**NAME**

Historic: Dyerville Mill

AND/OR COMMON

**LOCATION**

Street & Number: 610 Manton Avenue

City, Town: Providence

State: Rhode Island

**CLASSIFICATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Present Use</th>
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<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Occupied</td>
<td>Agriculture, Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building(s)</td>
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<td>Unoccupied</td>
<td>Commercial, Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Work in Progress</td>
<td>Educational, Private Residence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>Public Acquisition</td>
<td>Accessible</td>
<td>Entertainment, Religious</td>
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<td>Object</td>
<td>In Process</td>
<td>Yes: Restricted</td>
<td>Government, Scientific</td>
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<td>Being Considered</td>
<td>No: Unrestricted</td>
<td>Industrial, Transportation</td>
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**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

Name: Robert and William Lonardo

Street & Number: 610 Manton Avenue

City, Town: Providence

State: Rhode Island 02909

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

Courthouse, Registry of Deeds, etc.: Providence City Hall

Street & Number: 25 Dorrance Street

City, Town: Providence

State: Rhode Island

**REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

Title: Providence Broadbrush

Date: July 1976 et seq.

Depository for Survey Records: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

City, Town: Providence

State: Rhode Island 02905
The Dyerville Mill is a stuccoed-stone structure located on the northern bank of the Woonasquatucket River. Although the mill is bordered on three sides by an urban late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century residential neighborhood, dense foliage and a steep hill to the north visually isolate it in a near-rural setting.

The factory was erected in 1835 as a three-and-a-half-story, L-shape structure with a simple gable roof and a four-and-a-half story tower at the outside corner of the L. Evenly spaced double-hung, six-over-six sash windows with granite sills and lintels punctuate the walls, which were originally stuccoed and scored in imitation of stone. An open, wood, arcuated belfry with Italianate detailing, probably added in the 1860s, caps the tower (photograph 1), which is connected by a covered wood walkway with an early twentieth-century building on Manton Avenue formerly used as the mill office. A stone, two-and-a-half-story picker house (photograph 3), located on the southwest side of the mill, and a one-story brick extension on the south, originally used as a weave shed, are nineteenth-century additions which form another L, creating a quadrangle (see site plan). A twentieth-century warehouse is attached to the brick addition.

The original open interior space is largely intact (photograph 5), with few new partitions erected. The original wood floors and "slow-burning" construction members remain exposed.

Much of the original water-power system remains in evidence. A long raceway formerly ran from a wooden dam on the Woonasquatucket River west of the mill. The dam is still in place, but the gates have been removed, and the race is only visible near the wood wheel house (photograph 4) on the northwest side of the building. A horizontal turbine and belt-driven generator remain in place at the wheel house, and a brick-and-wood boiler house survives on the northwest, but no steam engines remain.

A tall, yellow-brick, early twentieth-century stack displaying the name "Joslin Manufacturing Company" stands to the southwest of the mill building.
The Dyerville Mill, probably the oldest extant mill in Providence, was built in 1835 and continuously used for textile and textile-related industry for nearly one hundred years. The integrity of both the building and its site makes this an important and rare survivor of early textile industry development and mill architecture in Providence.

Architecturally the mill represents the shift from the first small, wood-frame industrial buildings, like Slater Mill in Pawtucket, to the larger masonry structures characteristic of Rhode Island's heavy nineteenth-century industrialization, such as the 1826 Slatersville Mill. Only two other early mills are known to remain in Providence, and both have been heavily altered and compromised by later construction. The nineteenth-century additions to the Dyerville Mill on the other hand, are architecturally in keeping with the original building.

The Rhode Island textile industry first developed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in the Blackstone and Pawtuxet Valleys. Providence lagged behind, with only four cotton mills by 1832. By 1840, however, twenty-six new cotton mills had opened, with much of this growth occurring along the water privileges of the Woonasquatucket River.

The Dyerville Mill was opened as part of this flurry of expansion by Elisha Dyer (1772-1854), a successful commission merchant, land owner, and banker. By the 1830s, however, diminishing returns apparently had prompted him to suspend his commission business and turn to textile production. The company survived the vagaries of the cotton-cloth market that caused the closing of all but eight Providence mills by 1850. In that year, the Dyerville Mill represented a capital investment of $75,000, employed forty men and thirty women, and produced about $50,000 worth of cloth annually. Dyer's son Elisha (1811-1906; Governor of Rhode Island, 1857-1859) was the agent in charge of operations from 1835 until his father's death. He remained the sole owner, agent, and proprietor until 1867, when he sold out to the Beckwith family.

(See cont. Sheet #2)
The years after the Civil War saw Rhode Island textile industry rapidly expanding to a position of regional importance, and the Dyerville Mill played a significant role in this development. Truman Beckwith, owner of the largest cotton brokerage in Providence, and his son Amos, who acted as agent for the mill, incorporated the concern as the Dyerville Manufacturing Company. By 1870, Dyerville Mill, by then partially run by steam, was capitalized at $250,000; contained 15,000 spindles and 274 power looms; employed forty men, forty-eight women, and twenty-four children; and produced $258,650 worth of cotton cloth.

The twentieth century brought, at first, diversification of textile production followed, ultimately, by the closing of many mills as production moved south closer to the source of supply. The Joslin Manufacturing Company purchased the mill in 1903 and converted it for the production of braid and shoelaces, a shift in interest toward novelties quite common in early twentieth-century textile production. The mill continued to manufacture these products until the 1930s, when it passed to a wholesale grocery company, which—though no longer the owner—continues to operate at this location. In recent years, the mill has housed several small, light industries.

Rhode Island textile industry's early growth, its rapid expansion in the late nineteenth century, and its decline in the mid-twentieth century are well chronicled in the Dyerville Mill. And while the expansion and adaptation of most mill complexes often destroys the integrity of both the structure and its setting, this mill is remarkable for its lack of obtrusive alteration. The Dyerville Mill is unique in Providence in its ability to illustrate the development of the Rhode Island textile industry.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES
The Biographical Cyclopedia of Representative Men of Rhode Island.
  Hall, Joseph D. Biographical History of the Manufacturers and
  Business Men of Rhode Island.
  Haer Inventory, Rhode Island
  Plat Card 883, Recorder of Deeds, City of Providence.
  (see cont. sheet #3)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY  almost 5 acres

UTM REFERENCES

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION
Providence Tax Assessor's Plat 96 Lot 2
and Plat 34 Lot 234 (land portion only)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

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<th>STATE</th>
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11 FORM PREPARED BY
NAME / TITLE  William McKenzie Woodward
ORGANIZATION  Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
STREET & NUMBER  150 Benefit Street
CITY OR TOWN  Providence
STATE  Rhode Island
DATE  July 1978

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION
THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE X  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 National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE  
TITLE  State Historic Preservation Officer
DATE  April 2, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
DYERVILLE MILL
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

Photographer: Warren Jagger

Date: Summer 1978

Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
Tower, view from the west
DYERVILLE MILL
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

Photographer: Warren Jagger

Date: Summer 1978

Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

General view from south
DYERVILLE MILL
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

Photographer: Warren Jagger

Date: Summer 1978

Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

Picker House, view from south
DYERVILLE MILL
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

Photographer: Warren Jagger

Date: Summer 1978

Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
Wheel House, view from west
DYERVILLE MILL
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

Photographer: Warren Jagger

Date: Summer 1978

Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

Interior