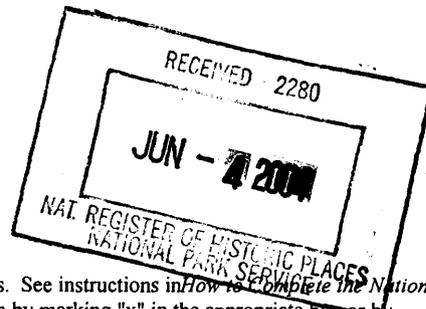


**United States Department of Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company

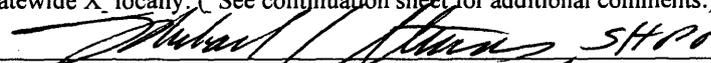
other names/site number N/A

**2. Location**

street & number	134 South Main Street, 214 State Street	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Racine	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Racine	code 101
			zip code 53555

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets \_ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_ nationally statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

  
Signature of certifying official/Title

5/17/04  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_ meets \_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company

Racine County

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain):

*Edson A. Beall*

7/14/04

*[Signature]*

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- structure
- site
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
2	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
2	0 total

**Name of related multiple property listing:**  
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources is previously listed in the National Register**

1

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

COMMERCE/TRADE/ business

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ multiple dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE/ business

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Movements

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation stone

walls brick

roof asphalt

other wood

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

---

Start

**DESCRIPTION**

**Overview**

The Thomas Driver & Sons Manufacturing Company complex is located at the north edge of Racine's downtown commercial district on the edge of the hill, near the mouth of the Root River. It occupies parts of two small city blocks roughly bounded by West State Street and First Street, west of South Main Street. The complex consists of an office and showroom building fronting on West State Street and the factory buildings on Second Street. The Driver Company produced sashes, doors, shingles, and other wooden products from the 1880s through the 1910s at this location. The buildings are described in order of their construction.

The Driver & Sons factory buildings are located on an irregular lot between First and Second streets, at 134 S. Main Street, the northwest juncture of S. Main and Second streets. The easternmost of the two factory buildings fronting on both S. Main Street and Second Street was built as a flour mill in 1882. It is four stories in height, rectangular in plan and built of typical factory load-bearing masonry walls and timber construction. It had one-story additions of a power plant and office, though the additions were removed for the construction of another building around 1910. The two story brick mill building adjoining the former mill's west wall and continuing along Second Street was built by Driver & Sons in 1894. It is irregular in plan with additions to the rear (north). All parts of the building are constructed of cream brick that is painted. The office building, located south of Second Street at 214 State Street, was built in 1888 to house an office, show room, sash glazing workshops, and a materials warehouse. It is located on the block south of the manufacturing building and fronts on State Street, opposite the Second Street factory. It is a two story, cream brick commercial building with a storefront ground floor and offices above on State Street. Due to the topographical rise of land from Second to State Street, it has a three-story elevation on Second Street. The State Street setting was a prominent location, set across from the Dr. Shoop factory and offices adjoining the newly built State Street bridge approach from Main Street. The bridge was a primary connection to the western parts of Racine. The office building is under a separate ownership from the Driver factory buildings.

**DRIVER FACTORY BUILDINGS**

Three buildings comprise the Thomas Driver & Sons Manufacturing Company. The buildings include a four-story former flour mill used by Driver for storage and art glass manufacturing at 134 S. Main Street (1882), the two-and-three-story Driver office and sash factory building at 214 State Street (1888), and the two-story planing mill, woodworking and machinery shops at 210 Second Street (1896).

**STAR ROLLER MILLS, Driver Warehouse and Art Glass Manufacturing  
134 S. Main Street, 1882 (C)**

The easternmost building of the Driver factory complex on the corner at S. Main Street and Second Street was built in 1882 as Star Roller Mills, a flour mill, before it was acquired by Driver. Originally built by Herzog and Roberts in 1881, the building suffered a fire in 1882 and was completely rebuilt to its present general appearance excepting the additions on its north side where the steam power equipment was located in a one-story building, and one and two-story shipping and storage buildings. The two one-story additions were demolished c.1910 for a two-story commercial building, the Scheckler

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

---

Building. It was demolished in the late 1990s for the widening of the Main Street bridge approach.

The four-story, cream brick building is wood post and beam structure bearing on exterior masonry walls set on a rubble limestone foundation. It is in a commercial Italianate style with a low-profile brick corbelled cornice at the top of the parapet wall hiding a low-pitched roof. The former entrances and loading doors are raised above the adjoining walk. The single windows are widely spaced within the masonry walls. All openings on this and the south face have segmental-arch hood moldings of corbelled brick and cut limestone sills. A simple denticulated brick cornice along the east and south sides crowns the building. A brick watertable course is at the base of the walls. Iron tie plates are found at the floor levels on the exterior walls. The bronze colored aluminum windows, replaced to match the original in the recent renovation, are double-hung with six-over-six lights in each sash, screens and a flat header beneath the arch.

The Main Street or east façade of the four-story building has three single window bays on the upper three floors and a former doorway in the south bay on the first floor. The doorway had previously been lowered to street level, and was paneled in the recent renovation. A large vertical metal building sign was installed on the Main Street façade near the corner during the recent renovation. Small modern architectural lights are attached to the façade. The cream bricks are painted.

