

**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 Hope Webbing Company Mill

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 999-1005 Main Street not for publication

city or town Pawtucket vicinity

state Rhode Island code RI county Providence code 007 zip code 02860

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 and 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
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain)	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Hope Webbing Company Mill
Name of Property

Providence County, Rhode Island
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
_____	_____	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/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION:

manufacturing facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION:

industrial storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

NO STYLE

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation STONE: granite

walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other STONE: granite

Narrative Description

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

Hope Webbing Company Mill
Name of Property

Providence County, Rhode Island
County and State

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

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 #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

INDUSTRY

Period of Significance

1889–1914

Significant Dates

1889: first building constructed

1914: site completely built out

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Sawtelle, Frank

Maguire & Penniman (portions)

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository

R.I. Historical Society Library, Providence Public Library

Hope Webbing Company Mill
Name of Property

Providence County, Rhode Island
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 7 acres

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	9	3	0	0	5	7	9	4	6	3	7	1	8	6
	Zone		Easting						Northing						
2	1	9	3	0	0	8	0	4	4	6	3	7	2	1	1

3	1	9	3	0	0	8	1	3	4	6	3	7	0	5	9
	Zone		Easting						Northing						
4	1	9	3	0	0	6	0	6	4	6	3	7	0	3	6

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 Matthew A. Kierstead

organization PAL, Inc. date June 2005

street & number 210 Lonsdale Avenue telephone 401 728-8780

city or town Pawtucket state Rhode Island zip code 02860

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 Hope Artiste Village LLC

street & number 1005 Main Street telephone 401 722-0752

city or town Pawtucket state Rhode Island zip code 02860

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 20503

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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DESCRIPTION

The Hope Webbing Company Mill is located at 999-1005 Main Street in the Woodlawn neighborhood, a mixed industrial, commercial, and residential area in southwestern Pawtucket, Rhode Island. The webbing plant buildings occupy a rectangular, 7-acre parcel bounded by Main Street (Rhode Island Route 122) to the east, Dudley Street to the south, Esten Avenue to the west, and Warren Avenue to the north. The mill parcel is on the east terrace of the Moshassuck River. The east half of the parcel is flat, and the west half slopes gently to Esten Avenue. The land on the north, east, and south sides of the mill complex is occupied by residential properties, and a historic industrial building of the former American Textile Company is located southwest of the mill complex across Dudley Street. The former Hope Webbing Power Plant, Bleach House, and Dye House were located on a separate parcel to the west, on the west side of Esten Avenue, and were connected to the main mill complex by an underground utility tunnel. Those buildings burned in 2004 and have been demolished. That parcel is not included in this nomination.

The property includes three contributing brick-walled buildings, the Finishing Building (Building 4)/Weave Sheds block (subsequently referred to as the "Main Mill") (1889–1914), The Preparing Building (Building 3) (1902, 1913), and the Boiler House (Building 6) (1889, 1903), all associated with the historical development of the property during its period of significance (1889–1955). The Main Mill is a headhouse-and-shed-plan complex occupying a single large rectangular footprint that dominates the major portion of the lot. It consists of the Finishing Building, a multistory headhouse fronting onto Main Street, and attached single-story Weave Shed Nos. 1, 2, 7 and 8, which extend west from the west side of the Finishing Building. The Preparing Building is a freestanding, multistory, loft-type building located at the west side of the lot and connected to the Main Mill by four enclosed overhead passageways. These buildings occupy the entire lot, with their outer walls rising at the sidewalk on the east, west and south elevations. A narrow strip of grass and a chain link fence border the property on the north side. There is vehicular access to the buildings on all four sides. A covered passageway through the Finishing Building connects Main Street to a long inner truck loading dock courtyard. The space between the Main Mill and the Preparing Building is accessible via a driveway off Warren Avenue. Dudley Street, now blocked off at Campbell Terrace, serves a small modern loading dock addition. The Main Mill is now partially occupied by trucking and warehouse operations. The interior of the complex has been stripped of historic textile machinery and associated mechanical drive systems.

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The component buildings of the complex share a common and regular vocabulary of construction materials and architectural features established in the initial design of the earliest buildings in 1889, and continued through the last phase of construction completed about 1913.^a Roofs are flat, of built-up plank and bituminous construction, with subtle longitudinal gable pitches for drainage, and either end flush with the walls or have overhanging wood cornices with wood crown molding at the gutter line. Walls are of brick with multiple-course corbels or machicolations and bullnose bricks common at window and door openings. The interior structure is fire-resistive, consisting mostly of heavy wood post-and-beam framing and multiple layer wood plank floors, with limited structural steel framing and concrete slab floors in some locations. Fenestration is regular, with tall rectangular single or paired segmental arch window openings with splayed brick arched lintels and thin quarry-faced granite lintels, containing a mix of original multiple-pane fixed and moveable wood sash units, modern replacement units, and wood and masonry infill. Shorter rectangular or square windows appear in scattered locations. The foundations, where exposed, are built of concrete or brick. With the exceptions of Building 3, which is at a slight skew to the Main Block, all buildings are at normal (90 degree) angles to one another. Overall building footprint measurements appearing in the following descriptions are taken from Factory Insurance Association plans for the property.

Main Mill (1889–1914)

The Main Mill consists of several attached buildings. The multistory Finishing Building headhouse runs the length of the east side of the property. Weave Shed Nos. 1, 2, 7, and 8 are long, narrow, high, one-story production sheds that extend west from the Finishing Building and are connected at their west ends by short extensions.

Finishing Building (1892–1914)

The Finishing Building is located immediately west of Main Street and fills the east end of the entire block between Warren Avenue to the north and Dudley Street to the south. It is a rectangular, multistory, 48-bay, 432-foot north-south by 6-bay, 60-foot east-west building. From the exterior the building is visually composed of three major sections of different heights separated by two towers. All of the roofs of the sections and towers have flat, built-up roofs with

^a The buildings and their components are referred to in this document by names and numbers that were assigned by Hope Webbing Co. that appear on a Factory Insurance Association plan for the property dating from 1955, the end of the complex's period of significance. These designations appear on the site map that accompanies this form.

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a molded copper flashing at the cornice. All walls are brick with segmental arch window openings, and half-height windows illuminate the basement at the sidewalk level. Despite the unified appearance of the symmetrical, unbroken east facade, the building was built in four separate sections between 1906 and 1914.

The two outermost, north and south sections are three-story, rectangular, 9-bay, 107-foot-long by 6-bay, 60-foot-wide structures with overhanging eaves with plank soffits and exposed rafter tails. Their brick walls have corbeling at the spring line of the upper story windows, and a broken string course of brick dentils running at the middle of the upper story windows. All of the windows on the south section have been recently replaced with modern triple-pane double-hung metal sash units. On the opposing north section some of the windows on the east elevation have been replaced, and all north and west elevation windows are original and consist of three major sash units, with a double-hung, 8-over-8 wood sash at the bottom and a fixed, 8-light segmental arch transom section above. The north elevation of the north section and the south elevation of the south section have bolted structural steel fire escapes with horizontal decks and diagonal stairways at the second and third floors, and the south section has a personnel door with a granite lintel in the west bay of the south elevation.

