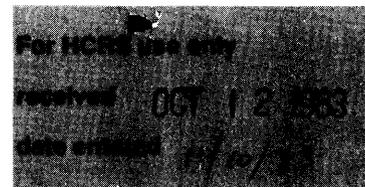


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Saxony Mill

and/or common " "

2. Location

street & number 66 West Street NA not for publication

city, town ~~Vernon~~ (Rockville) NA vicinity of congressional district 2nd

state Connecticut code 09 county Tolland code 013

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<u>NA</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Plastifoam Corporation

street & number 66 West Street

city, town Vernon (Rockville) NA vicinity of state Connecticut

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Town Clerk, Vernon

street & number 14 Park Place

city, town Vernon state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes/ no

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 So. Prospect St.

city, town Hartford state Connecticut

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

The Saxony Mill is located in the northeast portion of the Town of Vernon, Connecticut, on the western edge of the urban-industrial district formerly known as the City of Rockville. The mill complex consists of a wood-framed main building, constructed originally in 1836 and complemented by mid-nineteenth century additions, and three wood-framed and three load-bearing masonry additions constructed, with one exception, in the early years of the twentieth century.

The site of the Saxony Mill is the twelfth in a series of mill privileges along the Hockanum River in Rockville. It is the lowest mill site downstream from the outlet of Snipsic Lake. The Hockanum River flows along the northern edge of the property. The property is bounded on the east by West Street, on the south by Regan Street, and on the west by a residential zone. The north and west boundaries of the property are wooded, providing a buffer for adjacent residential neighborhoods. While the abandoned headrace located across West Street has been filled and the property has been developed commercially, a large portion of the abandoned tailrace located at the rear of the property remains (Photograph 1). It runs from the southwest corner of building number six to the west and north where it links up with the Hockanum River. Figure 1 shows the mill site and water system as it appeared on an 1899 map of Rockville. The mill complex, shown on the site plan (Fig. 2), consists of the following buildings:

Building number 1. A two and one-half story wood-framed structure with a five-story stair-and-bell tower centered on its street facade, built in 1836, with an addition CA 1870.

Building number 2. A one-story ell with load-bearing masonry walls and a timber-framed roof, located at the rear of the main building, built CA 1870.

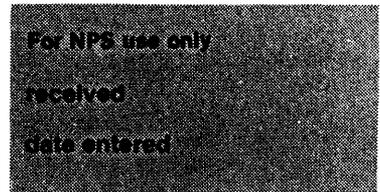
Building number 3. A two-story wood-framed addition located at the south end of the main building and connected to it by a two-story passageway, built CA 1915.

Building number 4. A one-story wood-framed addition located at the rear of the main building, south of the ell, and connected to both by one-story passageways, built CA 1915.

Building number 5. A one-story wood-framed addition with load-bearing masonry walls and timber-framed roof housing the boiler room and former dye house and located at the north end of the main building, built CA 1915.

Building number 6. A two-story wood-framed addition located to the north of both the main building and the ell and connected to the ell by a one-story passageway.

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



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Title: Vernon, Connecticut: A Survey of
Architectural and Cultural Resources,
Vol. 1, The City of Rockville

Date: 1980

eligible: X No
 X state

depository for survey records: Connecticut Historical Commission
59 South Prospect St.
Hartford, Connecticut

Title: Connecticut: An Inventory of Historic
and Industrial Sites

Date: 1981

eligible: X No
 X Federal

depository for survey records: Connecticut Historical Commission
59 South Prospect St.
Hartford, Connecticut

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No. 7. A one-story addition with load-bearing masonry walls and a wood-framed roof located at the south wall of the ell, built in 197

Two small one-story sheds are located at the rear of the property. A picket fence along West Street marks the property line and probably dates from the early twentieth century (Photograph 2).

The main building (building number 1) is wood-framed on a rectangular plan. It rises two and one-half stories from a brick masonry foundation to a gable roof. While the ground floor has direct access to grade at the rear or west side of the building, it is one-story below West Street on the entry or east side. Broad light wells between the building and the sidewalk allow large six-over-six windows to illuminate the ground floor (Photograph 17).

