

FORM A - AREA SURVEY

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Form numbers in this area | Area no. |
|                           | 177-D-1  |

2. Photo (3x3" or 3x5")  
Staple to left side of form  
Photo number \_\_\_\_\_

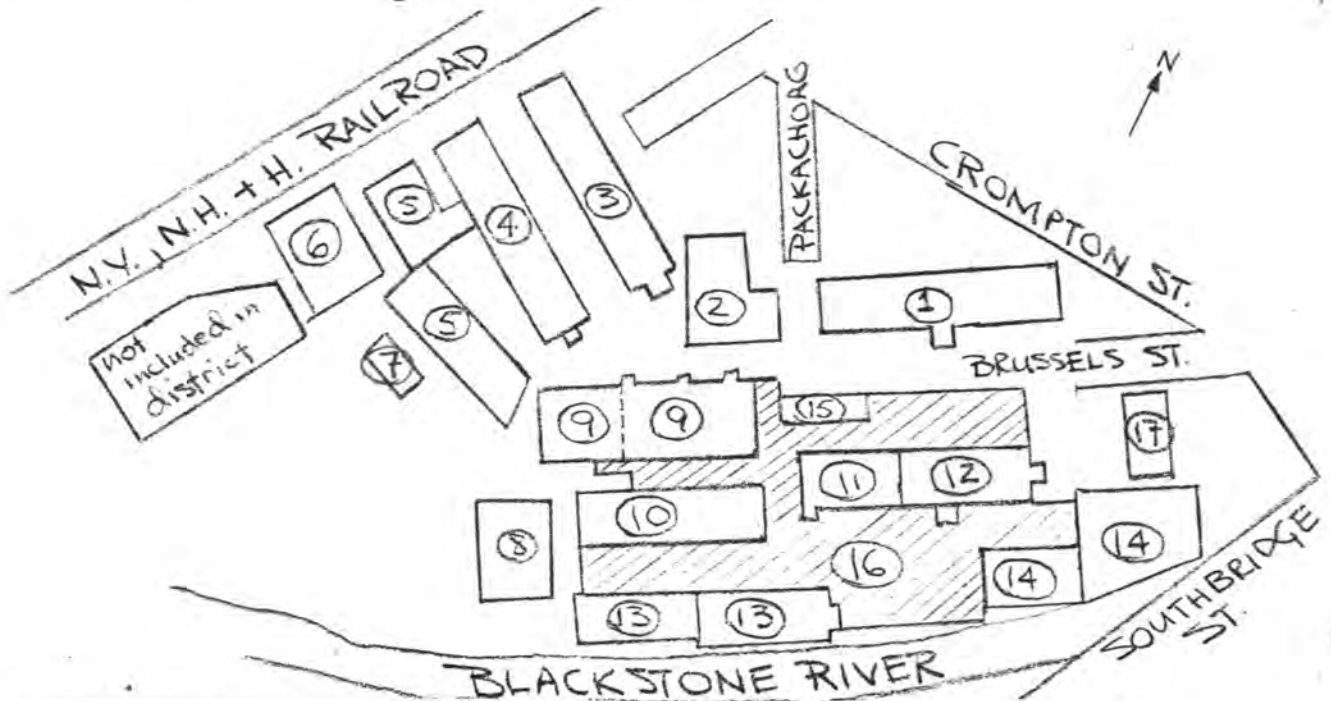
1. Town Worcester

Name of area (if any) Whittall Mills

3. General date or period ca. 1890-1930

4. Is area uniform (explain):  
in style? yes (utilitarian industrial)  
in condition? no (poor to good)  
in type of ownership? yes (private)  
in use? yes (industrial)

5. Map. Use space below to draw a general map of the area involved. Indicate any historic properties for which individual reports are completed on Forms B thru F, using corresponding numbers. Show street names (including route numbers, if any) and indicate north. Indicate with an "x" existing houses not inventoried on Form B.



DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE  
USGS Quadrant \_\_\_\_\_  
MHC Photo no. \_\_\_\_\_

6. Recorded by B.R. Pfeiffer  
Organization Worc. Heritage Pres. Soc.  
Date revised March 1979

(over)

UTM

A 19/267560/4680120  
B 19/267790/4680260  
C 19/267920/4680180  
D 19/267620/4680000

7. Historical data. Explain the historical/architectural importance of this area.

The Whittall Mills are an extensive group of three- and four-storey brick factory buildings most of which were built between ca.1870 and 1910. The district formed by the Whittall Mills is bounded on the east and south by the Middle River (a branch of the Blackstone River), on the north by Southbridge and Crompton Streets and on the west by the railroad tracks of the former Norwich and Worcester Division of the New England Railroad, later the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad. Boundaries for the area were selected to contain all the carpet mills owned by Matthew J. Whittall at the height of his company's prosperity in 1911. Areas contiguous to the factories (north and west) are residential with no additional factory buildings, while areas east and south are completely separated from the factory by water and Interstate 295.

Buildings contained within the district are listed below according to names shown in Richardson's 1911 Atlas of the City of Worcester, Mass. (excepting those structures built after 1911):

1. Main Offices: Facing Brussels Street, this building is a four-storey brick structure with a flat roof; on its east elevation is a five-storey tower with hip roof and clock (on each elevation) at the fifth storey; architectural ornament consists of decorative brickwork on the tower and moulded brick trim at various entries; a plaque on the facade (east) bears the inscription "M.J. Whittall - 1910".
2. (First) Power House: Bearing a plaque inscribed "1903", the Power House is a one-and-one-half-storey brick building with Classical decorative trim; the structure was built by Matthew Whittall to provide power to the whole mill complex, replacing three earlier power houses, originally equipped with 2250-h.p. boilers; the building's exterior is framed into bays of equal size by brick piers which frame (in each bay) two square basement windows, an arched window (1st storey) and three square lights (2nd storey). The roof is flat and has a stepped brick parapet with granite coping.
3. Whittall Mill #2: Bears plaque inscribed "1889 - M.J. Whittall"; three-storey brick structure with nearly flat roof and square-plan tower with hip roof centered on its east end wall; building constructed of regular bays, each containing two narrow paired windows at each storey; lower two stories were built in 1889, the top floor was added in 1902. (cont.)

8. Bibliography and/or references such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.  
city atlases & directories

Worc. Columbian Tribute. (1893). p. 99 (Worc. Carpet Co. - illus),  
p. 116 (Whittall Mills - illus.).

Rice, R. Worc. in 1898. pp. 491-495 (Whittall-photo of house).

Washburn, C. Industrial Worc. pp. 100-104. (Crompton, Hogg, Whittall),  
pp. 44 & 68 (White, Boyden, Hatch & Gunn).

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Form No:

177-D-1

Property Name: Whittall Mills

1.

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

- 7) 4. Whittall Mill #1: A two-storey wooden frame building with nearly flat (pitched) roof; central square-plan tower on its east end; side walls contain regular bays, each containing two narrow windows at each storey; built in 1883 and extended westward in 1884, this was the first mill built by Matthew Whittall; originally housed 30 Crossley looms.
5. Whittall Mill #3: Consists of two brick structures; western section of building is two stories high with a flat roof, built before 1866; this section may have been built in 1884 to house 12 Crossley looms; the eastern section is rectangular in plan with a tower at its southwest corner; the lower two stories were built in 1891, while the third storey flat roof and tower were built in 1905; a plaque on the tower bears the inscription "M.J. Whittall - 1891-1905".
6. General Storehouse: Built in 1920 for the Whittall Mills, this structure is a square-plan building of concrete construction, rising approximately four stories in height with irregular fenestration reflecting its original use.
7. Shop: Located southeast of Whittall Mill #3; one-storey rectangular plan shop of brick construction, probably built during the 1920s for the Whittall Mills.
8. (Second) Power House: Rectangular plan brick structure with "cast-stone" trim, approximately three stories high with a flat roof; built in 1930 as a power house.
9. Dye House: A large rectangular plan structure of brick and concrete construction, built for Matthew Whittall in 1904; the southern half of the structure is three stories high, faced with brick and has a flat roof; the building's northern half is two stories high with a monitor at its roof; a one-storey brick addition was built along the structure's west wall after 1922.
10. Worcester Carpet Mill #1: A 2-storey brick building with nearly flat roof; the structure's walls are divided into equal bays by projecting brick piers which rise to a corbelled cornice; this structure was built between 1870 and 1878 (probably in 1871) for the Crompton Carpet and is referred to in Washburn's Industrial Worcester as the "original Crompton Mill"; alterations to the mill include the removal of its mansard roof and an extension southward added in 1908 in the same style as the earlier section; in 1884 this mill was sold (along with the ruins of the Packachoag Mill) to William Hogg, who sold the property to Matthew J. Whittall in 1901.