The next innermost matching components of the Finishing Mill are the four-story north and south towers. The towers, which are square in plan and two bays wide, extend above the roofline of the lower sections to either side. The towers protrude only slightly from the facade. The east elevations are divided vertically into three sections by horizontal quarry-faced granite string courses. The top section of each tower contains a recessed panel with brick dentils and a granite sill, incorporating an arcade of five Roman arch windows with brick hoods and granite keystones. Each window contains original 9-over-9, double-hung, arch-topped wood sash windows. The middle section of each tower contains two third story and two second story windows. The sash has been replaced with modern metal sash units, with the exception of the third story of the south tower, which retains its two original windows with original double-hung, 8-over-8 wood sash at the bottom and a fixed, 8-light segmental arch section above. The ground level section of each tower contains a large, deep, bullnose brick segmental arch doorway opening with a flight of granite steps leading to paneled wood double doors with a single pane window in the top half. Each door is sheltered by an elaborate wood awning with a flat roof and elaborate wood cornice, supported by two wood volute scroll brackets incorporating a square geometric motif.

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The towers flank the two-story, 24-bay, 218 foot-long, 60-foot-wide central section of the building. This section has a flush cornice instead of the overhanging eaves of the flanking sections. Most windows contain modern replacement metal sash units, with some fixed 8-pane, wood sash basement windows and some first-story, 2-over-2, double-hung, wood sash windows with fixed 8-pane sections above in place. The primary feature of this section is the central entrance tunnel leading into the truck dock courtyard area, which consists of a high, wide, rectangular opening passing through the building with a flat ceiling and a long, rolled structural steel lintel. This entrance originally incorporated a trio of granite-trimmed Roman arches with wrought iron gates, which was removed to accommodate higher, modern tractor trailer trucks. The wall above the entry has a raised parapet with a quarry-faced granite coping, brick dentils, and a long horizontal cut granite panel containing the words "HOPE WEBBING CO." Windows in the entry tunnel are 2-over-2, double-hung, wood sash units with metal security screens. Just inside the courtyard, flanking the entry tunnel, are loading docks, with the south one modified with an extension consisting of a raised concrete foundation, concrete block walls, a flat roof, and a roll door.

The Finishing Building's interior structure is of fire resistive post-and-beam construction, with floors consisting of thick wood plank decking with a thinner wood plank wearing surface nailed on top of it. The floor spaces are divided into six longitudinal bays by five parallel rows of round wood posts supporting chamfered wood beams, some supplemented by rolled steel I-beams. Each of the major sections of the building are separated by brick walls with sliding metal-clad fire doors. The basement is divided into north and south halves and has heavy square wood posts and a concrete slab floor. A forklift tunnel passes under the street-level passage between Main Street and the truck yard, connecting the north and south sections. The bulk of the first, second, and third floor production spaces have been divided by modern office partitions, with some areas, including the north half of the second floor, and the north and south ends of the first floor, retaining their original open production floor plan. The tower stairwells retain their original painted walls, and in the upper floors, their wood staircases with vertical beaded board paneling. The south tower incorporates a freight elevator. Freight elevators are also located in the southwest corner of the three-story north section backing onto Weave Shed No. 7, and the southwest corner of three two-story middle section backing onto Weave Shed No. 2. The top floor of the south tower houses a corporate boardroom with plaster walls and original wood trim including wall panels, arched windows, chair rail, wainscoting, and stairway railing with turned wood balusters. The third floor of the north end of the building houses an original, unaltered, 1920s vintage, six-lane employee bowling alley of all-wood construction, with freestanding scoreboard holders and bowling ball return racks between the lanes. Manufacturer's decals

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indicate that the equipment was made by the J.E. Came Company of Boston, MA. The south end of the building contains a multistory, walk-in safe tower.

The Finishing Building, as it evolved through enlargement, housed a combination of functions including Hope Webbing Company administrative offices, operations imparting a variety of finishes to woven and braided products, and the company's packing and shipping department. The Finishing Building is in good condition, and is currently vacant.

Weave Shed Nos. 1 (1889–1892), 2 (1895–1899), 7 (1906–1907), and 8 (1914)

Weave Shed Nos. 1, 2, 7, and 8 are long, narrow, parallel, production shed-type buildings that extend west from the west elevation of the Finishing Building. The sheds are clustered from north to south so that 7 and 1 are separated by a narrow alley, 1 and 2 are separated by the wider truck loading courtyard at the center of the Main Mill, and 2 and 8 are spaced closely together like 7 and 1. At their west ends, short extensions to the south on Weave Shed Nos. 1 and 7, and a short extension to the north on Weave Shed No. 8 connect the west ends of the sheds, closing off the alleys and truck courtyard at their west ends. Small brick-walled covered passageway/restroom links connect Weave Shed Nos. 1 and 7, and also Weave Shed Nos. 2 and 8, halfway along their lengths. The entire lengths of the narrower spaces between these two pairs of weave sheds were roofed over with modern materials since the end of the period of significance. These four buildings are each 456 feet long east-west, and are variously 77 to 85 feet wide. All four buildings are essentially identical in many respects. All have brick walls with corbeled brick dentils at the cornice. All are 86 window bays long on their longest (Warren Avenue and Dudley Street) elevations. All have flat, built-up roofs with full-length, raised, central box monitors with flat, built-up roofs and long banks of fixed and hopper-type, moveable 12-pane windows, many of which have been covered with corrugated fiberglass panels. These central box monitors are notably wide, with their roofs wider than their lower flanking roof areas.

The window bays in all four sheds contain paired, tall, segmental arch openings linked by continuous quarry-faced sills. The window openings are divided into three sections containing wood sash, with an 8-pane, segmental arch, inward-tilting, hopper-type moveable section at the top, and an 8-over-12, double-hung, wood sash section below. The degree of retention of these sash units varies from shed to shed and from elevation to elevation, with complete retention on the north elevation of Shed No. 7 on Warren Avenue, covering with plywood panels on the elevations of Shed Nos. 1 and 2 flanking the truck courtyard, and filling with concrete block at

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the west end of the Dudley Street elevation of Shed No. 8. Each pair of main floor windows is located above a single, shorter basement window, which contain a variety of materials including eight-pane wood sash, concrete block, and wood panels. The west elevation main floor windows are a mix of windows with 8-pane, segmental arch fixed section at the top, and an 8-over-12, double-hung, wood sash section below, and replacement metal casement windows. The west elevations have exposed basement windows, which contain a mix of 12-over-12, double-hung, wood sash units and replacement units.

The weave sheds incorporate a variety of doorways along their long elevations. Weave Shed No. 7's long exposed north (Warren Avenue) elevation incorporates four doorways at roughly even intervals. Near the west end is a wide segmental arch doorway that retains its 12-light transom, and contains modern wood double doors with steel steps and a metal pipe railing. To the east is a narrow doorway made from a cut-down window opening, with the top filled with a wood panel, and a modern wood door above a short concrete ramp leading to the sidewalk. East of this entrance is a wide segmental arch that retains its 12-light transom and contains modern wood double doors and a wood picket gate. At the extreme east end of the shed is a wide segmental arch opening with a 12-pane transom window, modern wood door, and a raised steel and concrete loading platform. The west elevation of Weave Shed No. 7, facing the Preparing Building, includes a doorway under the overhead bridge connecting the two buildings. The doorway consists of a segmental arch with bullnosed brick piers containing wood double doors with a continuous 6-light transom, and paneled wood doors with tall, 6-light windows and small bottom panels with diagonal beaded planks above a granite sill.