The east facade has a symmetrical arrangement of six windows, regularly spaced, on each side of the central tower. The windows have six-over-six sash except those at the first floor of the north wing which are one-over-one (Photograph 2). The building is transitional from the Greek Revival to the Italianate style. Wood clapboards cover the entire exterior. A smooth frieze below the cornice alludes to the Greek Revival style; however, the gable roof is more steeply pitched than the roofs of other wood-framed Greek-Revival-style mill buildings extant in Rockville. The roof features six dormer windows with six-over-six sash echoing the symmetry of the windows at the lower floors and providing adequate illumination of the attic story (Photograph 3).

The stair-and-bell tower is also wood-framed. Constructed on a square plan, it rises three stories to a widely overhanging cornice with a pediment on four sides. The smooth frieze noted on the main building is repeated below the cornice of the tower. The cupola has a stepped square base with ocular windows and a square belfry with beveled corners and arched ventilators. The belfry is surmounted by another widely projecting cornice with modillion blocks (Photograph 4). The scale and massing of the tower, as well as its details, are Italianate in style. The tower's north and south elevations retain original twelve-over-twelve windows while its east facade has been altered to include a covered entry door and six-over-six windows (Photograph 5). This east facade originally featured three large openings equipped with double doors for access to each of the upper levels (Photograph 6).

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The building's north and south elevations were probably similar prior to construction of the south end addition. The north elevation retains its original window openings and twelve-over-twelve sash at the attic story and six-over-six sash at the second floor. As noted on the east facade, one-over-one replacement windows occupy the first-floor openings. The building's west elevation retains most of its eight-over-eight windows at the second floor and at the south wing of the first floor. Wood clapboard siding and the smooth frieze below the cornice are repeated on this elevation. While the brick shaft projecting from the face of the north wing appears to date from the twentieth century, the wood dormer to which it is linked is probably original (Photograph 7).

The interior layout of the main building (building number 1) is determined by its post-and-beam frame. Beams run from east to west (front to rear) and bear upon the brick masonry foundation and a central row of chamfered wood posts at the ground floor of the north wing. Steel posts are substituted for wood posts at the south wing. This suggests separate construction dates for the north and south wings. The wood beams have been boxed, but appear to be 8" wide by 10" deep. The masonry foundation wall retains its three-coursed brick arch where the water wheel was located in the east wall of the north wing (Photographs 8, 9). A 12" by 12" wood post opposite the wheel location and a 11" by 9" beam which projects 20" from the wall above the arch are probably related to the earlier water-powered machinery. Floors are constructed with 4" planks and finished with 1" flooring.

The first and second floors are essentially similar although the first floor has been subdivided and equipped for office use. The second floor retains its chamfered posts at the front and rear walls. These are tied to chamfered 8" by 10" beams with 4" by 6" diagonal braces let-in to both beam and post. Two steel lally columns have been substituted for each central post.

The attic story provides the primary physical evidence of the separate construction dates of the north and south wings. The six bays of the north wing, beginning at the north edge of the stair tower, are post-and-beam framed. Each bay is marked by roof beams tied together with collar beams overhead and diagonal braces to the floor structure. Rafters are supported by purlins located midway between the ridge and the top plate of the exterior walls. All connections at the north wing are pegged mortise and

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tenon joints (Photograph 10). In contrast the south wing has a conventional framed roof constructed with 2" by 8" rafters at 24" centers. These bear upon a kneewall at the exterior walls designed to imitate the top plate of the walls of the north wing. Collar ties at each rafter are used to reduce the effective rafter span and to allow an unobstructed attic floor.

