NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

**United States Department of the 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 any 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 Bourne Mill

other names/site number Bourne Mill Division of Berkshire-Hathaway, Tiverton Industrial Park

## 2. Location

street & number 1 Shove Street ☐ not for publication

city or town Tiverton ☐ vicinity

state RI code 005 county Newport code _____ zip code 02878

## 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 Date

Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

☐ 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.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ other (explain)

## 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- [x] private
- [ ] public-local
- [ ] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

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

- [x] buildings
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

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

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|---|---|---|
| 19 | 4 | buildings |
| | | sites |
| 2 | | structures |
| | | objects |
| 21 | 4 | total |

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

N/A

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

0

## 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY

**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE warehouse

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER
19th- and 20th -century industrial

**Materials**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation granite, brick
walls granite, concrete, brick
roof wood plank, concrete, asphalt
other

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

## 8. Statement of Significance

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

SOCIAL HISTORY
INDUSTRY
ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1881-1956

**Significant Dates**

1881, 1889

**Significant Person**

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

George A. Chace, designer; Frank Sheldon, architect;
Lloyd S. Earl. mason; Fenner Brownell, carpenter

**Narrative Statement of Significance**
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) 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

Bourne Mill
Name of Property

Newport County, Rhode Island
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 20 acres

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

| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 19 | 318820 | 4615420 |
| 2 | 19 | 318820 | 4615000 |
| 3 | 19 | 318560 | 4615000 |
| 4 | 19 | 318560 | 4615420 |

☒ 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 Edward Connors

organization Edward Connors and Associates date February 2006

street & number P.O. Box 154522 telephone 401 595-0699

city or town Riverside state RI zip code 02915

## 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.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

**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 amend 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 2050

## DESCRIPTION

### General

Located on the Tiverton, RI/Fall River, MA, boundary, the Bourne Mill complex is a group of twenty-three late 19th- to early 20th-century, 1- to 5-story, predominantly granite industrial buildings sited on a 20-acre waterfront site bounded by State Avenue in Tiverton and Cook Pond in Fall River on the north, Mill Street on the west, Canonicus Street on the south, and undeveloped land to the Massachusetts state line on the east. Although the 170-acre Cook Pond, from Bourne Mill to the Dwelley Street dam and outlet in Fall River, provided no waterpower at this location, a succession of 19th-century textile mills around the perimeter of the pond took advantage of the plentiful water for steam and industrial processes. The 1881 Bourne Mill was one of the later mills to locate there. From its north outlet, the waters of Cook Pond run underground in a northwesterly direction for some distance, eventually emptying out into Mount Hope Bay near Chase's Wharf.

Built for cotton textile manufacture, the earliest construction consisted of the main building (Bldg. 1) and an east ell (Bldg. 2). Over time, a number of auxiliary buildings were arrayed around the main building. In 1900 the Bourne interests erected one of Rhode Island's first sawtooth weave sheds to house a huge investment in Northrop automatic looms. Most of this massive, one-story granite structure, designed by mill engineer and architect Frank P. Sheldon and enclosing almost three acres of workspace, was recently demolished after the collapse of its roof, but portions of exterior wall survive.

Textile manufacture was carried out under the Bourne name until 1953, when Berkshire-Hathaway purchased the complex, operating it until 1961 for similar purposes. In 1961, Berkshire-Hathaway sold the plant, at which time it was leased to various tenants. Renamed the Tiverton Industrial Park in 1982, the plant is now used for commercial storage and is mostly vacant.

Nineteen contributing buildings, two contributing structures, and four non-contributing buildings are inventoried below.

**Inventory**

**Contributing buildings**

*The following buildings are inventoried according to their chronological occurrence (date of construction). With some variation, the numbering scheme is based on a convention established by the Bourne Mill in the mid 20th century.*

*Contributing buildings and structures are those built during the period of significance that retain all or most of their original features. Non-contributing buildings are those in the process of demolition or with fully-collapsed and missing roofs.*

**Building 1**
**Main Building (1881, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

Designed by George A. Chace, the first company treasurer, a five-story, 345' x 80', coursed, quarry-faced ashlar building with a shallow gable roof. Framing is plank on timber construction supported by round-section iron columns. A five-story central tower has double, wood-frame freight doors at each floor. An ornate front staircase and balustrade survives. The original mansard roof with four clock faces collapsed within the last fifteen years. Closet space in the fifth floor of the stairtower appears to hold debris from the collapse of the roof. At the tower cornice masonry detailing evokes a classical capital, a single raised lower granite course suggesting an astragal.

Historic photos show an overhang of exposed rafter ends; these appear to have been cut back almost flush to the building wall, the endgrain now covered with a sheet metal cap. Windows are wood-frame, 12/12, double-hung, set in rectangular openings; lintels and sills are quarry-faced granite.

A combined toilet tower and elevator is located at the rear of the building in the crook of Buildings 1 and 2. This toilet tower appears to have replaced an original tower in the crook of Buildings 1 and 2. That tower appears to have been adapted to serve as an elevator shaft sometime after 1905, at which time the present toilet tower, just north of the elevator, was built. The roof of the elevator tower may offer some indication of the design of the original cornice and overhang of the main roof.

This building housed the weaving and spinning operations of the original mill. By 1905 (after construction of the 1900 weave shed) the first, fourth and fifth floors were used for frame spinning; the second floor was used

for drawing and slubbers; the third for carding and speeders; the fifth for mule spinning. The building is currently used for commercial storage.

**Building 2**
**East ell (1881, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

Designed by George A. Chace, a four-story, granite ashlar, perpendicular wing extending to the east of Building 1. Windows are also 12/12, matching those of Building 1. The cornice has been altered in the same manner as Building 1. Interior framing is plank on timber supported by round-section iron columns. An east elevation granite tower once served as a dust chimney associated with the third floor picker room.

As originally built, this ell housed the original engine and boiler rooms, opener room, and fourth-floor slasher room. The plant was illuminated by an Edison direct current lighting system located in the basement. By 1895, with the construction of the new boiler house (Building 9), the functions of this building likely changed. By 1905 it was utilized in this way: a pump room (drawing water from Cook Pond), a dynamo and engine room on the first floor, openers on the second floor, picker room on the third floor. The fourth floor continued to be used as a slasher room. The first floor engine room housed two steam engines with a combined power of 900 HP.

The building is presently used for storage. None of the power or electrical generation machinery survives.

**Building 6**
**Picker House No. 1 (between 1883 and 1889, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A two-story, brick building, 106’ x 40’, joined to Building 7. This building represents the first significant expansion of the mill from the original 1881-3 plant. Described as a “cloth house and repair shop” in 1889, the building appears to have become the main Picker House, rendering the picker operation on the third floor of Building 2 an auxiliary function.

Windows are wood-frame, 12/12, double-hung, set in segmental arch openings. The window frames are not cut to fit the segmental arch; sills are wood. The roof is shallow pitched gable with a wooden cornice. Framing is plank-on-timber supported by round-section wooden columns. An altered, plywood-filled door and brick dust chimney (related to its use as a Picker House) are located on the north elevation.

This building is currently vacant.