Inside the central truck courtyard, the long south elevation of Weave Shed No. 1 and the north elevation of Weave Shed No. 2 are exposed, as is the east elevation of the short, 9-bay-wide block at the west end of the courtyard that connects the west ends of the sheds. Weave Shed No. 1's south elevation includes, from west to east, a blocked off window made into a personnel door, an original wide segmental arch doorway with a modern paneled wood roll door, another blocked off window made into a personnel door, and, near the center of the south elevation, a modern, 2-bay wide, covered truck loading dock structure with a raised concrete foundation, wood frame and sheathed walls, a flat roof, and a pair of roll doors in the east elevation. To the east is a former window bay modified into a wide rectangular opening with a modern paneled wood roll door, a raised concrete truck dock, and a metal frame awning. At the east end of the elevation is an original wide segmental arch opening containing a transom covered with plywood, a modern wood door, and a raised concrete lintel. Weave Shed No. 2's north elevation includes, from west to east, a former segmental arch doorway modified into a wide rectangular

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opening with a steel lintel, short brick parapet, steel pier protectors, and a modern paneled roll door. To the east is a former window bay modified to contain a metal roll door. Further east is an original wide segmental arch entry with its transom covered with plywood and modern double wood doors. The west elevation of the small block at west end of the truck courtyard that connects the west ends of Weave Shed Nos. 1 and 2 is nine bays wide. It contains two wide segmental arch doorways with the one to the north blocked off with wood panels, and the one to the south containing a modern personnel door above concrete steps.

Weave Shed No. 8's long exposed south (Dudley Street) elevation incorporates several doorways and loading entrances. The ten west bays are covered with concrete block in a section above the modern concrete block loading dock built on the closed west section of Dudley Street. Just to the east, opposite Campbell Street, is a four bay loading dock with metal roll doors and a raised concrete foundation flanked by windows converted to personnel doors with concrete steps and a metal pipe railing. Approximately half way down Dudley Street is a wide segmental arch opening that has been partially filled with brick to form a rectangular doorway opening containing a paneled wood garage roll door above a raised steel and concrete loading platform. Another similar loading door retaining its original segmental arch opening and 12-pane transom window is located at the east end of the elevation.

The ground level interiors of the weave sheds are long, open shop floors divided into three long aisles, with the center aisle wider than the two side aisles. The aisles are divided by two parallel, longitudinal rows of wood columns that are round for most of their height and transition to a square section near the top. The columns support the longitudinal sills of the roof monitor. The tops of the columns are tied to the roof beams of the monitor by diagonal knee braces located at the top of each column, and the sills of the monitor are connected by transverse steel tensioning rods at the tops of the columns. The ceilings of the roof and monitor consist of heavy splined planks that support the built-up roof structure. The north aisle of Weave Shed No. 7 has been divided from the center aisle with a concrete block wall. The weave shed floors are a mix of wood, sheet steel, and concrete slab depending on location and historic function. Modern wood frame partitions and office spaces are present at various locations throughout the sheds. Weave Shed No. 8 is the only shed with a full-length basement, the other sheds having a smaller basement at their west end only. Weave Shed Nos. 2 and 8 have a small subbasement at their west ends. All basements have concrete slab floors. The basements are accessed by stairways at the west end of each weave shed, with a freight elevator also located in the west end of Weave Shed No. 7. The weave sheds contain some scattered modern administrative partitions. The weave sheds originally contained long rows of weaving and braiding machines that were first

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driven by steam power and later by electric motors. The weave sheds are in good condition and are currently used for warehouse space or are vacant.

Boiler House (Building 6) (1889, 1902)

The Boiler House is located near the northwest corner of the property, extending west from the west elevation of Weave Shed No. 1. It is a rectangular, 39-foot by 27-foot, five-bay by three-bay, two-story building with a flat, built-up roof, brick walls with corbeled brick dentils at the cornice, and a concrete slab foundation. The windows and doors all have segmental arch openings and quarry-faced granite sills. The upper story window openings are roughly square and contain fixed, 12-over-12, wood sash windows, with the exception of one, 12-over-12, double-hung wood sash window on the south elevation. The lower story windows are taller and contain 12-over-12, double-hung wood sash windows. The north elevation contains three doors. A second story bay contains a tall, rectangular hoistway door with a wood lintel and a wood door with a panel set below four fixed lights. The ground level contains two, wide, segmental arch doorways, the east one filled in with a small modern door surrounded by modern wood sheathing, and the west one a raised loading door containing a multiple-panel door with diagonal planks in the panels. The ground floor is linked to adjacent Weave Shed No. 1 by a narrow, enclosed, two-story passageway with a single 4-over-4, double hung, wood sash window with a granite sill on each elevation. The ground level of the connector has brick walls consistent in appearance with the main part of the building, and the upper level of the structure is a later addition with a wood frame and clapboard siding. The Boiler House provided steam for heat and mechanical power before construction of the boiler house on Esten Avenue and the adoption of electricity for power transmission. The Boiler House is in good condition, and is currently vacant.

Sometime after the construction of the new boiler house on Esten Avenue about 1908, the Boiler House was converted to a workshop. Its original full-height, open interior was framed up to form a second floor. At a later date a rectangular, 22-foot-long by 12-foot-wide, one-story, three-bay-by-one-bay, blacksmith shop with a built-up shed roof, concrete block walls, and a concrete slab foundation was built against the west elevation. It has large multiple-pane, steel sash windows and wood double doors with upper multiple pane windows at the center of the south elevation. This blacksmith shop addition is in poor condition.

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Preparing Building (Building 3) (1902, 1913)

The Preparing Building is located west of the Main Mill, on the east edge of Esten Avenue. It is a rectangular, five-story, loft-type building that was built in two major phases, with the north half completed in 1903, and the south half completed by 1914. It is 418 feet long on its 41-bay long north-south axis, and 84 feet wide. Building 3 has a flat, built-up roof with a subtle longitudinal gable pitch for drainage. A small wood frame elevator hoist motor house is located near the east central portion of the roof. The roof on the north and south elevations has an overhanging wood cornice with plank soffits and fascia, exposed beveled rafter tails, and simple wood crown molding at the gutter line. The cornice on the east and west elevations has been modified and has been cut flush to the walls with a simple metal flashing at the cornice. The walls are of mortared brick masonry construction with a wide, continuous, quarry-faced granite block belt course at the windowsill line between the second and third stories and a shallow multiple course corbel at the cornice. The foundations, where exposed on the south and west elevations, are built of reinforced concrete. The east elevation incorporates stepped vertical piers between every six sets of windows. Bolted structural steel fire escapes are located at the west side of the south elevation, and at the north end of the east elevation.