Building number 2 (Fig. 2) consists of two ells constructed to extend the ground-floor work space toward the west or rear of the property. Both are one-story masonry bearing wall structures built on rectangular plans with timber-framed roofs. The ell adjacent to the main building has stone exterior walls with exterior brick veneer (Photograph 11). Timber trusses span the entire 50-foot width. The roof features a clerestory monitor with twelve-light window sash which is visible only from inside the structure. The ell farthest from the main building has rubble-stone exterior walls with no veneer (Photograph 12). Its wood-framed roof structure is hidden by a finished ceiling. Both ells feature wood lintels at all window openings. Windows are wood, double-hung units with multiple lights, some twelve-over-twelve, some six-over-six.

Building number 3 (Fig. 2) is a wood-framed, two-story structure constructed on a rectangular plan and attached at the south end of the main building by means of a passageway and elevator shaft (Photograph 13). Its floors are 2" thick planks supported on 8" by 10" timber beams which in turn are supported on wood posts at the exterior walls and on concrete-filled steel columns at mid-span. Exterior walls are wood-framed with clapboard siding to match the main building. Windows are wood, double-hung with six-over-six sash. The nearly flat, built-up roof is framed in a manner similar to the floors, with 2" by 8" rafters at 24" centers.

Building number 4 (Fig. 2) is a wood-framed one-story structure constructed on a rectangular plan and attached at the south of the ell and the west of the main building by means of two one-story passageways (Photograph 7). The floor is 2" thick planks on timber beams over a shallow crawl space. Exterior walls are wood-framed with clapboard siding to match the main building. Windows are double-hung with six-over-six sash. The nearly flat, built-up roof is framed with 2" by 10" rafters at 24" centers supported on 8" by 10" timber beams which in turn are supported on wood posts at the exterior walls and on concrete-filled steel columns at mid-span.

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Building number 5 (Fig. 2) consists of two structures constructed at the north end of the main building which housed the boiler room and the former dye house (Photograph 14). Attached to the boiler room structure is a large brick chimney, approximately 50 to 60 feet tall. Both buildings are one-story masonry bearing-wall structures built on rectangular plans. The former dye house has large windows with steel sash. Both structures have flat, built-up roofs with a wood deck supported on 8" by 14" timber beams.

Building number 6 (Fig. 2) is a wood-framed, two-story structure constructed on a rectangular plan, located to the north of the main building and connected to the ell by a one-story passageway (Photograph 15). The floors are 3" thick planks supported on 8" by 12" timber beams which in turn are supported on wood posts at the exterior walls and on concrete-filled steel columns at mid-span. The first floor is set above a shallow crawl space. Exterior walls are wood-framed with clapboard siding to match the main building. Windows are wood, double-hung with six-over-six sash at the upper story and nine-over-nine sash at the first story. The nearly flat, built-up roof is framed in a manner similar to the floors with 8" by 14" timber beams and a wood deck.

Building number 7 is a 1978 addition associated with shipping-receiving aspects of the current manufacturing use. It is a one-story addition attached at the south side of the ell (building number 2) and constructed using concrete masonry bearing-walls and wood roof framing. It has no windows and the shallow roof pitch indicates the probable use of trusses for framing (Photograph 11).

Two outbuildings, probably used for storage, are constructed on a rectangular plan and located at the rear of the property. Both appear to date from the mid-twentieth century. One is constructed using concrete masonry bearing-walls and wood roof joists. The other has aluminum exterior siding indicating wood bearing-walls as well as roof joists (Photograph 16).

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Local History

Criteria A, C

Specific dates 1836
Builder/Architect Unknown

additions CA 1870
 and CA 1915

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Saxony Mill is significant in local and national history for two reasons: first, the main mill building is a well-preserved example of a wood-framed structure constructed for the purpose of water-powered manufacture of woolen textiles. Few of these buildings, which dotted the Connecticut countryside in the early nineteenth century, have survived intact, making the Saxony Mill a rare example of a wood-framed mill building in a transitional Greek Revival to Italianate style (Criterion C). Second, the mill was built for the manufacture of satinet, a type of woolen cloth originally developed in the United States in the first quarter of the nineteenth century as an inexpensive substitute for fine woolens imported from England (Criterion A).