**Building 22**
**Store House (between 1895 and 1905 et seq., contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A three-story, brick, 80' x 129' building used as a store house. Typical of early 20th-century textile store- and waste-houses, the three stories of this building are quite shallow. Windows are 8-light wood-frame set in segmental arch openings. Lintels are quarry-faced granite. Sills for the stacked shipping doors at each floor are smooth-finished granite. Interior framing consists of heavy timber resting on wooden columns.

This building appeared in two phases: an original 80' x 70' southern section (defined by a cantilevered brick structure at the roofline) and a post-1905 section extending another roughly 60' to the north.

The building is currently vacant; a portion of the second floor has collapsed in the northeast corner.

**Building 23**
**Office (between 1889 and 1895 et seq., contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A brick, 48' x 42', two-story office building set on a granite foundation on a small peninsula of land jutting northerly into Cook Pond. (The state line crosses through the building; approximately 10 feet at the rear of the building is in Fall River.) The overhanging roof is flat with a wooden cornice and brick dentiling. As is evident in the façade, this building was built in two phases: the eastern 2/3 (between 1889 and 1895) being the earlier footprint, the western 1/3 (after 1905) closely matching the design of the original. An enclosed entryway extends from the center of the façade. Windows openings are rectangular with a bonded arch lintel and a quarry-faced granite sill. Original windows have been replaced with 1/1 modern metal sashes; four are brick-filled. The front door is a modern replacement type.

Interior space is subdivided for office functions. The newer, western section of the building houses a first floor paneled office and a fireplace. Some evidence of original wainscoting and trim is found in a small first floor closet. This building is currently vacant.

**Building 20**
**Supply House (between 1895 and 1905, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A brick, single-story, 16' x 25', flat-roofed building that served as a supply house in 1905 and possibly as a later yard office. Its proximity to an industrial scale (see Contributing Structures), suggests that it might have also been used in the 20th century as a scale house. All windows are plywood filled; sills and lintels are quarry-faced granite. Both visible entrances are cement block- filled. A crude, wood-frame east addition provided access to this now-vacant building.

**Building 3**
**Spooling and Warping Building (ca 1900, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A single-story, 67' x 162', granite building with a pitched roof and wood cornice. Windows are paired wood-frame, 6/9, and double-hung. Lintels and sills are quarry-faced granite. A pair of wood-frame 6-panel doors with six-light transoms is found on the west elevation. Round section iron columns support the plank-on-timber roof structure.

This building was likely designed by Frank Sheldon as part of the expansion that included the 1900 weave shed. In 1905 it was used to house spooling and warping operations. It is now used for storage. Buildings 3, 4, and 5 were built on raised basements, this likely due to the wet soil conditions below.

**Building 4**
**Intermediate Building (ca 1900, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

Similar to Building 3 and likely designed by Frank Sheldon, a single-story, 170' x 77', granite building with a pitched roof and wood cornice. Windows are paired wood-frame, 6/9, and double-hung. Lintels and sills are quarry-faced granite. A pair of wood-frame 6-panel doors is found on the west elevation at a concrete loading dock.

Although related in function to the 1900 weave shed, the specific use of this building is unknown. It is currently vacant.

**Building 14**
**Engine and Dynamo Room (ca 1900, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A granite ashlar, 23' x 31', single-story building. This building served in 1905 as an "Engine and Dynamo Room," its function likely related to the weave shed (Bldg. 5). Adjacent Building 17 (see Non-Contributing Buildings) was described in 1905 as simply an "Engine Room." This distinction suggests that Building 14 served as a small power house in the generation of direct current for lighting purposes, similar to the engine and dynamo in the first floor of Building 2. The absence of local boilers in 1905 suggests that steam was drawn from Building 9 and piped either underground or across what was then an open courtyard to this building.

This small building is now subdivided. The west side is empty; the east is a bathroom.

**Building 15**
**Small Boiler Room (ca 1900, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A granite ashlar, 26 x 31, deep single-story building now housing a single mid-20th century boiler. Windows are 9-light, wood-frame sash set in rectangular openings. The roof is plank on timber. A partially filled, large segmental arch doorway opens into Building 25 (q.v.). The north wall of this building was an exterior wall early in the 20th century, but is now a party wall with Building 25. This building is currently vacant.

**Building 18**
**2nd Pump House (ca 1900, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

Attached to (but predating) Building 16, a small, single-story, 29' x 21', uncoursed granite ashlar structure that housed a 1500 GPM fire pump drawing water from a well located under what is now Building 16. Wooden doors on the north elevation are in poor condition. The west end of the near flat roof appears to be failing. The cornice is wooden. This building is currently vacant.

**Building 7**
**Picker House No. 2 (ca 1910, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

Similar in construction and attached to Building 6, a brick, 106' x 40', 3-story building. Windows are a mix of wood-frame 12/12 and 8/8, double-hung, set in segmental arch openings. Sills are wooden. Framing consists of plank on steel *I*-section beams supported by round-section wooden columns. The roof is shallow pitched gable with a wooden cornice. Although door openings are found on the east, south and west elevations, the only doorway that appears to date to original construction is a double, wood-frame door on the west elevation set in a

segmental arch opening. Two doors on the south elevation once provided passage to Building 8, which was demolished in the late 20th century.

A single steel beam is all that remains of an enclosed overhead passage that once connected the northeast corner of Building 1 to this building. Significant local damage to the masonry of both buildings appears to have occurred in the demolition of this passage. This building is currently vacant.

**Building 11 (ca 1910, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A brick, 28' x 19', deep single-story building flanking the open courtyard formed in the crook of Buildings 1, 2, 25. A segmental arch door on the south elevation provided access from the interior of Building 12. Small 8-light windows are set in segmental arch openings.

The original function of this building is unknown; it is currently vacant.

**Building 10**
**Third Boiler House (between 1905 and 1933, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A deep single-story, 40-44' x 135', granite ashlar building attached to Buildings 2, 9,12, and 25. Upper level wood-frame, double-hung windows are 8/12. All lower level windows are cement block-filled. Sills and lintels are quarry-faced granite. The roof is pitched, consisting of heavy wood plank on *I*-section steel beams. The east, and most visible, elevation has been heavily altered with large door openings, now filled with brick and cement block. This building is clear span. All boilers have been removed; it is currently vacant.

**Building 12 (between 1905 and 1933, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A deep single-story, concrete and brick, 41' x 57' building separated from the remains of Building 9 by a wood-framed glass curtain wall, much of which survives. Windows on the west (brick) wall are wood-frame, 12/12, set in segmental arch openings. On the east (granite ashlar) wall, rectangular window openings to Building 10 are now cement block-filled. The roof is pitched.

The historic function of this building is unknown; it is currently vacant.

**Building 19**
**3rd Pump House (between 1905 and 1933, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A small, 24' x 17', single-story, detached granite building with a shallow-pitched gable roof and single garage entrance located in the courtyard between Buildings 2 and 7. This building, sited above an intake line from Cook Pond that extends to Building 18, housed a 1000 GPM pump that was driven by a steam turbine. There are two rectangular window openings; the south elevation window is 8/8, double-hung, wood-frame with a wooden sill and quarry-faced granite sill. On the north elevation the window opening is brick-filled.

This building is currently vacant.

