

FORM B - BUILDING

AREA	FORM NO.
	317

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116

PHOTO: (3x3" or 3x5", black & white)
staple to left side of form

Photo number _____

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection. Indicate north.

See attached sketch map

Williamstown Quadrangle
UTM Reference: 18/652440/4728820

Recorded by Betsy Friedberg

Organization Massachusetts Hist. Comm.

Date July 1985

Town North Adams ^{MRA}

Address 60 Roberts Drive

Historic Name Norad Mill

Use: Present industrial/commercial

Original woolen mill

DESCRIPTION:

Main block: 1863; addition: 1895-1983
Date (see attached sketch map)

Source Insurance maps

Style Italianate industrial

Architect unknown

Exterior wall fabric brick

Outbuildings See attached sketch map

Major alterations (with dates) _____

two-story concrete addition, 1982 (see attached sketch map)

Moved no Date N/A

Approx. acreage 4.50 acres

Setting This mill is located on the north side of the Hoosac River. Across the river to the south is Braytonville, a community with a high proportion of workers'

(Staple additional ^{housing} sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

The Norad Manufacturing Company represents the oldest complete mill structure in North Adams to have survived without major external alterations of the original structure's appearance. The main mill (A), wheelhouse, and wing (B), built in 1863, are open to view from many angles and places on public roads. Extensions were added to the west end (C) in 1898, and south wing (D) in 1895-1898, and a storehouse (E) was built next to the latter in 1904. These are small compared to the sections erected in 1863. Additions to the south wing replicate the earlier style of load-bearing walls and small window openings,

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.) (continued)

The Norad Mill was built by the North Adams Woolen Company, a concern organized in 1863 and capitalized primarily by its president, Sanford Blackinton. Blackinton had been for many years the wealthiest manufacturer in town, worth a quarter of a million dollars in 1857. He made almost all his money in woolens, the trade to which he was apprenticed as a young man. In addition, he bought into and sold out of several cotton manufacturing companies after the Civil War, often through associates and members of his family. Blackinton had acquired interest in and soon controlled the Old Stone Mill, built nearby by F. A. Brayton & Co. in 1832. (That building survived until after 1900.) Blackinton's first woolen mill, located west of this one in the Blackinton neighborhood, had been in operation since 1821, and continued to be his other main factory. But the demand for woolen goods created by the Civil War encouraged him to expand production by forming a second firm, Norad.

By 1863, Blackinton had access to raw materials and to markets, and had accumulated the capital necessary to undertake large-scale expansion. He was one of the largest subscribers to the railroad built from North Adams south to the Boston and Albany road in 1843, and he was able to utilize fully the link completed in 1854 from North Adams to Troy. Blackinton procured his raw wool both locally and outside the immediate area. Although wool prices rose quickly after the outbreak of the Civil War, Blackinton found a large amount of wool at lower prices in Ohio and was able to bring it in to North Adams by rail. In addition, Thomas C. Phelps, a sheep farmer whose herd grazed on 190 acres

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher) (continued)

History of Berkshire County, Mass., F. W. Beers, NY, 1885.

Insurance Maps of North Adams, Sanborn Insurance Company, Pelham, NY, 1888, 1908, 1914, 1929

County Atlas of Berkshire County, Mass., F. W. Beers, NY, 1876.

Atlas of the Towns of Adams, North Adams, & Williamstown, D. L. Miller, NY, 1894.

North Adams and Vicinity, H. G. Rowe, North Adams, 1898.

Selected Economic Papers 1881-1889, Bureau of Statistics of Labor, compiled by Carrol D.

Wright, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Boston, Mass., 1889.

History of North Adams, Massachusetts, 1749-1885, Willis F. Spear, North Adams, Mass., 1885.

Associated Mutual Insurance Companies, Insurance surveys of mills in North Adams.

The Transcript, North Adams, Mass.