The Preparing Building is connected to the west end of the Main Mill by four elevated, timber-framed, enclosed walkway bridges that enter the east elevation of the building at the fourth floor. These bridges have heavy timber Warren truss frames with diagonal substruts; flat, built-up roofs; clapboard siding; and are lit by a variety of several fixed, multiple-pane, wood sash windows on each side. There are no doorways on the north or south elevations of the Preparing Building. The windows on the west bay of the south elevation have been altered to fire escape doorways. The west elevation contains several doorways. The six southern bays contain the building's internal loading shed, consisting of six heavy concrete door frames containing a variety of raised and sunken truck loading docks with steel roll doors. The sixth bay from the south end is a multistory hoist bay with a steel hoist I-beam at the roofline and recessed hoist door entrances containing a mix of original wood doors with multiple pane wood sash windows and replacement doors, multiple pane transoms, and concrete slab sills. The windows on the eleventh, twelfth, and sixteenth bays from the north end of the elevation have been converted to loading dock doors.

Fenestration on the building is regular, with vertical rows of segmental arch windows above the granite belt course, and rectangular windows below, all in shallow spandrels between brick piers, and narrow, quarry-faced, granite sills. Windows on the west elevation are mostly covered with

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modern panels that are either blank or contain smaller single-pane windows or metal ventilation louvers, and many of the rectangular windows below the belt course contain paired, 4-over-6, double-hung, wood sash units. Windows on the east elevation vary, with some covered with panels on the top floor, units with a wood, ten, 10-pane, inward-tilting hopper-type window above and a 20-pane fixed sash below; and 12-pane, steel sash, moveable-portion windows on the ground level. The north and south elevations each contain four shallow recessed window bays separated by wide piers, with each bay containing two vertical rows of segmental arch windows sharing a common narrow quarry-faced granite sill. The narrow center piers in the top windows have a multiple-course corbel below the spring line. The north elevation contains a mix of windows, including triple-hung, 8 over 8 over 8, wood sash units; multiple-pane, awning-type moveable steel-sash units; modern panels with single-pane modern windows or metal louvers, and single-hung eight-pane wood sash rectangular windows in the basement. The south elevation windows are mostly blocked with wood panels, with some rectangular lower story openings containing paired 4-over-6, double-hung wood sash.

A small, one-story, one-bay-by-three-bay, flat-roofed, concrete block addition is located at the east side of the north elevation. Most of its windows are boarded up, and the original multiple-pane, steel sash windows are in place on the west elevation. This structure appears to be less than 50 years old and is not shown on the 1955 Factory Insurance Association drawing.

The Preparing Building's interior structure is of fire-resistive, post-and-beam construction, with floors consisting of thick wood plank decking with a thinner wood plank wearing surface nailed on top of it. The floor spaces are divided into four longitudinal bays by three parallel rows of round wood columns supporting transverse chamfered rectangular wood beams. The north half of the building has a basement, and the south half has a subbasement. The south subbasement is built of riveted structural steel columns with concrete clad beams and stringers with a concrete slab ceiling. Portions of the interior throughout the building have been modified with extra steelwork and concrete floors for heavy equipment floorloading. Vertical circulation consists of five freight elevators and two full-height staircases. The staircases are located on the east side of the interior, with one at the middle of the east wall that wraps around one of the freight elevators, and the other near the south end of the east wall, next to another freight elevator. Modern wood frame partitions for production spaces, offices, employee lockers, etc. are present at various locations throughout the building. The northwest corner of Floor 2 was last used as a machine shop and still contains some modern machine tools.

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The Preparing Building served as the warehouse and processing building for Hope Webbing's incoming raw materials, which consisted mainly of threads, yarns, and finishing materials. The threads and yarns were wound and spooled in this building, where finishes and coatings were also applied, before being transferred to the Weave Sheds for weaving and braiding. The Preparing Building is in good condition, and is currently vacant.

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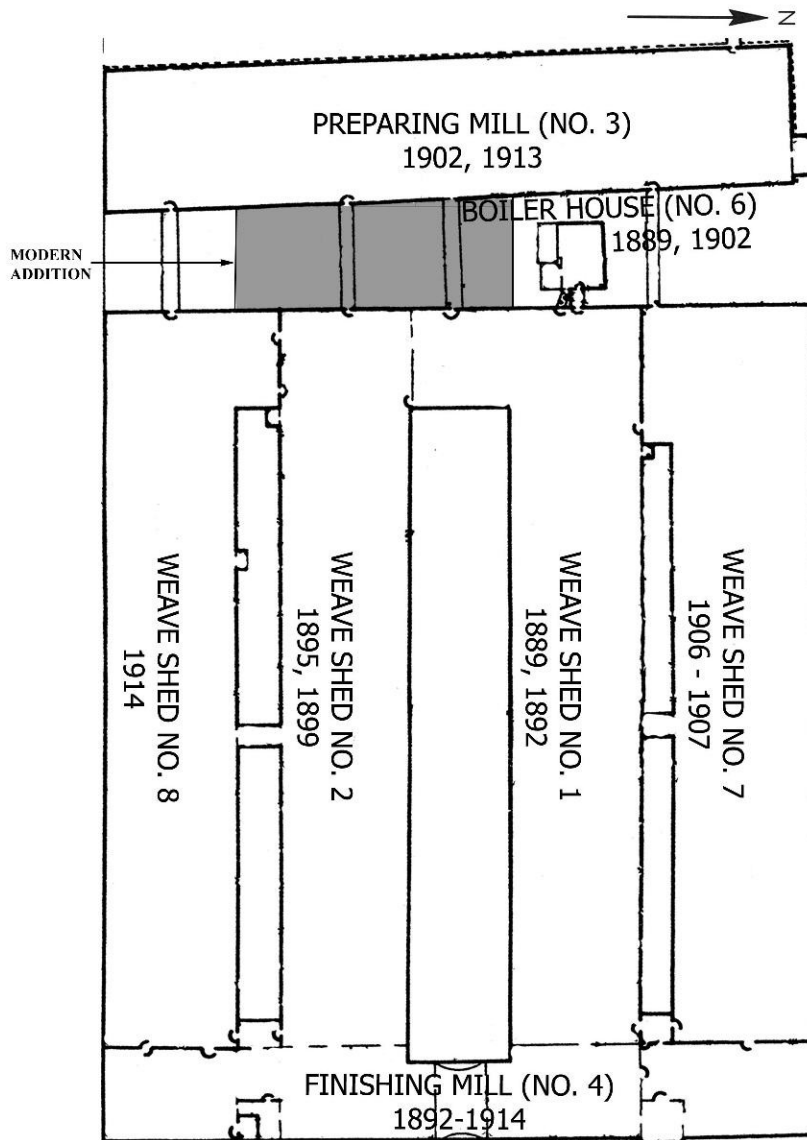
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Floor Plan



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PHOTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The information in numbers 1–5 is the same for all photographs.

1. Hope Webbing Company Mill
2. Providence County, Rhode Island
3. Photographer: Matthew A. Kierstead
4. Date of Photographs: March 2005
5. Negative on File at: PAL
210 Lonsdale Avenue
Pawtucket, RI 02860

(Note: These photographs were taken with a digital camera at high resolution and printed on Epson Premium Glossy paper using Epson UltraChrome pigmented inks per the National Park Service March 2005 Photo Policy Expansion list of Acceptable Ink and Paper Combinations for Digital Images).