**Building 24**
**Garage (between 1905 and 1933 et seq., contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A long, narrow, brick, 137' x 24', flat-roofed building that started out as a roughly 24' x 24' garage. Successive extensions to the east appear to have occurred in two phases: a first extension of roughly 40' to the clear demarcation in roofline evident today, and another 70' extension to the cement-block east wall that terminates the building. The older 66' western section has a low parapet on the west and south elevations defined by brick dentiling similar to that of Building 23 and a precast concrete cornice. Original openings (likely garage doors), are now brick-filled with bonded arches plainly visible. The newer, 70' section has little architectural detail. All windows and doors on the front elevation date to mid-20th century. Six-light wood-frame windows on the rear elevation (facing Cook Pond) of the original garage footprint appear to be original.

This building served as a retail yarn store in the mid- to late- 20th century; it is currently vacant.

**Building 25**
**Passage (between 1905 and 1933, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

In the years after the construction of Buildings 5, 14, 15, 17, and 18 (ca 1900), there was an open courtyard north of these buildings extending to Building 9. Over time much of the open courtyard was filled in with a combination of permanent buildings and more utilitarian, infill structures. A corridor providing passage between the older group of ca 1900 buildings to the south and the newer cluster of buildings (Buildings 10-13) to the north emerged in the early 20th century. This roughly 80' x 17' passage, consisting of three separate

chambers, is constructed of brick and granite, its roof supported by timber beams extending across the passage. The only elevation visible from the exterior (the east facing wall) consists of a brick front with two wood-frame, 9-light windows set in rectangular openings above paired wooden five-panel doors milled to fit the segmental arch opening.

The east, and apparently oldest, chamber consists of a deep, single-story between Building 15 on the south and Building 12 on the north. Although the west wall of this chamber now serves as an interior wall, it has two window openings that still contain wood-frame sashes consistent with those found in Building 15. This would indicate that for a period of time this chamber was the full extent of Building 25, the two smaller chambers to the west added later. This building is currently vacant.

**Building 16**
**Diesel Engine Building (between 1939 and 1951, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A granite ashlar, 67' x 43', deep single-story building with a steel frame supporting a concrete roof. The cornice is wooden. This clear span building housed diesel engines that were likely associated with a water intake line extending from Cook Pond. Windows are a mix of 8-, 12-, and 20-light, rectangular metal-frame typical of industrial buildings of the period. Sills are concrete; the concrete roof is near flat. It is currently used for storage.

**Contributing Structures**

**Chimney (between 1905 and 1933, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A brick, 165'-high, round section chimney east of Building 10. An overhead economizer unit that carried exhaust from the boilers of Building 10 has been removed. The openings for this unit in both Building 10 and the chimney are now cement block-filled.

**Scale (early to mid-20th century, contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

Located northwest of Building 20, a 10' x 50' concrete-decked industrial scale. Access covers to the scale mechanisms are stamped with the name of the Swett Iron Works, Medina, NY. The manufacturer of the scale itself is unknown. Building 20 (q.v.) may have been a combined scale house and yard office.

**Non-contributing buildings**

**Building 9**
**Second Boiler House (between 1889 and 1895, non-contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

Construction of this deep single-story, randomly-coursed granite, 44' x 82' boiler house (replacing the earlier boiler room housed in Building 2) represented a significant expansion of the Bourne complex. Housing eight boilers, this building provided steam to the engines in adjoining Building 2 which powered the plant through overhead shafting. Surviving windows are double 12/12, wood frame, double-hung. The floor is concrete. A partial south curtain wall of wood-frame windows separates this building from Building 12.

Currently vacant, only a portion of the roof remains.

**Remains of Building 5**
**Weave Shed (1900, non-contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

All that survives of this single-story weave shed are portions of exterior wall. Designed by Providence mill engineer and architect Frank P. Sheldon, this massive, granite, 320' x 395' structure enclosed almost three acres of space housing over 2000 looms and was one of the first sawtooth roof weave sheds in the state. Over the last fifteen years the roof failed. Significant demolition of the building was carried out in 2005 on orders of the Tiverton Fire Marshal.

**Building 17**
**Second Engine Room (ca 1900, non-contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A granite ashlar, 49' x 39', deep single-story (with basement) building. Distinct from the engine room located in Building 2, this building housed steam engines for the 1900 weave shed (Bldg. 5). The roof has failed. A wood-frame monitor window that once sat atop the roof is visible from the upper floors of Bldg. 1.

**Building 13 (between 1905 and 1933, non-contributing)**
**1 Shove Street**

A granite ashlar, 20’ x 45’, single-story building likely built as infill between Buildings 1 and 12. The roof has failed.

## SIGNIFICANCE

The Bourne Mill complex is the physical expression of eighty years of textile manufacture, adaptation to changing markets, and decline. Located on the Rhode Island-Massachusetts state line, the complex is physically situated in Tiverton but historically was part of the "Fall River system." Built between 1881 and 1883, the Bourne Mill was among the last of a number of 19th-century steam-powered textile mills built along the periphery of Fall River's Cook Pond; it was financed and operated by Fall River textile interests and constructed predominantly of locally-quarried Fall River granite. Within six years of the beginning of its operation in 1883, the company instituted a successful profit-sharing program that attracted national recognition and considerable ire from competing Fall River mill owners. The company expanded into the early 20th century, struggled through the Great Depression, became a division of Berkshire-Hathaway in 1953, and closed in 1961. At present, Buildings 1-3 are used for commercial storage and the rest of the complex is vacant. As such, it is highly representative of the rise and decline of textile manufacture seen throughout New England in the 20th century.

Nineteen contributing buildings and two contributing structures survive. This site meets National Register **Criterion A** in the areas of social history and industry and **Criterion C** as a fine example of the evolution of industrial architecture through the late 19th- and early-20th centuries.

### History

Textile manufacture in Fall River dates to 1811 when Joseph Durfee set up a cotton spinning mill near what is now Globe and South Main Streets. A few years later, Oliver Chace of the Troy Cotton and Woolen Manufactory and David Anthony of the Fall River Manufactory took advantage of the substantial water power at the outlet of the Watuppa Ponds to begin the large-scale industrialization of Fall River.

Huge expansion of the local textile industry took place during the Civil War era, the number of spindles increasing from 117,636 in 1854 to 1,258,508 in 1872. In the year 1872 alone, eleven new mills commenced operation. By the end of the 19th century the combined output of the sixty mills of the Fall River area made it "the largest cotton manufacturing community of the New World."[1] Among these late century mills were a number of steam mills on the periphery of Cook Pond, drawing process water from this impoundment created in 1815 by the erection of the dam at Dwelly Street, at the northern edge of the pond (see Figure 1, Additional Materials). These mills included the King Philip and Osborn Mills, arrayed on either side of the Dwelley Street Dam, and the Shove Mills along the southwest edge of the pond.

