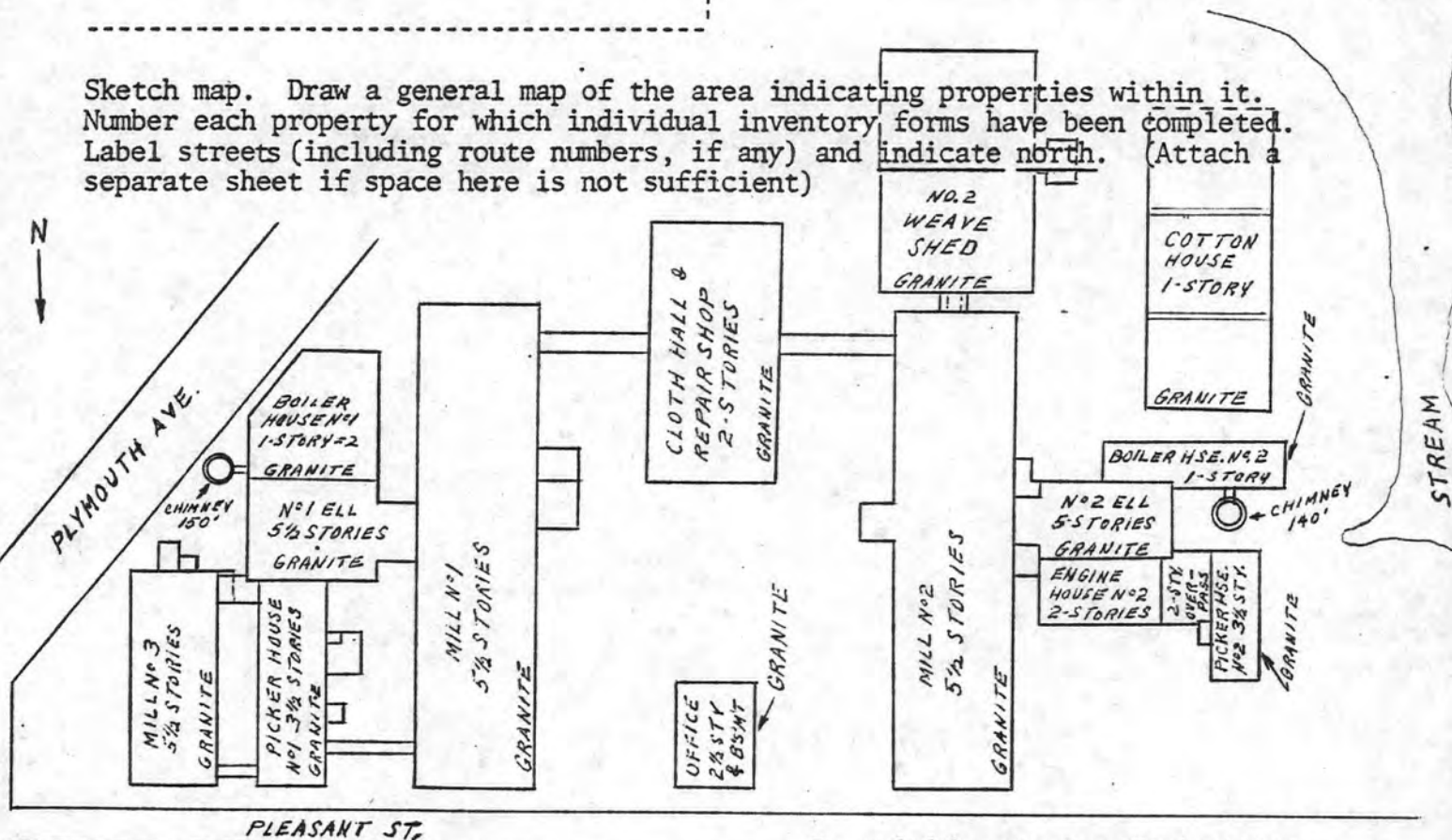
Town Fall River, Mass.

Name of area (if any) Durfee Mills

359-479 Pleasant Street

General date or period 1866-1904

Sketch map. Draw a general map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets (including route numbers, if any) and indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient)



Recorded by Pereira/Vielmetti/Fox

Organization FROHP

Date 12/30/80

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Describe physical setting, general character, and architecturally significant structures).

The Durfee Mills is the finest granite industrial complex in Fall River, outstanding in its styling, scale, site plan, use of materials, detailing, craftsmanship, and intact quality. The mills are located in the center of the city on the south side of Pleasant Street along the north bank of the Quequechan River. The central grouping is formed by two 5½-story Italianate mills with handsome 7-level center towers, erected in 1866 and 1871. These are placed symmetrically at right angles with Pleasant Street to form a large center court in which is set the 2½-story 1872 granite office. The square was originally grassed and landscaped and the complex is still enclosed by an iron fence with granite posts. In all the complex includes about a dozen structures, all built by 1904 and all of locally quarried granite. All major buildings have survived, including 3 mills (the third dating from 1881), the boiler house and 2 picker houses (all 1880), cotton house (1887), 2 weave sheds (1893 and 1895) and an engine room at #2 (1904). The major buildings built before 1885 are unusual in that they retain their gable roofs pierced with skylights. Mills #1 and #2 are virtually identical, and have the characteristic irregular (Continued)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Explain development of area, what caused it, and how it affected community; be specific).