Index to Photographs:

6. Main Street (east) elevation of Finishing Building (Building 4) looking southwest
7. Photograph 1

6. Detail view of south elevator/stair tower of Finishing Building (Building 4) looking northwest
7. Photograph 2

6. View of truck passageway into loading dock area between Weave Shed No. 1 and Weave Shed No. 2 looking west
7. Photograph 3

6. View inside loading dock area between Weave Shed No. 1 and Weave Shed No. 2 looking west
7. Photograph 4

6. View of south elevation of Weave Shed No. 8 looking northwest
7. Photograph 5

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- 6. View of north elevation of Weave Shed No. 7 looking southwest
- 7. Photograph 6

- 6. View of area between weave sheds and Preparing Building showing north overhead passageway, looking south
- 7. Photograph 7

- 6. View of Preparing Building (Building 3) looking southeast from Esten Avenue
- 7. Photograph 8

- 6. View of west elevation of Preparing Building (Building 3) looking east
- 7. Photograph 9

- 6. View of Boiler House (Building 6) looking northeast
- 7. Photograph 10

- 6. Interior view of Weave Shed No. 8 looking southwest
- 7. Photograph 11

- 6. Interior view of Preparing Building looking southeast
- 7. Photograph 12

- 6. Interior view of bowling alley, second floor, north end of Finishing Building, looking northwest
- 7. Photograph 13

- 6. Interior view of boardroom, top floor, south tower, Finishing Building, looking northeast
- 7. Photograph 14

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Photo Key Map



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SIGNIFICANCE

Hope Webbing is significant as an intact representative physical expression of the industrial history and architecture of Pawtucket, one of Rhode Island's most heavily industrialized communities. Hope Webbing includes three contributing buildings associated with the construction, development, and operation of the plant, a narrow woven textile production facility. Hope Webbing is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the state and local level under Criteria A and C. It is eligible under Criterion A for its association with the growth, consolidation, and decline of the Pawtucket and Blackstone River valley textile industry. It is eligible under Criterion C as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century textile mill architecture and engineering in Rhode Island. The period of significance begins in 1889, when the first extant mill buildings were erected, and ends in 1955, the 50-year National Register eligibility cutoff date, a time span that includes the construction dates of all contributing resources.

Pawtucket and Industry

From the mid-seventeenth century to 1862 the Blackstone River, which flows through Pawtucket approximately 1 mile east of Hope Webbing, served as the political boundary between Massachusetts and Rhode Island. "Pawtucket Village" evolved on either side of Pawtucket Falls, located at the Main Street Bridge. The village on the west bank was part of Providence until 1765, when it was set off as part of a new town, North Providence. In 1874, an eastern portion of North Providence merged with Pawtucket to form the present political boundaries. Pawtucket was incorporated as a city in 1885 (Roper 1978:4-5).

Pawtucket Falls is regarded as the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. It was there in 1793 that the mechanical skill of the Wilkinson family and textile machinery knowledge of Samuel Slater were combined to create Slater Mill, site of the first successful mechanized cotton spinning in the United States. In subsequent years the riverbanks were filled by a substantial number of residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional buildings. By 1830 the city's population was 3,300. Pawtucket's industrial expansion slowed after a general economic downturn in 1829, but picked up again after the construction of the Boston & Providence Railroad and the Providence & Worcester Railroad through the city in the 1840s. The city experienced another burst of industrial prosperity during the Civil War boom that lasted until the Panic of 1873. Pawtucket became an important producer of yarn, thread, specialty fabrics

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including calicoes, woven haircloth, worsted braid, and cotton wadding shoelaces. It was also a notable location for manufacture of narrow woven and braided textile products such as those made at Hope Webbing. Other Pawtucket products included textile and mill supplies, metalworking and machine tool building, nuts, bolts and screws, and leather belting. In the 46 years between the incorporation of the city in 1874 and 1920, the population of the city more than tripled to a total of 64,248. Eventually Pawtucket became second only to Providence in terms of population and industrial importance in Rhode Island, and the downtown rivaled its neighbor in abundance and variety of goods (Roper 1978:11–12, 15, 19, 21, 23, 26).

The general decline of New England's textile industry after World War I had a severe impact on Pawtucket's development. The Blackstone Valley's cotton industry, which began to fall off significantly by 1923, almost completely dissolved during the Great Depression of the 1930s. During the Depression, the city's population dropped by some 4,300 people between 1930 and 1936. Although suburban development began to increase with the rise of the automobile, downtown Pawtucket remained the center of commercial activity. At the start of World War II, Pawtucket experienced a brief economic boom as its remaining industries retooled to support the war effort, but by the end of the war, the economy again went into recession before stabilizing in the early 1950s. Though met with some local opposition, the Pawtucket section of Interstate Route 95, immediately west of Hope Webbing, was constructed through the center of the city and officially opened in 1963 (Roper 1978:33–36). The area now known as Woodlawn, where Hope Webbing is located, was open farmland until the end of the nineteenth century, and Main Street was a dirt road connecting Providence with Pawtucket and Lincoln to the north.

The Historical and Physical Development of Hope Webbing

The Hope Webbing Company was founded in 1883 in Providence, Rhode Island, by Charles Sisson and Oscar Steere. Both men had previously worked together at the Vaughn & Greene, Later Hamilton, Webbing Company at North Kingstown, Rhode Island (NR 1983). Sisson was born in 1847 in Coventry, Rhode Island, and worked at Hamilton Webbing for 17 years, moving up from a position as a clerk to general superintendent. Oscar Steere's expertise was in the manufacturing side of the business. In 1883 Sisson took Steere, as well as Hamilton Webbing bookkeeper Willis Harkness White, with him to form Hope Webbing in Providence. The men rented a small shop on Sprague Street, and installed ten looms primarily for making webbing for pull-straps for boots. On July 26, 1889, the company incorporated as the Hope Webbing Company, a stock company with capitalization of \$100,000, with Hezekiah Conant, president;

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Charles Sisson, treasurer; Willis H. White, secretary; and Oscar A. Steere, superintendent. By the late 1890s the company had 15 workers tending 60 looms, and, needing room to expand, were looking for vacant land outside the city for a new plant. The company purchased a parcel of land on Learned Street, just west of Main Street, in the South Woodlawn section of Pawtucket. The contract for the first mill building was signed on September 16, 1889. In early 1890 the offices and 108 looms were moved into the new 17,000 sq ft shop (Bicknell 1920:206; Grieve 1897:477–478; Anon. 1944; *Pawtucket Evening Times* 1896:6; Providence Board of Trade Journal 1912:294; Rhode Island State Bureau of Information 1930:232).

The Hope Webbing Company purchased the Pawtucket parcel for their new plant from Hezekiah Conant, who was considered “the leading manufacturer of Pawtucket.” Conant, born in Dudley, Massachusetts in 1827, was trained in Worcester, Massachusetts as a mechanic, and worked at the Colt Armory in Springfield, Massachusetts. He became an inventor and engineer concentrating on thread machines in Willimantic, Connecticut, known as the “Thread City.” In 1868 he founded the Conant Thread Company in Pawtucket, and in 1869 he established a relationship with the J & P. Coats thread of Scotland, the leading thread manufacturer in the world at that time. In April 1870 he built the massive Mill No. 2 and expanded the works through the 1880s. In 1893 the works was taken over by J. & P. Coats Company, with Conant remaining as chief executive. The plant, straddling the Pawtucket–Central Falls, Rhode Island line, eventually became the largest textile company in Rhode Island with its plant on one site, the largest thread mill in the world, and the largest employer in Pawtucket, with 3,380 employees during World War II (Grieve 1897:274–276; Roper 1978:17–18).