The original Saxony Mill building (building number 1), a simple utilitarian structure, appears today very much as it appeared in a photograph published in an 1895 souvenir booklet of Rockville (Photograph 6). The early twentieth-century additions to the north and south harmonize with the original structure in scale and design and do not detract from the original building, which is still dominant at the street line and substantially contributes to the nineteenth-century ambiance of the surrounding neighborhood.

The original building (north wing of building number 1) was constructed in 1836 to replace an existing eighteenth-century mill. The mill privilege, the lowest on the Hockanum River as it runs through Vernon, had been the site of a grist mill owned by the descendants of Samuel Grant, the first settler to come to the Rockville area of Vernon. The grist mill, known as Grant's mill, was converted to the manufacture of satinet about 1823.¹ Satinet, an American innovation in woolen manufacture, played a significant role in the development of the woolen industry in the United States. One of the pioneers in the introduction of satinet was Delano Abbott, who first manufactured this type of woolen cloth in Vernon, Connecticut, as early as 1812. Satinet combined a cotton warp, easily produced in American mills of this period and strong enough to withstand the harsh action of the cam loom, with a low-grade wool filler. It required little skill to produce and provided an inexpensive substitute for fine imported woolens, thus substantially broadening the market for factory-made woolen cloth in this country. By 1830 it accounted for half the factory production of woolens in the United States.²

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bagnall, William R., Sketches of Manufacturing Establishments in New York City and Textile Establishments in the United States. Micro-fiche edition, Merrimack Valley Textile Museum, No. Andover, Mass., CA 1890.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3 Acres

Quadrangle name Rockville, CT

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	8	7	1	1	0	3	4	1	0	4	6	3	7	8	1	0	1	0
Zone			Easting						Northing									

B

Zone			Easting						Northing									

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

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E

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is comprised of Lot 14, Block 41 of Vernon Assessor's Map 35:

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	NA	code	county	code

state	NA	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title S. Ardis Abbott, Historian-Consultant - edited by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization _____ date June 8, 1983

street & number 31 Davis Avenue telephone (203) 872-8122

city or town Rockville state CT

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

date October 5, 1983

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 11/10/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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In Vernon the manufacture of satinet provided the foundation upon which the internationally recognized Rockville woolen industry was later built.

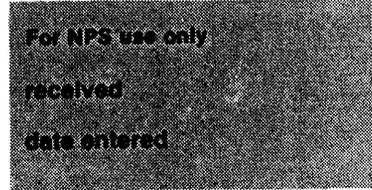
To meet the growing demand for satinet, a new mill was built on the site of the old Grant's mill in the summer of 1836, and in 1838 the proprietors organized a joint-stock corporation, the Saxony Company. In 1861 the mill was sold to Joseph Seldon of Vernon. Seldon enlarged the mill by one-half and the south wing and the stone and brick portion of building number 2 dates from this period.³ Seldon's mill was described as "120 feet long, 34 feet wide, and including attic and basement, both of which are utilized for manufacturing purposes...four stories high, the basement being of brick, the remainder of wood."⁴

No record has been discovered of how the manufacturing process was organized, but it probably did not vary from that of other Rockville mills of the same period for which records are available. The Hockanum Company mill, for example, according to an insurance survey of 1875, used the first story (basement) for fulling, scouring, wet and dry finishing. This story also housed the water wheel and pump. The second story housed the offices, weaving and burling rooms. Spinning was done in the third or attic story.⁵ The location of spinning machinery in the attic was a common practice. Attics, lacking columns, could accommodate the long spinning jacks and the wool spun best in conditions of high heat and humidity.⁶ Thus, a well-lighted attic was essential and gave rise to a variety of attic window styles. The Saxony mill was the only mill in Rockville to use dormer windows. None of the Rockville mills adopted the English-style monitor roofs used in other textile manufacturing regions.⁷ Beginning with the Saxony Mill, which is architecturally significant as a relatively rare example of a transitional Greek Revival and Italianate mill building, the Rockville mill owners adapted their buildings to the prevailing architectural styles.