Along the Second Street façade there are four window bays from Main Street to the west, followed by paired freight doors on each level with several small original windows adjoining them. An additional window bay is found to the west of the loading doors, though most were added when an interior stair was rebuilt decades ago, and two during the recent renovation. Two other windows had previously been added in renovations within this wall, the ones on the second floor with flat steel lintels. As with the east face, all windows have been replaced with aluminum windows. The freight doors and infill panels occupying the door openings were replaced with panels and windows to resemble the paired doors in the 2002 renovation. The original freight hoist bracket remains above the former freight door openings. A steel fire escape was removed in the 2002 renovation.

There are two new window openings on the two upper floors of the west side of the building, and several irregularly placed window openings on the north face of the building had long been bricked shut. Old painted advertising signs remain on the north wall, including a Bull Durham tobacco image and part of a Coca-Cola sign. These pre-date the construction of the adjoining two-story commercial building in the 1910s, and were exposed when that building was demolished in the late 1990s.

The interior of the building was divided into apartments in 2002. Features that remain throughout include the exposed brick walls, wood structural posts, beams, joists, and subflooring as ceilings. Previous to the remodeling the building floor plan was open.

**DRIVER FACTORY BUILDING, Planing Mill, Sash, Door & Blind Factory  
210 Second Street, 1870, 1896 (C) (current address is 134 S MAIN ST)**

The utilitarian, two-story, painted cream-brick, factory building was built in 1870 and rebuilt by Driver & Sons to its general present appearance in 1896. Originally built in 1870, it received additions, was damaged by fire, and was rebuilt. The building fronts on Second Street, directly across Second Street from the three-story Driver office building. The building is irregular in plan with a main building along Second Street, 170 feet with a depth of 62 feet, and a dog-leg of rear additions along the east of the front building 88 feet parallel to Second Street with a depth of 54 feet. Another small addition extends the rear wall 17 feet to the west and 23 feet toward the south. A simple linear corbelled cornice defines the roofline,

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 3

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

---

and an elevator penthouse breaks the line approximately the two-thirds the length toward the west end. The building has low-pitched roofs.

On the Second Street side, the single window openings have segmental arch brick molding set flush with the wall, and stone sills. On the ground floor, four doors from various dates built for vehicular or freight use remain. The western-most door is at the former elevator entrance and has a segmental masonry arch with its sill more than a couple feet above grade. The freight door to the east of it has a steel lintel and a sill above grade. Both of these have replacement sheathing built as a grid to resemble panels, rails and stiles -- these replaced nonhistoric garage doors in 2002. The next opening to the east is the main entrance to the apartment complex with recessed modern fixed glazed panels and doors. It has a flat masonry arch, its sill meets the sidewalk, evidence of its use as a garage door in recent decades. The last masonry freight door adjoins the east end of the building, has a segmental masonry arch and a sill at windowsill height though it is built as a double window. On the second floor level of the Second Street façade, single windows run in sets reflecting the staging of construction of this part of the building. The elevator was the first addition to the original 1870 building to meet the street front of the present building line. The elevator is reflected in the grouping of three windows on the second level and a penthouse above with two small narrow windows with half-round arches. A tenbay wide addition was added west of the elevator in 1896. At this same time the façade was reconstructed east of the elevator with 21 window openings. The windows are modern nine-over-nine, double-hung windows replicating the originals. The original wood sills were replaced, as well. Small modern gooseneck lights are attached to the wall, flanking the former door openings.

The west end face of the building has nine bays of narrow, paired four-over-four, double-hung windows within segmental arch masonry openings. The three bays of the second floor are a foot taller, probably built as space permitted, given the visible roofline that slopes from street to rear. A modern garage door opening centered in the wall is panelized sheathing similar to a garage door appearance, installed in the recent renovation. Basement level windows have long been bricked shut.

The rear of the main part of the building fronting on Second Street is comprised of sixteen closely spaced bays of four-over-four, double-hung single windows on the upper floor and thirteen on the ground floor and basement. A modern freight door was closed in the recent renovation to create one window and door. A side wall of the rear addition has three window bays. The small one-room addition at the west end of the rear building line has two window bays on the west and north faces. It abuts the remaining remnant of the chimney that dates to 1884.

This side of the building is partly obscured by the new apartment building adjoining it. The rear (north) side of the rear wing has five double-window bays, one recent, another altered from the original openings of segmental arches, with standard four-over-four, double hung paired windows within them. Basement windows which had been blocked-up, were re-opened in the recent renovation. The second floor has eleven single, double-hung windows with four-over four sashes.

The interior of the building is divided into apartments in 2002. Features that remain throughout include the exposed brick wall, wood structural posts, beams, joists, and subflooring as ceilings. Previous to the remodeling the building floor plan was open.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 4

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

---

**2002-2003 Addition**

The new, four-story, apartment addition was added to the historic building in 2002-2003. It is 147 feet long and 62 feet deep, set at an angle from the street grid, though following the curved street right-of-way established for the reconstruction of the bridge approach in 2001. The addition is set apart from the S. Main Street face of the four-story StarMill building with a quadrangle of open space. Its Main Street façade angles toward north-by-northwest. In plan, the center of the back of the building coincides with the northeast corner of the Driver factory building. Where the addition joins the Driver factory building, a short two-story connection is visible only from within the space between the buildings.

The building is four stories, set several feet above a partly exposed basement. The first floor is several feet above grade. The land slopes toward the north, dropping several feet along its length. A driveway from the First Street right-of-way north of the building, provides access to the parking garage in the basement.