The Bourne Mill, as described in an 1889 *Fall River Daily Herald* article, came into being as the result of "an oft-expressed desire" on the part of the company's first president, Edmund Chase, "to own a mill with a few friends in a close corporation."[2] Capitalized at $400,000, the new corporation, named for the Honorable Jonathan Bourne, broke ground in 1881 for the construction of a five-story mill to be built of granite quarried a short distance away. Mr. Chase never appreciated his oft-expressed desire, as he died in 1883, the same year the mill commenced operation. His successor as president was board member and original investor Jonathan Bourne (1811-1889), a New Bedford whaling merchant and state legislator. Bourne, for whom the town of Bourne, MA, is named, contributed the four clock faces of the original mansard tower roof as a gift to the corporation.[3]

**Profit Sharing at the Bourne Mill**

Bourne entered the whaling trade in 1841 with the purchase of a merchant ship, *Lagoda*,[4] which he re-outfitted for whaling and operated for forty-five years. When he retired the ship in 1886, it had amassed a net profit of more than $650,000. In his years in whaling Bourne utilized an early form of profit-sharing common in the trade known as the "lay-system." This system distributed on a tiered scale a "lay" or portion of the profit of the voyage to all of the workmen.

Although Jonathan Bourne's tenure as president of the textile corporation was brief (1883-89), his experience with the lay-system provided the basis for the introduction of a profit sharing plan that attracted national attention. After two years of significant profits and healthy dividends, the directors of the Bourne Mill conducted a study and adopted in May 1889 a six-month trial of a plan to share the dividends with the mill operatives. For a detailed explanation of this plan, the reader is referred to the chapter on the Bourne Mills from Rev. Nicolas Paine Gilman's 1899 study of industrial cooperation, *A Dividend to Labor*, reproduced in the *Additional Information* section of this nomination. Gilman, a Christian Socialist and founding member of the Association for the Promotion of Profit Sharing, described the Bourne Mills profit sharing plan as "one of the most successful instances on record," despite distinct disadvantages peculiar to the New England textile trade: the low education and wage level of the mill operatives, high cost of the original investment (mill and machinery), and the high reliance on machinery as compared to hand labor.[5]

Although Bourne's chief influence in profit sharing appears to have been his whaling experience, the rise of unionism as a force for collective bargaining and the desire for "industrial peace" could not have been far from the minds of the directors. Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury under Presidents Jefferson and Madison, instituted the first profit sharing plan in the country in the 1790s for the employees of his glassworks in New Geneva, Penn.[6] Gallatin's experience was not duplicated for another seventy years, when the Bay State and Shoe Leather Company (Mass.) set up the nation's second plan in 1867. Within a few years, the Riverside Press

in Cambridge (1872) had established a profit sharing plan for their workers. In Rhode Island, the Peace Dale Mfg. Co.[7] set up a plan in 1878, the Rumford Chemical Works in 1886, and the Bourne Mill in 1889.

The chief administrator of the Bourne profit sharing plan was company treasurer George A. Chace. Chace's plan was to give each operative "who continues faithfully at his work a share in the profits in proportion to dividends paid to stockholders and according to wages earned." The formula worked in this way:

> Every employee…who has served six months and worked faithfully during the term of this scheme, has a share in the profits "in proportion to the dividends declared and paid to the stockholders." The share is paid as a dividend upon the wages earned. A sum amounting to not less than six, nor more than ten percent of the amount paid to the stockholders (the percentage being determined by the directors) is divided by the largest total wages which the force can earn in six months. This gives the percentage on wages to be paid to each worker. His "divvy," as the men call it, varies thus according to his whole wages.[8]

The advantages to the company were clear. Chace, quoted eight years into the program (1897), discussed an upcoming vote of the stockholders as to the advisability of continuing the plan: "Unless profit sharing promotes profitability, no one can keep it up."[9] The plan gave all indications of profitability:

> The sharing of profits stirs up the ambition to make profits to share, as the payment of dividends stimulates the earning of dividends. The other advantage's to the company come in the form of better discipline, punctuality, care of machinery, cleanliness, economy of waste…[10]

Bourne's experiment stood out in sharp contradistinction to the standard wage system maintained by the owners of the rest of Fall River's cotton mills; Chace's assessment of the benefits of profit sharing was not held by his competitors. A decidedly critical article appeared in the *American Wool and Cotton Reporter* in late 1906. By this time, Bourne had delivered dividends to its operatives in all but two six month periods since the inception of the program. This article, summarized in the *Providence Journal*, cites the inevitable conflict between capital and labor as played out in the Bourne Mills:

> The labor leaders are enthusiastic over the outlook [for further dividends], but their action in reference to stop-motions and the strike they called…would hardly justify any organized labor hurrahs over treasurer Chace's efforts to fill his mill with expert operatives.[11]

The *American Wool and Cotton Reporter* was making reference to a crippling strike of 1904-05 that demonstrated the limits of industrial cooperation in a time of economic crisis for the area's cotton mills.

**Labor trouble and the introduction of the automatic loom**

A brief item in the *Providence Journal of Commerce* in August 1898 noted the Bourne Mills' adoption of the Northrop, an automatic loom developed by the Draper Company of Hopedale, MA, in 1894. Although many of Fall River's textile mills were reluctant to adopt the automatic loom,[12] the Seaconnet Mill had installed an early version in 1889 with satisfactory results. Nine years later, the Bourne Mill purchased an unknown number of these looms, in the process cutting their weave staff in half.[13]

At the time of the 1898 purchase, the Bourne Mill was operating 1316 looms. Two years later the company hired Providence mill engineer Frank P. Sheldon to design a huge, sawtooth-roofed, granite weave shed (Building 5, demolished 2005) to house 2700 automatic looms. Within a few years of this massive increase in production capability, a general production curtailment of about 20% occurred in 1904 due primarily to southern competition. One local industrialist noted that southern-produced cotton could be shipped north and sold on the streets of Fall River for a profit at a price lower than he could manufacture it locally.[14]

To address the slowdown, in July 1904 the Fall River Cotton Manufacturers Association agreed to a 12.5% cut in wages for mill operatives. A local labor leader described conditions in this way:

> The people are desperate on account of the long curtailment and the great reduction they have been called on to suffer in addition, because of running more looms and the removal of much of the spare help in departments outside of the weaving room…I think the operatives will not stand for a reduction at this time. They will not be able to resist for a long time, but I feel that there will be spasmodic strikes even though the union may formally accept a reduction, a thing I do not expect to see.[15]

The local unions did not accept the reduction, voting to strike on July 25. Although some weavers showed up at Bourne, the accumulated goodwill of fifteen years of profit sharing was not enough to keep the mill operating. By the following day, all of Fall River's cotton mills were closed. The strike continued into early 1905 when Massachusetts Governor William Doyle involved himself in negotiations between the labor unions and the cotton manufacturers. An agreement for a 7.5% reduction, as opposed to the 12.5% wage reduction that precipitated the strike, was reached on January 18. Over the course of the strike Fall River's cotton operatives lost $4,000,000 in wages. Bourne's directors paid no profit sharing dividends during the two six-month periods affected by the strike. They did, however, resume the plan as soon as production returned to normal levels and profitability returned.