In 1874 the Saxony Mill was sold to the Hockanum Company, a woolen mill located on the next privilege upstream. When the Hockanum Company added the Saxony Mill to its manufacturing plant, it was producing fine woollens, having been converted to the production of all wool cloth in 1858. The Saxony Mill was purchased and equipped to expand this production.⁸ In 1913, following the expansion of its main plant by the addition of a large, modern building, the Hockanum Company sold the Saxony Mill to the J. J. Regan Company, another Rockville woolen manufacturer.⁹ The J. J. Regan Company continued the production of woolen

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cloth and, between 1913 and 1920, made several additions to the original building (buildings number 3, 4, 5, and 6.¹⁰ In 1933 the Hockanum Company repurchased the mill, which by that time had been reduced to only carding and spinning operations.¹¹ It continued in use as a part of the Hockanum plant until the Rockville woolen mills were closed in 1951. Subsequently, the building was converted to other manufacturing purposes. The present owner, Plastifoam Corporation, manufactures styrofoam plastic insulating materials and a line of lightweight furniture. Fortunately the conversion did not entail drastic alterations; the original mill building remains essentially as it appeared at the completion of Joseph Seldon's addition in the 1860s and provides a rare instance of the continued use of an early nineteenth-century wood-framed mill building for manufacturing purposes.

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Footnotes

¹Cogswell, William T., History of Rockville from 1823 to 1871
(Rockville, Conn.: Rockville Journal, 1872), p.12.

²Cole, Arthur Harrison, The American Wool Manufacture, Vol. I
(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926), p.199-200.

³Map of Rockville (Baker and Tilden, Hartford, Conn., 1869),
Vernon Historical Society Collections.

⁴Bagnall, William R., Sketches of Manufacturing Establishments
in New York City and Textile Establishments in the United States
(Microfiche edition, Merrimack Valley Textile Museum, No. Andover,
Mass., CA 1890), p. 1245.

⁵Barlow's Insurance Survey, No. 3637, 1877, Merrimack Valley
Textile Museum Collections.

⁶Homespun to Factory Made: Woolen Textiles in America, 1776-1876,
(North Andover, Mass.: Merrimack Valley Textile Museum, 1977), p.86.

⁷Pierson, William H., Jr., American Buildings and Their Architects,
(Garden City, N. Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1980), p.39.

⁸Commemorative Biographical Record of Tolland and Windham.
Conn., (Chicago: J. H. Beers & Co., 1903), p 7.

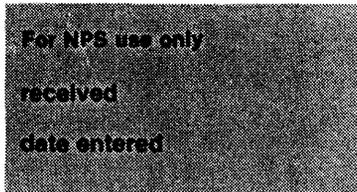
⁹Town of Vernon Land Records, Vol. 43, p 398.

¹⁰Records of the Common Council, City of Rockville, 1910-1922.

¹¹The Rockville Journal, June 22, 1933.

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Barlow's Insurance Surveys, Merrimack Valley Textile Museum,
North Andover, Mass.

Cogswell, William T., History of Rockville from 1823 to 1871,
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Cole, Arthur Harrison, The American Wool Manufacture, Vol.
I, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926.

Commemorative Biographical Record of Tolland and Windham Counties,
Conn. Chicago: J. H. Beers & Co., 1903.