The roof is low pitched and not visible, draining to the interior. The cornice height of the addition is somewhat less than that of the Star Mill building. Stuccoed stair and equipment towers rise above the cornice and are located along the centerline of the building.

The building has a two-toned brick veneer set atop a reddish-brown split-faced block base at the basement level and rising to just above the first floor window sill line. A yellowish tan brick sheaths the first through third stories of the building up to a line just above the fourth floor window sill line where it is topped with a darker contrasting split-faced concrete brick sill. A very light buff brick sheathing the balance of the fourth floor up to a cornice. The cornice is comprised of a band of the contrasting darker brick used on the lower stories, stepped to be wider at the brick pier, and topped with a stepped reddish metal band that juts out 30 inches above the brick piers and houses architectural down-lights.

The Main Street façade or east side has eleven bays of paired doors alternating with window bays of paired, double-hung windows. The window and door lintels and sills are cut limestone. The windows are white vinyl units, while the doors and the frames of windows and doors are white clad extruded aluminum. Fixed narrow transom windows are above the doors. The doors are simple clear-view type. Simple rectilinear rust-colored painted iron balcony grilles extend out only a few inches from the building and are set above extended concrete ledge that projects similarly at the door openings.

The north elevation is symmetrical, and has a vertical recessed area in the middle of the wall, that is recessed a foot from either side and sheathed with the light-colored brick. A standard modern garage door is located at the bottom of the recess. At the top of the recessed part of the wall is a curved parapet wall, ornamented with a painted narrow elliptical wood band. The doors and balcony rails on this elevation are all located in the recessed area, while a bay of double windows is found on each of the sides. There are four of the down-light fixtures within the metal cornice on this side.

The west elevation is a repeat of the east elevation, though there is a garage door opening to access the small parking lot. The south elevation is identical to the north elevation except that there is no curved parapet wall.

The interior is finished out as modern apartments, with drywall and carpet finishes.

The apartment addition is a non-contributing component of the Driver Building complex.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 5

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

**OFFICE BUILDING, Office & Sash Factory**

**214 State Street, 1888**

Previously listed on the National Register of Historic Places

as part of the Old Main Street Historic District on 8/11/87.

Thomas Driver & Sons built the cream brick, two-story office building in 1888 in a late Nineteenth Century commercial style to house the sash and blind manufacturing functions of the company, along with the office and showroom. It appears to front on State Street, though it extends through the short but steeply sloping block to Second Street, where it is a three story building, with full access to lower level. Its west side is abutted by a one-story commercial building of a separate ownership. Adjoining its east side is a former alley right-of-way, now a parking lot. The parking lot is bordered at its north edge nearest the office building by a new concrete block retaining wall with an iron fence, set high above Second Street. According to a vintage advertising diagram, the basement level of the building originally opened onto a basement-level alley on the east side of the building that led to Second Street. Adjoining the building was an elevated walk to a secondary door from the ground floor of the company office and a stair leading to the Second Street level of the alley. According to a Sanborn map the vault beneath the sidewalk was used for storage of glass and sashes. The building measures approximately 70 feet by 70 feet and has a gently-sloped roof hidden by a parapet wall, a corbelled chimney, and an iron fire escape on the north end of the east side wall. Historically the area now a vacant lot was used for the storage of lumber, as were open lots in many of the surrounding blocks. (Old Settlers Society, p.27, City Directories, Sanborn map)

The State Street façade, an angled corner at the southeast corner of the building and the alley side of the building have ornamental corbelled cornices with banded indentations and a denticulated corbelled cornice with a short parapet wall above. According to a photo, original ornamental stepped masonry extensions of the parapet wall at the center, west end of the State Street façade and the corner have long been removed. These were reminiscent of the stepped end gables found in German Renaissance Revival buildings in the region. Storefronts of large windows are at the angled corner and along the State Street façade. According to a vintage photograph, the original masonry openings of the store fronts were all half-round arch openings for doors, wide and narrow windows alike, with some multi-paned fixed sashes and others that were double-hung. Along the alley side, tall round-arch windows and a similar door were found as well, evident in the original masonry openings though they are bricked up. The windows of the State Street storefronts were all rebuilt at least twice. The present storefront and masonry pier alterations appear in a 1980s photograph, prior to the addition of the broad band of signable paneling now covering it. The storefront retains some of the original brick piers, while others had been replaced with steel lintels. Modern bronze framed windows rest atop a low brick wall and a broad modern band of sheathing cover the upper area where structural steel had been installed. An inset entrance serves two commercial spaces on the ground floor. Above the storefront and below the second floor windows on the State Street and corner facades are panels of textured brick patterned from angle-set bricks. The second floor window openings are tall single width openings excepting the wider corner window. They have segmental-arch brick lintels and cut limestone sills. The original second floor windows were single-glazed double-hung and remained until a remodeling in the 1980s according to an old photo, though the present windows are fixed glazed units with lower hoppers. The original upper sash of the corner window of the second floor was multi-paned with multiple colors of glass.

The rear or Second Street face of the building is three stories and has a utilitarian nature. Its roofline is unornamented and displays the roof pitched with a central drain at the rear wall. The brick masonry is painted a buff color. On the Second Street level is a single passage door with a transom window, centered in the wall, and a vehicle entrance door toward the east end of the building. Another former freight door, west of the center, along with the four single windows, is blocked in with masonry and has small glass-block windows. A double-hung window at the east end of the wall denotes a stair location. On the second and third floors are eleven and twelve single window bays aligning except for the stair window at the east end. On the second floor level, the stair window has an original two-over-two double-hung window with transom, and the

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 6

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

---

nine other second floor windows have original six-over-six-over-six, triple-hung sashes with three-part wooden storm windows. On the third floor level, nine of the windows were replaced in recent years with fixed glazed units with lower hoppers. The remaining three window openings are covered with boards. The building has a relatively open floor plan, though with generally recent applied finishes, dropped ceilings and wall paneling. Interior walls were largely removed in recent decades on the second floor.

