

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JAN 20 1984

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Minterburn Mill

and/or common " "

2. Location

street & number 215 East Main Street NA not for publication

city, town Vernon (Rockville) NA vicinity of

state Connecticut code 09 county Tolland code 013

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 type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Quator I Limited Partnership

street & number 215 East Main Street

city, town Vernon (Rockville) NA vicinity of state Connecticut

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Town Clerk, Vernon

street & number 14 Park Place

city, town Vernon state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect St.

city, town Hartford state Connecticut

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Minterburn Mill is located in the northeast portion of the town of Vernon, Connecticut, and is part of the urban-industrial district at the eastern edge of the former City of Rockville. The mill complex consists of a load-bearing stone building, constructed originally in 1834, three reinforced concrete buildings constructed in 1906, and a reinforced concrete dam.

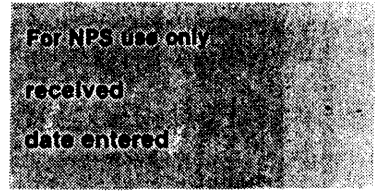
The site of the Minterburn Mill is the first in a series of mill seats along the Hockanum River in Rockville. The Hockanum River bisects the site as it flows from the outlet of Snipsic Lake through Adams Pond on the north to and under East Main Street on the south. The property is bounded on the north by Snipsic Lake and property of the Connecticut Water Company, on the east by property of the water company, on the south by East Main Street, and on the west by Snipsic Street and property of the water company. An abandoned concrete penstock channeled water from Adams Pond under buildings number 3 and 1, where the original water wheel was located, to the tailrace which carried water under East Main Street to property, currently owned by MacDermid, Inc., a manufacturer of chemical coatings, where it links up with the Hockanum River (Fig. 1, Photographs 1 and 2). The mill complex shown on the site plan (Fig. 2) consists of the following buildings:

- Number 1. A three-and-one-half-story building with load-bearing stone walls and timber-framed floor and roof structures which is the earliest extant building in the complex, built in 1834.
- Number 2. A four-story, reinforced concrete building with a usable basement, located at the east end of building number 1, built in 1906.
- Number 3. A one-story, reinforced concrete addition, originally used as a dyehouse, located along the north wall of building number 1 and the west end of building number 2, built in 1906.
- Number 4. A one-story, reinforced concrete building housing the boilers and the engine and generator, located to the north of building number 2, adjacent to the dam at the outlet of Adams Pond, built in 1906.
- Number 5. A reinforced concrete dam at the outlet of Adams Pond, built circa 1906.

A wood-framed, one-story building located to the west of building number 1 is the chlorination plant for the Connecticut Water Company. This is not included in the nomination.

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Title: Vernon, Connecticut: A Survey of Architectural
and Historical Resources, Vol. 1, The City of
Rockville

Date: 1980

eligible: X No
 X state

depository for survey records: Connecticut Historical Commission
59 South Prospect St.
Hartford, Connecticut

Title: Connecticut: An Inventory of Historic and Industrial
Sites

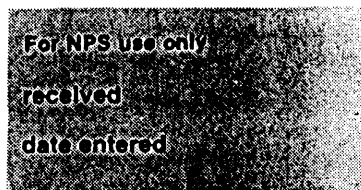
Date: 1981

eligible: X No
 X Federal

depository for survey records: Connecticut Historical Commission
59 South Prospect St.
Hartford, Connecticut

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Building number 1 is constructed on a rectangular plan. It rises three-and-one-half stories from the ground floor to the attic. Its foundation and exterior walls are granite masonry. The ground floor has direct access to grade at the west end of the building and is linked with building number 2 at its east end. The building is essentially Greek Revival in style. Its horizontal massing, symmetry, shallow roof pitch, and eyebrow windows on the street facade are Greek Revival characteristics. The bellfry centered on both of the building's axes reinforces the essential symmetry but exhibits an Italianate character.

The street, or south, facade has twelve regularly spaced windows at each of three floors and features eyebrow windows below the cornice at the attic story. The granite walls are laid in a coursed ashlar bond; their narrow belt courses alternate with wide, heavy courses. Windows are wood, double-hung units with six-over-six sash. The cornice overhang is unadorned and wide enough to shade the eyebrow windows. The roof is currently covered with asphalt shingles, and it features ten skylights regularly spaced along with the aforementioned bellfry (Photograph 3).

