

MAY 15 1989

594

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

Form numbers in this area	Area letter
17 149, 136	A

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

Photo number _____

Town Southbridge

Name of area (if any) Hamilton Woolen Company

District

General date or period 1836-early 20th c.

Acreage: 3.5 acres

Condition: Good

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)

UTM Reference

- Ⓐ 18/744 675/4663 000
- Ⓑ 18/744 540/4662 810
- Ⓒ 18/744 400/4662 870
- Ⓓ 18/744 420/4662 950
- Ⓔ 18/744 620/4663 040

USGS Quadrangle

Southbridge, Mass - Conn.

Scale

1:25,000

Recorded by E. Woodford, S. Ceccacci

ed. S. Ceccacci

Organization Southbridge Historical Com-
mission

Date May 1986

(Staple additional sheets here)

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

Clustered around the southern most end of Mill Street the buildings of this complex consist of the large five story brick Big Mill (1836, 1850) a group of seven one-and-a-half story Greek Revival style brick workers' tenements (1836) set on a quadrangle opposite it and a four story brick dye house (1929), a related one-story early-20th century brick building attached to its north end, and a ca. 1929 one story brick garage which stands opposite the Big Mill. The dominant feature of the complex is the Big Mill, situated on Mill Street on the north side of the river. This building, with its characteristic end tower capped with a Roman arched belfry rising above the roofline on the south end, can be seen from several vantage points on Main Street & from the nearby residential areas on the surrounding hills. The simple Greek Revival style and the use of the same red brick for both the Big Mill and the adjacent quadrangle of workers' houses establishes the character of the area. These buildings are visually related not only to each other but also to the largely mid-19th century buildings of the nearby Hamilton Mill Print Works area (~~demolished~~) and two brick houses of the same general period built by the company at Main and High Streets (forms #D-461 & D-460) overlooking the Big Mill complex. Although the 1929 Dye House with its expansive segmental arched

(See Continuation Sheet)

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

The water privilege at Globe Village was used as early as 1750 by William Plimpton to operate a fulling and scouring mill. Plimpton also later added grist and linseed oil mills at this location. In 1812 James and Perez Wolcott began manufacturing cotton yarn at this privilege. In 1814 their business was reorganized as the Globe Manufacturing Company and a small wooden factory building was built at a location on the northwest side of the river, north of the present Main Street bridge. This building was used as recently as the 1920's as the carpenter shop of the Hamilton Mill. No longer standing today, it was one of the largest cotton mills in the country at the time of its construction.

In 1816 the Wolcotts formed another company at Globe Village to manufacture woolen goods. The Globe Manufacturing Company and this woolen mill were incorporated three years later, in 1819, as the James Wolcott Woolen Company. Weaving was all done by hand until sixteen power looms were introduced in 1823, causing great opposition from foreign male hand-loom weavers.

A brick mill was built in 1823 south of the earlier mill and in 1827 the "Big Dam" was built to enlarge the company's water power. This dam broke in 1829, causing great losses to the company. Unable to recoup their losses, the Wolcotts sold out to Tiffany, Sayles and Hitchcock of Boston, who formed the Hamilton Woolen Company in 1831.

Having replaced the dam and raised it three feet, the new administration was successful enough to make major enlargements a few years later about 1836. A brick girls' boarding house (no longer standing) and a house for the millwright (form #D-461) were also built about this time. The new mill more than doubled the company's capacity for making broadcloth. One hundred twenty operatives were employed by the company at that time. During this period the Hamilton Woolen Company became the town's major industry, a position it was to hold until the late-19th century when the American Optical Company overtook it in size. (See Continuation Sheet #2)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

maps, atlases

Historical files: Hamilton Woolen Company, Jacob Edwards Library

Amidown H. Historical Collections, Vol. II, p. 370

Stone, Orra. Massachusetts Industries, 1930, pp. 1949-1950

Southbridge. Quinebaug Historical Society Leaflets, Vol. II, #12, 13, 14

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Southbridge	Form No: A-149
Property Name: Hamilton Woolen Co. "Big Mill" Area	

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

pg 2

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

windows is large in size, its location behind the other buildings, its similar brick exterior, and the shorter length but similar mass of its street facade when compared to that of the Big Mill subordinates it to the earlier structures.

