

**United States Department of the Interior**    **DRAFT 2/5/2026**  
 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: Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-Providence Combing Company Plant

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

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: 50 Agnes Street, 62-68 Dike Street, 37 Troy Street

City or town: Providence 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Not For Publication:  Vicinity: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 \_\_\_ 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national                      **x** statewide                      \_\_\_ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

**x** A                      \_\_\_ B                      **x** C                      \_\_\_ D

|   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| _____<br><b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>             | _____<br><b>Date</b> |
| _____<br><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b> |                      |

|   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. |                      |
| _____<br><b>Signature of commenting official:</b>                                       | _____<br><b>Date</b> |
| _____<br><b>Title :</b>   |                      |
| _____<br><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>                     |                      |

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**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:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal

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**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

**Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| <u>1</u>     | <u>0</u>        | buildings  |
| =            | =               | sites      |
| <u>1</u>     | <u>0</u>        | structures |
| =            | =               | objects    |
| <u>2</u>     | <u>0</u>        | Total      |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: manufacturing facility

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: business

COMMERCE/TRADE: professional

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER

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

Principal exterior materials of the property: STONE, STUCCO, BRICK, CONCRETE, SYNTHETICS

### 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 Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-Providence Combing Company Plant is in a densely-developed industrial area of the Olneyville section of Providence, Rhode Island. The plant includes a stone and brick, four-story Main Mill with its attached First Engine/Boiler House, both built 1829-1831, and four additions built between ca. 1875 and 1948. Ranging from one to four stories in height, the additions are all of brick or a combination of brick and concrete. Together, the Main Mill, attached First Engine/Boiler House, and the additions comprise one contributing building. There is also one contributing structure, a late 19<sup>th</sup>-century, freestanding brick chimney historically associated with the complex's steam power plant.

The Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-Providence Combing Company Plant occupies the city block bounded by Agnes Street to the west, Troy Street to the east, Dike Street to the north, and Oak Street to the south. The southern half of the block is occupied by the former Crown Worsted Mill (now Mars Plastics); a narrow alley (referred to as the south alley in this document), extending from Agnes to Troy Streets, bisects the block and forms the southern boundary of the nominated property. A partial alley (referred to as the north alley) extends west from Troy Street and terminates at a loading dock. The Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-Providence Combing Company Plant possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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## Narrative Description

### Setting

The Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-Providence Combing Company Plant is located in Olneyville, a neighborhood of Providence that experienced intense industrial development in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries due in part to its proximity to the Woonasquatucket River, which lies about 1/8 mile north of the plant. The Amtrak line, which runs along the route of the historic Providence and Stonington (Connecticut) Railroad, laid out between 1833 and 1837, is about 400 feet to the east and the Route 10/Route 6 interchange is about 400 feet to the south. The immediate vicinity of the complex is characterized by masonry industrial buildings and small areas of vacant land; the Weybosset Mills Complex (listed in the National Register, 2008) occupies three city blocks to the east, southeast, and south of the nominated property.

When built in 1829-1831, the Main Mill (with its principal entrance in the stairtower) and attached First Engine/Boiler House, faced southerly across an open mill yard. Additions were built mostly to the lot lines and, today, the plant abuts sidewalks on Dike, Troy, and Agnes streets. The sidewalks are paved with a combination of poured concrete and asphalt with concrete patching. The south alley is paved with concrete, except for an area opposite the Main Mill paved with cobblestones embedded in concrete.

A portion of the plant is set back from the Troy Street sidewalk. An *L*-shaped arrangement of metal planter boxes line the south and east edges of a concrete and asphalt paved area outside 37 Troy Street; a single granite step flanked by metal railings accesses the paved area from the sidewalk. A wood stockade fence separates the two ownership parcels in the north alley and terminates at a chain-link gate along Troy Street.

The Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-Providence Combing Company Plant was subdivided in 1954. As a result, the nominated property comprises two parcels (totaling .86 acres) under separate ownership. The south parcel contains the Main Mill, the First Engine/Boiler House, the Second Engine/Boiler House (Addition 1), the Carding/Twisting Spinning House (Addition 2), and the Chimney; it has two primary entrances, one on the west elevation at 50 Agnes Street and one on the east elevation at 37 Troy Street. The north parcel contains the First Store House/Office/Garage and Second Store House and has multiple entrances on Dike Street.

