

FORM A - AREA

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

Form numbers in this area

Area letter

N-16-9/10/11/13  
N-12-3/7/9

477

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

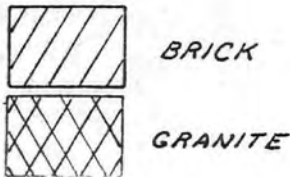
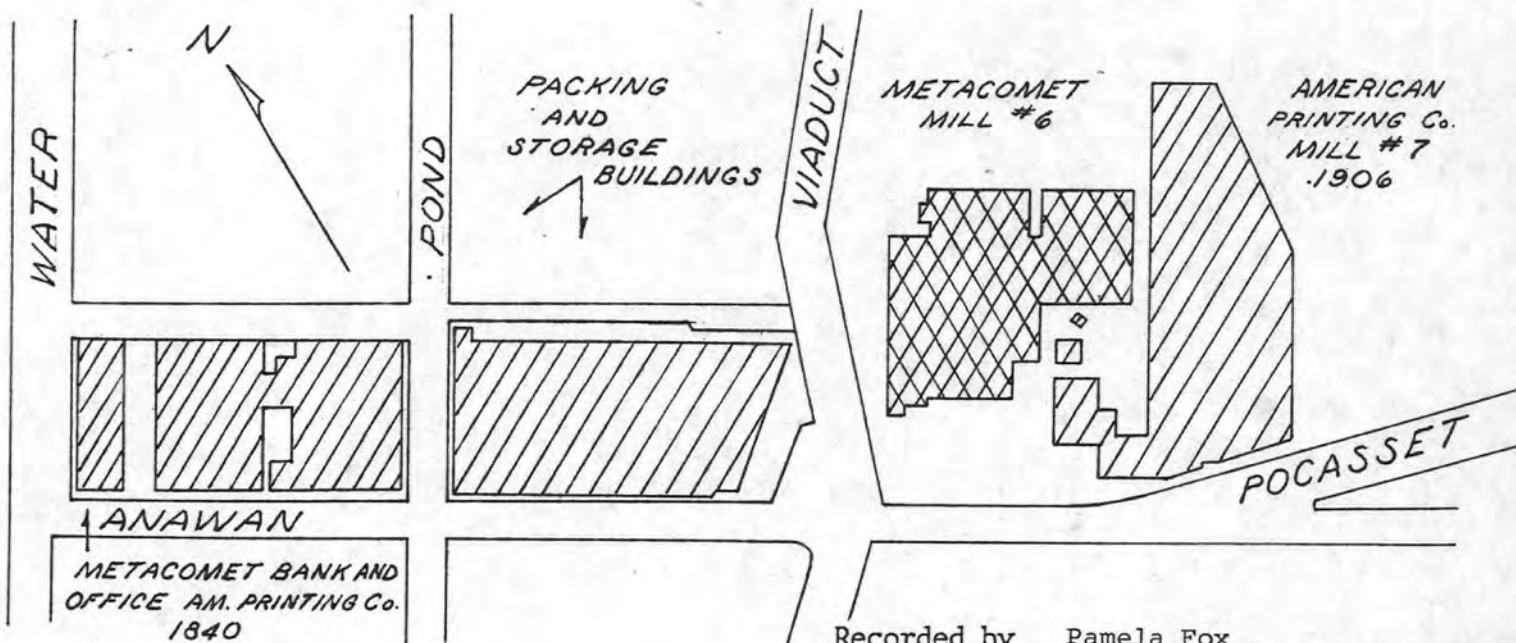
Photo number MP-7-9/10/18/20/23  
419

Town Fall River, Mass.

Name of area (if any) American Printing Co.  
(including Metacomet Mill)  
Anawan Street

General date or period 1847-1906

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 Pamela Fox

Organization FROHP

Date 3/10/82

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

The American Printing Company area along Anawan Street includes two mills and three large storage and packing buildings as well as numerous auxiliary structures. Of major architectural significance is the 1847 granite Metacomet Mill (later American Print Works #6), the oldest existing mill in Fall River. It is the only remaining mill originally powered in part by water and the earliest remaining mill to have utilized the steam engine. The Metacomet is also the only mill remaining along the lower falls of the Quequechan River, the site of all the city's early textile factories. The stream is still visible flowing under the eastern portion of the main structure. The Metacomet was modelled after the famous cotton mill at Bolton, England and was built from plans drawn by Major Bradford Durfee and his nephew, Wm. Davol. Durfee was one of the founders of the Fall River Iron Works and had supervised the building of the adjacent Annawan Manufactory in 1825. In 1838, Durfee and Davol traveled to England where they studied mill design and machinery. Davol later joined the firm of Hawes and Marvel, the company which

(Continued)

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

The buildings included within this area are all associated with the American Printing Company, a major Fall River conglomerate established in 1880. The oldest of the buildings, the Metacomet Mill of 1847, was originally built and owned by the Fall River Iron Works, an earlier conglomerate which also owned all or part of the Troy, Fall River Manufactory and Annawan Mills, as well as the Fall River Gas Works, Fall River and Providence Steamboat Company, and Fall River Machine Company. These firms were all jointly owned and operated until 1880. Most of the stockholders were also associated with the American Print Works, which will be discussed below. The Metacomet, presently the oldest remaining mill in Fall River, was named for King Philip, chief of the Wampanoags, whose Indian name was Metacomet. The first directory listing in 1853 gives the capacity as 21,600 spindles and 528 looms for the production of 5,407,500 yards of print cloth annually. The first mill agent, then the top position, was Richard Borden. Borden was also the treasurer and agent of the Iron Works, which he founded with Major Bradford Durfee in 1825. The superintendent, Foster H. Stafford, later founded the Stafford Mills. In 1880 the Fall River Iron Works was divided and the separate Metacomet Manufacturing Company was formed with a capital of \$288,000. Jefferson Borden became president and Thomas S. Borden, treasurer. In 1901 the company had 30,752 spindles and 794 looms. In 1904 it was taken over by the American Printing Company and became its Mill #6. The American Printing Company was an outgrowth of the American Print Works, which was established by Holder Borden in 1834. Most of the Print Works owners were also stockholders in the Fall River Iron Works Company. The latter firm erected buildings and rented them to the Print Works until 1857, when the firm organized as (Continued)

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Fall River and Its Industries, p. 120

History of Fall River, Mass. by Henry M. Fenner (1911), p. 64, 76

HABS Mass #983

Phillips' History of Fall River, p. 125-126

History of Bristol County (1883), p. 315-316

Textile World's Official Directory, 1901

Philip Borden Photographs (Album A, p. 3)

1853 Fall River City Directory

"Mill Architecture in Fall River," p. 188

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Fall River, Mass.

Form No: 477

N-16-9/10/11/13  
N-12-3/7/9

Property Name: American Printing Co.  
(including Metacomet Mill)

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Continuation)

perfected the American version of the English self-acting mule and also improved other mill machinery. The death of Durfee in 1843 left Davol in charge of plans for the Metacomet, which was to be part of the Fall River Iron Works consortium. The Metacomet and the 1847 Pocasset Mill, which was designed by Davol's brother and has since been demolished, were the first of the city's "wide mills." Earlier mills were all less than 50' wide and about 140-150' long, whereas the Metacomet originally measured 70' X 218' (later extended to 248'). The greater width allowed for better placement of spinning machinery. In addition to the width, the Metacomet featured another English-inspired structural innovation which attracted considerable attention from manufacturers throughout New England. The mill floors were supported by iron posts and girders, which decreased settling and, therefore, decreased friction in the machinery and consequent production loss. As one historian observed: "The value of the English importations by Durfee and Davol can hardly be overestimated, for they improved machinery, motive power and mill design." The Metacomet was one of the first to introduce steam power, which was needed because it occupied the lowest position on the falls. The mill had two breast wheels 19' in diameter powered by water and a single 160 horse power steam engine. The main mill itself was originally 5½ stories with a gable roof which was later raised to create a full sixth story. Walls are of random rubble with parged joints except where finished ashlar is used for corner quoins, sills, lintels, and for the tower. The central stair tower rises just above the roofline and now has a concrete block penthouse. Early photographs show a 7-level tower with a wooden battlement and flat roof. A 2½-story addition along one side was later raised to six stories. A 2-story entrance, office, and waste room were also constructed early, and then raised to 3 stories. The 2-story picker house and repair shop complete the inventory of Metacomet buildings which still remain.

In 1905-6 the adjacent Annawan Mill was demolished to make way for American Print Works Mill #7, one of the city's finest examples of early 20th century brick mill architecture. The most unusual feature of the design is the use of four elongated Gothic windows--the center two set within a brick arch--to adorn the Anawan Street side of the engine house. The main part of the mill has segmental headed windows with brick relieving arches and granite sills. Also of note are the large brick buttresses along the east side, where the mill rises to a full four stories and curves in response to the topography. The Metacomet Mill and Mill #7 are arranged together on a sloping site around a "sunken" courtyard which includes the brick mill chimney and an opening for the waterfalls. An early iron fence and granite curbing runs along Anawan Street.