The Big Mill complex is significant as an unusually well preserved remnant of an early-mid 19th century industrial complex. Of note is not only the good state of preservation of the Big Mill and the workers' houses but also their continued existence together. Although worker housing was provided by other early Southbridge mills, no other examples of an early or mid-19th century mill can still be found here together with its housing. The, ca. 1830's Ashland Mill Tenements still exist but no accompanying mill buildings have survived. Part of the 1837 Central Mill exists but no housing remains.

Big Mill, 1836 rebuilt 1850, rear additions ca. 1850's-early 20th c., Greek Revival with Italianate Overtones

Five stories high, this brick and timber structure has small windows with granite sills and lintels with some 12/12 and some 6/6 sash. The major portion of the windows are presently covered with plywood. Its walls are strengthened by iron tie bars and its eaves are ornamented with simple brick corbelling. The original 1836 structure featured a monitor roof which was replaced by a low-pitched gable roof in the 1850 reconstruction. The present flat roof dates from the early-20th century. The mill's most distinctive architectural feature is the projecting end stair tower with its Romanesque belfry pierced with pairs of round arches on each side.

Descriptions of the mill in its original 1830's state and of its rebuilding after a fire in 1850 are not precise enough to determine exactly how much of the original structure was reused and how much was new construction. The two story brick ells on the east side, which appear on the 1855 Southbridge map, may have been added in 1850.

Brick Square, 1836, Greek Revival

Originally consisting of seven one-and-a-half story brick houses, Brick Row today is a group of six relatively unaltered gable roofed houses arranged around a quadrangle. All were apparently originally built to house two families each. Set with the longer facade to the street, some have the entrances in the gable ends, others have pairs of entrances on the main facade. Some include paneled corner pilasters and a paneled architrave on the facade. Gable returns take the place of full Greek Revival pediments in order to allow room for second floor windows in the gable ends. The most altered of the group are two houses (map #3) at the corner of Canal and Mill Streets which received a sympathetic one story brick pilaster and panel addition joining them together some time during the early-20th century. In this state they were used as the office of the Ames Worsted Company in the 1940's. Alteration of the entrances and the addition of roof dormers appears to have occurred as part of this adaptive reuse.

Building #8, 1857, Greek Revival

This free-standing two story brick structure is distinguished by pilastered corners and gabled ends with pressed metal cornice and returns. Of interest are the low arched recessed entrances on the front and south side. The building has iron tie bars, 6/6 sash and a plaque bearing the date 1857.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Southbridge	Form No: A-149
Property Name: Hamilton Woolen Co. "Big Mill" Area	

CONTINUATION SHEET #2

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

pg 3

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

Dye House, 1929, Classical Industrial

This four story brick industrial building is of the popular pilaster-panel type with simple corbelling at the roofline. Typical of early-20th century industrial construction, a steel skeleton allows most of the wall space to be occupied by large segmental arched windows which extend from floor to ceiling. The south wall of the Front section has been left with no windows, avoiding strong stylistic contrast between this building and the earlier adjacent Big Mill and thereby maintaining a sense of unity within the complex.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

The introduction of the manufacture of delaines in 1844 brought increased success and growth to the company. Delaines was a printed fabric made of a cotton warp and a worsted wool weft. Up until this time the company had manufactured only woolen broadcloth.

During the mid-19th century the Hamilton Mill was one of the major manufacturers of worsted woolens in Worcester County. The county itself was the state leader in worsted productions as early as 1845.

The addition of delaines required the expansion of both the physical plant of the mill and its work force as well. Buildings for cotton manufacture and fabric printing were built on the south side of Main Street (*demolished*). A cotton warp mill was erected in 1844 and a second mill for the making of cotton warp was built in 1849 . Skilled English and Scottish worsted workers and additional American workers were attracted to the mill by this expansion. The influx of textile workers, which continued with the success of the new product led to the rapid growth of Globe Village. New houses and tenements were built by individuals and by the company (see forms #D-434 & D-455) to house the resulting increased population.

In 1860 a lower mill, the "New Mill", was built on River Street and an extensive reservoir was constructed in the town of Holland. Capital was increased to more than \$1,000,000 during this period. The interruption of the cotton supply during the Civil War, however, postponed the opening of the "New Mill" as a cotton mill. It later opened as a delaines mill.

