

FORM B - BUILDING

Area E	Form no. 152
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108

Town Newburyport

Address 1 Charles Street

Historic Name James Steam Mills

Original textile mill

Present factory/light industry

Ownership: Private individual
 Private organization

Public _____

Original owner James Steam Mills

DESCRIPTION:

1842

Source Currier, "History of Nbpt."

Style Greek Revival

Architect Charles T. James

Exterior wall fabric Brick

Outbuildings complex includes five structures

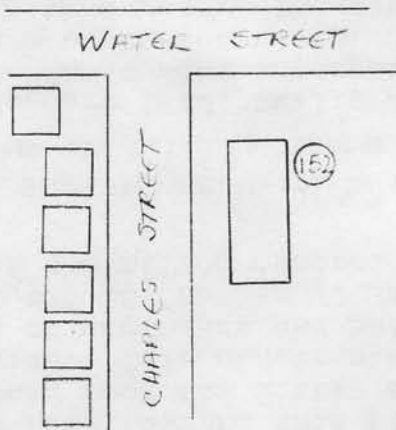
Major alterations (with dates) _____

Moved _____ Date _____

Approx. acreage 71,260 sq. ft.

Setting this industrial complex is surrounded by eighteenth and nineteenth century residential structures adjacent to the Merrimack River.

Indicate north.



Recorded by Mary Jane Stirgwolt

Organization Office of Community Development

Date 11-4-80

(Staple additional sheets here)

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

This four story brick factory is an excellent example of a mid-nineteenth century textile mill. It is the only such building in existence in Newburyport today. Although there were several similar complexes built during this period. The original four story brick factory with pitched roof has little architectural detail. It is 312 feet long and 50 feet wide. This nineteenth century mill building remained largely in the hands of engineers and builders rather than architects. This building is attributed to Charles T. James, an engineer from Pawtucket, Rhode Island, and one of the mill's owners. The building is first and foremost, functional

(cont.)

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

In January 1842, Philip Johnson, Mark Symonds, Robert Bayley and Charles T. James were incorporated as the James Steam Mill for the manufacture of cotton cloth. The original four story brick factory was erected in that year. The capital stock of the company was increased from one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to two hundred and fifty thousand dollars in 1844.

In 1851 the James Steam Mills had 17,000 spindles and 348 looms. At that time the company manufactured about 2,000,000 yards of No. 40 shirtings annually. There were 425 employees. The original corporation was dissolved in 1869 and in 1871 the property was sold to the Masconomet Mills.

In 1876 the Masconomet Mills company was re-organized and became the Victoria Mills. They continued to manufacture corset jeans, satteens and brown shirtings until 1897. In 1899 the property was conveyed to the Peabody Manufacturing Company, also owners of a mill complex at the corner of Water and Federal Streets. In the early twentieth century the complex was leased by the Warner Cotton Mills, manufacturers of cotton yarn.

The James Steam Mills were occupied by the textile industry until 1938 when the Mayfair Shoe Corporation purchased the buildings. This firm was later called the Kent Shoe Company. This company sold the complex in 1954. Since that time there have been a variety of light industrial tenants in the mill's buildings.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Assessor's Records 1890-1980

1851 City Directory

J. J. Currier, History of Newburyport 1764-1905, vols. I and II., reprint, Newburyport 1977.

1851 Plan of Newburyport, Mass. H. McIntire

1872 Map of the City of Newburyport, Mass. D. G. Beers and Co.

J. Klabouch, "A Study for the Reuse of the Sames Steam Mill"

Newburyport Historical Commission.

20M-2/80

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newburyport	Form No: 152
Property Name James Steam Mills 1 Charles Street	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

in nature. Noteworthy features include the brick dentil cornice, the granite window lintels and the beautiful wrought iron balconies on the Water Street side of the structure.

Today the mill complex consists of five buildings. Aside from the original mill these include a pecker house, facing Salem Street, probably built about the same time as the mill. Other buildings in the complex are a boiler and engine house that date from the 1870's or 1880's. A cotton store house dating from about 1890 and a combing building built about 1900.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom