

Jenckes Spinning Company Historic District  
Name of Property

Providence, Rhode Island  
County and State

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Jenckes Spinning Company Historic District

Other names/site number: E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company, Manville-Jenckes Company

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: Weeden, Barton, Pine, Lily Pond, and Conant Streets

City or town: Pawtucket State: RI County: Providence

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

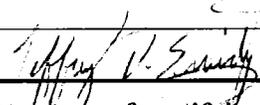
I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D

	<u>December 5, 2017</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>RI Historical Preservation &amp; Heritage Commission</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

RI Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of commenting official:**

**Date**

**Title :**

**State or Federal agency/bureauor Tribal Government**

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- \_\_\_ entered in the National Register  
\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_ removed from the National Register  
\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

#### 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.)

Building(s)

District

Site



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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>th</sup>-CENTURY INDUSTRIAL

EARLY 20<sup>th</sup>-CENTURY INDUSTRIAL

NO STYLE \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, GRANITE, CONCRETE

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Jenckes Spinning Company Historic District comprises a dense collection of seven contributing brick industrial buildings of from one to six stories occupying a large city block approximately .5 miles west of downtown Pawtucket, Rhode Island (see Building Key, Figure 13). The roughly 8-acre complex was built out by E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company and its successor, Jenckes Spinning Company, between 1883 and 1919. The two earliest Jenckes Spinning Company buildings on the site (dating from 1883) were demolished in 1915-6. Extant Jenckes buildings date from 1887 to 1919. A private, central interior alley running parallel to Conant and Barton Streets traverses much of the length of the district. Part of this alley along the rear of Building 4A (part of Lily Pond Road) is public. Although Building No. 7 (1882) was not built by the Jenckes interests, it is included because it was acquired by the company in 1920, abuts this plant, and is architecturally compatible with the Jenckes-built resources. A brick smokestack associated with the 1917 Second Boiler House and Engine Room (Building 6) is a contributing structure. Roughly 1,000' of granite paver road on Conant Street in front of Buildings 4B, 5, 5A and 5B is inventoried as a contributing structure. A 1964 brick industrial building, a 1990 warehouse and a ca. 1960 overhead walkway are non-contributing.

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*In this district the actual orientation of Barton Street, Conant Street and the center alley is northeast to southwest. For purposes of clarity this document simplifies map orientations along a north-south axis.*

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## Narrative Description

### Inventory

*All contributing buildings are of brick construction. With the exception of the sawtooth weave sheds (Buildings 4, 4A and 4B), all roofs are flat unless otherwise noted and are generally surfaced in membrane.*

### **Building 1 (constituted of Buildings 1, 1A, 1B, 1C, and 1D; 1887–1917; contributing)**

#### **Building 1**

#### **E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company Main Mill (1887)**

349 Barton Street

This is a four-story *L*-plan factory building measuring 200' by 108' overall. One wing extends north-south parallel to Barton Street; the other extends perpendicularly (roughly east-west), its southeast corner clipped to conform to the angled intersection of Weeden and Barton Streets. Rafter ends are exposed. An elevator shaft<sup>1</sup> is located in the crook of these two wings. Originally attached at its west end to the company's 1883 frame manufacturing building (demolished 1916), this building now connects to Building 1B to its north and Building 1D to its south. Although most windows have been filled with concrete block or brick and, in some cases, fit with modern horizontal inserts within the fill, several original windows survive on the east elevation fronting on Barton Street. These are paired, wood-frame, 9/9, double hung windows surmounted by a fixed, 12-light transom fitted to the contour of the segmental arch lintel. Sills are quarry-faced granite. The west (rear alley) elevation of the north-south wing also appears to have intact wood freight doors. These are also paired with a fixed 18-light sash and a transom matching that of the windows; the sills are heavy granite. A concrete loading dock and canopy occupy much of the first floor of the east wall (exposed due to the demolition of the first boiler house in 1916). Entrance to this building is through Building 2 (q.v.). Framing is slow-burning: round-section iron columns support a plank-on-timber beam flooring system.

**Function.** This building was constructed by E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company in 1887 for the manufacture of Hicks U.S. Standard Ring Travelers, steel hooks for leather belting and general mill supplies. By 1903 the company ceased the manufacture of wire goods and, reorganized as the Jenckes Spinning Company, concentrated on cotton spinning.

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<sup>1</sup> An 1897 engraving of the plant shows a wooden reservoir for an early hydraulic elevator on the roof of the shaft. See Figure 3.

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*Starting easterly at the Main Mill (Building 1), this apparently unbroken facade is actually four separate buildings combined, infilled and improved over time to create the four-story, 275'-long elevation fronting on Barton Street that is visible today. These three additional building campaigns are discussed below, in chronological order, as Buildings 1A, 1B and 1C.<sup>2</sup>*

### **Building 1A**

**E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company Dye House (1891, 1905)**  
349 Barton Street

The E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company constructed a freestanding, 2-story (plus basement), 60' by 200' building in 1891 to serve primarily as a Dye House. By 1895 this building was connected to the rear of the north elevation of Building 1 by a brick, two-story, 100' by 60' Speeder Building. A small, one-story, brick Dry House was built off the rear of the north elevation of the Speeder Building. The Dye House core and these two additions formed a "T" plan which left small undeveloped alleys perpendicular to Barton Street on either side of Building 1A (See Figure 4). By 1905 the Dye House was raised to the four stories that it presents today. The cornice is plain with a simple coping. Front elevation windows have been filled with concrete block or plywood inserts. Some have modern metal inserts. Although rear elevation windows vary in pane configuration, all show evidence of a fixed 12-light transom milled to fit the segmental arch opening surmounting multi-light sash. Some are plywood filled. All window openings have quarry-faced granite sills. A center, front elevation doorway is partially filled with concrete block and brick into which a modern metal door has been inserted. A substantial concrete loading dock is on the rear (alley-facing) elevation. Framing is slow-burning: round-section iron columns support a plank-on-timber beam flooring system.

**Function.** This building represents the first significant expansion of the E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company plant since the construction of the Main Mill (Building 1). In a departure from the manufacture of wire goods and provision of mill supplies, in 1887 E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company acquired Woonsocket Yarn Co. and Slater Stocking Company, the company's significant venture into textile manufacture. The construction of this building four years later allowed the company to manufacture colored yarns. As noted above, this building was originally 2 stories. A *Board of Trade Journal* item in January 1891 described the foundation and walls such that "one or more stories may be easily added when required."<sup>3</sup> This building housed a Dye Room and Drug Room<sup>4</sup> on the first floor with a rear Picker Room. The second floor housed "speeders," a preparatory step in yarn spinning. With the cessation of yarn manufacture ca. 1903, Building 1A was repurposed for combing and picking operations with "general manufacturing" on the upper two floors. The 1923 Sanborn drawing notes combing and pickers on the first floor, manufacturing on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floors and a Dust Room in the basement.

<sup>2</sup> A 1903 painting of the Jenckes Spinning Company plant (see Figure 5) shows much of this expansion. The Dye House (Building 1A) was raised to four stories shortly after the painting was made.

<sup>3</sup> *Board of Trade Journal* 2 (January 1891): 18.

<sup>4</sup> This room was used for the preparation and dispensing of chemical dyes.

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This latter, enclosed room was where air from the 1<sup>st</sup>-floor Picker Room was exhausted for the collection of cotton dust.

### **Building 1B**

#### **Jenckes Spinning Company Carding and Spinning Building (1903)**

Barton Street (no number)

In 1903 the short alley (40' in width) between Building 1 and Building 1A was infilled with this four-bay, four-story, 40' x 200' addition, incorporating the Speeder Building at its west end. Similar to Building 1A, the cornice is plain with a simple coping. Although most front elevation window openings are now filled with concrete block or plywood inserts, an original fourth-story window survives. This frame window comprises a pair of double-hung 9/9 sash separated by a wide mullion and surmounted by a transom molded to fit the segmental arch opening. This fixed transom comprises two 6-light sections, also separated by a wide mullion. Sills are quarry-faced granite. A front-elevation street-level freight door opening is now bricked in. Of the four bays of the rear-elevation, one bay provides four stories of loading doors. Framing is slow-burning: a mix of round-section iron and wooden columns support a plank-on-timber beam flooring system.

**Function.** The 1916 Sanborn Map notes that the first floor housed carding machinery; the second floor, mule spinning; the third floor, ring spinning; the fourth floor, winding and reeling. In 1923 the first floor housed carding; the second, speeders; the third, ring spinning; the fourth floor, winding and reeling.

### **Building 1C**

#### **Jenckes Spinning Company Picker and Carding Rooms (1915)**

345 Barton Street

In 1915 the Jenckes Spinning Company built this four-story, pier-and-spandrel, 110' by 200' building to the north of and attached to Building 1A. Similar to Buildings 1A and 1B, the cornice is plain with a simple coping. This 9-bay by 19-bay building has the best complement of original wood, segmental arch windows in the complex. On the Barton Street (front) elevation, the original pattern is obscured on many windows by the insertion of a protective 2"x4" frame holding storm windows in front of the sash. Other front elevation window openings are plywood-filled. The storm frame also contains a plywood panel to fill the underside of the segmental arch. Visual evidence, however, indicates that many original front-elevation windows survive. On the side alley-facing (north) elevation and the rear elevation there are no storm inserts: most window openings contain original, paired, 18-light sash (these may pivot) with a fixed, 12-light transom milled to fit the underside of the segmental arch. Sills are quarry-faced granite. On the front elevation, modern metal doors are installed in original recessed doorways. On the rear elevation two angled-plank wood freight doors appear to be original. There are also two rear modern freight entrances. Framing is slow-burning: round-section wood columns support a plank-on-timber beam flooring system.

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**Function.** The 1916 and 1923 Sanborn drawings note that this building housed picking and carding operations on the first floor and unspecified manufacturing above.

### **Building 1D**

#### **Jenckes Spinning Company South Extension of Main Mill (1917)** 173 Weeden Street

Attached to the south wall of Building 1 and the north wall of Building 6, this is a four-story building generally of rectangular plan with a clipped, three-bay southeast corner conforming to the alignment of Weeden Street. Overall dimensions are 125' by 75'. Despite being built thirty years after Building 1, its general architectural elements match those of its 1887 neighbor. The cornice is molded frame with rafter ends exposed. All front elevation windows are concrete-block filled; some have a small rectangular modern aluminum window insert. Rear elevation windows are mixed: the predominant form is wood, paired, double-hung, 9/9 sash with a 12-light fixed transom milled to fit the segmental arch. A street-level tunnel through the ground floor of this building provides vehicle and pedestrian access from Weeden Street to the private interior alley. Three stories rise above this tunnel. A frame door with nine lights provides access from the alley. Two altered rear openings contain modern metal doors. Framing is slow-burning: a mix of round-section wooden columns and built-up steel *I*-beams support a plank-on-timber floor system.

**Function.** Although its function within the Jenckes Spinning operation is unknown, at the time of its 1917 construction, it likely shared the storage, carding and spinning functions of the Main Mill.