**Cotton cloth manufacture at Bourne Mill**

Built of locally-quarried granite at a cost of $155,000, the Bourne Mill was designed by company treasurer George A. Chace. Lloyd S. Earl was the chief mason and Fenner Brownell the carpenter. Housing 1080 looms and 43,000 spindles of English and American manufacture,[16] the main mill (Building 1) consisted of a five-story, 80'x 345' central wing with mansard tower, housing all weaving and spinning operations. A 4-story, 101' x 52' rear ell housed the engine and boiler rooms, and a slasher room (top floor). An Edison direct current lighting system, located in the basement of this ell, illuminated the plant. A separate, 2-story, brick "cloth house and repair shop" (Building 6, later described as a Picker House) was located at the northeast corner of the main mill. The mill commenced operation in 1883 with 500 employees. Over the next four decades, the Bourne interests continued to expand the physical plant, most notably the construction of a huge sawtooth roof weave shed and several auxiliary buildings in 1900.

Although a number of Fall River cotton mills, including the neighboring Shove Mill (1872, with a satellite operation in Tiverton), had found a niche market in "odd goods," specially-ordered goods of non-standard widths or thread counts, at the beginning the Bourne Mill produced Canton flannels, this due to the influence of the plant's first superintendent, George Morgan. He had considerable experience in the manufacture of this fabric, but the marketing of this specialty required the service of a selling agency and the directors abandoned it as unprofitable in 1885. Morgan resigned the same year. At this time, the company switched its product line to specially-ordered odd goods. The dominant product of the mill over the years was sateens, a cotton cloth made with a satin weave; and twills, a type of weave that produces a cloth of greater firmness, weight, and substance than can be produced using similar yarns in a plain weave. By the turn of the century the mill was producing 17,000,000 yards of cloth annually.

**Recent history**

The Bourne Mill continued in its specialty area of twills and sateens through the WW2 era, at which time it employed 1000 operatives. The Bourne interests sold the company to Berkshire-Hathaway in 1953, at which time it became a division of the corporation. Berkshire-Hathaway closed the plant in 1961. Since that time the plant was occupied by various tenants. Although renamed the Tiverton Industrial Park in 1982, the plant had only marginal use. Buildings 1, 2, 3, and 16 are presently used for storage, and the remaining buildings are vacant. The Armory Revival Company of Providence plans to rehabilitate the property for mixed use, using historic tax credits.

## Notes

[1] Fenner (1906), p.3.
[2] See Bourne Mills article, *The City of Fall River Mass* (1899), p.62.
[3] Until the 1990s, employees of the moving and storage company now occupying Building 1 would sometimes go up into the roof and wind the four still-operating original clocks. Source: interview with Dave, the company owner.
[4] A half-scale model of this ship, constructed in 1911, is on display at the New Bedford Whaling Museum.
[5] *A Dividend to Labor*, 304 (reproduced in *Additional Information* section).
[6] Other sources date this experiment to 1794. Nicholas Gilman cast some doubt on the entire story, see footnote on pp. 378-9, *A Dividend to Labor* (1899).
[7] The author has found no evidence of the influence of the Peace Dale experiment on the thinking of Jonathan Bourne or the Bourne directors. The Hazard's family's introduction of profit-sharing at their Peace Dale Mfg. Co. woolen factory in 1878 was the result of a trip made by Rowland G. Hazard (1801-1888) to Rochedale, England, and other sites to observe co-operative programs. Hazard had corresponded with John Stuart Mill and was quite familiar with the philosophical debate on the continent over the antagonistic or interdependent relations between capital and labor. See, J.R. Cole, *History of Washington and Kent County*, pp. 504-5.
[8] See "Profit Sharing," *Providence Journal of Commerce* 5 (August 1897): 238.
[9] Ibid.
[10] *Providence Journal of Commerce* 6 (February 1898): 31. Chace, in a letter to employees, cited an 80% reduction in "seconds" over the years of profit sharing. See *A Dividend to Labor*, p. 309.
[11] As quoted in the *Providence Journal* (7 January 1907): 12.
[12] This reluctance is discussed in Thomas R. Smith's *The Cotton Textile Industry of Fall River Mass* (1944)pp. 115-117.
[13] Melvin Copeland, in *The Cotton Manufacturing Industry of the United States* (1912), writes, "The chief advantage of the Northrop loom consists in a saving of labor. It has reduced the labor cost of weaving one-half, a fact which is particularly significant since the labor cost of weaving previously constituted one-half of the entire labor costs of manufacturing cotton cloth. This saving has resulted from the increased number of looms per weaver. One weaver now tends from fourteen to thirty Northrop looms, where before he tended six to eight common looms." p. 86.
[14] *Fall River Daily Herald* (12 July 1904): 1.
[15] ibid.
[16] The machinery for the mill cost an additional $600,000.

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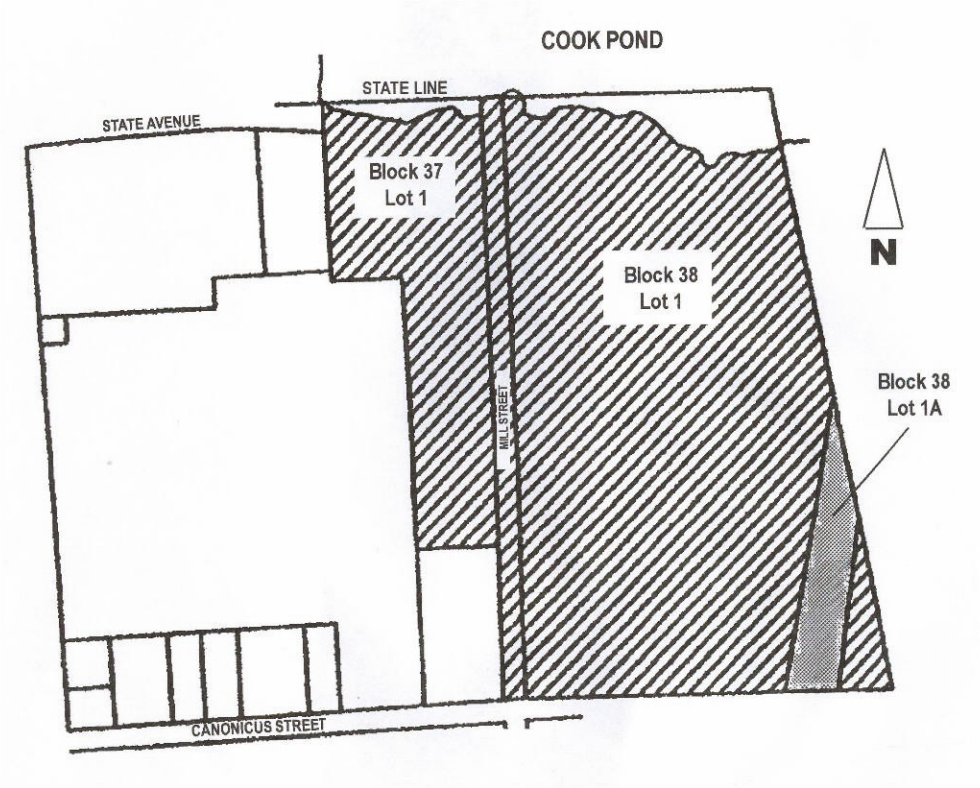
## Geographical Data

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the Bourne Mill are contiguous with Tiverton Tax Assessor's Plat Map 2-14, Block 38, Lots 1 and 1A; and Map 9-7, Block 37, Lot 1.