The bellfry is wood-framed and sided. Its base straddles the ridge and is finished with smooth, butt-jointed siding. The bellfry itself has four rectangular openings, each with a low railing and turned balusters and a wooden arch featuring open spandrels and large pendants. The four corners are finished with smooth, butt-jointed siding. The bellfry is surmounted by a widely projecting cornice with six brackets on each side. The roof rises to a wooden finial which is substantially deteriorated (Photographs 4 and 5).

The west elevation retains most of the original fenestration. It has an axial symmetry with large wood double doors at the center and two wood, double-hung windows with six-over-six sash on each side. Most of these appear to be original (Photograph 6).

The north elevation has been altered by the addition of building number 3. Only the eyebrow windows at the attic story remain open: sometime prior to 1876 the other windows were filled with brick to provide separation between the main building and the previous boiler room addition.

The interior layout of building number 1 is determined by its post-and-beam frame. Wood beams run between the granite exterior walls at the north and south of the building and are 10" wide by 12" deep, spaced regularly at 8 feet center-to-center. Supplementary bearing is provided by a row of wood

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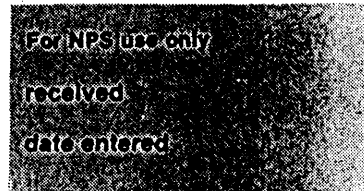
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columns at each floor, slightly off center to the north, which are 8" by 8" at the ground floor and 7" in diameter at the upper floors. Flooring consists of 1" maple boards on 3" tongue-in-groove planks. The ground floor is concrete.

The attic story provides the building's major structural interest. The roof is framed with 2" by 6" rafters at 24" center-to-center. There is no ridge beam, but the rafters are supported at mid-span by purlins, approximately 6" wide by 10" deep, which in turn are supported by 6" by 6" knee braces on a 6" wide by 10" deep timber truss with a modified "A" configuration. All connections are rigid, made with pegged mortise-and-tenon joints (Photographs 7 and 8).

Building number 2 is constructed on a rectangular plan, 293 feet long by 58 feet wide, and attached directly to the east end of building number 1. It rises four stories at the east end and five stories at the west end, giving it five usable floors. Its foundation and structural frame are reinforced concrete. With its exposed, reinforced concrete frame and curtain walls, the building is a significant early example of the modern factory style. Behind a concrete parapet, a flat roof is pitched toward the center of the building allowing a series of interior roof drains to remove storm water.

The street, or south, facade has thirty-eight window bays, spaced at 7' 6" center-to-center. The easternmost bay features windows at half-story intervals and the main entry door which opens onto the interior stairwell located at this corner of the building. The components of the concrete frame project 1" out from the components of the curtain wall. The frame includes columnar pilasters, rising the full height of the building and scored to resemble building blocks, and the belt at the base of the parapet. The curtain walls consist of projected concrete bands at the floors (serving also as window lintels) and at the window sills, recessed spandrel panels, formed and poured with the floors and sills, and large wood double-hung windows with twenty-over-twenty sash. While some of the windows are covered with plywood, especially at the lower levels, most appear to be original and are in fair condition (Photograph 9).

The north elevation mirrors the street facade except that the easternmost bays have large wooden doors and there is a steel hanger for a crane located above the doors at the center of the bay, providing access to each of the upper levels for machinery or raw materials (Photograph 10).

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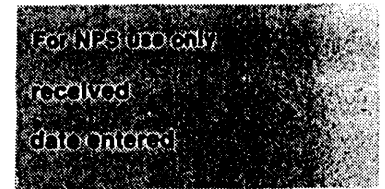
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The interior layout of building number 2 is determined by the reinforced concrete frame. Reinforced concrete beams run from north to south, spaced at 7' 6" center-to-center. These 12" by 20" beams support a reinforced concrete slab, 7" thick, with 1" maple flooring and 1" wood sub-floor. Reinforced concrete center beams 12" wide by 26" deep span between reinforced concrete columns spaced at 15' center-to-center. These columns increase in size from 16" by 16" at the fourth floor (supporting the roof) to approximately 24" by 24" at the ground floor (basement). The roof structure is pitched to the center; construction is similar to the floors described above. Roofing is built-up with a tar and gravel top coat (Photographs 11, 12, 13). As noted in the description of the exterior, the exit stair located in the southeast corner has a split landing. A second exit stair is located in the southwest corner of the building. Adjacent to this stair is a large freight elevator which stops at all levels of building number 1 and building number 2. A second elevator, located on the building's center line about 70' from the east end and linking all five floors, is original to the building (Photograph 14).