Although the Hope Webbing plant presents the appearance of having been designed and built all at once, particularly considering the cohesive, symmetrical design of its Main Street facade and continuous, repetitive appearance of the weave sheds, it was actually built in at least eight major phases reflecting steadily increasing product development and market demand during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The original plant consisted of a 78-foot-wide by 260-foot-long weave shed (the west half of Weave Shed No. 1) running longitudinally east-west on the north side of Learned Street, which extended west from Main Street. A 26-foot-wide by 20-foot-long, one-story Boiler House with steam engine (the east half of Building 6), was attached to the west end of the Weave Shed, and a 58-foot-wide by 62-foot-long office wing (now Building No. 5) projected south from the west end, severing Learned Street (*Providence Board of Trade Journal* 1890:14; *Pawtucket Evening Times* 1896:6).

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By November 1892, Weave Shed No. 1 was extended 194 feet east toward Main Street, essentially doubling its length, and a 66-foot-wide, 77-foot-long, two-story headhouse was constructed at its east end, fronting onto main street. The weave shed allowed doubling of the plant's capacity, and the headhouse provided basement space for shipping and storage and the floors above were occupied by offices. In 1829 the west end of Weave Shed No. 1 contained a machine shop and heater room, and Building 5 was used as a storehouse. The Boiler House contained one Corliss upright boiler (Barlow Insurance Survey 1892; *Pawtucket Evening Times* 1896:6).

By 1895, demand had again outstripped production and the plant was expanded. The east section of Weave Shed No. 2, a 271-foot-long by 82-foot wide building, was constructed parallel to and south of Weave Shed No. 1, on the south side of Learned Street. A two-story, 60-foot-wide by 218-foot-long headhouse section was built at its east end, connecting with the preexisting headhouse section to the north. The section of Learned Street between the two weave sheds was cut off from Main Street by three granite-trimmed Roman arches at the center of the headhouse, establishing the symmetrical Main Street facade. Power came from two 125 hp Corliss boilers and an 80 hp Corliss steam engine, and the plant had its own generator for electric lighting. It employed 460 hands making 150 miles of products a day, including cotton, jute, worsted wool, and silk narrow woven fabrics such as boot and shoe straps, carpet and horse blanket bindings, hat bands, non-elastic webs, and dress stay webs and trimmings, hose supports, and electrical machinery insulation for markets in the U.S., Europe, and South America. In 1897 the plant was said to make 1.5 million yards of narrow fabrics a year (*Pawtucket Evening Times* 1896:6; *Providence Board of Trade Journal* 1895:12, 1897:14). In 1899, Weave Shed No. 2 was extended approximately 185 feet west to meet the west wall of the original 1889 office and storehouse wing, forming an enclosed O-shaped plan with a central courtyard.

One important factor of Hope Webbing's success at this time was the development of cotton "linen finished electric tape" and related electric coil winding tapes, extremely thin fabric tapes for insulating electric motor wire coil windings. Hope management worked with the noted pioneering electrical machinery concern, the Thomson and Houston Company of Lynn, Massachusetts (later General Electric Lynn), to replace a proprietary imported Scottish linen material for armature and field coil windings. Hope technicians developed a special calendar roll to give the thin fabric a waxy finish that duplicated the linen it replaced. Plant superintendent Oscar Steere designed many narrow fabric looms, including a collaborative effort with the noted New England textile machinery company Crompton & Knowles to develop a double-bank loom,

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which incorporated two lines of shuttles for each warp, doubling the production of each loom machine (Anon. 1944).

In December 1902 Hope Webbing completed the north portion of the Preparing Building, a five-story, 84-foot-wide by 225-foot-long building located on Esten Avenue, west of the Boiler House, and attached to Weave Shed No. 1 by a covered overhead walkway. The building was built by the Providence construction company Maguire & Penniman. The almost 100,000 sq ft building was built to house raw thread preparation processes including warping and spooling. The plant's capacity had by that year more than doubled from its original incarnation and had become one of the largest narrow fabric mills in America. The Boiler House was also doubled in size that year. In 1904, the company began making braided cotton electric wire insulation, which soon became a major product line (Anon. 1944; *Pawtucket Evening Times* 1902:8; *Providence Board of Trade Journal* 1902:379).

In 1906, Hope Webbing completed construction of the 85-foot-wide, 356-foot-long Weave Shed No. 7, parallel to and north of Weave Shed No. 1, its 100-foot-wide by 108-foot-long west extension. A three-story, 60-foot-wide by 107-foot-long headhouse section was built at its east end, connecting with the preexisting Finishing Building headhouse section to the south. This section of the headhouse included a four-story Romanesque tower. These 1906 components were designed by architect Frank Sawtelle, who had offices at 48 Custom Street, Providence. In 1906 Hope Webbing made more than 20,000 different kinds of narrow fabric products (*Providence Board of Trade Journal* 1906:166–167).

This new north section of the headhouse also incorporated a significant amount of indoor space devoted to employee recreation. The top floor of the tower housed a “club room,” the second floor of the main section included recreation and assembly rooms, and the entire top floor was devoted to a four-lane bowling alley, which still survives in good condition. These amenities are surviving examples of industrial employee recreation facilities instituted as part of the “welfare capitalism” movement that began in the late 1880s and ended with the Great Depression. Employers believed that recreation facilities would influence workers’ behavior outside the workplace and dissuade them from unhealthy leisure time pursuits and help build team spirit” and company loyalty. Most programs included construction of outdoor recreational facilities such as ballfields and picnic grounds. Some companies went to great expense to sacrifice potential indoor production space for facilities such as swimming pools, bowling alleys, and club rooms with pool tables (Biggs 1996:64–69).

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The Boiler House, Bleach House, and Dye House that stood west of Esten Avenue were built between 1908 and 1912. The dye house was built to replace one operated by the company on Japonica Street, on the other side of Pawtucket, previously owned by the New England Thread Company. The new dye house saved much time in transportation of material to be dyed. Hope Webbing's construction of a captive finishing plant is typical of the early-twentieth-century phenomenon of textile concerns building or controlling specialized factories for their own finishing capacity (Carroll 1932:863). The boiler house included an electric power station. A report on the company's activities announced that: "electric motors will be installed . . . the present structures rewired, and other improvements made so that the entire plant can be run by electricity." By 1908, Hope Webbing was operating 1,000 looms (*Providence Board of Trade Journal* 1908:24, 1912:294). After the construction of the new boiler house on Esten Avenue in 1908, the old Boiler House (Building 6) was modified by the construction of a second interior floor. No evidence of the boiler or steam engine remains in the building today. A small blacksmith shop with concrete block walls and a shed roof was added to the south elevation of the building after it ceased to function as a boiler house.