While the interiors of the buildings have been altered with changing uses, the buildings retain sufficient integrity to portray the period and area of significance.

End

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Name of Property

Racine County  
County and State

Wisconsin

## 8. Statement of Significance

**Applicable National Register Criteria**  
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**  
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry

**Period of Significance**

1888-1917

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

unknown

## Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 1

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

Insert

The three buildings of the Thomas Driver & Sons Manufacturing Company buildings are locally significant under Criterion A, representing Racine's late Nineteenth Century industrial history. The buildings include the Driver office and sash factory building at 214 State Street (1888), the planing mill, woodworking and machinery shops at 210 Second Street (historic address) (1896), and a former flour mill used by Driver for storage and art glass manufacturing at 134 S. Main Street (1882). The period of significance for the buildings association with Driver & Sons is from 1888 to 1917. (Brown 1887, Sanborn Map 1887, Tax Rolls, Stone, p.156).

**Thomas Driver & Sons Manufacturing Company**

The Thomas Driver & Sons Manufacturing Company buildings are locally significant for their association with an important and early nineteenth century Racine industry. Driver & Sons became highly successful in its production of wood products for contractors, including sashes, doors, blinds, posts, siding, shingles, fine interior installations, and architectural elements, as well as materials for ship building. From the mid-nineteenth century to the late 1910s the Driver Company was referred to as the "the leading wood working firm in Racine." The Driver & Sons buildings housed one of the city's oldest firms with origins dating to the 1840s. From 1870 to the late 1910s, the company operated from its location centered on the Second Street west of Main. The period of significance for the buildings association with Driver & Sons begins in 1888, the date of the oldest visible part of the plant at 210 Second Street and the date of the office building at 214 State Street, and ends in 1917 when the business closed.

The office building at 214 State Street was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (#87000491) in 1987 as a contributing building in the Old Main Street Historic District. The boundary of the district, drawn at the rear of that building along Second Street, excluded the rest of the complex at 134 S. Main Street and 210 Second Street, perhaps due to the change in land use from commercial to industrial/warehousing, and lack of integrity of the surrounding area in relation to the commercial district. (Note: The two buildings historically at 134 S. Main and 210 Second Street are presently addressed as 134 S. Main Street.)

**Historical Context**

Gilbert Knapp founded the City of Racine in 1834 when he filed a claim for 140 acres of land at the mouth of the Root River. The claim was platted in 1836 and the river was first bridged in 1838. From its earliest days, the center of commerce and manufacturing in the community was in the vicinity of the river and harbor, since the principal cause of the development of the City came from its role as a lake port. The area from Second Street north to the river and east of Main Street was an early location of materials storage and shipping via rail and boat. Lumberyards and various manufacturing concerns dominated it. As a result, the area along Main Street developed as the commercial center of Racine. (Stone 1:67-68) (NRHP nomination, Old Main Street Historic District)

In the 1840s and 1850s, early industries began to develop in Racine that became the dominant economic force in its growth. The proximity to Lake Michigan and the harbor at the mouth of the Root River, along with the early railroad lines, provided access to inexpensive transportation for shipping raw materials, such as grains, timber and iron, as well as finished products including flour, wood products and farm machinery. Their success also required easy access to coal for steam generation, and space for materials storage, such as lumber. Among the industries that began to develop in the vicinity of Racine's harbor were flouring mills, agricultural implement and wagon manufacturers, trunk manufacturers, planing mills and sash, door and blind manufacturers. (Wyatt, Vol. 2:7-3)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 2

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

---

**Racine's Industrial Context**

In decades following the settlement of the area, the earliest of Racine's industries developed to serve agriculture and shipping, among them flour milling and boat building. Beginning in the 1840s and 1850s, early manufacturers in wood and farming products emerged and Racine soon developed as a leading center in the nation in the manufacturer of fanning mills, plows, threshers, and farm wagons.

The earliest of the farm machinery companies in Racine was begun in 1843 by J. I. Case whose companies, the J. I. Case & Co., J. I. Case Threshing Machine Co. and J. I. Case Plow Works, later were among the largest manufacturers of farm machinery in the world. The manufacture of farm products expanded considerably in the 1860s and in following decades they required metal fabrication. Thus the early blacksmiths and foundries were soon joined by manufacturers of hardware, wire cloth, wagon parts, steam engines, and machine castings. The wagon makers and parts suppliers grew in the 1860s and in decades following. They included the Mitchell-Lewis Wagon Co., one of the largest farm wagon companies in the U. S., Fish Bros. Wagon Co., and the Racine Wagon Co. In 1903, the Mitchell-Lewis Wagon Co. launched the automobile industry in Racine. It was renamed the Mitchell-Lewis Motor Car Co. and grew to become one of Racine's largest manufacturers. In turn, it generated other companies that produced automobile parts including tires, machine castings and upholstery.