Throughout its history the Durfee Mills was the largest single textile manufacturing company in Fall River. The firm was organized in 1866 with a capital of \$500,000 and named after Major Bradford Durfee, whose son, B. M. C. Durfee, was the principal stockholder and original president.

Major Durfee has been credited as "the originator of plans which were the inception of Fall River's industrial life." With Colonel Richard Borden, he was the founder of the Fall River Iron Works Company, which began as an iron manufactory and which constructed many of the city's earliest textile mills.

The first two Durfee mills were erected in 1866 and 1871, and in 1877 the company had a capacity of 87,424 spindles and 2,064 looms. Its product was print cloth, of which 23 million yards were made in 1877, consuming 9,500 bales of cotton and employing 950 operatives. After the #3 mill was built in 1881, the firm had a capacity of 109,360 spindles, a number which increased to 151,328 by 1920. During the 20th century, the company remained the largest Fall River textile firm not part of a larger conglomerate. The corporation was liquidated in 1935.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

HABS No. Mass 982

Fall River and Its Industries, p. 126-127

"Mill Architecture in Fall River," p. 194

Phillips' History of Fall River, Fascicle II, p. 122, 127

History of Bristol County, p. 317

Fall River City Directories, 1900, 1910, 1920

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Fall River, Mass.

Form No:

N-24-1

Property Name: Durfee Mills

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Continuation)

ashlar walls, 12/12 sash and bracketed cornices. The masonry blocks used at the corners, as lintels, and on the stair towers are of neatly shaped ashlar with a hammered finish at the edges. The upper level of the towers has a simplified Palladian window arrangement with openings filled by wooden slats. Early photographs show that the tower roofs were originally low-pitched hips surmounted by a decorative wood pedimented parapet. They presently have a bracketed wooden cornice and flat roof. Mill #1 measures 376' X 72'. Also of particular architectural interest is the 2½-story office, one of the finest detached mill offices in the city. Among its unique features are the triangular granite pediments above the door and windows, Palladian window in the upper story, and use of neatly cut and finished granite blocks for the walls. The architect of the Durfee complex, if any, is unknown.

The Durfee Mills is the finest granite industrial complex in Fall River, outstanding in its styling, scale, site plan, use of materials, detailing, craftsmanship and intact quality; it meets Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received 4/5/83

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 4 of 10

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Fall River Multiple Resource Area
State MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

31. Coughlin School

~~Substantive Review~~

Keeper

2/16/83 Delores Byers

Attest

32. Crescent Mill

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 Delores Byers

Attest

33. Davol School

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 Delores Byers

Attest

34. Davol, William C., Jr., House

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 Delores Byers

Attest

35. Downtown Fall River Historic District

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 Delores Byers

Attest

36. Durfee Mills

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 Delores Byers

Attest

37. Earle, John M., House

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 Delores Byers

Attest

38. Fall River Bleachery

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 Delores Byers

Attest

39. First Baptist Church

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 Delores Byers

Attest

40. Flint Mills

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

2/16/83 Delores Byers

Attest

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Durfee Mills (Fall River MRA)
Bristol County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 115/83-15
Fed. Reg. Date: 2.7.84
Date Due: 2/3/83 - 2/19/83
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 2/16/83
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT
Entered in the ☐ National Register
Federal Agency: _____

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

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
☐ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: ☐ technical corrections cited below
☐ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered	☐ moved date _____
☐ fair	☐ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- _____ summary paragraph
- _____ completeness
- _____ clarity
- _____ applicable criteria
- _____ justification of areas checked
- _____ relating significance to the resource
- _____ context
- _____ relationship of integrity to significance
- _____ justification of exception
- _____ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UNIT References

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- _____ Maps
- _____ Photographs
- _____ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: 202 272 - 3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



NAME: Durfee Mills

LOCATION: 359-479 Pleasant Street
Fall River, ^{MA} Mass.

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Fall River Office of Historic
Preservation
One Government Center
Fall River, Mass. 02722
(VLNR-3-10)

IDENTIFICATION: Durfee Mill #2, looking east

Photo # 1 of 2



YORK
PORTER
SEWING MACHINES
←

LEGAL
CARPET
WAREHOUSE

Family Sportswear
5th Floor East
Family Fashion
2nd Floor West

NAME: Durfee Mills

LOCATION: 359-479 Pleasant Street
Fall River, ^{MA} Mass.

PHOTO CREDIT: Vivienne Lasky (1982)

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Fall River Office of Historic
Preservation
One Government Center
Fall River, Mass. 02722
(VLNR-3-9)

IDENIFICATION: Durfee Mill #2 with Mill
Office in foreground, looking
southeast

Photo # 1 of 2



Fall River MRA, Ma

MP-3-34

Durfee Mills

South view of complex



Fall River MRA, Ma

MP-4-14

Durfee Mills

N/w Mill Office
+ Mill #1



Fall River NRA, Ma

MP-4-15
Durfee Mills

Mill #1 n/w



MP-4-17
Durfee Mills
East view
Tower, Mill #2

Fall River MRA, Ma

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000279