### **Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-Providence Combing Company Mill (one contributing building)**

The plant is comprised of several components – the Main Mill (1829-1831; 1919) and its attached First Engine/Boiler House (1829-1831; 1919), and four additions built between ca. 1875 and 1948. For the purposes of this nomination, each addition is numbered in order of its

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construction date. Each component of the plant is described individually and presented in chronological order, below.

### **Main Mill (Photographs #1-5, 7, 9, 11-13, 17)**

50 Agnes Street

Constructed 1829-1831 for Eagle Steam Mill (John Waterman and Company); raised to four stories 1919 by Providence Combing Company

Constructed between 1829 and 1831 as the Eagle Steam Mill, the Main Mill was originally a three-story, hipped-roof, rubblestone masonry, T-plan building with a 212' x 28' main block and a 24' x 21' ell extending from the south elevation (Figure 3). In 1919, then-owner Providence Combing Company added a brick fourth story to the Main Mill; the current membrane-surfaced roof is flat or near-flat with exposed rafter ends and a molded wood cornice below metal coping. Photovoltaic panels are located on the roof. Although partly obscured by later additions, many of the original wetlaid rubble exterior walls of the Main Mill survive. They are 24" thick with parging that is likely the original finish. The walls are most visible at the eastern half of the main block and the south elevation of the ell. In the western half of the main block, the original north exterior wall remains, but, with the construction of Addition 4 (1948), it now serves as an interior wall. The original west exterior wall and the western half of the south exterior wall of the main block, which had become interior walls when Addition 2 was constructed, were removed in the 20th century (see description of this alteration in "Main Mill/Interiors," below).

Many original window openings survive, notably in the eastern half of the main block. On the first three stories, they are rectangular (40" wide x 54" high) and have historic granite lintels and sills (some obscured by parging). The fourth floor features segmental-arch window openings that measure 5'-wide x 8'-high. No early sash are known to survive, and no photographic evidence has been found to confirm original light configuration. Instead, the window openings in the eastern half of the Main Mill are now filled with modern vinyl inserts (paired on the fourth floor) and window openings on the western half of the north (party) wall are filled with concrete block. On the ell, window openings are filled with modern vinyl replacements; sills are concrete.

There are two recessed door openings on the south elevation of the ell, one on the ground floor (fitted with a modern metal door) and one on the second floor (filled with wood paneling). The I-section steel beams serving as lintels above both openings suggests that they were created in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although much altered, the first-floor doorway may have been the original principal entrance to the Main Mill.

Sometime before 1951, Providence Combing Company built a brick and concrete, 8.5'-wide x 28'-long, loading/rigging dock extension from the east end of the fourth floor of the Main Mill (Photo 3). In order to support this structure, a high pier was erected on the Main Mill's east elevation. The structural system of this addition is comprised of two concrete-encased steel beams, visible from the exterior. There is a fixed, double-leaf metal door on the east elevation of the loading/rigging dock extension with a four-light upper panel set above an angled-plank lower

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panel. A modern circular sign that reads “HARRISON STEAM WORK SPACE” is mounted on a wood panel located below the doorway.

**Main Mill/Interiors:** The interior of the four-story *T*-plan Main Mill is organized into three areas: the west end, the south ell, and the east end. Each level contains between four and six commercial tenant spaces ranging in size from approximately 450 to 1,700 square feet.

The west end has open communication with the Carding/Twisting/Spinning House (Addition 2) where the original west exterior wall and western half of the south exterior wall of the main block were removed (see below regarding structural changes at this location). All four floors of the west end have a single-loaded hallway along the north wall that accesses commercial units that span between the Main Mill and Addition 2 and which terminates on the west at the Carding/Twisting/Spinning House staircase and elevator.

The south ell contains restrooms, mechanical closets, and a ca. 1919 staircase located inside the south wall. Providing circulation between all four floors, the staircase has wood treads and risers, simple wood handrails, painted beadboard partition walls, a parged exterior wall, and several historic metal fire doors. The second and third floors of the ell access the First Engine/Boiler House.

On the east end of the Main Mill, the first floor houses a large commercial unit which extends into the First and Second Engine/Boiler Houses. On the second, third, and fourth floors, there is a single-loaded hallway along the south wall that accesses commercial spaces to the north and east. The second-floor hallway continues into the Second Engine/Boiler House. The third- and fourth-floor east hallways terminate on the east at a commercial unit; on the fourth floor, the easternmost unit extends into the elevated loading/rigging dock extension and also accesses the First Engine/Boiler House.