(cont.)

Staple to Inventory form at bottom



## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

2.

Community:

Form No:

177-D-1

Property Name: Whittall Mills

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

11. Packachoag Mill: A three-storey brick factory with low-pitched roof and circular plan tower at its southwest corner; walls are divided into equal bays by piers which rise to a corbelled cornice; this structure contains the southern half of the original Packachoag Mill (1870-1871) which was built by George Crompton for the Crompton Carpet Company; in 1884 the mill burned, leaving a shell which Crompton sold in two parts, the southern half to Hogg, the northern half to Whittall (see Edgeworth Mill - 12); it is likely that Hogg rebuilt the structure in 1884, using the walls of the earlier mill, adding a third storey and a tower at the structure's southwest corner.
12. Edgeworth Mill: A three-storey brick building with low-pitched roof, walls divided into bays of equal width by piers which rise to a corbelled cornice; square plan entry tower centered on building's north facade; bears plaque inscribed "M.J. Whittall - 1889"; this structure occupies the northern half of the site of the original Packachoag Mill (see Packachoag Mill - 11); in 1884 Whittall incorporated the shell of the original building into the present structure, using it as a spinning mill; in 1889 a third storey and entry tower were added to the mill, at which time the building was named the Edgeworth Mill.
13. Worcester Carpet Mill #2: A three-storey brick building with low-pitched roof, which rests on a high basement, next to the Middle River, the building is constructed of even bays with little architectural ornament; built in several sections, the mill's southern half (60' x 145') was built in 1893 and was originally two stories high, except for its southern facade which was three stories high; between 1893 and 1906 a third storey was added; in 1906 the building was sold to Whittall who added the northern half of the structure; following the pattern of other Whittall Mills, the building's north face has a central tower with a plaque bearing the inscription "M.J. Whittall - A.D. 1906".
14. Wool Storage: The southernmost portion of the structure is a six-storey brick structure with irregular fenestration and a flat roof; it was built in 1905 to provide storage for up to 3,000,000 pounds of raw wool; northern portions of the structure are of brick, one storey high with flat roofs and irregular fenestration; it is unknown whether these sections of the structure were once taller and have had their upper floors removed.
15. Central Building: A two-storey brick building of Colonial Revival style, built to contain offices, this building post-dates 1922 although its design is congruent with earlier buildings on the property.

(cont.)

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Worcester

Form No:

177-D-1

Property Name: Whittall Mills

3.

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

7.

16. Shaded sections bearing this number are modern one-storey loading bays and platforms, built of brick and concrete block; while these mid-twentieth-century additions connect many of the mills in the central section of the complex, they are merely constructed in front of the mills' original walls and do not permanently alter the buildings to which they are attached.
17. A two-storey aluminum-clad shed, built in 1970; to be regarded as an intrusion.

Significance:

Located on a former mill privilege, the Whittall Mills were built between 1870 and approximately 1930 as the major center of Worcester's large carpet industry. Industrial use of the site dates from at least 1824 when a machine shop here was owned by White & Boyden; however, the district's major significance post-dates 1870, the year in which the Crompton Carpet Company was formed.

Founded by George Crompton (owner of the Crompton Loom Works - Survey Form 143-C) and Horace Wyman, the Crompton Carpet Company was the second American firm to possess power looms for the manufacture of Brussels carpets (the first was the Bigelow Company of Clinton, Massachusetts). At a time when restrictive English patent laws hindered the importation of looms, Crompton and Wyman invented their own power loom. In 1870-1872 the company built the Packachoag Mill and equipped it with 16 Crompton looms which were powered by the neighboring Middle River. This original brick mill (60' x 115', two stories high with a third storey beneath a mansard roof - see sections 11 and 12 of description) was followed in 1871 by the construction of a dye house. (perhaps section #10 on map). Soon after the company's initial success, power looms for Brussels carpets became widely available to American manufacturers in the late 1870s, causing a reduction in carpet prices from \$3.00 a yard in 1870 to \$1.00 per yard in 1879, the year in which the Crompton Carpet Company went out of business.