### **Building 2 (constituted of Buildings 2 and 2A; 1887–1917; contributing)**

#### **Building 2**

##### **E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company Turbine/Engine Room (1887)** 173 Weeden Street

Extending from the east wall of Building 1D, and slightly overlapping onto Building 1, this is a single-story building of irregular plan (60' by 37' overall) presenting six bays along Weeden Street. The cornice is corbeled with a wood molding and a modern sheet metal coping. Most original segmental arch windows have been replaced with single-light modern inserts; some are filled with concrete block. Five smaller windows appear to have been cut into the north elevation wall formerly shared with the first boiler house. An original freight door opening has been partially bricked in to accept a modern aluminum door frame with a flat panel surround. A steel lintel and brick infill mark the width of the original opening. Sills are quarry-faced granite on the front (east) elevation and rowlock-course brick on the north elevation. Due to lack of access, the interior framing method is not known.

**Function.** The Boiler House built in 1887 for Building 1 (demolished by 1949) occupied the present loading and parking area between Building 2 and Building 1. Building 2 (the Engine

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Room), housing a 450 HP and a 250 HP steam engine, was attached to the boiler house (which contained six boilers), with a steam line feeding its engines. The Engine Room provided mechanical power to the shafting of Building 1. By 1902 it also housed a dynamo for generation of DC current. By 1923 it housed one or more steam turbines likely coupled to alternators.

### **Building 2A**

#### **Jenckes Spinning Company Transformer Room (1917)**

173 Weeden Street

Attached to and associated historically with the function of Building 2, this Transformer Room is a single-story, 20' by 30' brick room built ca. 1917. This single-story building extends easterly from Building 1D. This building was associated with the electrical generation occurring in Building 2. The corbeled cornice matches that of Building 2. All windows are plywood filled except for a double-hung 1/1 window on the west elevation. On the east wall of an enclosed walkway between Buildings 2 and 2A are six small, metal-frame windows. A metal east-elevation door in a segmental arch opening is inoperable. Due to lack of access, the interior framing method is not known.

**Function.** This Transformer Room served in the generation and transmission of electrical service within the plant.

### **Building 3 (1903 et seq.; contributing)**

#### **Jenckes Knitting Machine Company Building**

335 Barton Street

This freestanding, three-story building measures 200' by 60', presenting 7 bays along the façade and 28 bays to the rear. The roof is a shallow-pitched gable; the plain cornice matches that of Buildings 1A, 1B and 1C. On the side elevations, steel, circular tie rod plates with a central star pattern occur at the location of interior floor beams. By 1916, the building had been raised from two stories to its current height of three stories. Circa 1916, a 100' by 42', north-south addition was made at the rear of the building. This addition blocked a part of the interior road that formerly traversed the length of the complex. Along the alley on the west elevation are found two sets of angled-plank paired freight doors in original condition. Although many window openings are plywood filled, numerous original windows survive. These are of wood construction with a movable lower sash of twenty lights surmounted by a fixed transom of ten lights. The front entrance is a narrow doorway in the center bay; the door and its surround are of relatively recent construction. For lack of access, the interior framing method is unknown, though the tie rod plates indicate heavy timber floor framing.

**Function.** Shortly after the January 1903 reorganization that created the Jenckes Spinning Company and the Jenckes Knitting Machine Company, a frame cotton shed at the east end of the property was demolished to make room for this two-story brick factory building. By 1916 it was raised to three stories. At that time, the Jenckes Knitting Machine Company used the basement

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for a Wash and Stock Room and the second floor for a Machine Shop. Jenckes Spinning Company used the first floor for beaming and the third floor for a drafting office and manufacturing operations.<sup>5</sup> This division of operations was essentially unchanged in 1923.

**Building 4 (constituted of Buildings 4, 4A, and 4B; 1909–1915; contributing)**

**Building 4**

**Jenckes Spinning Company First Weave Shed (1909)**

Dwight Seabury, architect

327 Barton Street

This is a two-story, pier-and-spandrel, sawtooth-roofed weave shed built for silk and cotton cloth production. As built, it was nearly square in plan, measuring 160'x 200'. Each sawtooth unit has a molded frame cornice and rises above two segmental arch window bays. On the south elevation, rafter ends extend to a molded frame cornice. All regular window openings (as opposed to sawtooth) are brick-filled or a combination of brick fill with modern metal windows inserted, some at street level, some above. Street-level window openings, occupying the full width of the bay between piers, measure 7'-wide by 9'-high. Second-story windows measure 7'-wide by 3'-high. Sills are quarry-faced granite. Although no historical photographs have been located to show original windows, it is likely that the windows discussed below (Building 4B, q.v.) match those of this first weave shed. Because of the ample light entering through the sawtooth roof, second floor window openings (also brick filled) are significantly smaller than those at ground level. Each sawtooth section has an oculus in a brick opening. While these oculi are brick-filled along the full length of the Barton Street elevation, Building 4B (q.v.) presents several intact wood frame, 6-light, fixed, round sash that may match those that were original to this building. For lack of access, the interior framing method is unknown.

**Function.** The 1916 Sanborn drawing notes cotton storage on the first floor and weaving on the second. By 1923 it also housed weaving and warping operations.

**Building 4A**

**Jenckes Spinning Company Second Weave Shed (1915)**

329 Barton Street

Jenckes Spinning Company built this two-story, pier-and-spandrel, 260' by 200' Second Weave Shed as part of the mid-teens expansion of its tire fabric manufacturing capacity. Similar to Building 4, each sawtooth has a molded frame cornice. On the north elevation there is a plain granite coping. The fenestration pattern of this building differs from that of the First Weave Shed (Building 4): in Building 4A, each sawtooth section rises above three narrower window bays measuring 6'-wide by 9'-high at the ground level and 6'-wide by 3'-high above. Street-level window openings are filled with concrete block; second story windows are also filled but have

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<sup>5</sup> The Jenckes Knitting Machine Company moved to the former Easton and Burnham Machine Company building (Building 7, q.v.) on Weeden Street in 1928. Dropping the reference to knitting machines, they were renamed the Jenckes Machine Company in 1958.

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modern aluminum window inserts. A rear concrete freight dock opens onto Lily Pond Street. Framing is slow-burning: round-section steel columns support built-up steel beams supporting a plank floor.

**Function:** In 1916 the first floor was used for cotton storage, the second floor for weaving. By 1923 it served solely for weaving.

### **Building 4B**

**Jenckes Spinning Company Third Weave Shed (1915)**  
225 Conant Street

In 1915 Jenckes Spinning Company erected a two-story, pier-and-spandrel, *L*-plan weave shed to the west of Building 4 and fronting on Conant Street. It measures 250' by 140' overall. Each sawtooth section has a molded frame cornice. On the north elevation, rafter ends extend to a molded frame cornice. Although most original windows have been replaced with modern metal units (these are paired, sliding single lights below with an insert to suggest divided lights and a fixed 16-light transom above), many original windows survive. Similar to Building 4, each sawtooth rises above two windows. Ground-floor openings are 6'-wide by 9'-high; second floor openings are roughly 6'-square. Original wood-frame windows are paired with two 15-light lower sash and a fixed 10-light transom above. The transom is rectangular with a fill panel above to fit the underside of the segmental arch opening. As noted above, although dimensions differ, it is likely that the paired sash with fixed transom represent the original window design of Buildings 4 and 4A.<sup>6</sup> The 1916 Sanborn map shows a wood-frame south wall on this addition. This was a temporary measure, as the construction of Building 5B (1919, q.v.), when completed, extended to this wall. Framing is slow burning: steel I-beam columns support steel floor beams that support concrete floors.

**Function.** The 1916 Sanborn drawing notes the use of this building solely as a "cloth room."<sup>7</sup> By 1923 it continued to house this function on the first floor, with weaving on the second floor and twisting in the basement.

### **Building 5 (constituted of Buildings 5 and 5A; 1916–1919; contributing)**

#### **Building 5**

**Tamarack Mill (1916-17)**  
179 Conant Street

This is a 4-story, pier-and-spandrel building on a concrete foundation. It measures 370' in 40 bays along Conant Street by 172'. Segmental-arch windows occupy the entire space between piers. Piers are edged with rounded-corner brick. At the top of these piers are two courses of

<sup>6</sup> See Figure 10. Although this ca. 1930 illustration of the Manville-Jenckes plant is imprecise in a number of areas, it shows paired windows on both floors on the Barton Street elevation of Building 4.

<sup>7</sup> Among the various functions of the cloth room is inspection of woven cloth. Diffused light admitted through a north-facing sawtooth roof permitted close inspection of the cloth.

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granite separated by a diamond-shaped ornament. The brick cornice is corbeled with a quarry-faced granite coping. Throughout the building the segmental arches are unornamented except for the two bays providing street-level entry. In these bays, a granite keystone is set in each segmental arch. Above the main entryway is an opposing-angle brick pattern framed by headers (this treatment is replicated in Buildings 5A and 5B). Five granite steps lead to recessed doorways. These doorways are now partially brick-filled or fitted with an aluminum and glass modern metal doors. Two date stones are set at the cornice inscribed *1917*.

Although windows are predominantly filled with concrete block (wholly so on the rear elevation), some original windows are found on the Conant Street elevation. These are paired, 12-light, wood-frame windows with 6-light fixed transoms (not milled to fit the segmental arch). Framing is slow-burning: round-section wooden columns support a plank-on-timber beam flooring system. In the entrance bay near the center of the facade, a single window with a 16-light wood sash under an eight-light transom fills each opening.

**Function.** Originally built to house 53,000 spindles for manufacture of cotton yarn for tire fabric. By 1921 the spindle count was doubled to 107,000; it also housed 200 looms. The basement provided a dust room where cotton dust was exhausted from upper stories.

### **Building 5A**

#### **Tamarack Waste and Store House (1916)**

179 Conant Street

This is a four- and six-story, pier-and-spandrel building measuring 76' by 172' (9 bays along the front by 16 bays to the rear). It is attached to the Tamarack Mill (Building 5) to its north and to the Second Boiler House and Engine Room (Building 6) to its east. This is a complex structure: The front half of the building presents six stories; the rear, four. The first four stories of the front section are of low ceiling height (approximately 9')<sup>8</sup>; the two upper stories are 16' in height. The rear half of the building is four uniform stories of 16' ceiling height. The cornice is corbeled with a quarry-faced granite coping; piers are edged with rounded-corner brick. Segmental arch window openings occupy the full width between piers. Windows are either plywood or concrete-block filled, most with cutouts for modern metal horizontal window inserts. Segmental arches over the windows of the northernmost (entrance) bay have a granite keystone. The sole front entrance is a modern metal doorway; this entrance bay is surmounted by a raised decorative brick panel with a diamond-shaped granite insert. At the cornice of this bay is a panel inscribed *1916*. The bricks within this panel are angled. Each pier is topped at the cornice by a granite band and a repetition of the diamond pattern. Framing is slow-burning: round-section steel columns support a plank-on-timber beam flooring system.

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<sup>8</sup> The combination of low and normal factory ceiling height in this building appears to be a rarity addressing specific production requirements and not a typical method of constructing a waste/store house. In contrast, the 1890 cotton store house at Royal Mill (NR-listed, 2004), in West Warwick, R.I. presents four unvarying, low-ceilinged floors.

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**Function.** This building housed the handling of cotton waste and storage.