Across the elevated expressway along Anawan Street are four additional brick buildings once belonging to the American Printing Company, which are also included within this area. Three of these were probably originally used for packing and/or storage and date between 1880 and 1905. (The storage building closest to Water Street was probably constructed about 1880, followed by the adjacent building, erected between 1883 and 1895, followed by the larger building on Anawan between Pond & Viaduct, erected between 1895 and 1905.) They are set directly along the street and are 3-4 stories in height above the basement level with slightly pitched roofs and granite sills. Although not individually distinctive, their regular fenestration pattern of small, segmental arched windows creates a rhythmic streetscape. The last major building in the area, located on the corner of Water and Anawan Streets, is the one-story vestige of a 3½-story Greek Revival building probably constructed between 1840 and 1853. From 1853 to 1876 it was the headquarters of the Metacomet Bank, which used the second floor. It also served for many years as the office of the American Printing Company. The front and side entrances have simple granite pilasters supporting flaired Egyptoid pediments. Windows have square lintels and some retain the 6/6 sash.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Fall River, Mass.

Form No: 477

N-16-9/10/11/3  
N-12-3/7/9

Property Name: American Printing Co.  
(including Metacomet Mill)

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

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Continuation)

a corporation and purchased its facilities. In 1880 the Print Works was reorganized as the American Printing Company with a capital of \$300,000. The main complex of this firm was located nearby between Mt. Hope Bay and Water Street and was called "one of the finest in the world devoted to the business of printing textile fabrics." The main office was located across Water Street at the corner of Anawan Street in a Greek Revival building which also housed the offices of the Metacomet Bank. In 1905-6 the American Printing Company erected Mill #7 adjacent to the Metacomet on the site of the old Annawan Mill. American Printing continued in business until the early 1940's. The Metacomet Mill and Mill #7 are presently used for light manufacturing.

The American Printing Co. complex documents architecturally the growth of this firm which was established as the American Print Works in 1834; the most significant building in the complex is the rubble stone 1847 Metacomet Mill, the oldest existing mill in Fall River and the only mill remaining along the lower falls of the Quequechan. This important industrial complex 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 Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received 1/5/83  
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page # of 10

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Fall River Multiple Resource Area  
State Massachusetts Bristol County

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Algonquin Printing Co.

Substantive Review

Keeper

2/16/83 Ronnie Lee Boyd

Attest

~~2. American Printing Co. and  
Metacomet Mill~~

~~Entered in the  
National Register~~

~~for Keeper~~

~~2/16/83 Melores Byers~~

~~Attest~~

3. Anthony, David M., House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 Melores Byers

Attest

4. Ashley House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 Melores Byers

Attest

5. Ashworth Brothers Mill

Substantive Review

Determined Eligible  
Keeper

2/16/83 Ronnie Lee Boyd

Attest

**DOE/OWNER OBJECTION**

6. Barnard Mills

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 Melores Byers

Attest

7. Belmont Club/John Young House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 Melores Byers

Attest

8. Blossom, Barnabus, House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 Melores Byers

Attest

9. Boguslavsky Triple-Deckers

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 Melores Byers

Attest

10. Borden, A. J., Building

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

2/16/83 Melores Byers

Attest

States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

American Printing Co. and Metacomet Mill (Fall River  
MRA)  
Bristol County  
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 116/83-15  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2.7.84  
Date Due: 2/3/83 - 2/19/83  
Action:  ACCEPT 2/16/83  
 RETURN  
 REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Entered in the \_\_\_\_\_  
National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

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  excellent  deteriorated  good  fair  
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

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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## 10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UMT References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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## 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



Fall River MRA, Ma

MP-7-20

American Print Works

Mill # 7

S/View



Fall River MRA, Ma

MP-7-9

Am. Printworks

Office + former Metacommet  
Bank Building.  
w/storage building  
in background



Fall River MRA, Ma

MP-7-10  
Am. Printworks  
Packing + Storage  
Bldgs.



Fall River MRA, Ma

MP-7-18

Am. Printworks

Metacomet Mill (#6)

+ Spooling + Cloth

Storage houses



DARWOOD

DRIVE  
SLOWLY

Fall River MRA, Ma

MP-7-19

Am. Printworks

#7 mill

Boiler + Engine Hse

W/View



Fall River MRA, Mass

MP-7-23

Am. Printworks

MILL #7

n/e view of flume  
& rear of boiler  
house

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000279