In the 1870s, there was an increase in wood milling companies outside of the rather sizable wood shops of the farm equipment and wagon manufacturers. In addition to the building products of the mill shops and planing mills, these companies produced finished products such as trunks, farm and household products. In the 1880s, S. C. Johnson Co, a floor finishes wax company, was born out of the wood milling business. It became one of the largest companies of its kind in the U.S. and continues to be headquartered in Racine.

Machinery invention and manufacture was an outgrowth of the farm products companies in that a host of artisans were trained in machinery design and production. These individuals formed the companies that produced appliances, automobiles, automobile parts, and industrial machines that dominated the manufacturing scene in Racine in the 1900s and later. Among the other of Racine's notable early machine manufacturers was the Hamilton Beach Co, begun in 1904.

**Thomas Driver & Sons Manufacturing Company, Historical Context**

Driver & Sons was among the earliest of the wood products companies in Racine, an industry that was very successful and helped lead the city's growth. Of the 34 Wisconsin sash, door and blind manufacturers listed in the 1860 census, four were in Racine County, including the former Lucas Bradley company in which Thomas Driver had part ownership. A third of the companies were in Milwaukee County, and Racine was tied for third in number of companies and was third in production value. By 1870, again, four sash, blind and door manufacturing firms were listed in Racine. In the 1870s, wood products companies in the southern port cities of Milwaukee and Racine were able to take advantage of the improvements in rail transportation of the raw timber and increased lumbering of the northern pine lands. Coupled with the growing demand of the cities, the industry increased several-fold in the 1880s. Oshkosh emerged as the state leader in production, partly due to its location on the Wolf River flowage and the easy water transportation of raw materials. The leading producers were in Winnebago, Milwaukee and Fond du Lac counties. The production of sash, door, and blind mills increased in value over following decades, such that by 1900, the state ranked third nationwide. (Twelfth Census of the U.S. 1900:431-440) By the beginning of World War I, the state's wood product manufacturing began to wane due to clearcutting of forests and the

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 3

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

---

movement of large lumbering operations further away. By 1920, the building products industry was no longer among the state's largest twenty industries, and with few exceptions sash, door and blind factories closed their doors in the state. (Wyatt, Vol. 2, 7-1, 7-4 through 6)

### **Thomas Driver & Sons Manufacturing Company History**

Thomas Driver was born June 28, 1818 on the Island of Westray of the Orkney Islands, Scotland, the son of Thomas and Mary (Dearness) Driver. After completing a basic education at the age of fourteen, he began work as carpenter apprentice, which he followed for six years without pay. He then worked for a boat builder, and soon thereafter began boat building on his own. To seek greater opportunity, he came to the United States, and arrived in Racine June 4, 1851 with his wife Marion (Mainland) and three children. (Racine Daily Journal, July 11, 1899)

In 1851, Driver began work at a planing mill owned by Lucas Bradley and Elisha Norton, whose firm produced sashes, doors, cupboards, and mantles for sale to contractors and carpenters. At that time the company was located at Sixth and Campbell streets (now Grand Avenue). Driver worked for the millworks for fifteen years having long been a supervisor, and in May of 1866 he bought out Norton, leased Bradley's share in the business, and began business on his own. The firm was then located at the corner of Chatham (Lake) and Third streets (1865) and employed 40 men year round. The company's output was significant. In that building the planing machine was capable of planing 300,000 feet of lumber in ten hours, and a shingle machine capable of sawing 15,000 feet of lumber in ten hours. Driver's plant at Lake and Third was destroyed by fire on January 17, 1870. The following month he began construction of a three-story factory on the site of the present buildings. (Racine Weekly Journal, May 9, 1866) In this new endeavor Driver associated with James Van Pelt. He bought land at the present site on Second Street to the west of the Herzog and Roberts flour mill and built a new planing mill. The builder was Driver's former employer, Lucas Bradley. (Racine Daily Journal, Feb 2, 1870; Butterfield, p. 463)

The new location on Second Street was noted, at the time, to be well suited for Driver's business. It was a short distance from the lumber docks and adjoined the Western Union Railroad (later the Chicago & North Western Railroad), thus having the convenience of shipping coal to power the steam engines, raw lumber to the factory, as well as the finished or "dressed lumber" or products to clients.

The new mill was a large, three-story, brick building set back from the Second Street frontage with attached dry kilns and livery, and powered by steam-driven equipment in a boiler house at the rear. The rear of the property was bordered by the Western Union rail siding that extended to depot east of Main Street.

A fairly thorough description of the layout and machinery was provided when the Second Street building was first occupied. The building was outfitted with heavy machinery on the first floor, consisting of "a planer, two flooring machines a siding machine and three saws. The second story held the office and the rest of the floor devoted to the manufacture of doors and moldings for which there were two saws, and one tenoning, one mortising and two sticking machines. The third story was used for the manufacture of sashes, blinds, frames, brackets and other items. The machinery for that purpose included three saws; one tenoning, three mortising, one sticking and one shaping machine; and a scroll saw, a blind rod machine, a blind slat machine, a boxing machine, and a sash style cutter. The rear building in which the engine and tank room was located also was used as the lathe room. The engine cylinder had a sixteen-inch bore with twenty-six inch stroke. The balance wheel was sixteen feet in diameter, weighing nine tons. The drive wheel was ten feet in diameter and ran a belt twenty inches wide, seventy-six feet long. The lathe room was supplied with a broom and fork handle lathe, capable of turning a stick fourteen

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 4

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

---

feet long, for making ship windlasses, clothes drying poles, fence, hitching, barn and newel posts." Upper levels held steam heated dry kilns connected to each floor. The basement was used for storage and for sawing heavy lumber. (Weekly Journal, May 11, 1870)