### **Building 5B**

#### **Tamarack Mill Extension (1919)**

217 Conant Street

This is a 5-story pier-and-spandrel building measuring 100' along Conant Street by 200' to the rear. It is attached to Building 5 to the south and Building 4B to the north. Segmental arch window openings occupy the full space between piers. Matching Buildings 5 and 5A, the cornice is corbeled with a quarry-faced granite coping; piers are edged with rounded-corner brick. All window openings are concrete-block filled with modern aluminum window inserts. The second floor of both the front and rear elevations shows no evidence of segmental arch window openings. On this floor only, the concrete-block-filled area is fully rectangular. Framing is slow-burning: round-section wooden columns support a plank-on-timber beam flooring system.

**Function.** The 1923 Sanborn drawing notes that this building housed a cloth room on the first floor, weaving on the second, weaving and spooling on the third, and twisting on the fourth.

### **Building 6 (1917; contributing)**

#### **Jenckes Spinning Company Second Boiler House and Engine Room**

173 Weeden Street

Attached to Buildings 1D on the north and 5A on the west, this is a 2-story pier-and-spandrel building on a high brick foundation comprising a Boiler House and attached Engine Room. Sited near the angled intersection of Weeden and Conant Streets, this roughly triangular building measures 72' by 110' overall. The Boiler House held five boilers to meet the electrical power and heating needs of Buildings 5, 5A and 5B. Granite trim includes a wide beltcourse integrating the sills of the windows, a keystone in the window arches, inset square spring blocks at the window arches, a tapered cap at the top of the piers, and a plain coping above the cornice. Window openings are high with a hemispheric arch; although most are now obscured from the outside behind fiberglass storm panels, one south-facing window has no screen. From the interior, these steel-frame windows are generally intact. Horizontally, the windows are divided into three sections separated by a wide mullion. Vertically, they are arranged in three tiers: an upper fixed tier set in the hemispheric arch, a middle tier that can contain either windows or paired, angled-plank freight doors, and a lower window tier. At the center alley (north) elevation, ground-level freight doors are paired, angled-plank with two lights and heavy steel strap hinges. Boiler House framing: built-up steel *I*-columns set on a concrete pad support rolled steel *I*-beams, which, in turn support a slow-burning plank floor. Engine Room framing: same as above, except columns are concrete. Within this building are four functioning mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century boilers.

**Function.** By the time Jenckes Spinning Company built the neighboring Tamarack Mill (Buildings 5, 5A and 5B) in 1916-17, power was furnished to the mill's machinery for direct electric drive. Although no generating equipment survives, the general layout of the Boiler

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House and Engine Room indicates that steam from the adjoining Boiler Room was admitted to the engines in the Engine House; these, in turn, powered alternators which fed electricity through the wiring grid of the plant.<sup>9</sup>

**Building 7 (1882, contributing)**

**Easton and Burnham Machine Company/Jenckes Cafeteria**

180 and 200 Weeden Street

This is a 3-story building measuring 42' by 183' (25 bays along Weeden Street and four bays on the ends). The rear (east) elevation is dominated by one-story leading docks facing the adjacent railroad tracks and open to the north. A molded wood cornice surmounts brick corbeling. Windows are set in segmental arch openings. Although plywood-filled along the ground level of the Weeden Street elevation, a nearly full complement of original, wood, 12/12, double-hung windows survive elsewhere on the building. The upper sash conforms to the underside of the segmental arch. Sills are rough granite. A Eureka Heating Boiler (no longer in use), made by the Wholey Boiler Works of Providence survives on the ground floor.<sup>10</sup> A wooden sign in poor condition with "Jenckes Machine Company" in gold lettering on a black field is mounted on the north exterior wall. This sign likely dates to ca. 1957 when the Jenckes Knitting Machine Company dropped the reference to knitting in their corporate name and began specialized machining. Framing is slow-burning: square-section timber columns support a plank-on-timber beam floor system. Some rolled *I*-beams on the ground floor supplement timber floor beams for heavy industrial use.

**Function.** Easton and Burnham Company (established 1849) erected this building in 1882, a year before the E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company purchased land across Weeden Street. Easton and Burnham had a long-established business relationship with the Fales and Jenks Machine Works, furnishing spindles for their spinning frames. The company remained at this location until 1913 when they built a new plant (now demolished) at Lily Pond, Conant and Pine Streets near the northwest corner of the Jenckes Spinning Company plant. The building remained vacant for a few years and was reopened in 1920 as the Jenckes Cafeteria (see *Significance* section). Food was prepared and stored on the first two floors; the third was outfitted as a cafeteria. Jenckes closed the cafeteria in 1926. Two years later the Jenckes Knitting Machine Company relocated to this building from their original 335 Barton Street location (Building 3). Jenckes Machine Company occupied the plant until 2011.

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<sup>9</sup> It should be noted that the labeling of this *Engine Room* on the 1923 Sanborn (Figure 9) may have been a carryover from earlier drawings. By 1923 the original 1887 Boiler and Engine House powering the Main Mill (demolished by 1949) had an adjoining Turbine/Engine Room and Transformer Room (see Buildings 2 and 2A) and appears to have served for electrical generation through the use of a steam turbine system.

<sup>10</sup> Because the Wholey Boiler Works was not established until 1896, this would appear to be the second boiler installed in the Easton and Burnham building.

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### **Contributing structures**

**Chimney** (associated with Second Boiler House and Engine Room, 1917)  
In alley, near north wall of Building 6.

This is an approximately 90'-high, buff brick chimney with a base diameter of approximately 14 feet. Sometime after 1937, New England Paper Tube Company painted their corporate name on the structure.

**Granite paver road** (between 1890 and 1895)  
Conant Street

An approximately 1,100' section of Conant Street is surfaced with rectangular 4" x 9" granite pavers. This roadway, passing in front of Buildings 5, 5A, 5B and 4B, is 25'-wide and bound by granite curbing. Laid out between 1890 and 1895, it is likely that the street was paved by the neighboring Conant Thread Company.

### **Non-contributing buildings**

**Schofield Printing** (1964, non-contributing)  
211 Weeden Street

This is a mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century single story, flat-roofed, brick and concrete block building, its main volume measuring 95' by 108' with a small office fronting on Weeden Street. This building now serves as the office of Schofield Printing, which also occupies part of Building 5A.

**Warehouse**  
180 Weeden Street (1990, non-contributing)

Sharing a parcel with Building 7, this is a 134' by 30', 4-bay, single-story, metal-sheathed garage on a concrete foundation.

### **Non-contributing structure**

**Enclosed overhead walkway** (between 1952 and 1962)

Extending across the center alley between Buildings 5 and 1C, this is a steel frame structure with metal siding.

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## 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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY

ARCHITECTURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1887-1937

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1887, 1903, 1923, 1933

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Dwight Seabury (First Weave Shed, 1909) Wilmarth and McKillop, contractors.

Various

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Jenckes Spinning Company Historic District is significant under **Criterion A** on the local level for its association with Pawtucket, Rhode Island's, role in American textile industrialization in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Edwin Jenckes purchased manufacturing and sales rights to the "Hicks Standard Patent U.S. Ring Traveler" in 1883 and relocated in the same year to the site that is the subject of this nomination. There, Jenckes expanded the sales of mill supplies and ventured into cotton spinning. On that basis, Jenckes incorporated as the Jenckes Spinning Company in 1903, massively expanded the spinning of cotton yarn, and began large-scale weaving. Shortly after Jenckes' death in 1910, the successor leadership of his company initiated a new venture, the manufacture of "tire fabric," a coarse, strong cotton duck material that was embedded in liquid rubber before vulcanization. In the decade from 1910 to 1920, Jenckes would become a leading global supplier of cotton yarn and tire fabric and the largest employer in Pawtucket. The Jenckes Spinning Company and its successor, the Manville-Jenckes Corporation, occupied and developed this site until production ceased in 1933.

The complement of buildings of the Jenckes Spinning Company Historic District are also significant under **Criterion C** as a fine example of the evolution of the architecture of large-scale cotton spinning and weaving in the period from 1882 to 1919.

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### **Narrative Statement of Significance**

In the early years of water powered cotton spinning following Samuel Slater's innovations in the 1790s in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, spinning frames manufactured locally for specific entrepreneurial ventures were based on British designs. These included the throstle frame, spinning jenny, and the mule. Common to these early spinning machines was the use of "flyer arms" to insert a twist in the yarn as well as to wind it onto a bobbin for later weaving. A major improvement to the spinning process was devised by Providence- and Pawtucket-based machinist John Thorp (1764-1848) who received patents in 1828 and 1844<sup>11</sup> for a new process called "ring spinning" that eliminated the often unwieldy flyer arms of the earlier machines and replaced them, in the words of the patent, with a "whirling or rotary ring and a revolving hook" (Figure 1).

Robert Grieve, writing some fifty years later in *The Cotton Centennial*, described both inventor and invention:

John Thorp, of Providence, Rhode Island, a very ingenious mechanic, invented this improvement, which consisted of a thin piece of flat steel wire bent like the letter C that "traveled" on the upper

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<sup>11</sup> See U.S. Patent 5322, *Spinning Machine Called Ring Groove Spinner*, Dec. 31, 1828; and Patent 3766, *Whirling and Rotary Ring and Revolving Hook Spinner and Twister*, September 27, 1844.

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surface of a highly-polished metal ring. This ring encircled the spindle, and by the action of the mechanism, was moved up and down the whole extent of the bobbin, by this means the yarn being wound thereon.<sup>12</sup>

Although Thorp's invention would revolutionize spinning technology and come to be universally adopted later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the textile industry was slow to embrace the new technology, in part because of difficulties in the precise and standardized manufacture of the small but critical "revolving hook" that guided the newly-spun thread onto a bobbin. This C-shaped hook, moving in a recessed groove on the spinning ring, came to be known as a "ring traveler." Understanding the benefits of ring spinning, machinists soon developed variations on the design of the rings themselves, but uniformity in the size, shape, temper and finish<sup>13</sup> of the critical ring traveler bedeviled early adopters of ring spinning.

Nathan Place Hicks (1824-1885) came to work for the Chase family's cotton spinning operation (incorporated in 1855 as the Valley Falls Company) in Valley Falls, Rhode Island, as a teenager ca. 1842. Advancing through the ranks, he was, by the 1850s, overseer of the company's spinning room. In that capacity he observed the frequent slowdowns and difficulties caused by the variation in the quality of ring travelers noted above. In 1854, he began manufacturing his own ring travelers at the Valley Falls Company and, according to some histories, hardening them at home after hours over his cooking stove.<sup>14</sup>

By 1860, Hicks left the Valley Falls Company, setting up Nathan P. Hicks and Company in downtown Providence for the manufacture of "Hicks United States Standard Ring Travelers."<sup>15</sup> Working with various partners at a few different city locations, he established a commercial market for his ring travelers and spinning rings as well. In 1867, along with partners John J. Sprague and Henry Shaw, Hicks executed a five-year lease to occupy the second floor and attic of the Old Slater Mill in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, with the option to build a brick annealing house along the banks of the Blackstone River.<sup>16</sup>

Despite the recognized mechanical benefits of his improved ring traveler, by 1870 Hicks found it necessary to end the partnership and act as manufacturing agent for Pawtucket merchant, banker, and political figure Olney Arnold (1822-1900). The 1870 Federal Census shows a substantial

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<sup>12</sup> Robert Grieve, *The Cotton Centennial* (1891), p. 37.