Building number 3 is an addition to building number 1 and is constructed along its north wall. It rises one story, about 15' to a flat roof with a clerestory monitor (Photograph 15). The foundation, wall and roof are reinforced concrete similar in style to building number 2.

The west elevation of building number 3 features four bays expressed by recessed curtain wall panels set between reinforced concrete columns and the roof slab. The curtain walls are concrete, emulating the construction of building number 2. Wood double-hung windows with ten-over-ten sash are set into three bays. Outswinging wood doors occupy the fourth bay (Photograph 6).

The north and east elevation are essentially undecorated. Reinforced concrete walls have the appearance of flat slabs punctuated by wood windows with ten-over-ten sash. Window sills are concrete with small recessed panels below (Photograph 15). The clerestory monitor has a square parapet at the west end and a row of four-light windows along its north and south sides.

The interior layout of building number 3 is determined by the clear span of its reinforced concrete beams. These are 12" wide with varying depth to accommodate the shallow pitch of the reinforced concrete roof slab and span between the north and south walls. Roofing is built up with a tar-and-gravel top coat (Photograph 16).

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Local History

Specific dates 1834, 1906

Builder/Architect Frank B. Gilbreth, New York, N. Y.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Minterburn Mill is significant for two reasons: first, the site and the two main buildings provide an architectural and engineering record of the development of the woolen textile industry in Connecticut from the colonial fulling mill to the mass production of the twentieth century (Criterion A); second, the two factory buildings are representative early examples of their type (Criterion C). The Rockville Warp Mill (building number 1) is an 1834 Greek Revival style stone mill built for the water-powered manufacture of cotton warps used locally in the production of a woolen cloth known as satinet. The Minterburn Mill (building number 2), constructed in 1906, is a very early factory style reinforced concrete building of the type first developed by Ernest J. Ransome, whose buildings are architecturally and technologically significant precursors of the industrial architecture of the twentieth century.

The site of the Minterburn Mill marks the location of the first mill privilege on the Hockanum River in Vernon to be developed for the use of water power. The site is said to have been the location of an iron works and gin distillery in the Revolutionary War period.¹ Later it became a gristmill and sawmill known as Payne's Mill.² Sometime prior to 1800, George Hall began fulling cloth at the same privilege and sold his interest to Simeon Cooley in 1803. Cooley established a clothier's shop for the purpose of finishing homespun from the surrounding countryside.³

In the 1820s Rockville's first textile mill, the Rock Mill, was built further downstream, and its success led to further expansion of the industry and the need for increased water power. Consequently, the Rock Manufacturing Company bought Payne and Cooley's privilege and land and erected a new stone dam and a stone mill in 1834 (building number 1). The mill differed from other Rockville mill buildings of the period in being constructed of stone rather than wood; otherwise, the building conformed to local tradition, being built in the prevailing Greek Revival style. It is interesting to note that none of Rockville's mill buildings adopted the "factory roof," the English style monitor roof, which was the dominant factory form in other regions in the 1830s and 1840s.⁴ The new mill was equipped with carding, spinning and warping machinery. In 1837 the Rock Manufacturing Company conveyed the property to a new corporation known as the Stone Mill Company. The factory manufactured cotton warps for satinet, a type of cotton

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bagnall, William R., Sketches of Manufacturing Establishments in New York City and Textile Establishments in the United States, Microfiche edition, Merrimack Valley Textile Museum, ca. 1890.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 5.06

Quadrangle name Rockville

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	8	7	1	3	0	4	0	4	6	3	8	0	6	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

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D

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E

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is comprised of Block 123, Parcel 16, Vernon Assessor's map 75.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
NA			
NA			

11. Form Prepared By

name/title S. Ardis Abbott, Historian-Consultant - edited by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization N/A

date August 11, 1983

street & number 31 Davis Avenue

telephone (203) 872-8122

city or town Rockville

state Connecticut

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 

title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

date January 13, 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

2/16/84


Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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and woolen cloth being manufactured at several woolen mills operating downstream from the Stone Mill.⁵ Under successive ownerships (Panola Mill, Adams Manufacturing Co., Rockville Warp Mills) the mill continued in the production of cotton warps and cotton yarn until it was purchased by the Minterburn Mill Company in 1906.⁶