In 1879 the property and its machinery (then containing 36 Crompton looms) were leased to William J. Hogg of Philadelphia. (For biography, see Survey Form 116-L-12). Hogg continued to rent the property until 1884, when a fire destroyed much of the Packachoag Mills. Having bought Crompton's interest in the southern half of the burned mill and a second mill building (sections 10 and 11 on map), Hogg rebuilt the Packachoag Mill as a yarn mill and began manufacturing carpets in partnership with his father as William James Hogg & Company, later changed to the Worcester Carpet Company. The firm manufactured "Wilton and body Brussels carpets of the finest grades" and employed 500 skilled workers in 1898. In

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Worcester

Form No:

177-D-1

Property Name: Whittall Mills

4.

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

7.

1893 a second mill was constructed (section 13 on map) and water rights to the adjoining Stillwater Pond (now filled) were purchased from George Crompton, who had created the pond in the 1870s. The Middle River continued to be an important source of power for the Worcester Carpet Mills, even after their purchase by Matthew J. Whittall between 1901 and 1906.

The individual most responsible for the Whittall Mills development was Matthew J. Whittall, an English immigrant, who worked in the 1870s as superintendant of the Crompton Carpet Mill. In 1874 Whittall travelled to England and returned to Worcester with 8 Crossley Carpet Looms which he set up in rented loft space elsewhere in the city. The expansion of Whittall's business led to the addition of 8 more looms in 1882 and to the purchase of land facing the Packachoag Mill, on which Whittall Mill #1 (section 4 on map) was built in 1883. In 1884 Whittall expanded his original mill and rebuilt part of the Packachoag Mill as a yarn mill (section 12 on map). Enjoying nearly unbroken success, Whittall built new buildings on the property in 1889 (Whittall Mill #2 - section 3 on map), 1891 (Whittall Mill #3 - section 5 on map), 1903 (Power House - section 2 on map), 1904 (Dye House - section 9 on map), 1905 (Wool Storage House - section 14 on map) and 1910 (Main Offices - section 1 on map). Major extensions of existing buildings were made in 1889 (Edgeworth Mill - section 12), 1902 (Whittall Mill #2 - section 3), 1903 (Worcester Carpet Mill #1 - section 10), 1905 (Whittall Mill #3 - section 5) and 1906 (Worcester Carpet Mill #2 - section 13).

It is likely that a large number of these buildings and alterations were designed by Stephen Earle, who designed at least one factory here in the 1880s and who in the 1890s designed Whittall's own house (nearby on Southbridge Street, now demolished) and St. Matthew's Church (built by Whittall - see Form 165-H).

By 1906 the company's large size led to the formation of Whittall Associates of which Matthew J. Whittall was president and treasurer until his death and Matthew P. Whittall was assistant treasurer. By World War I, the Whittall Mills contained more than 500,000 square feet of floor space, 350 looms and employed 1500 skilled laborers. During the 1890s the company expanded by purchasing a plant in Palmer, Massachusetts and by establishing showrooms in New York, San Francisco and St. Paul, Minnesota. Between 1883 and 1897 only Brussels and Wilton carpets were manufactured at the Whittall Mills; after 1897 the company began making Wilton plush carpets (1897) and chenille carpets (1916). Among the firm's most famous customers

Staple to Inventory form at bottom



INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

5.

|                               |                     |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Community:<br>Worcester       | Form No:<br>177-D-1 |
| Property Name: Whittall Mills |                     |

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

7.

were President and Mrs. McKinley who chose Whittall carpets for the White House; between 1891 and 1897 the Whittall Mills supplied carpets for buildings owned by the Federal government.

By far the largest employer in South Worcester, the Whittall Mills increased the speed of residential development in South Worcester, particularly during the 1880s and 1890s. In addition to providing employment, Whittall occupied a paternalistic position in the community by providing health and disability benefits to employees, by building and donating St. Matthews Church (Form 165-H) and by donating land for the construction of the South Worcester Branch Library in 1913. The Whittall Company continued to manufacture carpets here until the company was sold in 1950.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

6.

|                               |                     |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Community:<br>Worcester       | Form No:<br>177-D-1 |
| Property Name: Whittall Mills |                     |

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

7.