The ceiling height for the first three stories is 10'; this increases on the fourth (brick) floor to 16'. Interior framing consists of predominantly 7.5" square-section, chamfered, timber columns. These support 12" x 12" timber floor beams which, in turn, support tongue-and-groove, 3"-thick plank flooring. At various locations rolled steel *I*-beams have been inserted as floor beam reinforcements. In some areas on the ground floor these steel elements have been bolted and welded into columns. In the location of the original west exterior wall and western half of the original south exterior wall of the main block, which were removed in the 20th century, there is a load-bearing structure of heavy *I*-section steel beams and round-section steel columns.

Splayed window openings on the lower three floors of the Main Mill widen to 54" to allow more daylight to the interior of the building. Painted, plain wooden casings for both filled and unaltered window openings survive throughout the lower three floors. An interior opening at the

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east end of the Main Mill provides access to Addition 1 (Second Engine/Boiler House) and may have originally housed an exterior door.<sup>1</sup>

Partition walls are gypsum wallboard, while exterior walls are parged stone and brick masonry. Flooring is largely wood plank; several areas are finished with modern flooring or concrete. There are also areas of concrete flooring at the first-floor level. Ceilings are open to the underside of the slow-burning wood plank floor and exposed timber beams. An exception to this is found at the eastern portion of the first floor, where gypsum wallboard facing has been set on the underside of the floor planks between the floor beams. Entrances to commercial units are fitted with solid-core wood doors set within metal frames.

**Main Mill/Industrial function (Figures 6, 8, 10-12, 14):** The Main Mill originally housed cotton yarn spinning and weaving operations. A review of Sanborn maps from 1874 to 1920 reveals additional uses in later years. In 1874 the first floor housed a weave room and a machine shop, the second an additional weave room, the third carding and spinning, and the fourth (attic space) mule spinning. By 1889 the first floor housed carding operations, the second floor weaving, the third floor spinning, and the attic mule spinning. By 1920, some eighteen years after the conversion to worsted manufacture and shortly after the addition of a fourth floor, the first floor housed wool combing and scouring, the second carding and drying, the third and fourth wool sorting and storage. Physical evidence of part of an exterior hoist suggests that the loading/rigging dock extension was used by Providence Combing Company to rig machinery or hoist manufacturing materials.

### **First Engine/Boiler House (Photos #1-2, 4, 6, 10, 14)**

50 Agnes Street

Constructed 1829-1831 for Eagle Steam Mill (John Waterman and Company); converted to Picker House after 1874; raised to four stories 1919 by Providence Combing Company

The First Engine/Boiler House is located at the southeast intersection of the Main Mill's main block and ell. It was built in 1829-1831 and was historically, and remains, attached to the Main Mill. As constructed, the First Engine/Boiler House was likely three stories in height, with a high-ceilinged, parged rubblestone first story (a floor was inserted into this high-ceilinged space ca. 1900, creating two stories) and two stories, likely wood-frame, above, and measured 45' long x 31' wide. The length was shortened to its present 28' between 1874 and 1889; the width has remained the same since original construction. In 1919, the two upper stories were replaced with brick. The flat roof is surfaced in membrane with exposed rafter ends and a molded wood cornice beneath metal coping.

The west elevation has doorways with modern metal doors at all four levels—single-leaf doors on the two lower stories and double doors on the two upper stories. A single-flight, straight-run modern stairway with metal treads, risers and railing is affixed to the west elevation of the First

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<sup>1</sup> It is unknown if there was an original exterior door along this east wall before the Second Boiler/Engine House was built in phases along the east and south elevations after 1874.

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Engine/Boiler House and the south elevation of the Main Mill ell. It rises from the south alley to a landing outside the second-floor door. Windows on the first two floors are vinyl replacement types set in rectangular openings; lintels and sills are granite. Windows on the third and fourth floors are paired vinyl replacements set in segmental arch openings.

Two small one-story additions are located at the southeast corner of the First Engine/Boiler House. The north portion is brick and was built for cotton storage by 1899. The south portion is a narrow, concrete and brick, one-story structure with a reinforced-concrete T-beam roof. Fronting on the south alley, a metal double-leaf door is set below a vent panel on this elevation. The east side of the addition has short lengths of steel I-beams below the roofline. The roof is lined with a metal railing.

**First Engine/Boiler House Interiors:** The square-plan First Engine/Boiler House contains commercial units on each of its four floor levels. On the first floor, the space is part of a large unit that extends into the Main Mill and Second Engine/Boiler House. Each upper level houses a single commercial unit. Interior access to the First Engine/Boiler House is provided from corridors within the Main Mill.

Historically, the First Engine/Boiler House was divided by a masonry wall separating a 14-foot by 45-foot engine room located to the west from a 17-foot by 45-foot boiler room located to the east. This partition wall was removed following 1874, when the building was converted for use as a picker house. As a result of this alteration, all four floors of the First Engine/Boiler House now have open floor plans.

Interior framing consists predominantly of 7.5" square, chamfered timber columns supporting 6" x 12" timber floor beams. Ceiling heights measure approximately 10 feet on the first and second floors, approximately 8 feet on the third floor, and approximately 12 feet on the fourth floor. Flooring materials vary by level, with concrete flooring on the first floor; wood flooring on the second and fourth floors; and finished plywood installed over decking on the third floor.

Exterior walls are constructed of parged rubble masonry on the first and second floors and unpainted brick masonry on the third and fourth floors. Ceilings throughout the First Engine/Boiler House consist of a combination of exposed upper-story decking and gypsum wallboard installed between timber beams. With the exception of one historic metal fire door on the second floor, doorways are fitted with modern metal doors set within metal frames.

**First Engine/Boiler House/Industrial function (Figures 6, 8, 10-12, 14):** From 1829 to 1874 this building served as the original engine/boiler house. As built, it comprised two narrow high-ceilinged chambers: a 14' x 45' eastern chamber served as the engine room, and a 17' x 45' western chamber housed four high-pressure boilers. Power was transmitted via belting from the engine to the Main Mill's overhead shafting through an opening located near the mid-point of the Main Mill's south wall. The upper stories likely served functions related to the carding and spinning operations carried out in the adjacent areas of the Main Mill. After 1874 the First Engine/Boiler House was repurposed for use as a picker house, machine shop, and

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spooling/warping room. During its final years in cotton manufacture (1899-1903), the building housed picking, speeding, and spinning operations. After conversion to worsted manufacture in 1903, it was used for various operations including combing, scouring, dyeing, and sorting. The 1920 and 1951 Sanborn maps show the first floor used for dusting,<sup>2</sup> the second a soap room, and the third storage. Use of the fourth floor at that time is unknown.

**Addition 1: Second Engine/Boiler House (Photos #1-4, 6, 9, 15)**

37 Troy Street

Built ca. 1875 et seq. for Harrison Steam Mill Company (as operated by John L. Ross)

This complex, two-story brick addition is connected to the east and south elevations of the Main Mill, creating an L-shape. Its earliest components were constructed ca. 1875 to replace the original Engine/Boiler House. It was expanded several times, reaching its present footprint by 1920 with the construction of a brick, two-story, 32' x 8' "water softener" bumpout off the east elevation. The flat roof is surfaced with membrane and has exposed rafter ends and a molded wood cornice below metal coping.

The Second Engine/Boiler House has an irregular façade along Troy Street with the south end recessed one bay back from the face of the "water softener" bumpout. All window openings are rectangular and filled with late 20<sup>th</sup>-century vinyl replacements. Lintels and sills are a combination of concrete, granite, and wood. There are multiple door openings on the first story of the façade: a double-leaf aluminum door with sidelight set beneath a steel lintel at the southwest corner (under a modern sign for "SIREN SPIRITS"), two separate aluminum single-leaf doors with glazed upper panels and angled-plank lower panels, and two chain-link "doors" provide access to an electrical utility area in the two northernmost bays. A former loading entry beneath an I-beam hoist is infilled with wood paneling and trimmed with concrete sill and lintel.

On the north elevation, a double-leaf metal door beneath a granite lintel faces the north alley. On the west (rear) elevation, a single-leaf metal door under a quarry-faced granite lintel accesses the south alley. On the south elevation, there is an aluminum single-leaf door with glazed upper panels and angled-plank lower panel on the original part of the addition and a large opening largely infilled with wood siding that also contains a blocked door frame and an eight-light wood window in the "water softener" bumpout.

After 1956, the west end of an alleyway between the Main Mill and the Second Engine/Boiler House was bricked in to create a three-story extension measuring about 36' x 12' in area.

**Addition 1/Interiors:** The Second Engine/Boiler House contains two commercial units on each of the first and second floors, with unit sizes ranging from approximately 319 to 953 square feet. The addition communicates with the Main Mill through door openings at its eastern end. A

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<sup>2</sup> The *Callaway Textile Dictionary* (1947) describes dusting as "a shaking treatment usually given to wool between the operations of sorting and scouring." The shaking machine that likely occupied this space was called a *duster*.