An insurance survey of the mill in 1876 indicates that the mill had a capacity of 2500 spindles and operated on water power. The first story was used for spinning, the second for carding, the third for beaming and finishing, and the attic for reeling and warping. A two-story addition on the north side housed the wheel and boilers, with pickers located on the second story.⁷ Other mill operations were housed in several outbuildings, all of which were removed by the Minterburn Company in 1906. Only the main stone building was left intact, probably because it housed the power source, a turbine wheel under a twenty-six foot head of water, producing 150-horse power.⁸ A 1937 insurance survey map indicates the water power system was still held in reserve for emergencies.⁹

On April 11, 1906 the Minterburn Company, the last of Rockville's woolen textile companies was organized. The company subsequently purchased the Rockville Warp Mills, razed all but the main stone building and built a modern, reinforced concrete plant (buildings number 2, 3, and 4). The plant was equipped with 4,080 spindles, 68 broadlooms, and employed 225 persons.¹⁰ It was the last and the most ambitious undertaking for the textile industry in Rockville and marked a significant moment in the century-old history of the industry here. By the turn of the century, the Rockville woolen industry had become nationally and internationally recognized for the production of fine woolens and worsteds. But the future of the industry was in mass production, and with its enlarged physical plant and the reorganization of its five major woolen mills in 1908 into the Hockanum Company Mills, the industry was in a position to enter the mass production market with a line of automobile cloth to meet the demand of the new automobile industry. The Minterburn's major product until the Rockville mills closed in 1952 was automobile cloth.¹¹

The reinforced concrete mill building erected by the Minterburn Company in 1906 was justifiably a source of pride for local residents who considered it "one of the finest [mill buildings] in New England of concrete construction."¹² While the architect is unknown, the building bears a strong resemblance to the work of Ernest L. Ransome as exemplified in the Kelly & Jones Co.'s machine shop at Greenburg, Pennsylvania (1903-4).¹³ The building has approximately the same dimensions of the Ransome building and reflects a number of technical and design innovations pioneered

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by Ransome: the floor construction follows a technique patented by Ransome in 1902, and the exposed concrete framing of the facade is a hallmark of Ransome's design. These early reinforced concrete structures, precursors of the better known Detroit automotive buildings, as it has been noted, are "of undeniable interest for their impressive and pleasing proportions, direct expression of structure, and comparative freedom from conventional decorative details that were to 'enhance' even the best of later industrial architecture including the famous Kahn factories."¹⁴

Following the closing of the Rockville textile mills in 1952, the Minterburn Mill was purchased by Roosevelt Mills, Inc. and converted to the manufacture of knitwear. It is still in use for this purpose. The machinery is different, but the building itself is essentially unaltered. Thus, the complex of buildings and the dam site provide an architectural and engineering record of the manufacturing process as it developed over more than two hundred years.

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Footnotes

¹Cogswell, William T., History of Rockville from 1823 to 1871 (Rockville, Conn.: Rockville Journal, 1872), 7.

²Bagnall, William R., Sketches of Manufacturing Establishments in New York City and Textile Establishments in the United States (Unpublished Manuscript, Microfiche edition, Merrimack Valley Textile Museum, ca 1890), 1594.

³Ibid. 1594.

⁴Pierson, William H., Jr., American Buildings and Their Architects (Garden City, N. Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1980), 42.

⁵Bagnall, 1595.

⁶Corporation Records, The Minterburn Mills Co., April 11, 1906, (Stevens Collection, Merrimack Valley Textile Museum).

⁷Barlow's Insurance Survey, No. 3978, 1876, Merrimack Valley Textile Museum Collections.

⁸"Illustrated Rockville," The Rockville Journal, June 1893, 9.

⁹M. T. Stevens and Sons, Insurance Survey Map, 1937.

¹⁰Smith, Harry Conklin and G. Denison Talcott, Summary of Vernon's History and Centennial Observance (Privately Published, 1908), 29.

¹¹The Hockanum Co. Cloth Analysis Sheets, 1928-36, Stevens Collection, Merrimack Valley Textile Museum.

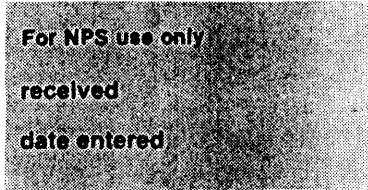
¹²Smith, Summary of Vernon's History, 29.

¹³Ransome, Ernest L. and Alexis Soubrey, Reinforced Concrete Buildings (McGraw-Hill: New York, 1912), 13.

¹⁴Huxtable, Ada Louise, "Reinforced Concrete Construction, The Work of Ernest L. Ransome, Engineer, 1884-1911," Progressive Architecture, 38 (1957), 39-42 and 121-2.

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"Illustrated Rockville," The Rockville Journal, June, 1893.

Pierson, William H., Jr., American Buildings and Their Architects.
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Other Sources

Stevens Collection, Merrimack Valley Textile Museum, North Andover,
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Barlow's Insurance Surveys
Records of the Hockanum Mills Co.

M. T. Stevens and Sons, Insurance Survey Map, 1937.

Building Plans and Sections, Minterburn Mill, Manufacturers
Appraisal Co., Nov. 1918.

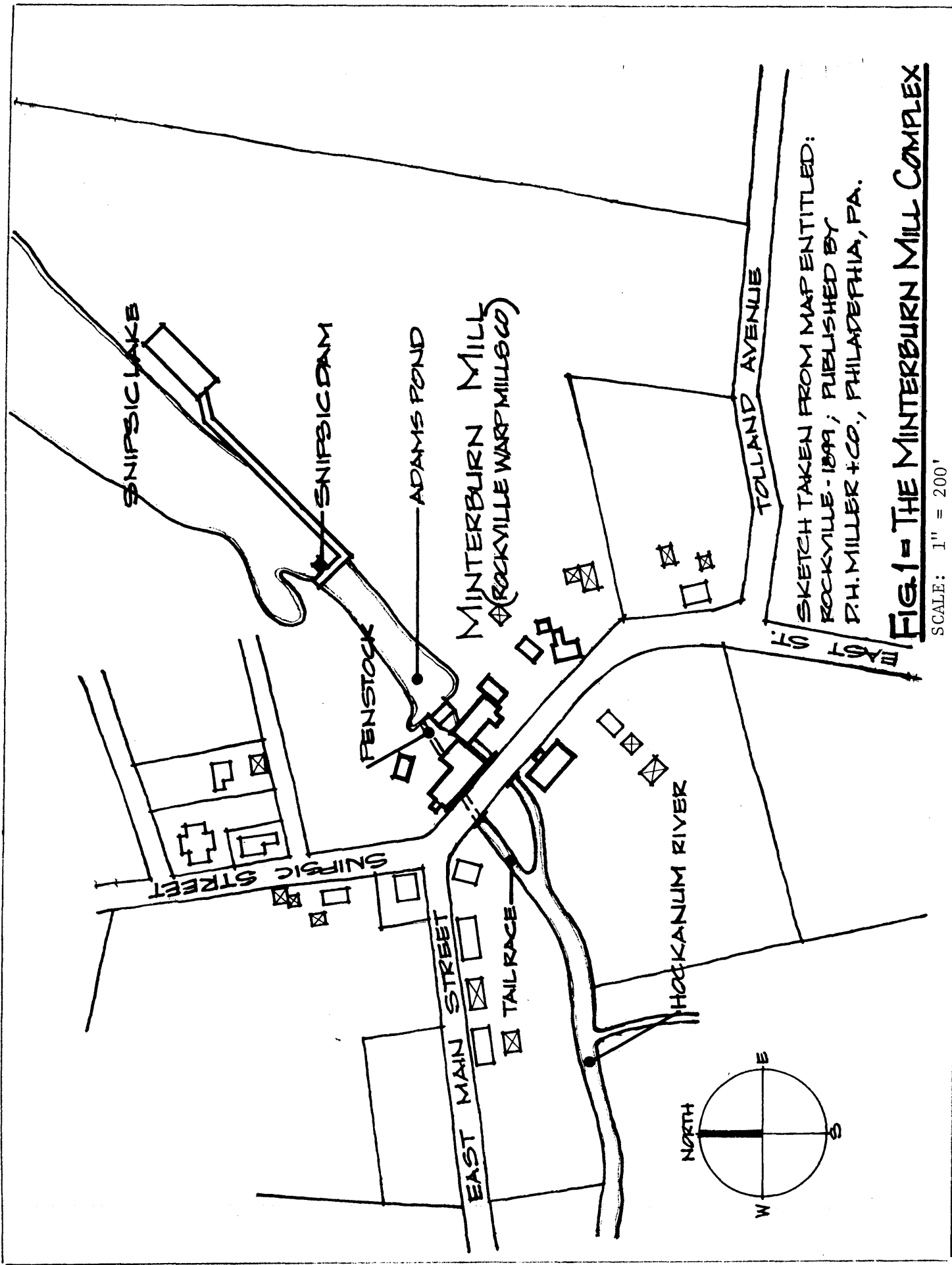
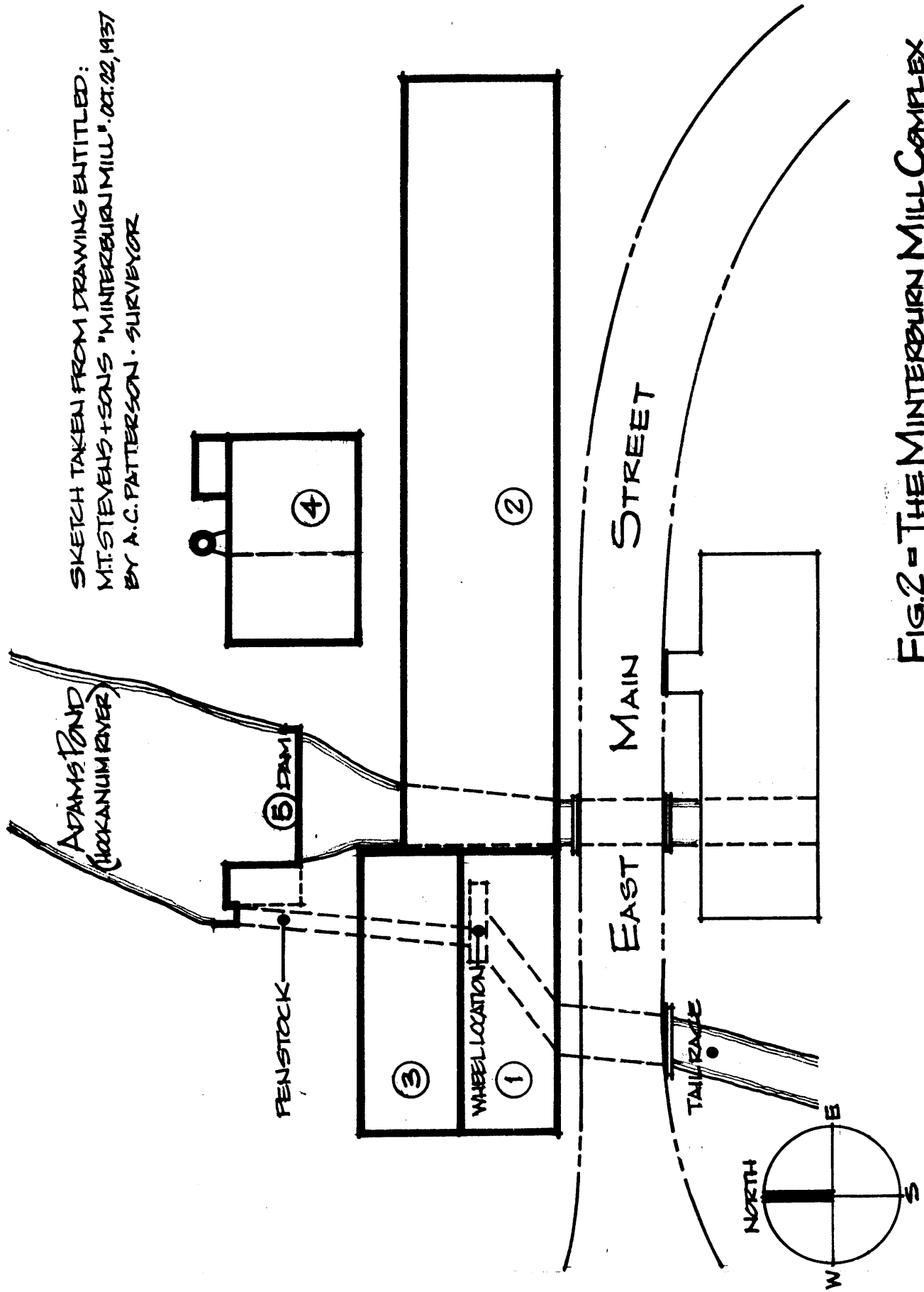


FIG. 1 - THE MINTERBURN MILL COMPLEX



SKETCH TAKEN FROM DRAWING ENTITLED:
 M.T. STEVENS + SONS "MINTERBOURN MILL". OCT. 22, 1937
 BY A.C. PATTERSON - SURVEYOR

FIG. 2 - THE MINTERBOURN MILL COMPLEX
 SCALE: 1" = 50' ±