| Property                        | Assessor's Data                           | Present Owner                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Main Offices                 | Assessor's Book, 7, p.35                  | Worcester Knitting Co, Inc                                                                                           |
| 2. First Power House            | Lots 15A, 15-17, 24-28<br>50, 108 sq. ft. | Abraham Persky, Lillian<br>B. Palais & William A.<br>Yoffie, Trustees<br>1 Brussels Street<br>Worcester, Mass. 01610 |
| 8. Second Power House           | Book 7, p. 51                             | Brussels Development Co.                                                                                             |
| 9. Dye House                    | Lot 1                                     | 1 Brussels Street                                                                                                    |
| 10. Worcester Carpet<br>Mill #1 | 10 acres                                  | Worcester, Mass. 01610                                                                                               |
| 11. Packachoag Mill             |                                           |                                                                                                                      |
| 12. Edgeworth Mill              |                                           |                                                                                                                      |
| 13. Worcester Carpet<br>Mill #2 |                                           |                                                                                                                      |
| 14. Wool Storage                |                                           |                                                                                                                      |
| 15. Central Building            |                                           |                                                                                                                      |
| 16. shaded areas                |                                           |                                                                                                                      |
| 17. aluminum shed               |                                           |                                                                                                                      |
| 3. Whittall Mill #2             | Book 7, p. 35<br>Lot 2<br>34, 438 sq. ft. | Stevens Properties, Inc.<br>36 Portland Street<br>Worcester, Mass. 01608                                             |
| 4. Whittall Mill #1             | Book 7, p. 35<br>Lot 3<br>28,099 sq. ft.  | S. R.<br>Realty Trust<br>52 Richmond Avenue<br>Worcester, Mass. 01602                                                |
| 6. General Storehouse           | Book 7, p. 35<br>Lot 5<br>16,617 sq. ft.  | Mason-Dixon Realty<br>Associates<br>Box 45<br>Worcester, Mass. 01601                                                 |
| 5. Whittall Mill #3             | Book 7, p. 35                             | Simon Rasnick & S. R.                                                                                                |
| 7. Shop                         | Lot 4<br>36, 873 sq. ft.                  | Realty Trust<br>52 Richmond Avenue<br>Worcester, Mass. 01602                                                         |

Staple to Inventory form at bottom



Property Worcester Multiple Resource Area (Partial Inventory)

State MA (Worcester) Working Number 8.30.79.2060

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos 383 + 13  
Maps 2, 63

Excellent multiple resource nomination for the entire city of Worcester. Both the general description & statement of significance & the individual inventory sheets are well done. Each type of property included is well justified & reasons are listed for not including others at this time (e.g. 3-deckers). Opposition is high. Minor problems with some properties are listed on attached sheets.

HISTORIAN

Call/Accept  
Lightner  
10-30-79

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

Concur with Bruce's comments on 102-L-3, 116-CBD-11, 117-E, and 130-CBD-50 and 44. Integrity and/or boundaries need to be addressed specifically on individual forms.

ARCHEOLOGIST

116-CBD-11 - Destroyed, cannot be listed.  
130-CBD-44 - I am not convinced this has lost integrity. See attached.  
102-L-3 - Period of significance and categorization of bldgs need to be discussed with State.

With 3 exceptions all properties appear to me to meet the criteria and the forms are adequate. ~~Both~~ BOTH TECHNICALLY AND TO DETERMINE SIGNIFICANCE. ALTHOUGH SOME OF THE FORMS DID NOT CONTAIN STRONG STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE THE RESOURCE CATEGORIES WERE THOROUGHLY DISCUSSED IN THE BODY OF THE NOMINATION; THEREFORE SIGNIFICANCE WAS ESTABLISHED. VBDs WERE NOT NECESSARY BECAUSE

OTHER

ACCEPT  
MacDougal  
2/28/80

OF THE SCALE MAPS AND CLEARLY DELINEATED BOUNDARIES. ALTHOUGH WAS MISSING IN SOME PROPERTIES BUT IS NOW INCLUDED AFTER THE 2/11/CORRECTIONS.

HAER

THE ONLY PROPERTIES THAT I DO NOT RECOMMEND LISTING ARE

Inventory \_\_\_\_\_

Review \_\_\_\_\_

✓ 116-CBD-13 - DESTROYED BY FIRE MD - 116 CBD - 11  
130-CBD-44 - DOES NOT RETAIN INTEGRITY FOR INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY

✓ 102-L-3 I ~~DO NOT~~ <sup>AM NOT</sup> CONVINCED ABOUT BOUNDARIES

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

BUT BELIEVE THEY COULD BE OK. ~~BASED~~

ON ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION SUBMITTED - I DEFER JUDGEMENT.