American Wool Manufacture, Arthur Harrison Cole, Cambridge, Mass., 1926

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: North Adams MRA	Form No: 317
Property Name: Norad Mill	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, continued

and copy the low pitch of the roof on the original wing, though these additions do not display the ornate corbelled brickwork found on the 1863 cornices. The 1898 westerly addition to the main mill extends that block's three-story facades another seventy-nine feet, but uses more modern curtain-wall construction such as is typically found in other mill buildings of several stories built in North Adams around the turn of the century. Its recessed window bays contain larger window openings in a nonsupporting wall curtain. The bays alternate with vertical brick members reaching from ground to flat roof, giving the effect of pilasters. The high-peaked roof of the original (main) mill rises above the flat roof of the extension, and contains the same decorative brickwork seen in other mill buildings dating from the period during or immediately following the Civil War.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, continued

adjacent to the mill, also was a supplier. Blackinton's productive new mill allowed him to market great quantities of woolen goods soon after the elevation of tariffs on wool during the Civil War, while competitors were still making plans for expansion.

Blackinton recruited for his new company some of the most able administrators seen during the post-Civil War heyday of industry in North Adams. E. B. Penniman joined as agent for sales through New York outlets; Thomas W. Sykes became superintendent. When the firm was reorganized as the North Adams Manufacturing Company in October of 1877, Sykes remained as superintendent. Penniman became treasurer and clerk, and H. G. B. Fisher of New York assumed the presidency.

By the mid 1890s, the Norad Mill was producing fancy cassimeres worth half a million dollars annually, equal to the sales of the largest firm in North Adams, the Arnold Print Works, makers of printed cotton cloth. The Norad Mill employed at this time 225 hands. This exceeded the national average work force in woolen mills three times over; it made Norad larger than 90 percent of the woolen mills in the country, and almost twice the size of the average woolen mills in Massachusetts, which were the largest in the nation.

The woolen-production industry at the turn of the century was becoming more centralized as the small mills dropped out. The Norad Mill became associated with an aggregate of mills in Connecticut, where the average size of woolen mills was rising faster after the turn of the century than in any other major wool-producing state, ranking near the leading state, Massachusetts. These associated mills followed a course different from those that grew to mammoth size in order to achieve economies of scale; like its Connecticut colleague, the Hockanum Company, Norad survived on a moderate scale by diversifying its product and combining medium- and fine-grade products in order to maximize waste of its variety of raw materials. By the mid 1920s, only 150 operatives worked at Norad, producing cotton as well as woolen blankets. In 1900 and 1925, power was still 70 percent water, with steam auxiliary.

(continued)

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: North Adams MRA	Form No: 317
Property Name: Norad Mill	

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

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, continued

Woolen manufacture continued to be Norad's primary effort, and continued under several names (Middlebrook Mills after September 1939, and Blackinton Mills, Inc., after August 1943) until shortly after World War II. The mill was sold to the Norad Realty Corporation in July 1947.

William B. Roberts bought the plant on February 10, 1954, and established the Excelsior Printing Company there. In 1964, Crane Paper Company bought him out but retained the firm's name. Crane has since then printed manufacturing specification sheets, college catalogues, and paperbacks, amended social stationery, and served all of Crane's eastern outlets for stationery from Excelsior Printing Company. Robert and Thomas Cramer bought most of the wing and its extensions in October 1971 for sales and storage by their Central Radio and Appliance Company.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The Norad Mill, North Adams' most intact and oldest mill complex, retains integrity of setting, design, location, materials, workmanship, and association with the city's primary 19th century industry--wool production--and its major industrialist--Sanford Blackinton. It thus fulfils Criteria A, B, and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