<sup>13</sup> These four areas of imprecision were noted in an article on Nathan P. Hicks' manufacturing operation in *Webb's Statistical Gazetteer* (1869), p. 428-9.

<sup>14</sup> Although this anecdote also appeared in different historical accounts over the years, likely the earliest account of Hicks' evening work of hardening ring travelers is found in *Webb's Statistical Gazetteer* (1869).

<sup>15</sup> Hicks sought and received trademark protection for this term, but he did not patent his improvements in ring traveler manufacture.

<sup>16</sup> North Providence Land Evidence Book 42: 54 (on file, Pawtucket City Hall). By 1867 the Old Slater Mill was owned by Francis Pratt and Job Spencer, who had purchased the mill two years earlier. It is worth noting that John Thorp had perfected and manufactured the components of ring spinning at Old Slater Mill a generation earlier in the 1830s.

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expansion of the operation at Old Slater Mill under Arnold and Hicks. The operation, capitalized at \$18,300 and employing seven men, four women and eight children, was, by that time, producing ring travelers, belt hooks, and braided, narrow-fabric banding.<sup>17</sup>

Although the circumstances are unknown, by 1871 Hicks and Arnold appear to have gone their separate ways and the Hicks operation found itself in financial difficulty. He was approached at the end of the five-year Old Slater Mill lease by Edwin Jenckes, a Walpole, Massachusetts, textile manufacturer, with an offer. Jenckes would provide needed capital and financial stability and Hicks would be retained as manufacturing agent under the name E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company. Jenckes and his son Joseph had already established themselves in Pawtucket as textile mill suppliers at a nearby Mill Street<sup>18</sup> location. The new company would manufacture and market Hicks' U.S. Standard Ring Traveler as its flagship item and continue to furnish mill supplies.<sup>19</sup>

The company weathered the economic difficulties of the Panic of 1873; by 1879 both operations had been consolidated at a new location on East Avenue, Pawtucket. A year later, the U.S. Census noted substantial expansion. In that year, E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company, now capitalized at \$50,000, sold \$150,000 worth of goods and employed twenty men, six women, and twenty-four children.<sup>20</sup> Although E. Jenckes retained the license to manufacture and market Hicks' U. S. Standard Ring Travelers, his association with Nathan P. Hicks ended in 1882.

An apparent dissolution of the decade-long Hicks-Jenckes business association can be seen in a May 1882 corporate charter for Hicks Manufacturing Company.<sup>21</sup> Nathan Hicks and four partners, independent of Edwin Jenckes, received this charter to carry on the "manufacture of cotton yarns and supplies for cotton and woolen manufacture." Conspicuously absent from the language of the charter is any mention of Hicks U.S. Standard Ring Travelers. Hicks had purchased the former Greene Mill in Pawtucket in late 1883 and commenced the new operation shortly after. He died in 1885, and the assets of Hicks Manufacturing Company were sold at public auction in September 1888.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> United States Census for 1870, *Products of Industry* manuscript schedule. Belt hooks are the small, hardened-steel hooks inserted at each end of leather machine belting to make a continuous loop. The hooks at each end mate in such a way as to create a void for insertion of a steel pin to hold the belt together. Similar in size and manufacture to ring travelers, this was a related area for expansion of Hicks' product line.

<sup>18</sup> Since renamed Roosevelt Avenue.

<sup>19</sup> Before their association with Hicks, the Jenckes had established a specialty in the manufacture of "bright and mill wire goods." In that sense, their expertise in metalworking fit well with the demands of ring traveler manufacture.

<sup>20</sup> United States Census for 1880, *Products of Industry* manuscript schedule.

<sup>21</sup> "An Act to Incorporate the Hicks Manufacturing Company." *Acts and Resolves of the Rhode Island General Assembly* (May Session, 1885), p. 35.

<sup>22</sup> Pawtucket Land Evidence Book 25: 453 (10 December 1883). *Notice of Public Auction*, 29 September 1888.

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Three years after Hicks established the 1882 corporation, Edwin Jenckes sought an amendment to the original Hicks Manufacturing Company General Assembly charter. This amendment changed the corporate name to “E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company” and increased the original capitalization to \$200,000.<sup>23</sup>

In 1883 the E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company purchased<sup>24</sup> an undeveloped 4.5-acre lot along Weeden Street northwest of downtown Pawtucket described in a *Providence Journal of Commerce* item as “a wilderness of brush and sand.”<sup>25</sup> This land, abutting the tracks of the Boston & Providence Railroad, would allow for major expansion of the Jenckes operation. The first manufacturing building was 3-stories tall, 200’ by 50’ and of frame construction with an attached boiler and engine house<sup>26</sup> and a 1-story storehouse and waste house. In the same year, E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company published an *Illustrated Price List* and catalog of a wide selection of textile manufacturers’ supplies as well as detailed tables of rings and travelers tailored for a diverse range of spinning frames (Figure 2).

The company expanded rapidly in the new location. In 1887, four years after the construction of the first (frame) mill, Jenckes erected an L-plan, 4-story brick factory building (Building 1) that came to be known as the “Main Mill” (Figure 3). This construction included a steam plant (demolished by 1949) and a surviving Turbine/Engine Room (Building 2). In the same year, the company purchased the Woonsocket Yarn Co. and Slater Stocking Company, Jenckes’ first major venture into textile manufacture. Following a development pattern that would continue into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, in 1890 the company purchased additional land east of the Main Mill along what is now Barton Street. In 1891 the company erected a brick, two-story Dye House and Picker Room (Building 1A). A contemporary article noted that the structure was designed strong enough to permit the addition of upper stories when needed. Jenckes advertised the manufacture of colored yarns at the Pawtucket plant the following year. By 1905 this building had been raised to four stories to match the height of the Main Mill. The alley between the Main Mill and the Dye House was infilled to Barton Street by 1903 (Building 1B). This infill and new construction created much of the continuous four-story façade extending easterly from the Main Mill that is visible today (See Figures 5 and 10).

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<sup>23</sup> “An Act in Amendment of ‘An Act to Incorporate the Hicks Manufacturing Company.’” *Acts and Resolves of the Rhode Island General Assembly* (May Session, 1885), p. 15. This charter, made after Hicks’ death, replaced his original corporate partners with Edwin Jenckes, Joseph E. Jenckes, Stephen A. Jenckes and Pawtucket industrialist Edmond Orswell.

<sup>24</sup> Pawtucket Land Evidence Book 32: 364. See also, “E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company.” *Providence Journal of Commerce* 5 (June 1897): 157. Nine months after the initial purchase, Jenckes purchased an additional 36 lots from the Edwin Darling Plat (32:555). The latter transaction did not specify acreage.

<sup>25</sup> “E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company.” *Providence Journal of Commerce* 5 (June 1897): 157. The characterization of this land as “wilderness” was overstated. The Conant Thread Works and the Fales and Jenks Machine Shop occupied land just northwest of Jenckes’ undeveloped parcel. The machine shop of Easton and Burnham Company also occupied a 3-story brick building (Building 7, 1882) to the immediate east.

<sup>26</sup> This building, demolished in 1917, was located near the present-day intersection of Weeden and Conant Streets.

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When Edwin Jenckes died in 1895, control of the company passed to his son Joseph. By 1903 the E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company had ceased manufacture of ring travelers, wire goods and the provision of mill supplies in favor of cotton yarn spinning. In January of that year the company was dissolved and two new corporations established: Jenckes Spinning Company would expand cotton yarn spinning and the Jenckes Knitting Machine Company, a subordinate operation, would manufacture the “Invincible Knitting Machine.”<sup>27</sup> Demonstrating the close affiliation of the two new companies, shortly after the formation of the new corporations the Jenckes interests erected Building 3 (Figure 6), a three-story freestanding structure sited at the then-undeveloped north end of the mill property. The Jenckes Knitting Machine Company would occupy the basement and the second floor; the Jenckes Spinning Company, the first and third floors.

In October 1908, the Jenckes Spinning Company sponsored a Rhode Island General Assembly act to incorporate a subsidiary, the Tamarack Company, “for the purpose of engaging in the business of manufacturing, weaving, buying and selling silk, cotton, worsted cloth or any article of textile manufacture.”<sup>28</sup> While casting a wide net in terms of potential product, the company settled in to the work of cotton and silk weaving, Jenckes Spinning Company’s first efforts in that field. In the same year, the Tamarack Company set up forty looms within the existing Jenckes plant. By April of 1909, ground was broken along Barton Street for a 200’ x 160’ two-story sawtooth-roofed First Weave Shed (Building 4) north of the Jenckes Knitting Machine Company building.<sup>29</sup> Dwight Seabury was the architect, Wilmarth, McKillop general contractor. This building, costing \$30,000, would house 100 looms, with the first floor for cotton weaving and the second floor for silk.

### **Tire Fabric**

Joseph Jenckes died in January 1910.<sup>30</sup> Shortly after, control of the Jenckes Spinning Company passed to the owners of neighboring Fales and Jenks<sup>31</sup> Machine Works, well-established manufacturers of looms and spinning frames. Stephen Jenks and Le Roy Fales became, respectively, the president and vice president of the Jenckes Spinning Company. Under the new direction, Fales and Jenks gambled on a decisive departure from the established Jenckes product line. A directory ad published at the time announced the manufacture of yarns made from “Peeler Egyptian and [Georgia and Florida] Sea Island cotton,” both types known for their long staple

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<sup>27</sup> Acts of Incorporation, General Assembly, January session 1903.

<sup>28</sup> Rhode Island General Assembly, *Certificates of Incorporation*, Volume III (Feb. 1907 to Jan. 1911), p. 230. The Tamarack Mill No. 1 was located elsewhere in Pawtucket. When Jenckes Spinning Company planned Buildings 5, 5A and 5B in 1915-6, the three buildings were called, collectively, Tamarack Mill No. 2. For the purpose of this document, these buildings are simply called the Tamarack Mill.

<sup>29</sup> “Mill News.” *Textile World-Record* 37 (April 1909): 150.

<sup>30</sup> “Obituary of Joseph Jenckes.” *American Wool and Cotton Reporter* (13 Jan. 1910.): 52.

<sup>31</sup> Despite the similarity in spelling there is no recent genealogical connection between the two families.

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and resultant strength and recognized as the highest grade of cotton available. Looking back on the period from 1905 to 1920, an observer of the cotton market wrote:

When the automobile industry began to make such strides in production and the demand for pneumatic tires began to grow, Sea Island cotton found a new customer. During the last fifteen years I should say that the pneumatic tire industry had consumed on the average of from 75 to 90% of the Sea Island cotton crop.<sup>32</sup>

In June 1911, an item in the *Board of Trade Journal*<sup>33</sup> made mention of the company's venture into the manufacture of "tire fabric," a coarse, strong cotton duck<sup>34</sup> material embedded in liquid rubber before vulcanization (Figure 12). Automobile tires up to that time wore quickly, were unstable, and tended to distort in shape, especially when turning. To address these inadequacies, B.F. Goodrich began producing tires with this embedded fabric in 1906. The insertion of what came to be known as "tire fabric" added more stability and better resistance to wear, especially when treads (introduced ca. 1905) were added to the tire profile, all innovations of this early period of automobile and pneumatic tire design.

Jenckes Spinning Company's entry into the tire fabric market made sense. American automobile registration would rise from fewer than a half million units in 1910 to 9.2 million in 1920.<sup>35</sup> In 1917 alone, the U.S. tire industry produced some 25 million tires. In the decade from 1910 to 1920, Jenckes would become one of the world's main suppliers of cotton yarn and tire fabric. In the same period, employment at the growing Pawtucket plant soared from 588 to 3,600 operatives. The plant operated more than two thousand looms by 1921.

In 1914-17 Jenckes more than tripled the size of the 1909 First Weave Shed on Barton Street and to the rear at Lily Pond and Conant Streets (Buildings 4A and 4B). At the same time, the company built a new Picker and Carding Building (Building 1C) and a final southern extension of the Main Mill along Weeden Street (Building 1D).

A year later, the company broke ground for a massive expansion of their tire fabric spinning and weaving capacity (Figure 8). Built in phases between 1916 and 1919, the Tamarack Mill (Buildings 5, 5A and 5B) rose four to six stories, extending some 640' along Conant Street. This expansion was due in no small measure to a five-year, fixed-profit arrangement made in 1915 between Jenckes Spinning Company and the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company to supply both yarn and fabric for their tire production.<sup>36</sup> At that time the company also demolished the original 1883 frame mill and erected the Second Boiler House and Engine Room (Building 6).

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<sup>32</sup> "Sea Island Prospects." *American Cotton and Wool Reporter* (18 March 1920): 32.

<sup>33</sup> Untitled item, *Board of Trade Journal* (June 1911): 250.

<sup>34</sup> The English word duck is derived from the Dutch *doek* for linen canvas.

<sup>35</sup> Source: FHWA, *State Motor Vehicle Registrations, by Years 1900-1995*.

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/ohim/summary95/mv200.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> "Jenckes Spinning Company." *American Wool and Cotton Reporter* (11 April 1920): 61-2.

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The decision to concentrate on the spinning and weaving of tire fabric and massively expand the plant yielded mixed results. In the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the output of southern cotton plantations had declined dramatically—despite rising demand—due to the assault on the cotton crop by the boll weevil between 1892 and 1930. Sea Island cotton experienced a significant decline due to the apparent preference of the boll weevil for this grade of cotton.<sup>37</sup> During this period, the tire industry had experimented with using shorter-staple cotton as a substitute for the superior Sea Island variety with unsatisfactory results.<sup>38</sup> Labor strife,<sup>39</sup> southern competition, and a significant post-World War I economic slump in 1920-21 only compounded the difficulties of maintaining production.

During the war, Jenckes Spinning Company had been a supplier of military duck fabric, causing the City of Pawtucket to post officers at the plant to watch for possible sabotage. While the war was nearing its end in August 1918, Jenckes ceased its reliance on Pawtucket's municipal force to police its sprawling plant and established the Jenckes Guards, an armed, private police force of twelve men working 12-hour shifts. An expansive and supportive article in the *Providence Sunday Journal* noted the commingling of factory operatives of many nationalities. Charles H. Cooper, a former Pawtucket officer and head of the guard, observed, "It is but natural that differences will spring up among these people, some of whom are of such temperament that it might take but little to fan a small flame into a serious matter."<sup>40</sup> Serious matters certainly loomed.

In 1920, addressing a post-war surge in the cost of living and operatives' difficulty in putting food on the table, the Jenckes Spinning Company purchased the former Easton and Burnham building (Building 7), across Weeden Street from the plant, for use as a cafeteria outfitted to serve, at cost, 2,500 meals daily to the plant's 3,600 operatives.<sup>41</sup> The Jenckes Cafeteria remained open until 1926.

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<sup>37</sup> See U.S. Department of Agriculture Bulletins 926-959 (1922): [https://books.google.com/books?id=7ftGAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA1&lpg=PA1&dq=%22sea+island+cotton%22+%2B+%22boll+weevil%22&source=bl&ots=NDYbDd17gb&sig=iBWtQkOlzDNVPomsWuT901oEUxk&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiXnvPRxfnSAhWqxFQKHY\\_aBTEQ6AEIMDAE#v=onepage&q=%22sea%20island%20cotton%22%20%2B%20%22boll%20weevil%22&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=7ftGAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA1&lpg=PA1&dq=%22sea+island+cotton%22+%2B+%22boll+weevil%22&source=bl&ots=NDYbDd17gb&sig=iBWtQkOlzDNVPomsWuT901oEUxk&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiXnvPRxfnSAhWqxFQKHY_aBTEQ6AEIMDAE#v=onepage&q=%22sea%20island%20cotton%22%20%2B%20%22boll%20weevil%22&f=false) (accessed March 2017).

<sup>38</sup> In the 1930s tire companies introduced synthetic fabric as a substitute for Sea Island cotton and, later, fiberglass and steel belting.

<sup>39</sup> As part of the general flight of textile manufacture to the South in the period, in 1919 the Jenckes Spinning Company, seeking cheap labor and proximity to cotton, purchased the Loray Mill in Gastonia, North Carolina. The mill was converted for tire fabric production as part of its long-term relationship with Firestone. This was one of the first Southern mills to introduce northern "efficiency" methods along with the "stretch out"--increasing the workload of the individual worker and substituting piece work for regular wages. Loray under the (post-1923) Manville-Jenckes ownership experienced labor strife from the beginning. This erupted into a violent, and storied, strike in 1929.

<sup>40</sup> "Private Police Force Helps Many Races to Merge in Pawtucket Mill." *Providence Sunday Journal* (22 June 1919): Section II, p. 5.

<sup>41</sup> "Jenckes Spinning Company Opens Restaurant." *Evening Times* (22 July 1920): 1.

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In 1923, the Jenckes Spinning Company merged with the Manville Company (Lincoln, Rhode Island) to form the Manville-Jenckes Company. The new company, capitalized at \$39 million, combined the Pawtucket plant with its operations in Manville and Woonsocket, Rhode Island.<sup>42</sup> Continued market difficulties and labor strife caused a halving of the company's stock value in 1927. The Jenckes plant, now the Pawtucket division of Manville-Jenckes, continued to produce cotton goods and tire fabric into the Great Depression years when it sought bankruptcy protection in 1931, underwent a reorganization in 1933, and was shuttered by the parent company in June of that year. The JayTee Corporation, hoping to resume textile manufacturing in the plant, purchased the 8-acre property in 1933.<sup>43</sup> When JayTee Corporation failed within a year of the purchase, the plant was sold at public auction on December 19, 1934.

Despite the closing of the plant, the Manville-Jenckes plant remained on the front page for a brief period in the mid-1930s. Walter O'Hara (1897-1941), part-owner of the Narragansett Race Track (also in Pawtucket) and a close ally of Democratic operative and future Pawtucket mayor Thomas P. McCoy, anonymously purchased the entire plant at the public auction for the high bid of \$35,500. Unlike the previous owner, O'Hara had no interest in resuming textile production at the plant. The City of Pawtucket had been in negotiations with the local utility, the Blackstone Valley Gas and Electric Company (BVG&E), in an effort to reduce electric rates. The Manville-Jenckes plant, although quiet for over a year, had a huge electrical generation facility comprising six boilers, steam turbines and transformers--built some twenty years earlier for Jenckes' massive expansion of tire fabric manufacture.

O'Hara, likely in league with McCoy, threatened to reactivate the Manville-Jenckes electrical plant (Buildings 2, 2A and 6) to compete with BVG&E or to force the utility to decrease electricity rates. O'Hara, who incorporated Pawtucket Light and Power Company<sup>44</sup> for this purpose in 1935, claimed that electricity generated at the plant would be sold at 50 percent of current rates for street lighting and electricity for City Hall and the city's public schools.<sup>45</sup>

This confrontation with the utility company was short-lived; BVG&E eventually reduced rates by 10 percent. Amid much public debate as to the City's involvement in real estate, the City purchased the plant from O'Hara for \$55,000 in August 1936.<sup>46</sup> Although it is unlikely that the City had the wherewithal or incentive to do it, its stated intention was to lease space to create jobs for Pawtucket's 1,400 highly-skilled, unemployed textile workers. This plan never came to

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<sup>42</sup> Business Incorporations and Amendments Vol. 11A, p. 211-6. August 1923. With this merger, Manville-Jenckes controlled eight mills with a combined workforce of 7,700 operatives. These figures include the Loray Mill in Gastonia, N.C. and a mill in Drummondville, P.Q., Canada.

<sup>43</sup> Pawtucket Land Evidence Book 323: 61. June 14, 1933.

<sup>44</sup> *Articles of Association for the year 1935*, p. 209.

<sup>45</sup> This episode is discussed in William McLoughlin, *Rhode Island: A History*, NY: W.W. Norton and Co., 1978 (p. 206). See also "O'Hara revealed as buyer of Manville-Jenckes mills." *Providence Journal* (16 February 1935): 1.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, Book 336: 259. August 12, 1936.

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fruition; the City began subdivision of the property for industrial and warehouse use in 1937.<sup>47</sup> In the post-World War II economic revival, the plant saw new life in the form of specialty textile manufacturing, including narrow-fabric weaving and knitting, a use that continues today.<sup>48</sup> The plant also houses a moving and storage company in Building 1C, a retail furniture store in Building 4, a specialty screen printer in Building 5A, a “home staging” warehouse in Building 4, and a billiard hall in Building 4A. It remains a vital commercial and industrial center to this day.

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<sup>47</sup> One of the longest tenants of the former Jenckes Spinning Company plant was New England Paper Tube Company, which purchased Buildings 1, 1A, 1B and 1D as well as the Boiler and Engine House (Building 6) from the City in 1937 and occupied them until entering receivership in 2016.

<sup>48</sup> Northeast Knitting occupies Building 5 and Conrad-Jarvis Building 5B.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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---

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

\_\_\_ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

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**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 8 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: 19 Easting: 301366 Northing: 4639129

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

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3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries of the Jenckes Spinning Company Historic District are contiguous with those of Pawtucket, Rhode Island Assessor's Plat 44, Lots 426, 428, 433, 437, 438, 464, 465, 551, 561, 581, 601, and 611.

**Boundary Justification**

These boundaries represent the fullest expansion of the Jenckes Spinning Company in the early 1920s and comprise all of the surviving buildings of the complex. The boundaries also include the Easton and Burnham Building (Building 7, 1882), which was acquired by the Jenckes interests in 1920 to serve as the company cafeteria.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Edward Connors  
organization: Edward Connors and Associates  
street & number: 39 Dyer Avenue  
city or town: Riverside state: RI zip code: 02915  
e-mail nconnors@cox.net  
telephone: 401 595-0699  
date: April 2017

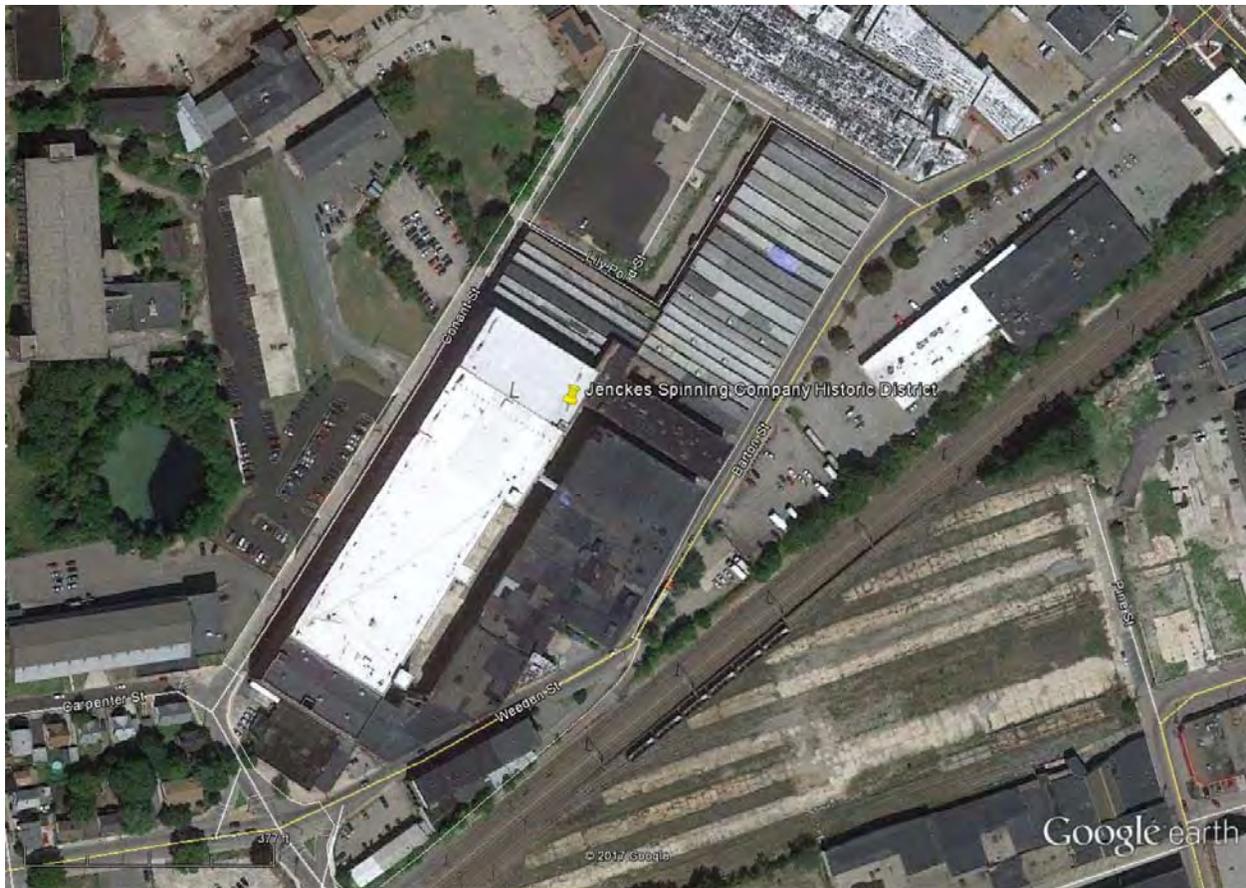
Jenckes Spinning Company Historic District  
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County and State

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)



Google earth

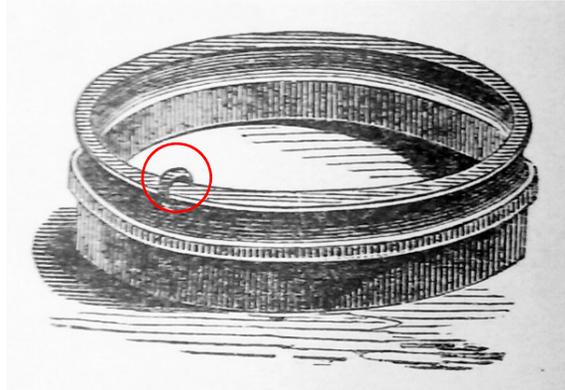
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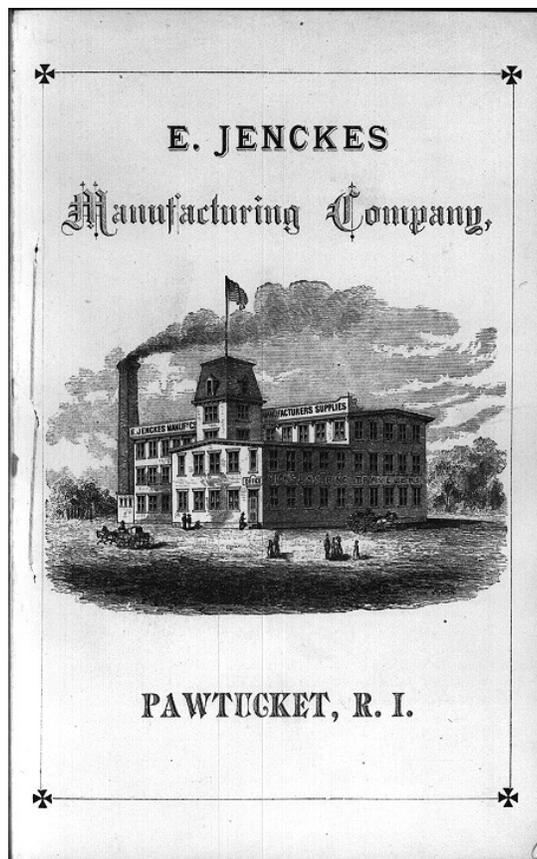


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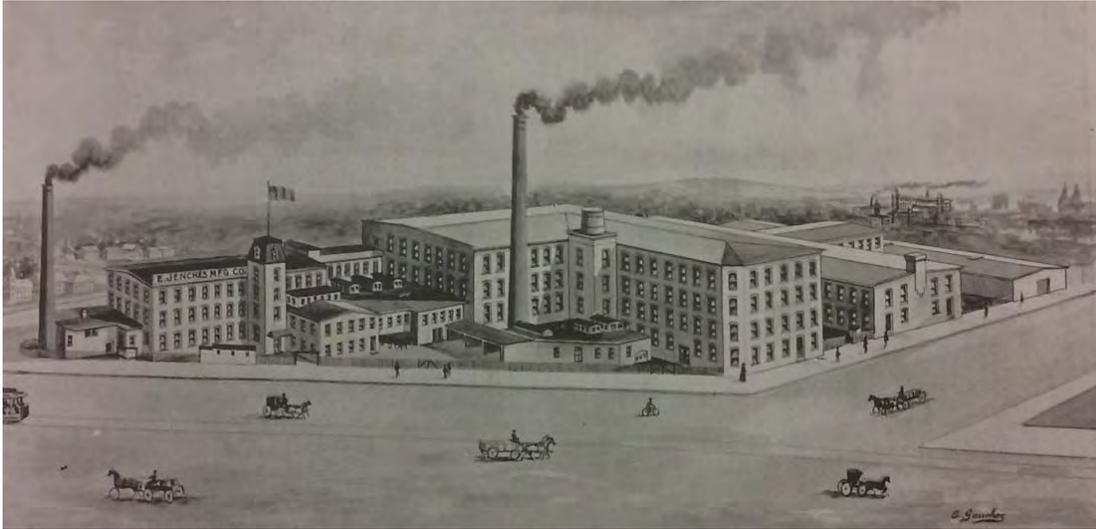
**Figure 1**  
Engraving of ring and traveler (circled)  
From E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company catalog (1883)



**Figure 2**  
Illustration from E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company *Illustrated Price List*  
showing original frame factory building, boiler house, and attached store/waste house (April 1883)

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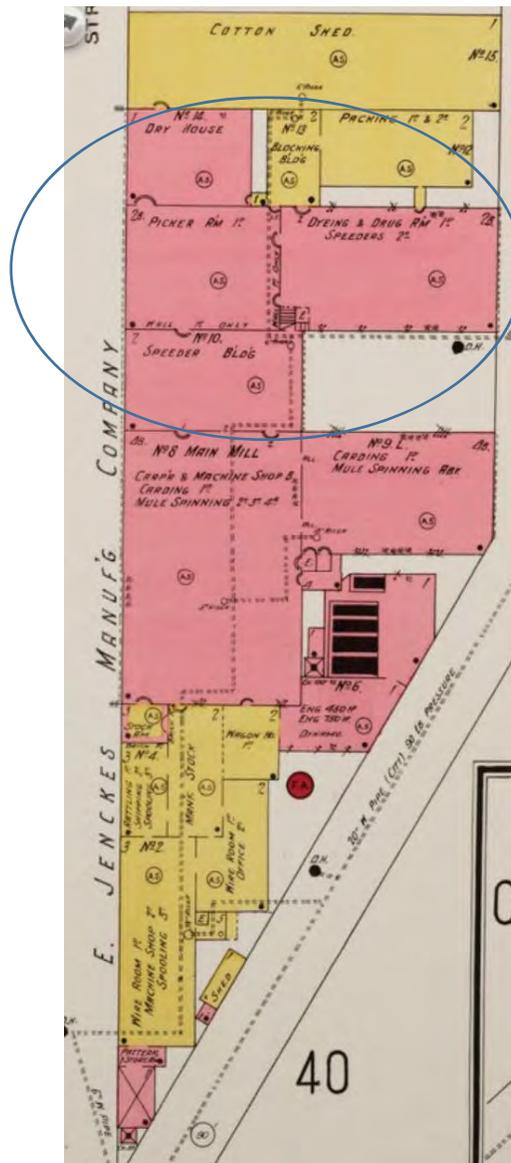
**Figure 3**

Engraving of E. Jenckes manufacturing Company, *Providence Journal of Commerce* (1897) showing (l-r) original boiler house, first frame mill with attached store/waste houses, 1887 “Main Mill” with separate boiler house, 1891 two-story Dye House and Picker Room (later raised to four stories), and frame shed.

*Note hydraulic elevator reservoir on roof of Main Mill elevator shaft.*

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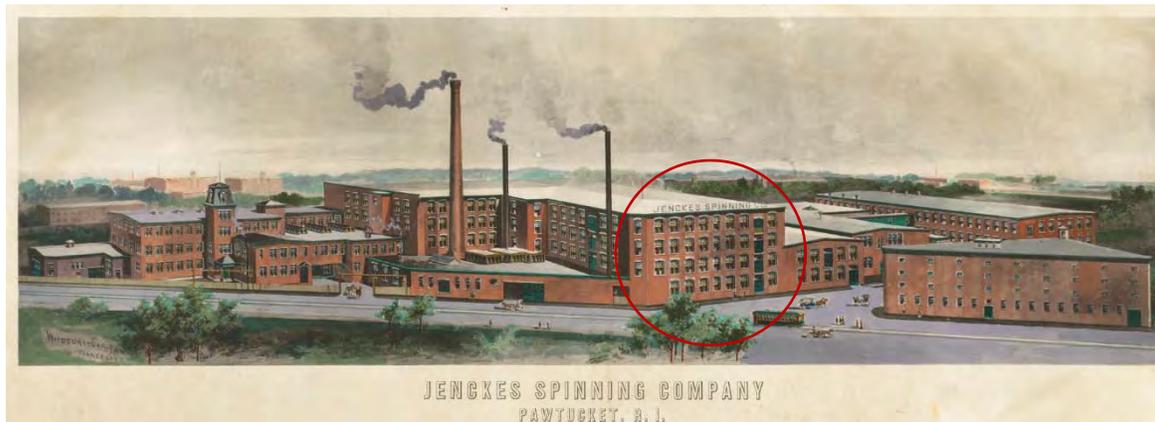
Providence, Rhode Island  
County and State



**Figure 4**  
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (1902)  
showing E. Jenckes Manufacturing Company Main Mill and T-plan of combined  
Dye House, Picker Room, Speeder Building and Dry House (circled).  
Yellow-tinted buildings at bottom of image represent the first frame mill built in 1883 and  
demolished in 1916 for the construction of the Tamarack Mill (Buildings 5, 5A and 5B).

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**Figure 5**  
Painting of Jenckes Spinning Company (1903)  
showing L-plan Main Mill (Building 1, 1887), its north extensions (circled)  
and two-story Dye House (now four stories).

*Note: The artist rendered all buildings as brick despite the fact that  
the 1883 first mill (at far left) and the building to the right of the  
Dye House (Building 1A) were frame.*

*The two-story building shown partially at the far right of the painting housed the Jenckes Knitting  
Machine Company (Building 3). That surviving building is also brick.*

*Courtesy Museum of American Textile History*

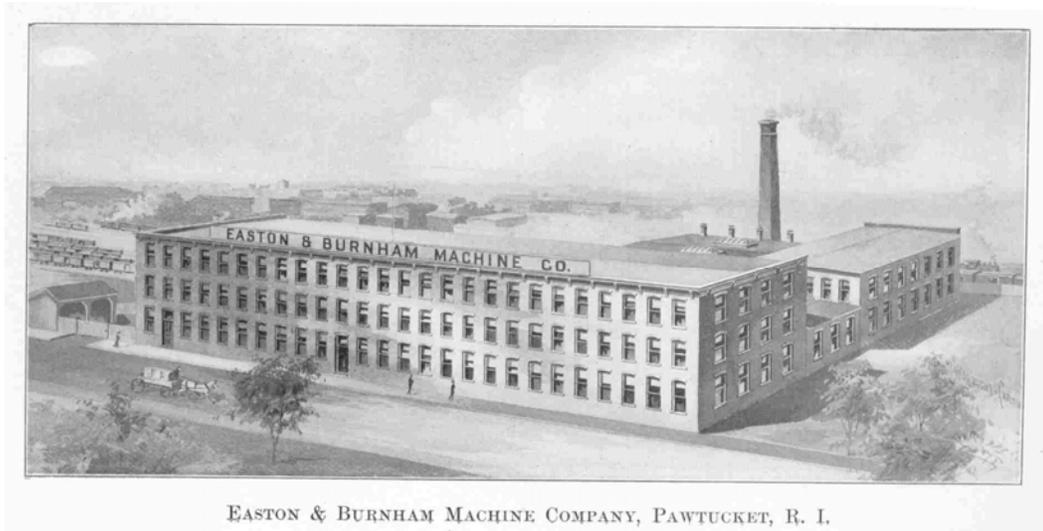


**Figure 6**  
Building 3, Jenckes Knitting Machine Company,  
half-tone from *Rhode Island Industries Catalogued* (1904)

*Note: a third story was added by 1916.*

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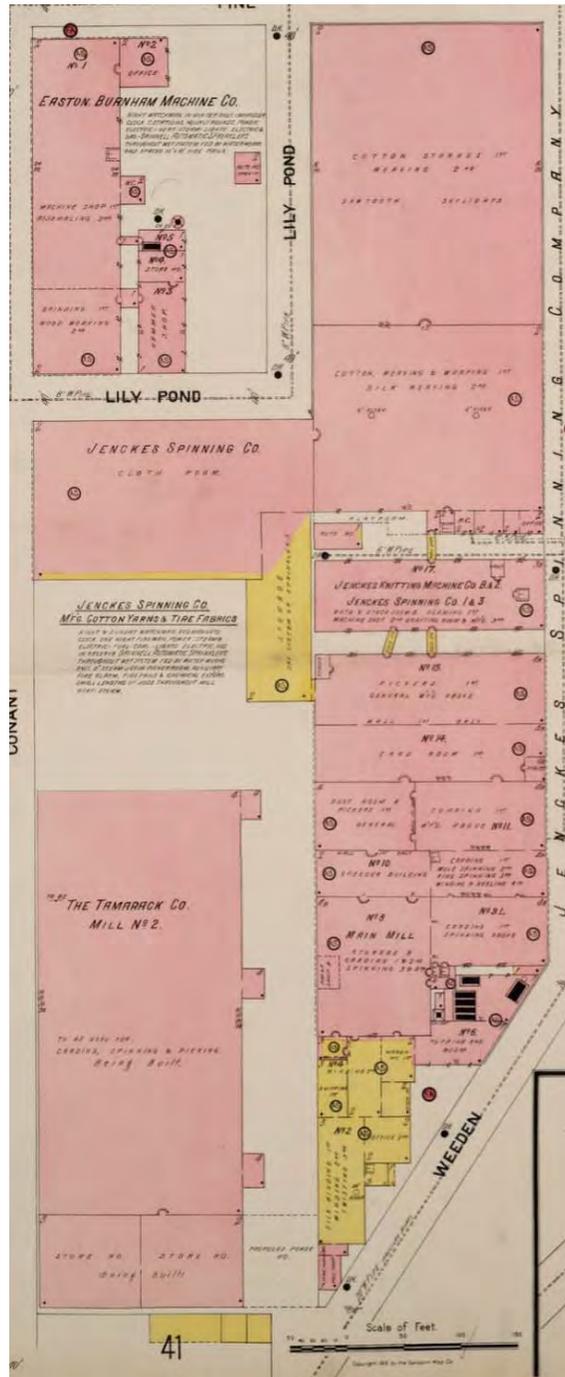
**Figure 7**

Building 7, plant of Easton and Burnham Machine Company, built 1882.  
Engraving from *Report of the Commissioner of Industrial Statistics* (1906)

*Note: A rerouting of the railroad tracks ca. 1915 to their present location necessitated removal of the rear forge shop and boiler house seen at the right of this engraving.*

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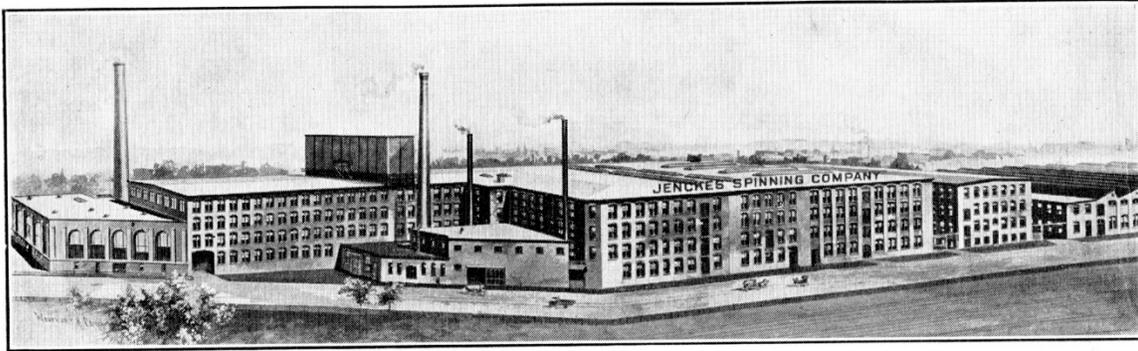


**Figure 8**  
Sanborn Fire Insurance drawing (November 1916)  
showing additions to 1909 First Weave Shed (Building 4)  
and construction in progress of Tamarack Mill (Buildings 5 and 5A)



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**Figure 10**

Illustration of part of the Manville-Jenckes plant from *The Book of Rhode Island* (1930)

*Note: This image, adapted from a 1921 engraving, is highly stylized and imprecise. E.g., the massive 4-6 story Tamarack Mill (Buildings 5, 5A and 5B), built directly behind these buildings in 1916-9, is not shown.*

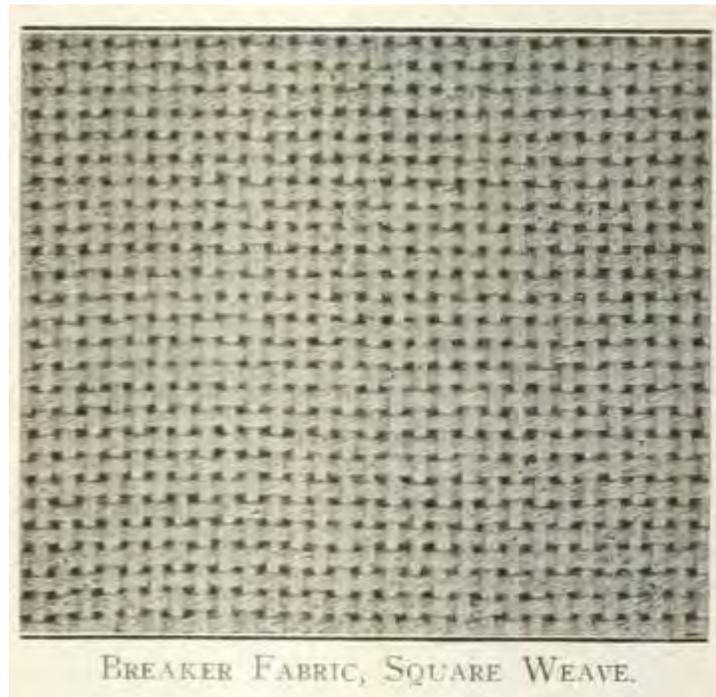


**Figure 11**

Detail from Rhode Island State Aerial photograph (May 1939)

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**Figure 12**  
An example of tire fabric  
*India Rubber World 1917*

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Jenckes Spinning Company Historic District  
 Building Key