Recommend Listing all properties ~~except~~ <sup>now</sup> these 3. Return 116-CBD-11 to State (not eligible); ~~to discuss further~~ <sup>to discuss further</sup> w/NR staff + State. DUBIE

BRANCH CHIEF 3/3/80

Return 102-L-3 to State for correction;

HOLD 130-CBD-44 for info from State

Staff conference 3/5/80 - agreed to action as noted below:

KEEPER

Accept with exception of 116-CBD-11 (official notification of fire & clean from State), 102-L-3 (returning to State for revision - also returning 116-CBD-11) and 130-CBD-44 (holding from State)

Soldner  
3/5/80

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_

Send-back \_\_\_\_\_

Entered \_\_\_\_\_

MAR 5 1980

Federal Register Entry \_\_\_\_\_

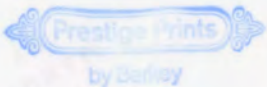
2.3.81

Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

SEE 3/3/80 REPORT



JUN 1979



JUN 1979

Worcester MA, Ma

177-D-10

AUG 1979

Whittall mill #2

Whittall Mill

South & east  
elevations

Prestige Prints

by Barney





Prestige Prints

by Berkeley

JUN 1979

Prestige Prints

by Berkeley

30 AUG 1979

Worcester MA, MA

177-1-1  
Whittall Mills

Sect. 16 on map  
& wood storage  
South & east  
elevations



Prestige Prints

by Berkeley

JUN 1979

Prestige Prints

by Berkeley

Whitcomb Mills

177-5-1

30

AUG 1979

Worcester MA 4, Ma

Worcester Carpet  
Mill #2

South east  
elevations





by Berkey



JUN 1979

177-D-130 AUG 1979  
Worcester MA, MA  
Whittall Mill #3  
Whittall Mills.  
South elevations



JUN 1979

Prestige Prints

by Berkeley

JUN 1979

Prestige Prints

by Berkeley

177-D<sup>3</sup>-A AUG 1979  
Whittall Mills  
Whittall Mill #1  
Worcester MRA, MA  
East & north elevation





JUN 1979



by Berkey

JUN 1979



by Berkey

Whittell Mills

177-D-1  
Worcester MA, MA

Worcester Carpet  
mill #1

South elevation

30 AUG 1979



JUN 1979

Prestige Prints

by Berkeley

JUN 1979

Prestige Prints

by Berkeley

Whittall M. 115

177-D-1

(First) Power

Worcester MA 014 Ma House

South + east elevations

27 AUG 1979  
30 AUG 1979





JUN 1979



by Berkey

Whitell Mills

Worcester MA

Main Office

East elevation

30 AUG 1979

JUN 1979



PRIME SPACE FOR RENT

791-7151

by Berkeley



JUN 1979

177-D-1<sup>30</sup> AUG 1979  
Worcester MA  
(Second) Power House  
Whitfall Mills  
West & south  
elevations



by Barney

JUN 1979

Prestige Prints

by Barney

177-<sup>30</sup>0-1 AUG 1979  
Whittall Mills  
Whittall Mill #2  
Worcester MA, MA  
South east  
elevation