Through the years the name of the company changed to reflect its partnerships. In 1874 Thomas Driver was joined by his son John M., at which time the business was reorganized under the firm name Thomas Driver & Son. In the early 1870s, John had been in charge of the company's Chicago commissions and maintained his residence there. In 1882, the firm's name Thomas Driver & Sons Manufacturing Company was assumed when three other sons, Andrew, Charles and Sinclair Driver, were taken into the company. The business was incorporated in 1884. (Racine Weekly Journal, Feb. 4, 1874)

Throughout the 1880s, the company continued to grow. In early 1882, Thomas Driver bought out his partner, Van Pelt. (Racine Weekly Journal, Feb 7, 1882) In 1888, the facility was expanded with the construction of the three story brick building across the street from the plant and running through the short block to State Street. The building was tailored to the downtown commercial trade afforded by the location fronting on the new State Street extension to Main Street, built to accommodate the new raised bridge that replaced the one at Second Street. Up the hill on the State Street side of the building, a two-story storefront was the location of the company office and showroom. On its east side and on Second Street across from the plant it had two full faces as a three story building. The office building was used for the office and showrooms of the samples of materials, designs and workmanship of the company on the State Street level, while the sash, glazing, blind assembly and storage occupied much of the rest of the building. Painting and glazing workrooms were on the second floor. The vaults beneath State Street were used for storage for the varnish and glass. (1894 Sanborn Map)

By 1894, the original three-story factory (built in 1870) received a sizable addition. The addition required removing half the brick walls of the front of the building and east end, and expanding the building to the east to the flour mill, to Second Street and toward the rear to replace the lathe room. The machinery and workroom layout depicted on the Sanborn map described the planing and sawing machinery as occupying the first and second floors of the main building fronting on Second Street, while woodworking machinery was on the third floor. The elevator faced the street with its shaft rising above the roofline. The engine room was at the rear of the building with its new coal powered steam engine and new 100 foot tall brick chimney. Steam dry kilns occupied rooms on each level at the rear. Lumber was stored on the land around the factory.

One account of the business in 1892 refers to a robust business for "the leading wood working firm in Racine." The area of trade beyond the city, due to the Chicago and North Western rail service, extended the trade to Chicago and points west. At that time, the company employed about sixty men and five teams, the pay roll ran about \$2500 per month, "and three to five thousand feet of lumber, both hard and soft is continually kept seasoning in their yards and dry kilns, and every public, with one exception, and most of the private buildings in the city furnish examples of their superior work." The firm made a specialty of office furniture and fittings for banks and other offices. (Portrait and Biographical Album of Racine and Kenosha Counties, p. 72) A few of the buildings noted in various accounts as having been outfitted with work commissioned from the Driver company were the Deberard & Titus Block (1858), the First Presbyterian Church of Racine, St. Rose Catholic Church of Racine, the interior of the Kenosha court house, sheriff's residence and the jail churches, and fine residences, with jobs as far away as Kansas. (Racine Daily Journal, March 20, 1858; Racine Daily Journal, Oct. 21, 1885)

The Second Street factory building suffered a fire in 1896. It was largely rebuilt, altering the floor heights, and effectively lowering the height of the building to two stories. The elevator remained in the same location, but the remaining part of the 1870 building was completely reconstructed to extend its footprint to Second Street and to the west. At about that time, the

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 5

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

---

company acquired the adjoining former flour mill building on Second Street and used it for storage and had an art glass works on the fourth floor. (Sanborn map; Stone)

Thomas Driver died in 1899 at the age of 81, whereupon his sons John and Sinclair became the owners of the company. Thomas Driver had continued to head the business until his death in 1899, at which time J. C. Driver was made president with John M. Driver as secretary and treasurer and Sinclair Driver, superintendent.

By the 1910s, the managing partnership of Driver brothers were in their late fifties, and specialty millworks were providing competitively priced products that were shipped from other sources in Wisconsin and elsewhere. In June 1915, Sinclair Driver bought out the interests of his brothers, and became president of the company. Soon thereafter the business was closed down and the properties sold. (Stone)

The land on which the one-and-two-story flour mill buildings were located was sold separately and a commercial building built there. The factory was sold to Western Publishing, and the former lumber storage lot next to the 'office' building was developed for the New Orpheum Theatre.

**Thomas Driver & Sons Manufacturing Co.**

The three buildings of the Thomas Driver & Sons Manufacturing Company are collectively locally significant as good representatives of Racine's late nineteenth century industrial history. Through the last half of the Nineteenth Century, Racine was a vital center of industry, particularly in wood products, agricultural implements, and wagons. These buildings were centered on the harbor and rail service at that time and expanded outward into outlying districts in the early twentieth century. Due to the decline in these small industries since then, and more recently due to urban renewal, most of the industrial buildings built prior to 1900 in the vicinity of the harbor in downtown Racine have been demolished. The Driver & Sons buildings remain as important local examples of Racine's early industrial history, and of a once important Wisconsin industry sash, door and blind manufacturing.

**CONCLUSION**

The Thomas Driver & Sons Co. buildings are significant for their association with the locally important wood milling industry in Racine in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The old Driver & Sons office and factory buildings retain their general historic character and well represent this period of Racine's industrial history.