The company maintained its strength during the late-19th century. Changes in production occurred as the market for delaines fell off. In 1886 the company ceased to produce delaines. In 1891-1892 production operations were consolidated so that the "Big Mill" and the Print Works were used for worsted manufacture and the "New Mill" was outfitted for cotton production. In 1893 cassimeres production (men's wear) was eliminated in favor of all worsteds for ladies' wear. At this time the company employed 960 operatives.

By the end of the century Hamilton Woolen was still the dominant textile mill in Southbridge, although it was no longer the major employer. In the early-20th century the company remained competitive on the world market by updating machinery and its produce line. A new dye house was added in 1929. A strike in December of 1934 closed the mill and its assets were liquidated by a vote of the stockholders on January 15, 1935.

The Big Mill section of the complex has continued to be used for textile manufacture up to the present time. Other portions of the original complex have been adapted to other uses.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Southbridge

Form No:

A-149

Property Name:

Hamilton Wollen
District

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

pg 4

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT

The Hamilton Wollen Company District is significant as an exceptional early example of industrial complex, held by the company that dominated the Southbridge economy through the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The mill privilege was first developed by 1750, and early in the nineteenth century the Wolcott's were developing it for textile manufacturing. After several set-backs the company received financial support from Boston investors as the Hamilton Wollen Company in 1831. The expansion and success of this company contributed to the growth of the Globe Village. The nominated properties are all that survive of the larger mill complex constructed in 1836 and expanded in 1850, 1857, and 1929. It meets National Register criteria A and C at the ~~local~~ level and retains integrity of location, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association. The boundaries indicated on the attached assessors map are those of current ownership and represent the surviving elements of the Hamilton Mills.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Southbridge MRA
State Worcester County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review	Date/Signature
31. Gleason, James, Cottage Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byrum</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
32. Globe Village Fire House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byrum</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
33. Glover Street Historic District Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byrum</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
34. Hamilton Mill Brick House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byrum</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
35. Hamilton Mill--West Street Factory Housing Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byrum</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
36. Hamilton Millwright--Agent's House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byrum</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
37. Hamilton Woolen Company Historic District Substantive Review	Keeper <u>Betty L. Savage</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
38. Harrington, Theodore, House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byrum</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
39. Hartwell, George H., House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byrum</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____
40. Hartwell, Samuel C., House Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Helene Byrum</u> 6/22/89 Attest _____

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Hamilton Woolen Company Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME: Southbridge MRA

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Worcester

DATE RECEIVED:	5/15/89	DATE OF PENDING LIST:	5/31/89
DATE OF 16TH DAY:	6/16/89	DATE OF 45TH DAY:	6/29/89
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:			

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89000594

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL:	N	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	N	SAMPLE:	Y	SLR DRAFT:	N	NATIONAL:	N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 6/22/89 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Locally significant early example of industrial complex which retains its mill buildings (some) and its workers' housing. The complex is historically associated with the Hamilton Woolen Company which was influential in the community's industrial evolution.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A+C
REVIEWER Swartz
DISCIPLINE Architectural History
DATE 6/22/89

DOCUMENTATION see ~~attached~~ comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N
(on reverse)

CLASSIFICATION

___count ___resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

___historic ___current

DESCRIPTION

___architectural classification
___materials
___descriptive text

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

___acreage ___verbal boundary description
___UTMs ___boundary justification

* ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

X sketch maps ___USGS maps ___photographs ___presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Signed _____

Phone _____

Date _____

no scale is indicated on the reduction of the sketch map - however a detailed inventory of resources included w/in the boundary is contained in the cover form for the NRT, including street addresses for each.