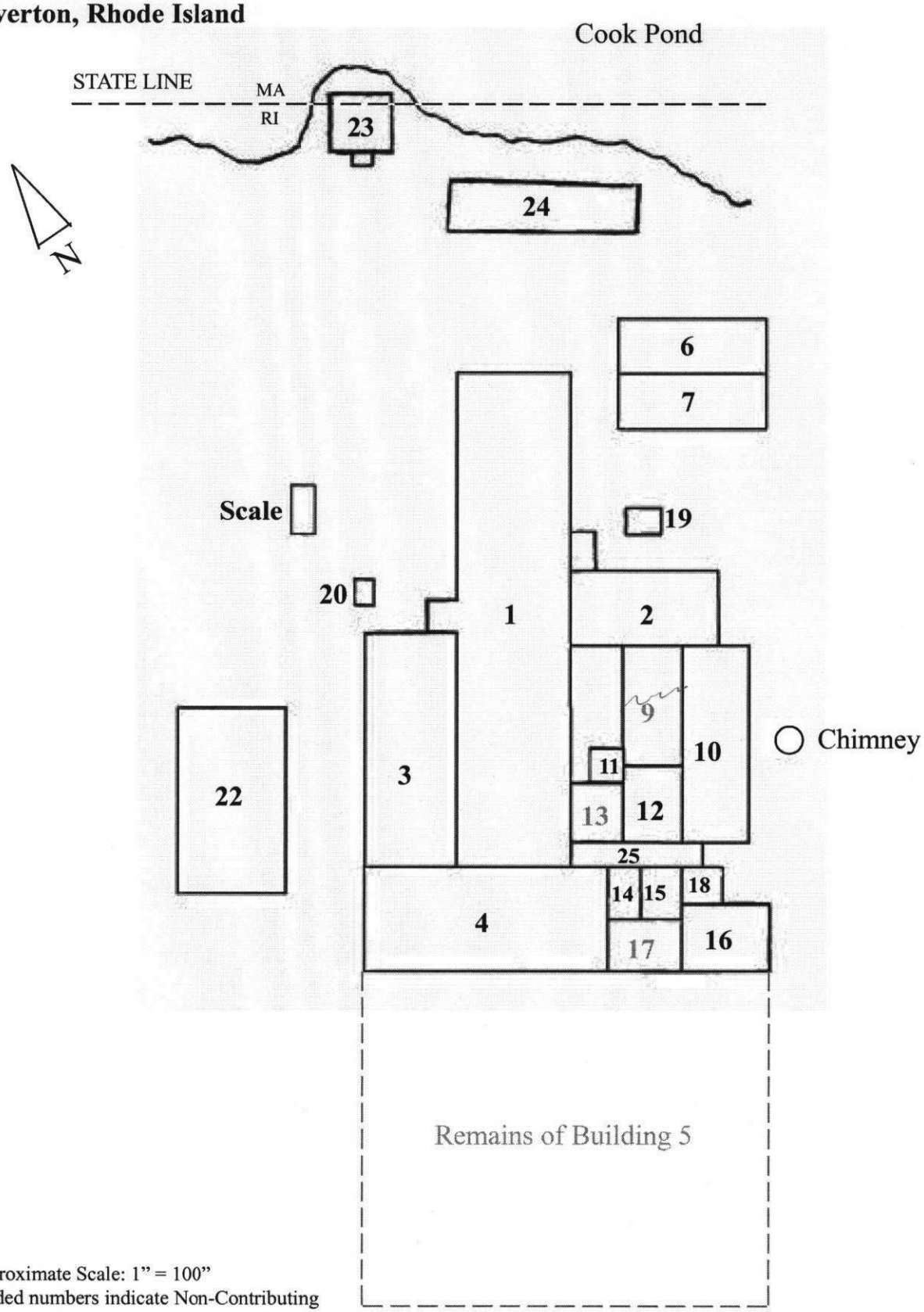
BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

These boundaries, comprising 19.9 acres, define the land historically associated with the operation of the Bourne Mill from 1881 to 1961.

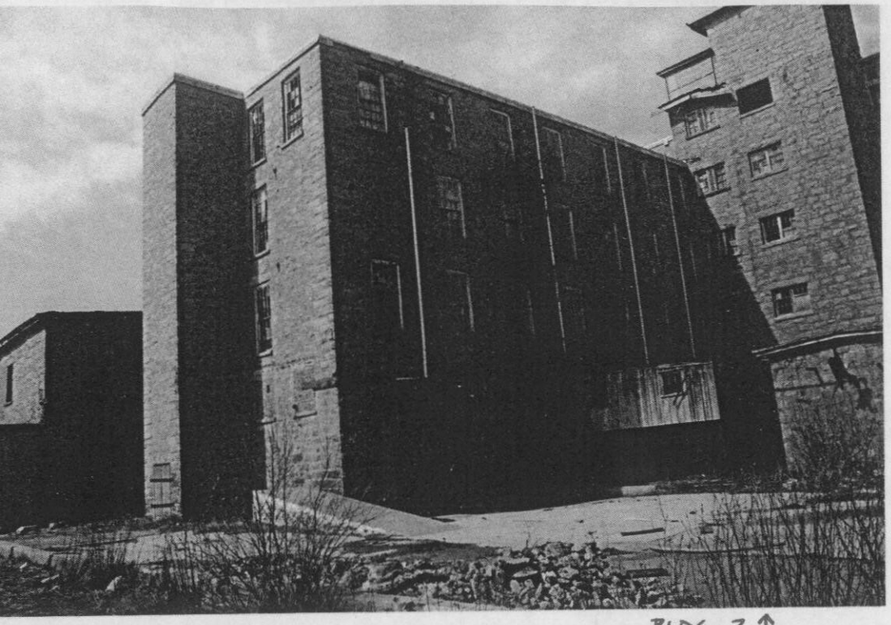


Bourne Mill
1 Shove Street
Tiverton, RI
Fall River, MA Quadrangle
Scale: 1: 24,000

**Sketch Plan**
**Bourne Mill**
**Tiverton, Rhode Island**




Approximate Scale: 1" = 100"
Shaded numbers indicate Non-Contributing



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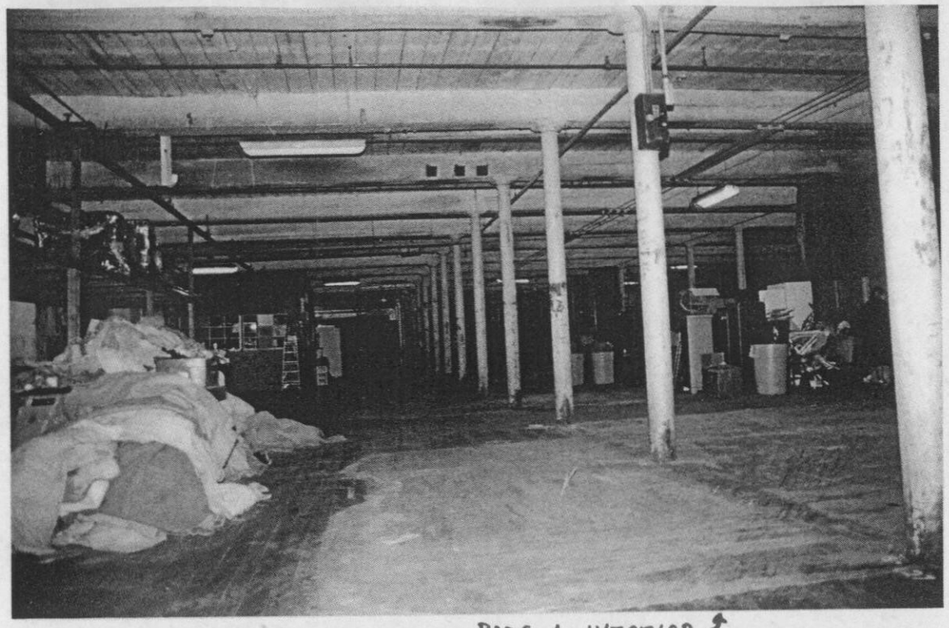