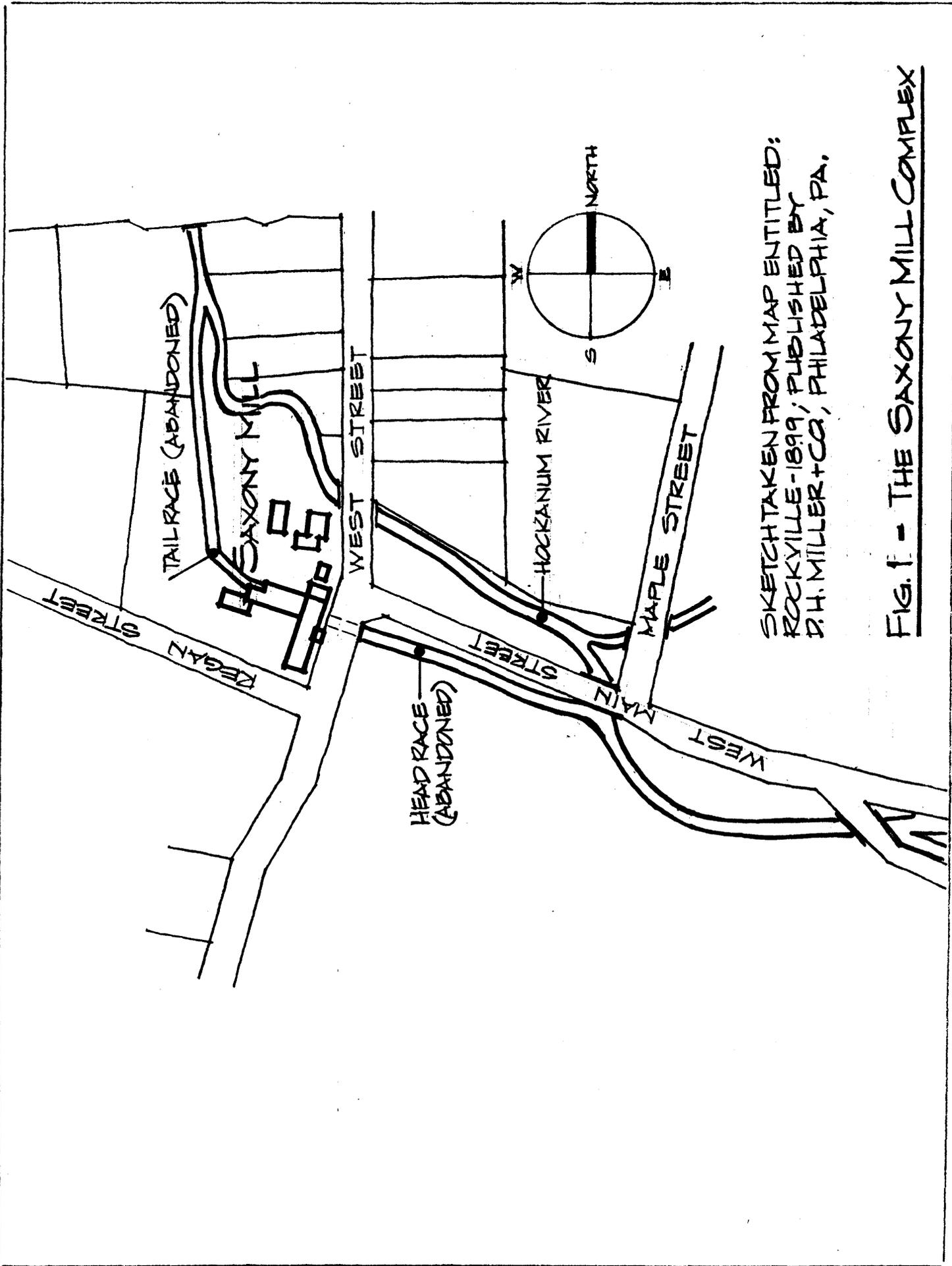
Homespun to Factory Made: Woolen Textiles in America, 1776-1876.
North Andover, Mass.: Merrimack Valley Textile Museum, 1977.

Map of Rockville, Conn. Baker and Tilden, Hartford, Conn., 1869,
Vernon Historical Society Collections.

Town of Vernon Land Records, Vol.43, p.398.
Records of the Common Council, City of Rockville,
1910-1922.

The Rockville Journal, June 22, 1933.

Pierson, William H., Jr., American Buildings and Their Architects,
Garden City, N. Y.: Anchor Press, 1980.