Building #8
Hamilton Woollen Company District
Southbridge, MA, ~~MA~~
Ceccacci, 1986
Southbridge Historical Commission
Roll #7

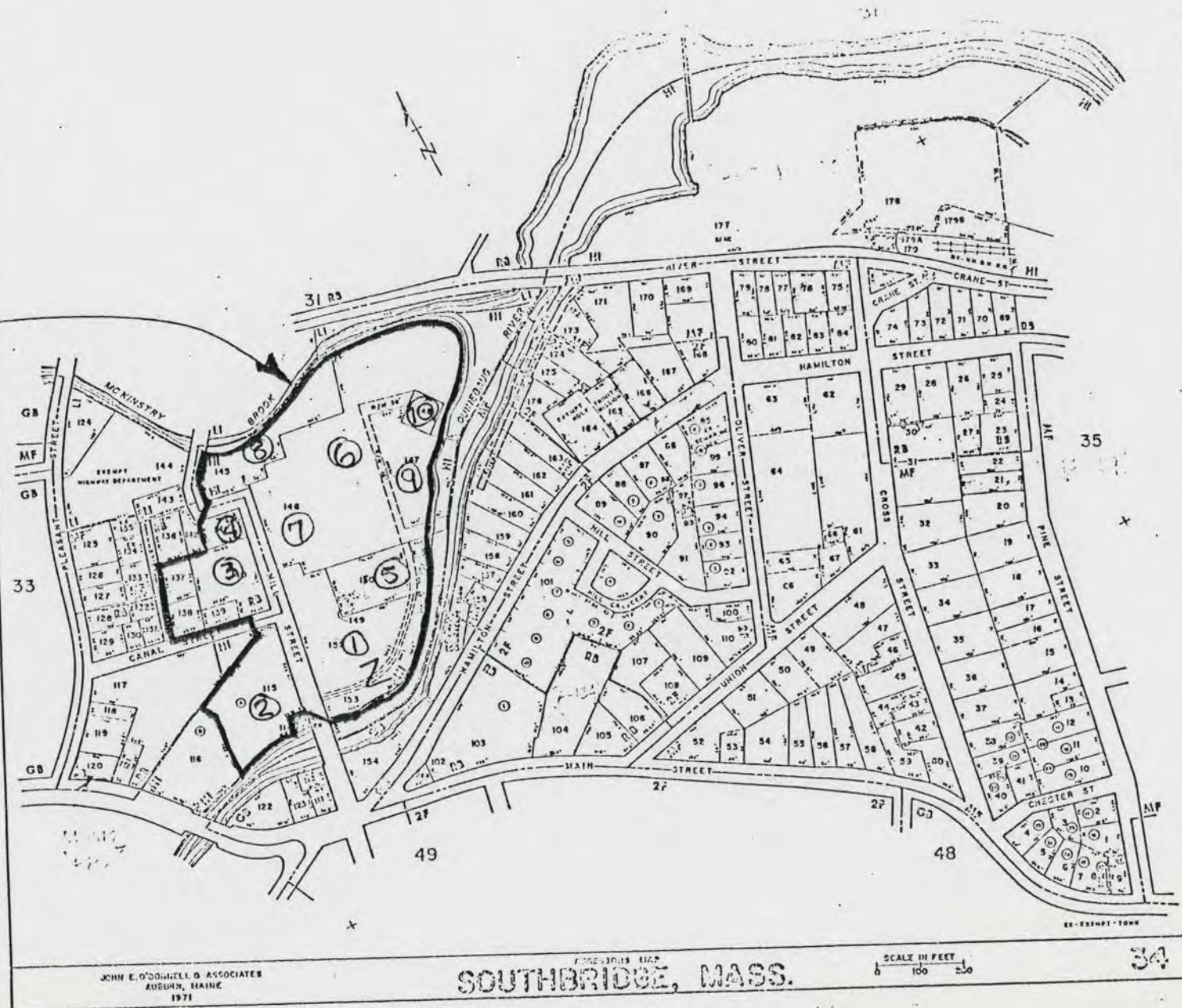


Brick Square and Canal Street
Hamilton Woolen Company District
Southbridge, MA ~~MA~~
Ceccacci, 1985
Southbridge Historical Commission
Roll #1



Big Mill and Dyehouse, 26 Mill Street
Hamilton Woollen Company District
Southbridge, MA ~~MA~~
Ceccacci, 1985
Southbridge Historical Commission
Roll #1

A-149



Big Mill Area

JOHN E. O'DONNELL & ASSOCIATES
AUBURN, MAINE
1971

SOUTHRIDGE, MASS.

SCALE 1" = 100'

34

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000294