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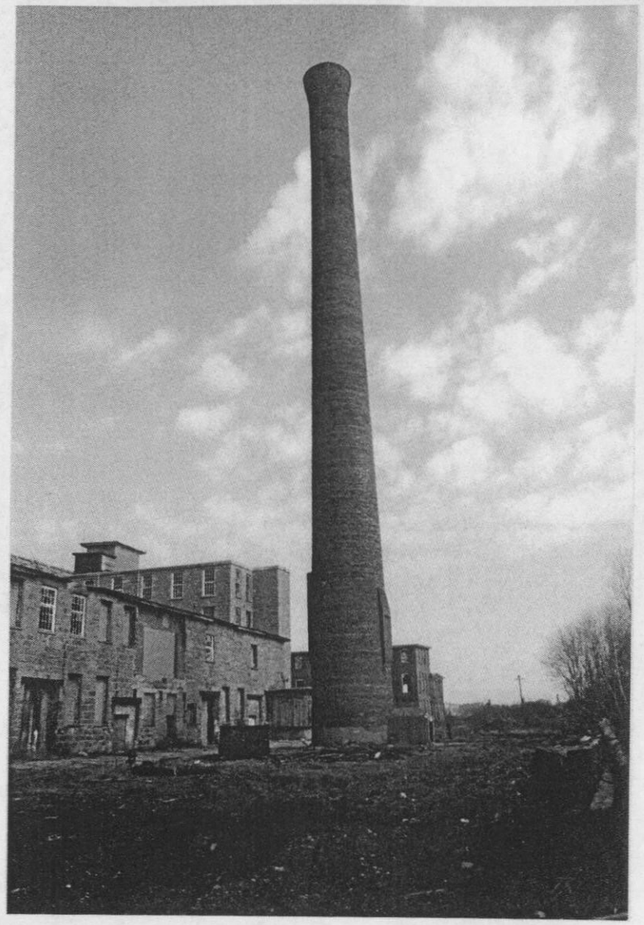

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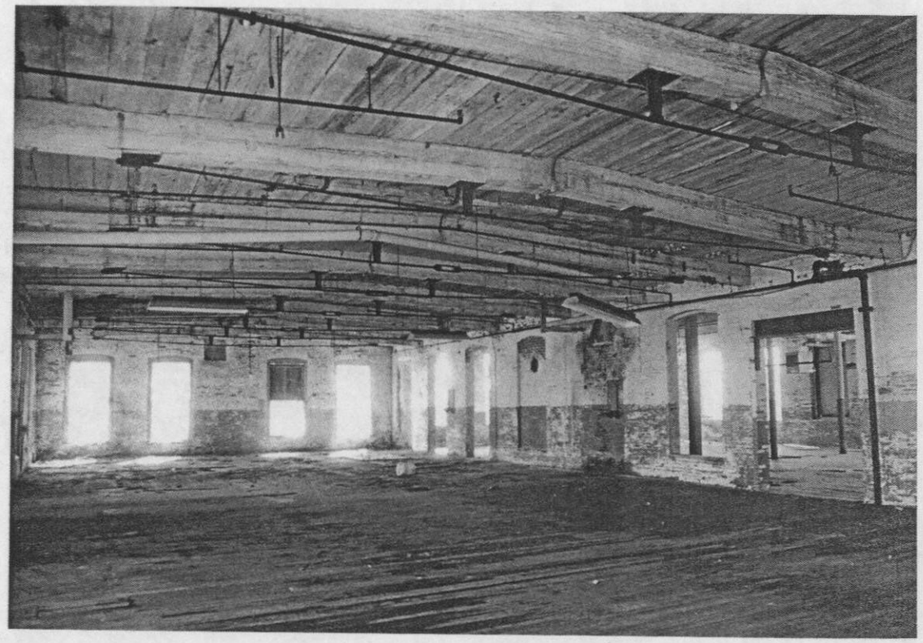

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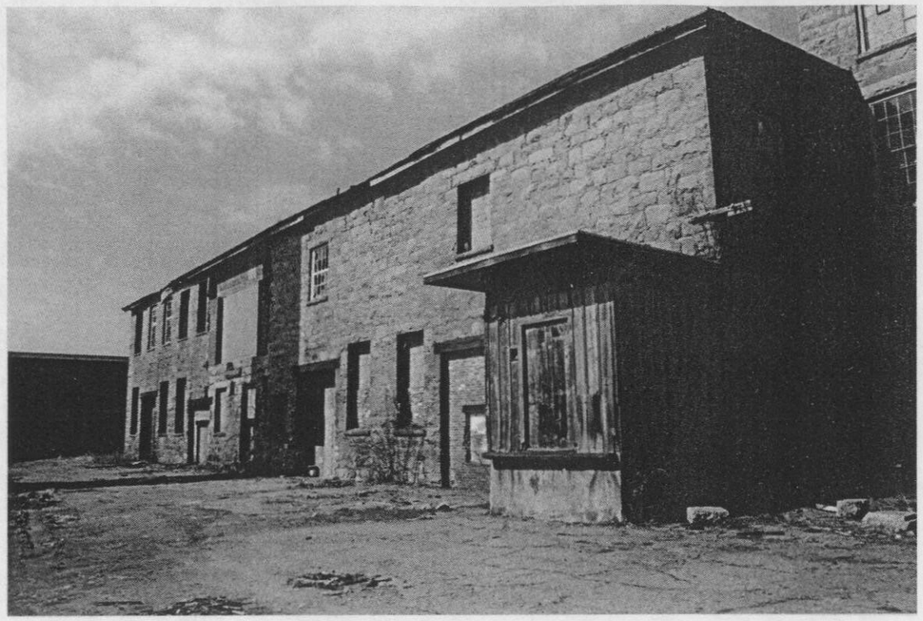