The last phases of construction of the Hope Webbing plant took place just prior to World War I. In 1913 the company completed the 83-foot-wide by 193-foot-long south portion of the Preparing Building. In 1914 they completed construction of the 85-foot-long by 374-foot-long Weave Shed No. 8, and its 82-foot-wide by 107-foot-long west extension. A three-story, 58-foot-wide by 107-foot-long headhouse section was built at its east end, connecting with the preexisting Finishing Building headhouse section to the north. Like its counterpart to the north, this section of the headhouse included a four-story Romanesque tower. Weave Shed No. 8 was connected to the Preparing Building by another overhead walkway, completing the buildout of the Hope Webbing Plant. In 1912 Hope Webbing employed 1,200 hands and made more than 25,000 varieties of narrow woven products. Employment peaked at 1,300 during World War I (*Providence Board of Trade Journal* 1912:294; Anon. 1944).

Modern additions constructed after 1955 also include small covered truck loading dock structures on the south side of Weave Shed No. 1, the northeast corner of Weave Shed No. 2, and the west end of the south side of Weave Shed No. 8. A small one-story, flat-roofed modern concrete block enclosure was built at the northeast corner of the Finishing Building. The largest modern alteration consisted of the enclosure of a portion of the open area between the east elevation of the Preparing Mill and portions of the west ends of Weave Sheds 1, 2, and 8 with an structure with a flat, steel-truss roof and concrete block walls that enclosed the overhead bridges

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linking the weave sheds with the Preparing Mill. The Esten Avenue Boiler House, Bleach House, and Dye House were destroyed by fire in 2004.

Hope Webbing was said to be the “largest plant in world making narrow woven fabric” in 1923, and had sales offices in Chicago and New York (*Pawtucket Magazine* 1923:16). In 1930 the company had 1,200, multiple-shuttle narrow fabric weaving looms and 800 braiding machines on 12.5 acres of floor space, plus their own fabric preparation and finishing facilities including a dye house and bleach house integrated into the works. Hope consumed the equivalent of 40 acres of cotton annually. They used cotton yarn principally, but also made web and braid from rayon, linen, worsted, silk, jute, wire, and paper. The company operated no spindles, consuming raw material as beam warps, ball warps and skeins ready for dyeing or on tubes or cones to be beamed. Products included banding, belting, binding, braids, cords, gimps, labels, name webs, ribbons, sleeveings, spinning tapes, stay webs, strappings, tapes, and trimmings, hose supporters, life preservers, mattresses, nightwear, pajamas, suspenders, trunks, underwear, and material for industries including automobiles, boots and shoes, clothing, and electric machinery.

During World War II Hope Webbing operated 1,100 weaving looms and 1,100 braiders on 600,000 sq ft of floor space. Wartime products made for the U.S. military included camouflage net tape, parachute harness webbing, and clothing tapes. Wartime production capacity was achieved with an average of only 700 workers (Anon. 1944; Rhode Island State Bureau of Information 1930:232). The company calculated that it had woven 50,000 different configurations since its inception in 1883. Among its most notable accomplishments were manufacturing Ford Model T clutch and brake woven linings, pioneering the development of cloth zipper tape, and developing and manufacturing a wide range of electrical fabrics, which constituted the greatest yardage of their overall production (Anon. 1944).

Hope Webbing suffered its first financial losses in 1955, the end of its period of significance. In 1956 New York textile operator George A. Hovarth purchased the plant and sold it to HW Realty of Providence, which was owned by the Rosen family, who also owned the School House Candy Company. HW Realty then leased half of the plant back to Hope Webbing, and set up a candy factory in the Preparing Building, and used part of the weave shed complex for warehouse space. School House Candy was subsequently purchased by Sherwood Brands before quitting the complex. Hope Webbing, now known as Hope Global, left building in 1995 for a modern facility on Martin Street in Cumberland, Rhode Island, where their home office is now located (*Pawtucket Times* 1994).

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Narrow Woven Products and Rhode Island Manufacturing

Hope Webbing specialized in manufacturing “narrow” woven and braided textile products, which are those measuring less than 6 inches in width. Hope Webbing made both flat woven “tape” or “web” products as well as cylindrical and tubular braided products.

Tapes and webbing are woven flat textile products with a “selvage” (self edge or fast edge), a ravelling solid woven edge resistive to tearing. This weave gives it a strength-to-weight ratio greater than cut fabric strips. The weaving equipment has a flexibility permitting special features such as loops, tubes, button holes, ribs, beads, loose or tight edges, variations in weave density, etc.) of any density or thickness. Braids are hollow flat or tubular products, with longitudinal threads with a diagonal crossweave that give them extensible and retractable qualities. Braids do not distort when curved, and can be braided around a core for strength, insulation, and flexibility. The electrical industry provided Hope Webbing with important product development and marketing opportunities beginning in the early 1890s, when Hope Webbing product researchers developed a special “linen finished” cotton tape for binding insulation on electric motor coils. Subsequently, Hope Webbing added flexible coated tubular cotton braids of high electrical resistance to their product line that were made specifically for covering electrical lead wires, exposed connections, and splices. As electrical technology progressed, Hope Webbing maintained close research contact with the electrical industry, and the company became a leader in woven fabrics for electrical applications (Hope Webbing Company n.d.)

Hope Webbing may have been the largest narrow woven fabric plant in the world, however, it was hardly the only one, even within Pawtucket, which emerged as a center of the narrow fabric industry. Other Pawtucket narrow fabric concerns included the John J. Kenyon Manufacturing Company with 60 looms and 600 braiders, the Smith Webbing Company with 200 looms, the Shannock Narrow Fabric Company with 64 looms, the Providence Braid Company with 1,500 braiders, the Glencairn Manufacturing Company, the Vienna Braid and Tape Company, and the Rhode Island Textile Company, with 500 braiding machines. Most of these concerns specialized in a particular narrow woven product and none had nearly the range of products offered by Hope Webbing (Anon. 1917:24). In 1932, 11 of Rhode Island’s 15 largest webbing factories, with a total of 3,084 employees, 8,696 spindles, and 4,524 looms, were located in Pawtucket. The largest two were Hope Webbing with 1,200 looms and the Rhode Island Textile Company with 1,500 looms (Carroll 1932:868).

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Architecture

The arrangement of the buildings at Hope Webbing is an example of a “headhouse-and-shed” type of plan, a variety of “consolidated works.” The consolidated works was a new model for manufacturing facilities that emerged in the late nineteenth century that emphasized proximity of associated activities and the connection of the buildings that housed them, providing direct communication, efficient materials handling, and production flow. This change from partitioning work areas based on trades or materials gave way to open layouts in production sheds because of the improvements in materials handling such as traveling cranes and fork lifts, and the use of heavier machinery that operated at faster speeds and needed to be mounted to a ground floor surface. The headhouse-and-shed plan was based on the nineteenth-century model of the armory and railway station, which placed a narrow, multistory building, the “headhouse,” in front of a large, high, one-story drill shed or train shed. This plan combined one-story production shed space with loft space for finishing, packaging, warehouse, and administrative space, with the headhouse screening the production sheds behind (Bradley 1999:74–77).

The Hope Webbing plant was not built all at once and did not reach a clear expression of the headhouse-and-shed mode until the 1892 extension of the original section east to the edge of Main Street. Expansion then followed from the ca. 1895 expansion and culminated in the full buildout by 1914. The multiple-arm, “E-shaped,” plan of Hope Webbing, with multiple sheds of standard length, is a clear expression of the expandability of the headhouse-and-shed plan.