SKETCH TAKEN FROM MAP ENTITLED:
 ROCKYVILLE-1899; PUBLISHED BY
 D.H. MILLER+CO, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

FIG. 1 - THE SAXONY MILL COMPLEX

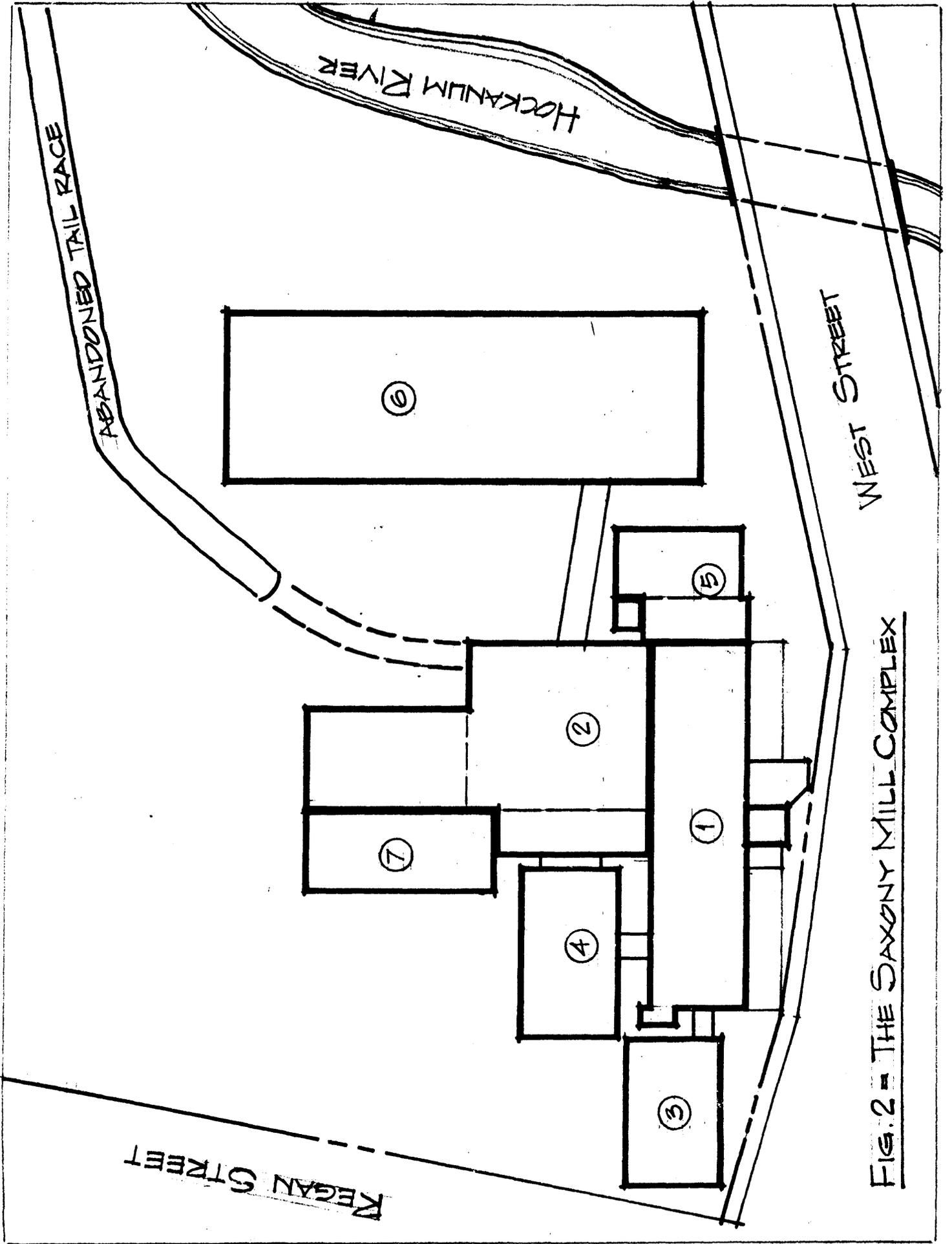


FIG. 2 - THE SAXONY MILL COMPLEX