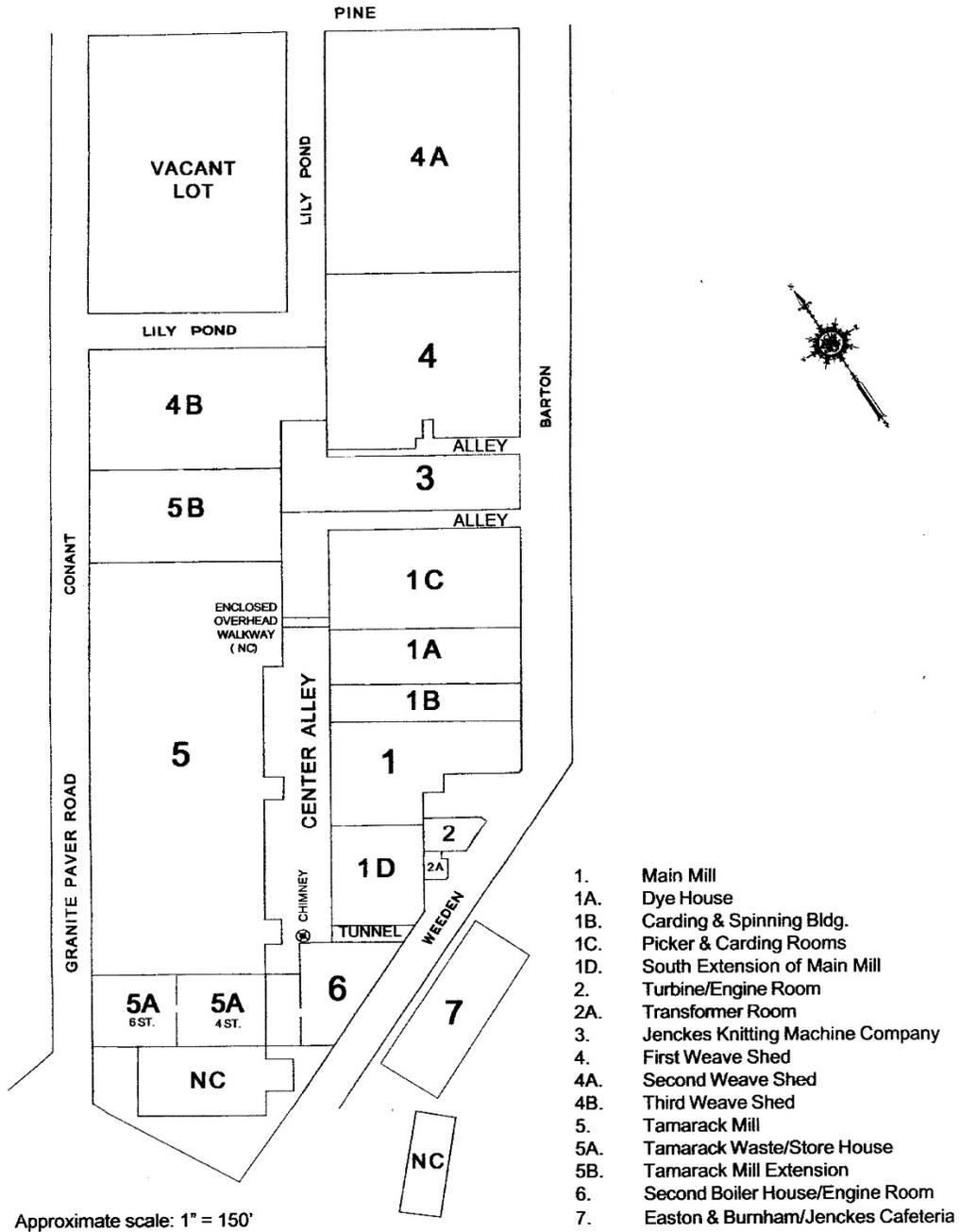


Figure 13

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### **Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photograph log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photograph date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### **Photograph Log**

Name of Property: Jenckes Spinning Company Historic District

City or Vicinity: Pawtucket

County: Providence County

State: Rhode Island

Photographer: Edward Connors

Date Photographed: Fall 2016 and Spring 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

#### **Photograph #1**

General view from vicinity of Conant Street. Building 5A at extreme left, Building 3 at extreme right. View facing north.

#### **Photograph #2**

Building 2 (left foreground) and Building 1 (Main Mill), behind. View facing north.

#### **Photograph #3**

Building 1 (Main Mill) rear (west) elevation from alley. View facing southeast.

#### **Photograph #4**

Building 1 (Main Mill) detail of framing. View facing northwest.

#### **Photograph #5**

General view along Barton Street, showing (left to right) Building 1, 1B, 1A, 1C, and portion of Building 3 at right. View facing southwest.

#### **Photograph #6**

Building 6 (Second Boiler House and Engine Room) at left, 1D (South Extension of Main Mill) in background, 2A (Transformer Room) center front, and 2 (Turbine/Engine Room) right front. View facing southwest.

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Photograph #7

Building 1D (South Extension of Main Mill) rear elevation from alley showing tunnel to Weeden Street at right. View facing south.

Photograph #8

Building 1D (South Extension of Main Mill) interior framing detail. View facing south

Photograph #9

Building 2 (Turbine/Engine Room) with Building 1 (Main Mill) behind. View facing north.

Photograph #10

Building 2A (Transformer Room) with Building 1D (South Extension of Main Mill) behind and Building 2 to the right. View facing northwest.

Photograph #11

Building 1C (Picker and Carding Rooms) at left and east (left) and north (right) elevations of Building 3 (Jenckes Knitting Machine Company Building) at center. View facing west.

Photograph #12

Building 3 (Jenckes Knitting Machine Company Building) detail of south elevation loading door. View from alley, facing northeast.

Photograph #13

Alley between Building 1C (Picker and Carding Rooms) at left and Building 3 (Jenckes Knitting Machine Company Building) at right. View facing southwest.

Photograph #14

West end of south elevation of Building 3 (Jenckes Knitting Machine Company Building). East elevation of Building 5B (Tamarack Mill Extension) at left. View from center alley facing northeast.

Photograph #15

East elevations of (left to right) Buildings 4 (First Weave Shed) and 4A (Second Weave Shed). View facing northeast.

Photograph #16

Building 4 (First Weave Shed) detail of sawtooth monitor end on east elevation. View facing northwest.

Photograph #17

West elevation of Building 4B (Third Weave Shed). View facing east.

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Photograph #18

West side of complex, showing (left to right) Building 5B (Tamarack Mill Extension), Building 5 (Tamarack Mill), and Building 5A (Tamarack Waste and Store House). View facing southeast.

Photograph #19

Portion of west elevation of Building 5 (Tamarack Mill). View facing southeast.

Photograph #20

Detail of entrance bay on west elevation of Building 5 (Tamarack Mill). View facing southeast.

Photograph #21

Building 5 (Tamarack Mill) interior framing detail. View facing north.

Photograph #22

West elevations of (left to right) Building 5 (Tamarack Mill) and Building 5A (Tamarack Waste and Store House) and south elevation of Building 5A (right). View facing east.

Photograph #23

Building 5A (Tamarack Waste and Store House) interior framing detail showing example of 9-foot ceiling height of the four lower floors in the front half of the building. View facing south.

Photograph #24

West elevation of Building 5B (Tamarack Mill Extension). View facing southeast.

Photograph #25

Detail of cornice and coping at northwest corner of Building 5B (Tamarack Mill Extension). View facing southeast.

Photograph #26

Building 6 (Second Boiler House and Engine Room) south elevation (left) and east elevation (right) with Building 1D beyond. View facing north.

Photograph #27

Detail of pier base and entrances on east elevation of Building 6 (Second Boiler House and Engine Room). View facing northwest.

Photograph #28

Building 6 (Second Boiler House and Engine Room) interior framing detail. View facing south.

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Photograph #29

Chimney for Second Boiler House and Engine Room. View facing southwest from center alley.

Photograph #30

Building 7 (Easton and Burnham/Jenckes Cafeteria). View facing south.

Photograph #31

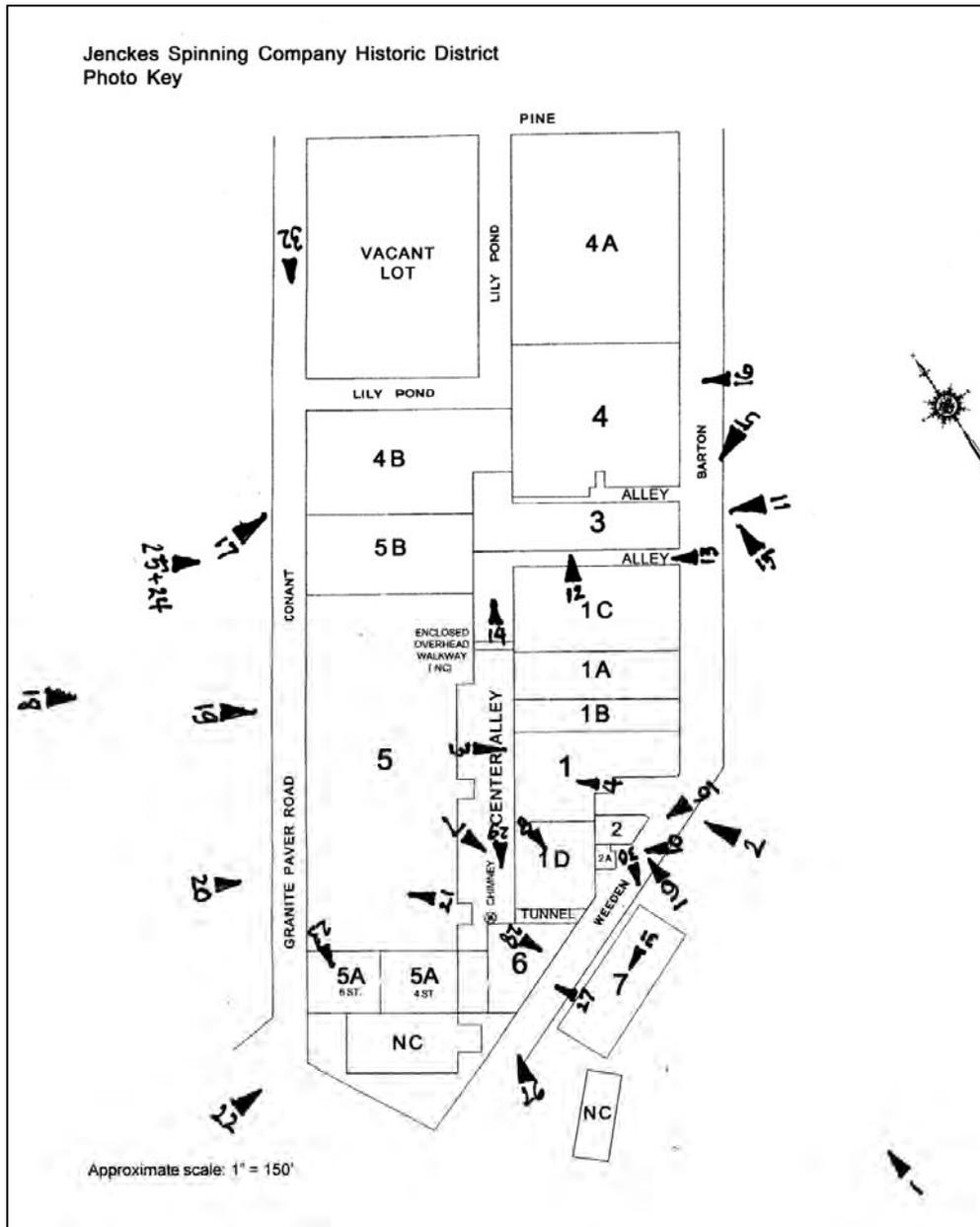
Building 7 (Easton & Burnham Machine Company/Jenckes Cafeteria) interior framing detail. View facing west.

Photograph #32

Granite pavers, Conant Street. View facing southwest.

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**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 to amend existing 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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.







**THE FURNITURE DEPOT**

**BARGAIN OUTLET**

**BARGAIN**

**90% OFF**

**BARGAIN**

**20-50% OFF**

**FINANCING 1 YEAR 1%**

**BARGAIN**

**BARGAIN**

**BARGAIN**

**BARGAIN**

**BARGAIN**

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**BARGAIN**

**BARGAIN**









NO PARKING  
LOADING ZONE

NO PARKING  
LOADING ZONE

NO PARKING  
LOADING ZONE

NO PARKING  
LOADING ZONE



Avenue  
M





MAXIMUM  
FLOOR LOAD  
150 lbs.  
SQUARE FOOT



TRUST  
2011

NOTICE

1111

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