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staircase provides vertical circulation serving the Second Engine/Boiler House and the eastern end of the Main Mill. Unit entry doorways have metal frames and wood slab doors throughout this addition.

**Chamber A** is two stories in height, measuring 40' x 20' and accessed through a doorway from the Main Mill. Originally the first floor of this chamber had a row of three center columns. Now there is only one column, made possible by the insertion of a heavy floor beam to render the room predominantly clear span. The second floor, however, retains its three original tapered wooden, round-section columns. A switchback staircase with wood treads, risers and solid beadboard balustrade provides circulation between the first and second floors. Exterior walls are painted brick, and floors are covered with narrow planks. Ceilings are exposed to the wood decking.

**Chamber B**, which housed the plant's boilers, is single-story, measuring roughly 12' x 50' overall. A mezzanine accessed by an open steel stairway was inserted between 1904 and 1920 and removed in 2024. Exterior walls are unpainted brick and floors are concrete. Ceilings reveal wood decking.

The three-story extension north of Chamber B is integrated into the Chamber B commercial space on the first floor. On the second and third floors, the extension functions as a single two-story commercial unit accessed from the Main Mill hallway. Flooring consists of concrete on the first floor and stained plywood on the upper stories. Ceilings are exposed wood decking, and exterior walls are constructed of stone and brick masonry. A modern wood stair provides circulation between the second and third floors.

**Addition 1/Industrial function (Figures 6, 8, 10-12, 14):** From 1875 to ca. 1905 Addition 1 housed the plant's power system—boilers powering a steam engine, its pulley and belting driving overhead shafts to power machinery. The steam engine was housed on the first floor of Chamber A, the boilers in Chamber B. In 1889 the upper story of Chamber A housed slasher and gauzer rooms.<sup>3</sup> By 1900 the second floor also housed a "dynamo" (direct current generator) room. Following the electrification of the plant in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the boilers' primary purpose was to heat the plant and provide hot water for worsted finishing processes.

*[The Chimney (one contributing structure) is described after Addition 4, below]*

**Addition 2: Carding/Twisting/Spinning House (Photos #1-2, 5-8, 10, 16-18)**

50 Agnes Street

Built 1893 for Harrison Steam Mill Company (as operated by John L. Ross), raised and expanded 1919

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<sup>3</sup> The *Callaway Textile Dictionary* describes a slasher as a "large machine used for applying a size mixture to warp yarns." The precise function of a gauzer is unclear; Callaway only describes the loose fabric known as gauze, with no description of related machinery.

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This is a two-part, L-plan, four-story, brick, pier-and-spandrel, flat-roofed addition extending from the south and west elevations of the Main Mill and abutting the south wall of Addition 4. Erected in 1893, it was raised and extended in 1919. The flat roof has mechanical equipment and photovoltaic panels set atop its membrane surface. There are exposed rafter ends and a molded wood cornice beneath metal coping along the south elevation; the cornice visible along Agnes Street (west elevation) has a glazed ceramic coping, common among industrial buildings of this period.

The 1893 section shares a north party wall with the Main Mill and has a rectangular plan, measuring roughly 28' deep x 90' long. Originally two stories in height, Providence Combing Company raised this addition to four stories in 1919. A bracketed wood cornice extends from the roofline. Windows are paired, vinyl 1/1 replacements set in original segmental-arch openings with concrete sills; most windows on the first and second levels of south elevation have one-light transoms. Although they were likely paired, the original frame sash configuration is unknown. The easternmost bay on the south elevation contains a modern metal door.

In 1919 Providence Combing Company erected an irregularly-shaped, four-story, brick addition to the Carding/Twisting/Spinning House extending westerly from the Main Mill and the earlier 1893 addition described above. Measuring about 57' x 40' overall, this roughly L-shaped structure follows the angled alignment of Agnes Street, with a chamfered edge at the intersection of Agnes and the south alley. The south elevation of the 1919 extension matches the pier-and-spandrel brick construction and window openings of the 1893 section to which it is attached.

The west elevation (Agnes Street) contains two entrances. A single-leaf aluminum door with glazing in the upper panel, sidelight and transom provides access to the main lobby near the southwest corner of the addition. Two bays to its north, a single-leaf metal door is set within an angled recess beneath a hand-painted sign which reads "VICTORY PEARL INC. MANUFACTURERS OF INDESTRUCTIBLE PEARLS." In the northernmost bay, there is a shallow loading dock with a metal door is set in a steel-framed angled recess; segmental-arch window openings above have been infilled with brick. Other windows are paired and are modern vinyl replacement types. A modern round metal sign set between the first and second stories of the façade reads "HARRISON STEAM WORK PLACE."

**Addition 2/Interiors:** The L-shaped Carding/Twisting/Spinning House contains commercial tenant spaces on each floor, with unit sizes ranging from approximately 463 to 1,655 square feet. The first floor contains one commercial unit as well as the main lobby and service spaces for the 50 Agnes Street/37 Troy Street parcel. Commercial units spanning between Addition 2 and the Main Mill are accessed off a single-loaded hallway located along the north wall of the Main Mill. This hallway continues west into the Carding/Twisting/Spinning House and accesses the stair and elevator.

The ca. 1919 stairwell is located near the western entrance to the building and provides circulation between the first floor and the roof. Interior finishes within the stair tower include concrete masonry unit (CMU) enclosure walls, concrete treads and risers, and simple metal

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handrails along the interior of the stair; no exterior wall handrails are present. The ca. 1919 freight/passenger elevator (later renovated) is located at the northwest corner of the addition and includes an exterior dock on Agnes Street.

Interior framing of the 1893 portion consists of round-section 5.5” steel columns. These support timber floor beams on the first and second floors; columns on the third and fourth floors are square-section timber. On the first floor of the 1919 extension, interior framing is comprised of round-section steel columns supporting timber floor beams. Upper floors incorporate a combination of steel and timber columns. On the fourth floor of Addition 2, short wood stairways, railings, and platforms were installed circa 1956 to create mezzanine levels.<sup>4</sup> A row of square wood columns with chamfered edges was added in 2025 to the mezzanine level to support the load of photovoltaic panels on the roof.

Floors in Addition 2 are finished with concrete and wood on the first floor and with wood and finished plywood on the upper stories. Exterior walls are exposed brick and stone masonry; demising walls are gypsum wallboard. Ceilings are exposed to the wood decking above. Unit entries have wood slab doors within metal frames.

**Addition 2/Industrial function (Figures 10-12, 14):** As built for cotton manufacture, the 1893 section of this addition housed carding on the first floor, twisting and spinning on the second. With the conversion to wool combing in 1903, the first floor housed combing operations, the second carding. In 1919 Providence Combing Company added two floors to the 1893 portion of this addition. While Sanborn maps of the period do not identify specific functions within this space, it is likely that functions carried out on different floors of the Main Mill carried over into this space. The 1919 extension likely housed the same uses as those within the 1893 portion.

### **Addition 3: First Store House/Office/Garage (Photos #3, 9)**

62-68 Dike Street

Built 1932 for Providence Combing Company

Erected by Providence Combing Company in 1932, this three-story, brick, 140’ x 36’, rectangular addition was a freestanding building until the construction of Addition 4 in 1948, which linked it to the rest of the plant. It shares party walls with Addition 4 to its west and south.

The roof is flat and surfaced with membrane. There are five entrances along the north (Dike Street) elevation. These are (east to west): a modern overhead freight door; a modern, metal recessed door accessed by a concrete stair; and three recessed doorways with double, modern metal doors. Two openings with modern, metal replacement doors are located along a wide alley running along the south elevation of this addition and accessed from the north alley off Troy Street.

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<sup>4</sup> The carpentry and finish of the mezzanines suggest that they are contemporary with the post-1956 infill between Main Mill and Addition 1. See description of Addition 1.

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On the west and north elevations, single and paired windows are set in rectangular openings with brick sills; sash are modern, metal replacements. On the south elevation, second-story windows are similar. First floor windows, however, are a distinct departure from the rest of the fenestration—the two easternmost windows, although modern replacement types, are set in segmental arch openings with concrete sills. The two westernmost window openings are filled with glass block (likely original) with a metal lintel above and brick sills.<sup>5</sup>

**Addition 3/Interiors:** The First Store House/Office/Garage is divided into commercial units. On the first floor, there is one double-height space in the easternmost bay (accessed by the freight door) and additional units accessed by private or shared hallways. Three straight-flight stairways provide access to units on the second floor, and a fourth stairway ascends to the third floor. Addition 3 communicates with Addition 4 on all three floors.

Interior framing is comprised of a mix of round-section steel and square-section timber columns supporting timber floor beams. Flooring is concrete on the first floor and finished plywood and wood plank flooring on the upper stories. Walls are finished in gypsum board, and some exterior walls display exposed brick. Ceilings are a mix of exposed ceiling decking and gypsum board finishes.

**Addition 3/Industrial function (Figure 14):** Replacing a frame store house (ca. 1903) and a brick garage (ca. 1919) on the same footprint (Figures 11-12), this addition contained company offices, storage, and (in its easternmost bay) a high-ceilinged garage.

#### **Addition 4: Second Store House (Photos #6-10, 19-20)**

62-68 Dike Street

Built 1948 for Providence Combing Company

This irregularly-shaped addition consists of a two-story volume (built in 1948) that measures approximately 125' x 50' with a one-to-three-story east extension that measures approximately 60' x 15' (erected after 1956). It is the last of the major improvements made by Providence Combing Company. Built of brick-faced concrete block, it rests on a concrete pad and is attached to the rubblestone north wall of the Main Mill and the brick west and south walls of Addition 3. The roof is flat and surfaced with membrane.

Modern metal replacement windows on the second floor are mostly grouped in threes with concrete sills and brick, flat-arch lintels. There are four recessed, modern, metal doors along the north (Dike Street) elevation. A modern sign that reads "62-68 DIKE ST." is located above the easternmost recess. The west (Agnes Street) elevation contains two entrances: modern, metal double doors beneath a brick lintel and a single-leaf modern, metal door that accesses the main

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<sup>5</sup> Segmental arch openings on this elevation and a change in the brick bonding pattern from prevailing stretcher bond to a single course of header bond at the height of the second floor provides some evidence that Providence Combing Company may have incorporated the rear wall of the 1919 one-story brick garage that stood at the corner of Dike and Troy Streets from ca. 1919 to 1932.

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corridor along the party wall shared with the Main Mill. The east elevation of the extension is accessed by a two-story metal exterior stair.

**Addition 4/Interiors:** The first floor contains an office, boiler room, and workshops, along with commercial units arranged around a *T*-shaped corridor with a straight-run stair located in the southwest corner of the addition. The second floor has a single-loaded corridor that provides access to commercial units and a utility room. The third floor of the extension contains a commercial unit that accessed by a short flight of steps from Addition 3.

Ceiling heights are roughly 8' on the first floor and 14' on the second. Floor beams are concrete; interior columns are predominantly round-section steel. Flooring is concrete on the first floor and finished plywood and wood plank flooring on the upper story. Ceilings are a mix of exposed ceiling decking and gypsum board finishes.

**Addition 4/Industrial function (Figure 14):** Replacing a wood-frame building erected ca. 1881 and labeled as an "office" by 1899 and a storehouse (ca. 1903), this addition is labeled "Store House" on the 1951 Sanborn drawing.

**Chimney (one contributing structure, 1874-1899) (Photos #2-4):** Located along the south wall of the Main Mill and west of Addition 1, this brick, square-section chimney tapers from a roughly 8'-square base, rising to a height of 125'. It is unclear if this chimney represents a replacement or an increase in height to the 80' high chimney installed by John Ross between 1874 and 1899.

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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.)

ARCHITECTURE

INDUSTRY

**Period of Significance**

1829-1954

**Significant Dates**

1829-1831 – construction of Main Mill and First Engine/Boiler House

1874-1899 – construction of Chimney

1875 ca. – construction of Addition 1

1893 – construction of first phase of Addition 2

1919 – two stories added to Main Mill, First Engine/Boiler House and Addition 2; extension of Addition 2

1932 – construction of Addition 3

1948– construction of Addition 4

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

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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 Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-Providence Combing Company Plant is significant under **Criterion A** at the state level in the area of Industry for its ability to illustrate the rise and decline of the state's textile industry from early, steam-powered cotton cloth and yarn manufacture from 1829 to 1902, to conversion to wool combing in 1903, and the cessation of textile manufacture in 1954.

The Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-Providence Combing Company Plant is also significant under **Criterion C** at the state level in the area of Architecture, as the physical expression of several phases of industrial adaptation over 125 years. The Main Mill and First

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Engine/Boiler House and subsequent additions illustrate the evolution of textile mill architecture, from original construction as a stone masonry steam mill (1829-1831), to pier-and-spandrel brick construction (1893 et seq.), to brick-faced concrete-block construction with interior steel and concrete framing (1948). These variations reflect new technologies, new building materials, changes of manufactured product, and the boom-and-bust economic cycles affecting Rhode Island's textile industry. Notably, the plant includes significant remains of the masonry walls of one of the first steam-powered cotton mills in Rhode Island.