End

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Name of Property

Racine County  
County and State

Wisconsin

### 9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 1.2 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 435800 4731130  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Gary Tipler	date	2/21/04
organization	Consultant for Gorman and Company	telephone	608-286-1844
street & number	807 Jenifer Street	zip code	53703
city or town	Madison	state	WI

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 1

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

---

Insert References

**Major Bibliographical Sources**

**Star Roller Mills**

Apps, Jerry and Allen Strang. Mills of Wisconsin and the Midwest, Madison, Wis.: Tamarack Press, 1980. p.67, 85.

City Directory, 1867, Racine Star Mills, advertisement.

"History of Racine and Kenosha Counties," Chicago: 1879, p. 468.

Racine Daily Journal May 6, 1882; July 14, 1882; Dec 30, 1882; Jan 30, 1883; Sept 20, 1883; April 30, 1885; Sept. 26, 1887; Oct. 15, 1887; Dec 28, 1894.

Racine Weekly Journal, Oct. 13, 1875.

Sanborn Map, 1874, J.P. Jones & Co. Steam Star Mill

Scheive, Brian K. Adaptive "Reuse of the Thomas Driver & Sons Mfg. Building: Reintegration into a New Urban Context, University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, School of architecture & Urban Planning.

Wyatt, Barbara, project director. Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin. Madison, Wis.: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Vol. 1, 2-1 through 3.

**Driver & Sons Manufacturing Company**

Butterfield, C. W. History of Racine and Kenosha Counties, Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1879, p. 463.

Causier, Charles. Determination of Eligibility Document, HNTB consultants, 1990.

Eads, A.B. Eads' Illustrated History Of Racine, 1884.

Founding Industries of Racine Project, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee.

"History of Racine and Kenosha Counties," Chicago: 1879, p. 463.

Karr, Susan. "Architectural and Historical Survey of the City of Racine," Racine Landmarks Preservation Commission, 1979.

National Register of Historic Preservation Nomination Form, "Old Main Street Historic District," June, 1987.

"Manufacturing Interests of Racine," Weekly Advocate, Feb. 15, 1865.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 2

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

---

Old Settlers Society, 1897, p.27. Cut-away diagram of building within ad.

Portrait and Biographical Album of Racine and Kenosha Counties, Chicago: Lake City Publishing, 1892, p. 72, 480.

Racine City Directories

Racine County Plat Map, 1887. Print of 1870 building.

Racine Daily Journal, July 11, 1899, Obituary of Thomas Driver.

Racine Daily Journal, July 14, 1882, Dec. 30, 1882, Jan. 30, 1883, Feb. 8, 1883, Sept. 20, 1883, Apr. 30, 1885, Sept. 26, 1887, Oct 15, 1887.

Racine Weekly Journal, Feb. 4, 1874, account of Chicago office.

Racine, Wisconsin, 1883 Bird's Eye View, Published by J. J. Stoner, Madison, Wisconsin.

Stone, Fanny S., supervising editor. Racine Belle City of the Lakes and Racine County Wisconsin - Illustrated Volume II Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement, Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1916.

Twelfth Census of the U.S. 1900:431-440.

Weekly Journal, "Thos. Driver & Co.'s New Sash and Door Factory," May 11, 1870. Description of building layout and locational advantages.

Wyatt, Barbara, project director. Cultural resource management in Wisconsin: a manual for historic properties resource protection planning project. Madison, Wis.: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Vol. 2, 7-1, 7-4 through 6.

\_\_\_\_ End

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 1

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

---

Insert

**BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The property includes the buildings and associated property at 214 State Street, 210 Second Street and 134 S. Main Street in Racine, Wisconsin.

The boundary is described as such:

Beginning at the eastern point of the property line for 214 State Street at the curb line and then west along the curb line to the point aligning with the west property line of the property, then north along the building and across Second Street to the curb line in front of the building at 210 State Street then west along the curb line to the point that coincides with the west property line, then north along that line to the arc that forms the rear property line, then running roughly northeast to the curb line of S. Main Street then along the curb line to Second Street, then west along the curb line to coincide with the east property line of the property at 214 State Street, then south to the point of beginning at the curb line at State Street.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundaries encompass the buildings and their additions and the parcels associated with these buildings.

134 S. Main Street – Factory buildings and addition

The property boundaries correspond with the current legal description of the building complex and the associated land area. It does not include land north of the building lines, since that land was separated in ownership after the Driver & Sons business closed.

214 State Street – Office Building

The boundaries include the legal parcel that has been in independent ownership since the 1920s.

End

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company  
Name of Property

Racine County  
County and State

Wisconsin

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

**Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

<b>name/title</b>	Tom Capp, Vice President for Development	<b>date</b>	2/2004
<b>organization</b>	Gorman and Company	<b>telephone</b>	608-257-4410 x310
<b>street&amp;number</b>	1244 South Park Street	<b>zip code</b>	53715
<b>city or town</b>	Madison	<b>state</b>	WI

<b>name/title</b>	Mike Hart	<b>date</b>	2/2004
<b>organization</b>	Econoprint	<b>telephone</b>	262-886-9417
<b>street&amp;number</b>	214 State Street	<b>zip code</b>	53555
<b>city or town</b>	Racine	<b>state</b>	WI

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section Photo Page 1

Thos. Driver & Sons Manufacturing Co., Racine, Racine Co.