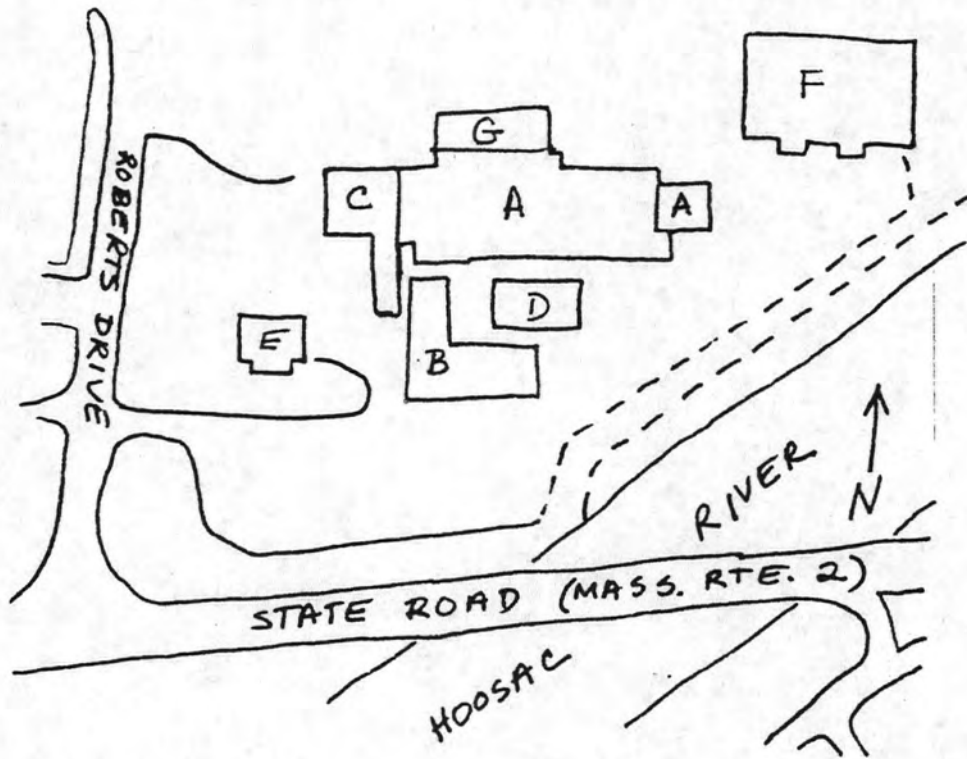
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: North Adams MRA	Form No: 317
Property Name: Norad Mill	

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

APPENDIX A

Sketch Map, Norad Mill
(not drawn to scale)



KEY

- A. 1863
- B. 1895
- C. 1898
- D. 1904
- E. 1965/NC
- F. 1980/NC
- G. 1983/NC

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received 9/12/85
date entered _____

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 2 of 2

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name North Adams MRA
State Bershire County, MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Hathaway Tenement

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 10/25/85

Attest

12. Johnson School

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 10/25/85

Attest

13. Johnson Manufacturing
Company

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 10/25/85

Attest

14. Norad Mill

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 10/25/85

Attest

15. Sherman, William B.,
Farm

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 10/25/85

Attest

16. Sykes House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 10/25/85

Attest

17. Wells House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 10/25/85

Attest

18. Phelps House

S. Linn

Keeper

Attest

19.

Keeper

Attest

20.

Keeper

Attest

85003417

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Norad Mill (North Adams MRA)
Bershire County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. SEP 12 1985
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87
Date Due: 10/10/85 - 10/07/85
Action: ACCEPT 10-25-85
 RETURN
 REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

Entered in the
National Register

- 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 Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
----------	---------------------------------	----------------------	-------------

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 excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed

Check one unaltered altered

Check one original site moved date _____

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

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM 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: _____



59

NORAD Mill
(Excelsior Printing)
Roberts Drive
North Adams, ^{MA} Mass.
Photo by R. Reed, 1981.
Negative at NAHC



NORAD Mill
[Excelsior Printing]
60 Roberts Drive
North Adams, ^{MA} Mass.
North side.
Photo by R.Reed, 1981
Negative at NAHC

S2
BF

RECEIVED

AUG 26 1985

MASS. HIST. COMM.

131
74.80
329.144
74.80

NORAD

1.25
17.60
41.5
2.35

118.85