The individual buildings incorporated in the Hope Webbing plant are representative examples of late-nineteenth/early-twentieth-century New England textile mill building types. The Finishing Building and Preparing Building are examples of the nineteenth-century tradition of the long, narrow, multistory “industrial loft,” a specialized type of building often associated with textile manufacturing, consisting of two or more stories in a long, narrow configuration. This shape was originally developed to satisfy the combined needs for interior light and power transmission via lineshafting. Useable floor space was maximized by concentrating vertical circulation in exterior towers. These buildings employed fire resistive, or “slow-burning” construction, with heavy, self-supporting masonry outer walls. The interior framing system, which supported the floor load, consisted of widely spaced, heavy timber or cast iron posts, timber or steel beams, and thick, multilayer plank floors, providing limited surfaces for fire to take hold (Bradley 1999:25, 29–34, 93, 117–121, 126–129, 155; Brooks 1906:50, 54–68).

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The east facade of the Finishing Building (No. 4) and its corbeled and arched Romanesque towers is an example of decorative industrial architecture often found in administrative buildings and/or buildings visible from main thoroughfares. Offices were usually integrated into a complex so as to be centrally located, near the main entrance, but separated so as to reduce noise and vibration from manufacturing. Administrative offices or “front” buildings were usually designed with more architectural “effect” that was more high-style and ornamental, creating a centerpiece that shielded the utilitarian buildings behind (Bradley 1999:35–37). The embellishments on the east elevation are restrained and largely confined to the cornice and towers, prompting a 1908 commentator to state that “while little attention has been paid to adornments, the plant from an architectural standpoint has a very pleasing appearance” (BOTJ 1908:24).

Weave Sheds 1, 2, 7, and 8 are examples of “production sheds,” distinctive single-story industrial buildings enclosing wide bays and high spaces. This type of building evolved to accommodate large or heavy machinery, operations involving high temperatures and/or emanating vapors, and the movement of large objects. The interior structure of the older, vertical mill buildings could not withstand the vibration of the increasingly large weaving looms. Horizontal production shed walls were built of heavy masonry construction to withstand vibration and sometimes to carry the weight of traveling cranes. The advent of direct electrical drive using individual motors allowed for more flexible arrangement of machinery within a horizontal space. The new building form allowed vibration free, rationally arranged, well lit production space, which enabled precision operation and increased output per machine. Production sheds usually include distinctive roofs that incorporate monitors that provided both ventilation and light. Often large openings were incorporated for moving large objects or containers between buildings (Bradley 1999:146–149, 192–193; Kulick and Bonham 1978:22).

The Boiler House (No. 6) is an example of another industrial building that began to evolve during the mid-nineteenth century, although it is not a large example and does not exhibit the strong characteristics of the building type. Its original high, clear-span interior has been altered with a second floor added. The chimney to provide draft for the boiler fireboxes and to carry away waste gases has been removed (Bradley 1999:49–52).

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Factory Insurance Association

1923 Isometric of Hope Webbing Company, Pawtucket, R.I. Drawing #1528B 1"=50'
Factory Insurance Association, Eastern Regional Office, Hartford, CT. Surveyed
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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Boundary Description:

The property boundaries encompass all of Plat Map 62, Lot 0305 a 7.027-acre parcel within Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries include the full extent of contiguous historic and structural resources associated with the activity in the property during its period of significance. The boundaries follow legally recorded property lines and roads.

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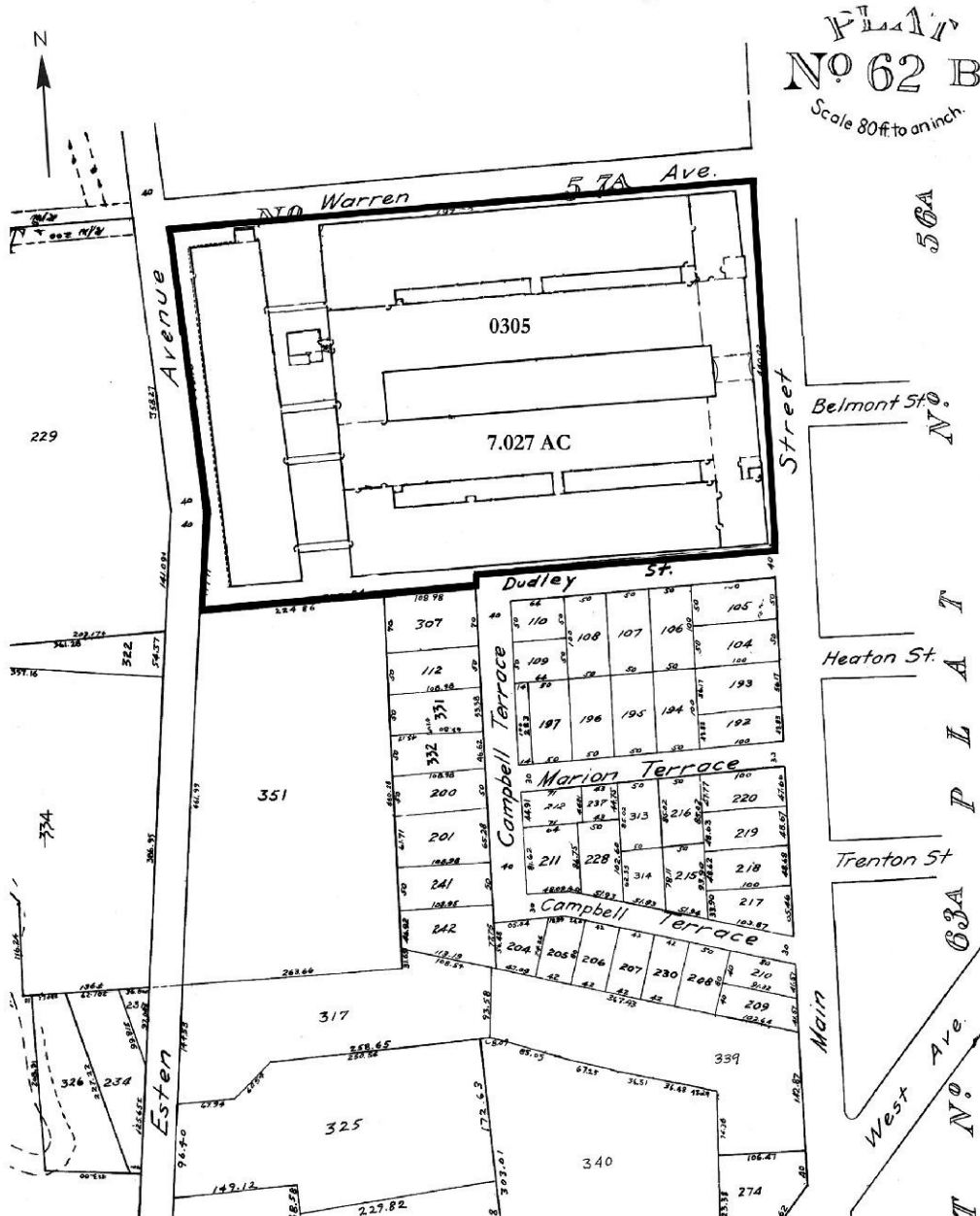
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City of Pawtucket Assessor's Map Number 62



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