



FORM B - BUILDING

Area	Form no.
B	82

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
 294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108



Newburyport

53 Warren Street

Common Name Ocean Steam Mills

Original Industrial

Present Industrial

Ownership: Private individual
 Private organization Bixby Box Toe Company

Public _____

Original owner Ocean Steam Mills

DESCRIPTION:

1845 - 1920

Source Merrill, "North End Papers"

Style Mill

Architect Col. Fred Coffin and others

Exterior wall fabric Brick

Outbuildings This complex consists of nine buildings several of which survive from the original mill.

Major alterations (with dates) Mill

expanded (1867), Mill No. 2 built (1880)

Building No. 4 built (1890), Building

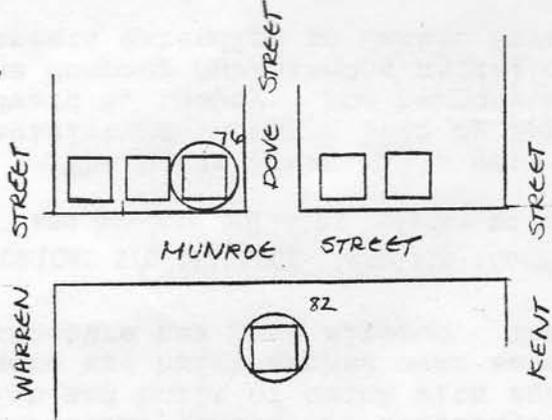
No.5 and No.2 built (20th century)

Moved _____ Date _____

Approx. acreage 148,250 sq. ft.

Setting in Newburyport's North End surrounded by residential neighborhoods which began developing during the nineteenth century.

cross streets and other or geographical features. Indicate north.



Recorded by Mary Jane Stirgwolt

Organization Office of Community Development

Date 8-4-80

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

This industrial complex was constructed between 1845 and 1920. The original mill building was replaced in 1920. The Ocean Steam Mill was a brick four story factory built in 1845. In 1867 the complex was enlarged, probably through the addition of adjacent structures. Several of the buildings in existence today date from the first decades of the mill's operation. These are Buildings 6, 7, and 8. Building 6 is two stories high and built of brick with square granite lintels over the windows. There are brick arches over several of the doors. The roof of this structure has been altered. The building measures 87 feet by 71 feet.

(cont)

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

The Ocean Steam Mills were incorporated by the Massachusetts legislature in March 1845 by Benjamin Saunders, William Balch and Edward S. Lesley. The purpose was the manufacture of cotton cloth. The company purchased a parcel of land on the corner of Kent and Munroe Streets extending to Carter Street.

In that year the company started construction of a four story brick mill building between Kent and Warren Street. The mill was built by Albert Currier, a local contractor, to the designs of Col. Fred Coffin. The building was completed the next year and the manufacture of cotton sheeting and calico cloth was begun. The looms were built by Leslie. In 1867 the factory was enlarged and new machinery added.

About 1871 the property was sold and a new company, the Ocean Mills, continued the operation until 1878. At that time the property again changed hands and a third company, the Ocean Mills Company was formed. In 1880 the second large mill was built (Building No. 1) This extended the industrial complex to the upper side of Ocean Street.

In 1886 Seth Milliken of New York purchased the mills and the name was changed to the Whitefield Mills. Prosperity continued to elude the company however, and in 1889 the machinery was sold to a Southern manufacturer and other interests moved into the buildings.

(cont.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- O.B. Merrill, "North End Papers", Newburyport Daily News, Sept. 1, 1906.
Assessor's Records 1890-1980
J.J. Currier, History of Newburyport 1764-1905, vols. I and II reprint, Newburyport 1977.
Newburyport Daily News August 21, 1928
Newburyport Herald, March 30, 1880

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newburyport	Form No: 82
Property Name: Ocean Steam Mills 53 Warren Street	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

Buildings 7 and 8 are one story brick structures with granite foundations and trim. The window lintels are square and the windows themselves have single hung wood sash. The buildings have a gable roof with classically inspired brick cornice but little other architectural detail.

Building No. 1 is a three story brick factory with timber frame built in 1880. It measures 98 ft. by 234 ft. This building has large windows with granite sills and brick arched lintels. The roof is relatively flat which is typical of later mill buildings. Building 3, the boiler house is built onto this structure and was probably built shortly thereafter.

The other buildings in the complex include a large two story industrial building built in 1920 (Building 2). This structure has a first floor of concrete block with a second story of wood frame covered with asbestos shingle. Building 2 measures 103 ft. by 275 ft. and has a shallow gable roof.

Building 4 was built in 1890. Several other buildings have been added to this complex in the twentieth century. Building 5, a one story brick building, was built in 1915. Building 9 is a two story wood frame structure covered with asbestos shingles and steel sash windows. Two aluminum silos have recently been added to the complex.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

The oldest mill was occupied by Burley, Stevens and Co., manufacturers of boats and shoes. The 1880 mill was leased and occupied by the Bay State Cordage Co. This factory was later taken over by the shoe manufacturer.

Numerous companies have occupied the Ocean Mills complex. Today the buildings are owned by Bixby Box Toe Company and are still industrial structures.

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