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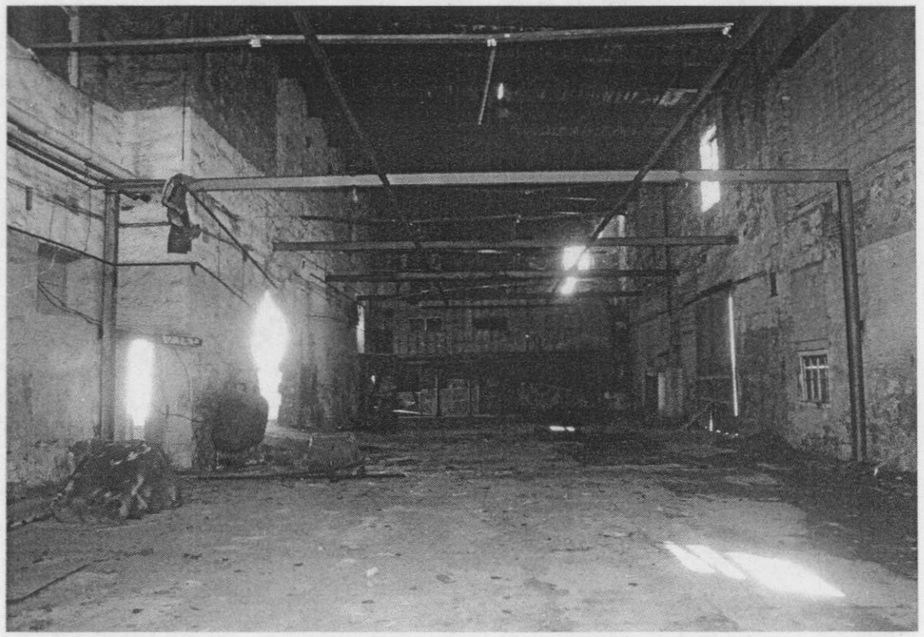

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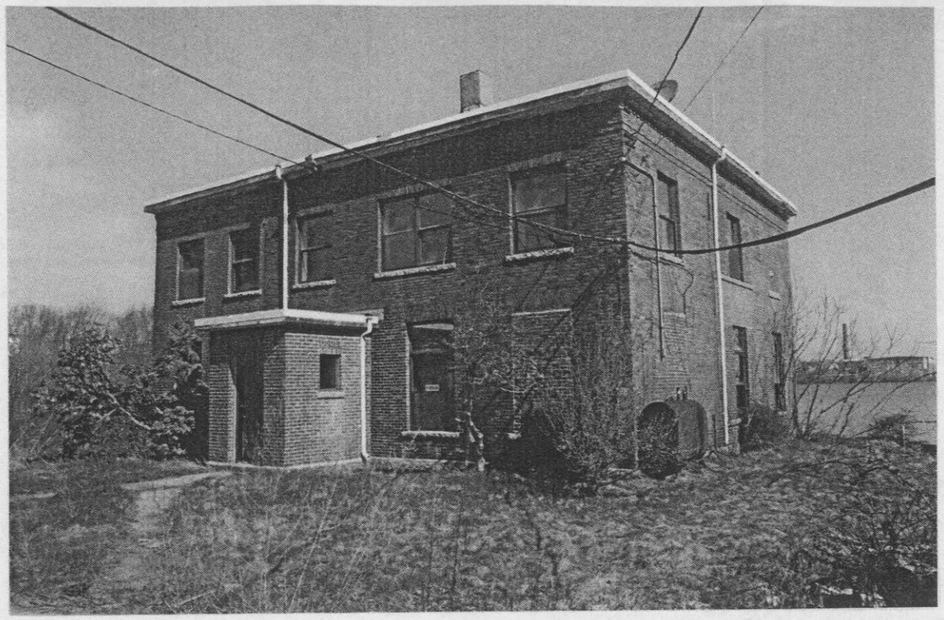

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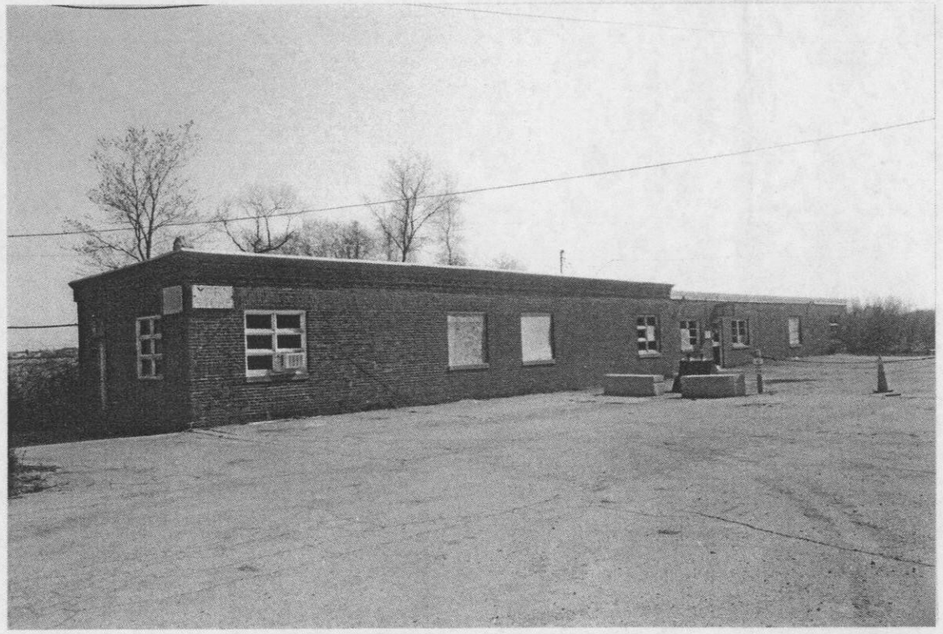

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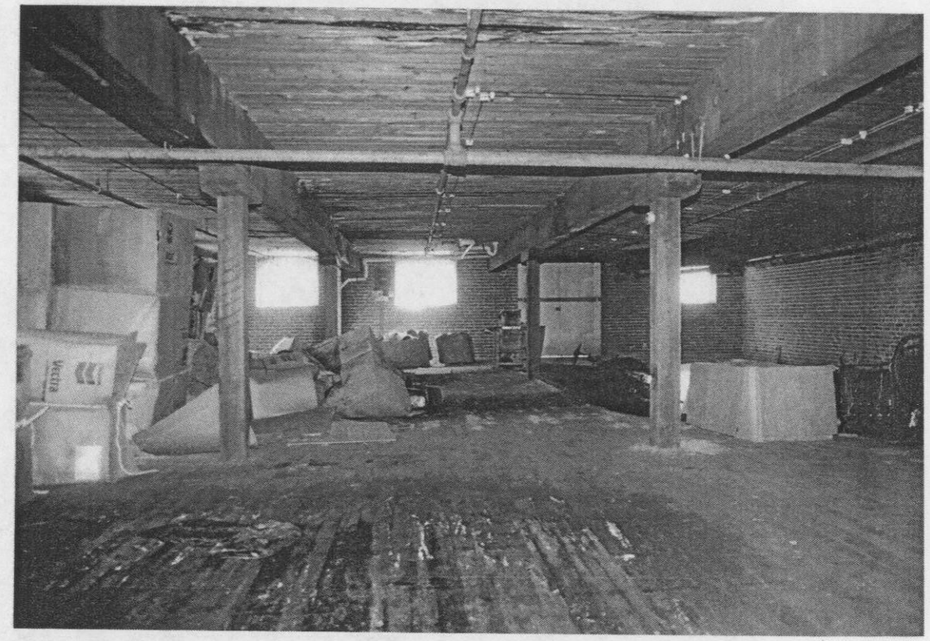

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