---

Thomas Driver and Sons Manufacturing Company

Racine County, Wisconsin

Gary Tipler

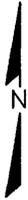
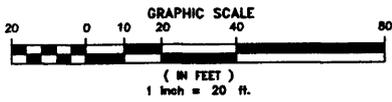
March, 2004

Negatives in the collection of the Wisconsin Historical Society

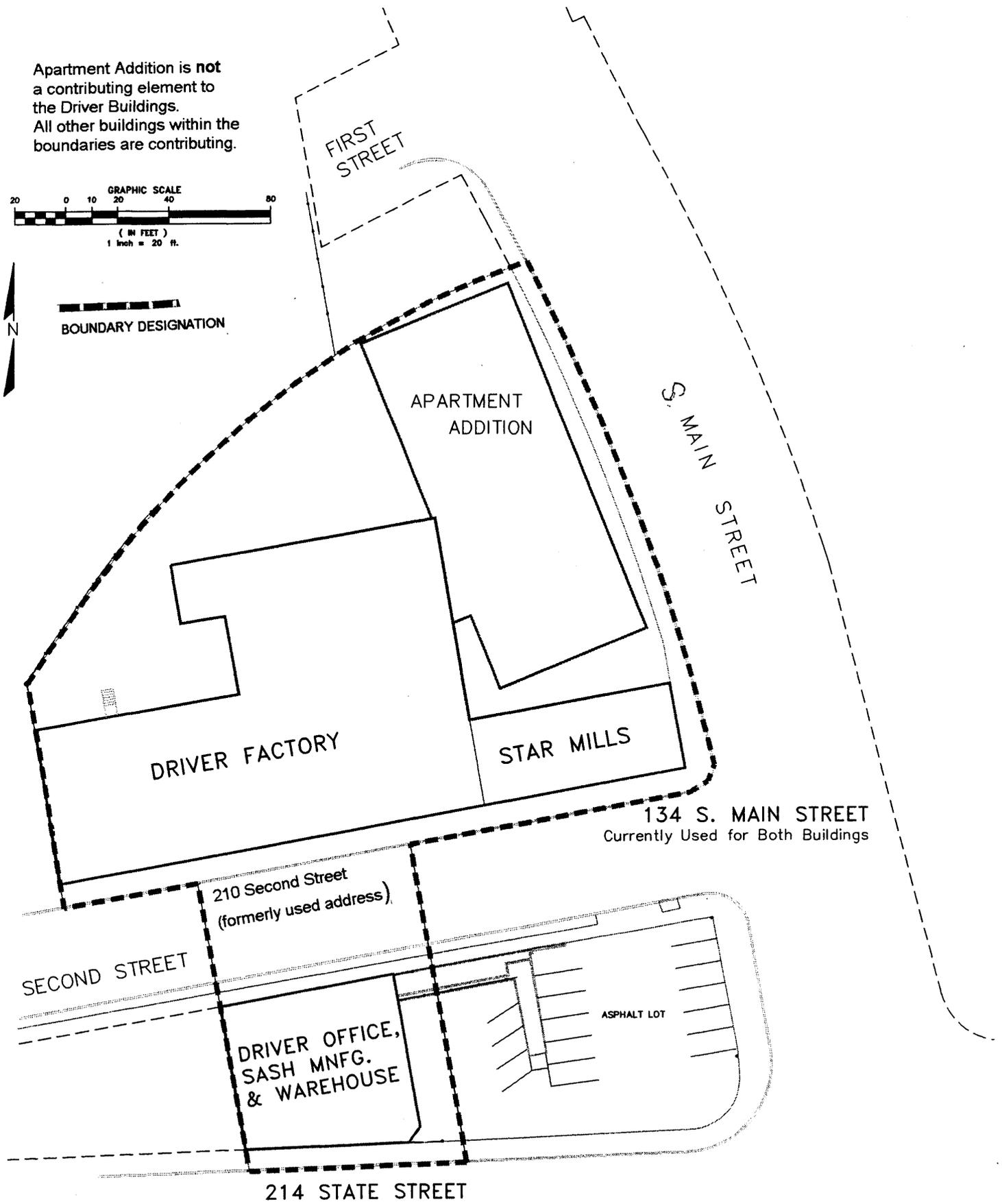
The above information is the same for all photographs

1. Thos. Driver & Sons Manufacturing Co.  
View across S. Main Street. Office and sash factory building (left) and factory buildings (right), (facing west).
2. Office and sash factory building east side wall (facing west).
3. Four mill building (right) and Driver factory building beyond (left) from the intersection of Main and Second, (facing northwest).
4. Four mill building (right), Driver factory building beyond (left) and office/sash factory (left) from the intersection of Main and Second, (facing west).
5. Flour mill building, looking south on Main Street (facing south).
6. Four mill building painted signs, (facing southwest).
7. Rear of Driver factory building (right), viewed from Main Street bridge, (facing south).
8. Office and sash factory building, Second Street façade, (facing southwest).
9. Flour mill building, Second Street side (right) and Driver factory (left), (facing northeast).
10. Driver factory building, Second Street façade, east end (facing northwest).
11. Driver factory building, Second Street façade, west end (facing northwest).
12. Second Street, Driver factory, (facing northeast).
13. View of Second Street, Driver factory building (left) and office (right), (facing east).
14. Typical interior view, reception office, Driver factory building, (facing north).

Apartment Addition is not a contributing element to the Driver Buildings. All other buildings within the boundaries are contributing.



BOUNDARY DESIGNATION



THOS. DRIVER & SONS MANUFACTURING CO.  
134 S. MAIN ST., 214 STATE ST., RACINE, WI  
RACINE COUNTY, WISCONSIN