CARL S.  
DUB  
TEXTILE WASTES

PRICHARD

PRICHARD



JUN 1979



by Berkeley

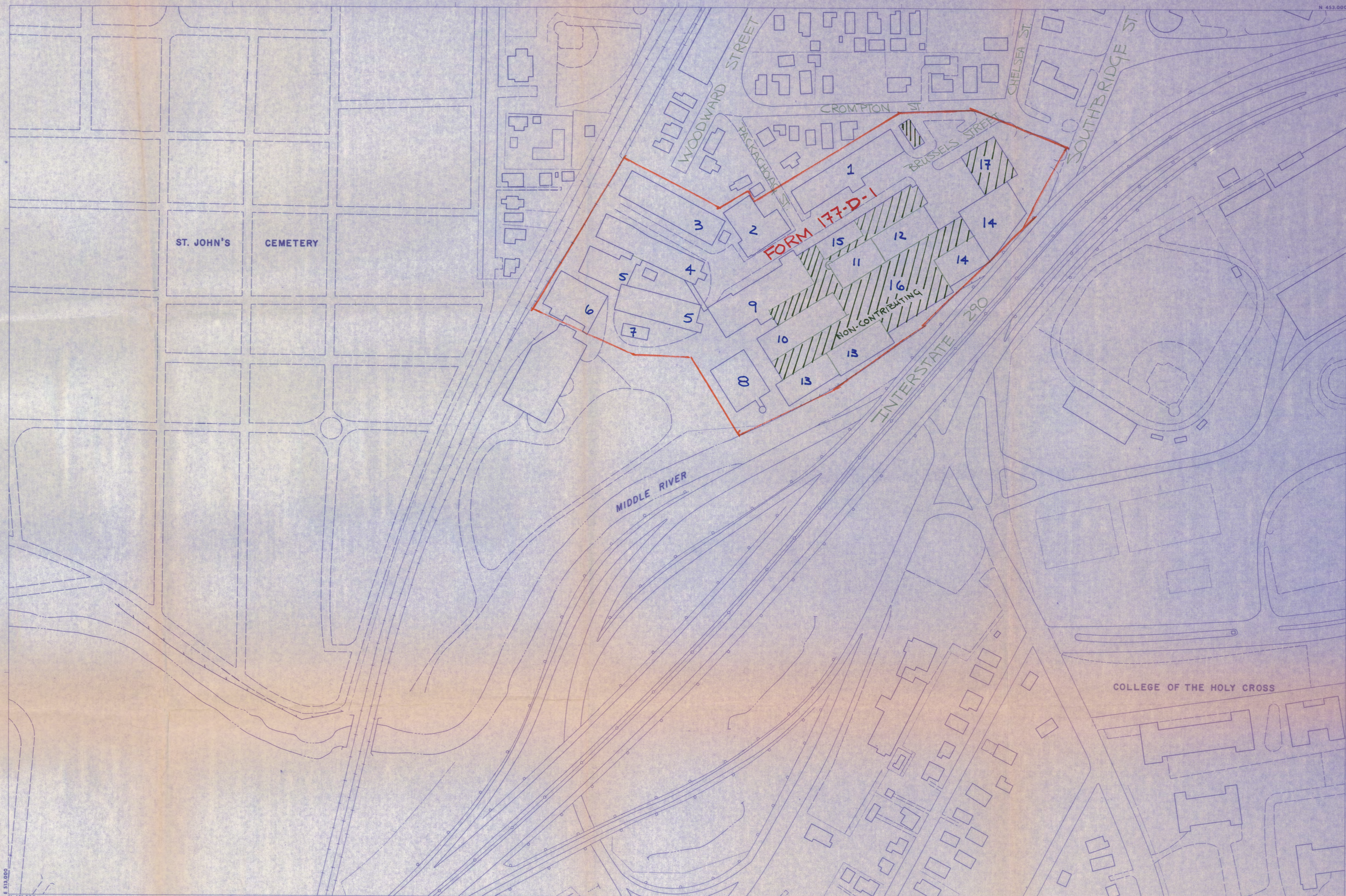
JUN 1979



by Berkeley

177-D-1  
Whitcomb Mills  
Shop 30 AUG 1979  
Worcester MRA, Ma  
Southeast  
elevations





N 451,000  
E 513,000

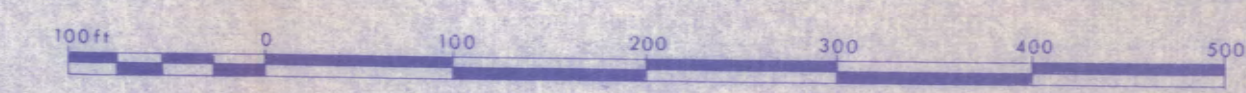
COMPILED BY PHOTOGRAMMETRIC METHODS

moore survey & mapping corp.

CONTROL BY MASS. GEODETIC SURVEY, U.S.C. & G.S., & M.S. & M. CORP.

UPDATED BY \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

THIS MAP REPRODUCED FROM MAPING MEETING NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS AT A SCALE OF 1"=200'



500 FOOT GRID BASED ON MASS. RECTANGULAR COORDINATE SYSTEM

| INDEX |     |     |
|-------|-----|-----|
| 164   | 165 | 166 |
| 176   | 177 | 178 |
| 189   | 190 | 191 |

CITY OF WORCESTER  
MASSACHUSETTS

PLANIMETRIC BASE MAP

PROJECT: M.S.M. 2517

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPHY: 10-22-74  
SHEET 177 OF 220 SHEETS