The **Period of Significance** (1829-1954) represents the beginning of construction and the years that the mill was engaged in cotton and worsted wool textile manufacture. After sale of the plant in 1954, it was subdivided for use by various tenants, notably manufacturers of artificial pearls for use in costume jewelry.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

## CRITERION A - INDUSTRY

### **The Eagle Steam Mill as owned and operated by John Waterman 1829-1846**

Construction of the cotton spinning and weaving mill known as the Eagle Steam Mill in 1829-31 occurred in the context of the development of Olneyville as an important textile manufacturing district, significant civic and population growth in Providence, and the early embrace of stationary, steam-powered "mill engines" in Rhode Island and throughout the new nation. See the *Additional Information* section below for a more detailed description of the technological developments and economic factors influencing Waterman's choice of steam as a motive power.

Settlement of Olneyville dated back to the early eighteenth century with the construction of Plainfield Road and Valley Street, linking a Native American village and paper mill to the compact part of Providence. Additional growth followed after Christopher Olney set up his 1785 paper and gristmill in the area. Over the course of the nineteenth century, several small foundries and other industrial enterprises located along the banks of the Woonasquatucket River, with many of the businesses eager to harness waterpower from the river and its many small cataracts. Cotton manufacturers arrived in the early nineteenth century with two of the earliest being the Union Mill (established in 1805 for cotton spinning, no longer extant) and Lyman Cotton Manufacturing Company (1807, no longer extant).<sup>6</sup>

John Waterman (1786-1879--Figure 1), born in Johnston, Rhode Island, learned the textile business and its associated machinery while working for his uncle Henry Franklin. An early

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<sup>6</sup> The Lymansville Company Mill in North Providence (listed in the National Register in 2012) includes hydraulic features from the 1809 Lyman Cotton Manufacturing Company water privilege, but the 1807 mill is not extant.

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textile entrepreneur, Franklin likely helped his teenage nephew find employment in the Union Mill machine shop, where he learned textile machinery repair and construction. While there Waterman met Daniel Wilde, with whom he entered into a short-lived partnership to operate a cotton spinning mill for wholesale merchant Richard Wheatley in Canton, Massachusetts.

In 1812, a year after the dissolution of the partnership with Wilde, Waterman rejoined Henry Franklin in the establishment of the Merino Mill, a 1,500-spindle woolen mill (later converted to cotton spinning, not extant) upstream on the Woonasquatucket River in Johnston. Waterman served as mill superintendent while Franklin attended to financial affairs. Demand for domestic cotton goods was rising due to the Embargo Acts of 1807 and the War of 1812, and five more cotton mills were constructed in Olneyville.<sup>7</sup>

In 1819 Waterman set off on his own due to considerable financial loss in his Merino Mill investment, returning to Olneyville to lease the Union Mill.<sup>8</sup> To modernize the plant, he sought a \$20,000 loan from the well-known Pawtucket machining firm of Pitcher and Gay; this company also supplied new machinery for the plant. The Union Mill under Waterman's operation was profitable—he was able to repay the Pitcher and Gay loan in just three years.

Upon repayment of the loan, Waterman remained for an additional year, leaving the Union Mill in 1826 to act as resident agent for the Blackstone Manufacturing Company of Blackstone, Massachusetts. Shortly after, due to declining health, he relocated to New Orleans to serve as a cotton broker for the Blackstone Company while remaining on the company payroll.

In 1829 Waterman returned to Rhode Island to purchase roughly 50 acres of land in Olneyville (Figure 2) just east of the Providence-Johnston town line. A number of mills had been constructed in the area, making it an important textile district. Waterman's faith in the profitability of cotton manufacture and commitment to the use of stationary steam engines to manufacture yarn and cloth can be seen in his decision to break ground for a substantial steam mill in the autumn of 1829, soon after the launch of the Providence Steam Cotton Mill two miles east (not extant), even as the regional cotton industry was in the throes of a serious financial crisis.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Lisa C. Fink, *Providence Industrial Sites, Statewide Historical Preservation Report P-P-6* (Providence: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, 1981), 5.

<sup>8</sup> For a six-month period following his partnership with Wilde, Waterman rented a "room with power" to build textile machinery. Little is known of this operation. The availability of relatively inexpensive rented "rooms with power" (shafting and belting from which machinery could be operated) was an important factor in the incubation of industrial shops of the period.

<sup>9</sup> The regional cotton economy was subjected to successive downturns in 1816, 1819, and 1825. The first signs of a major financial crisis began appearing in Pawtucket in early 1829 and were fully developed by the summer of that year. The 1829 financial collapse, caused by excessive borrowing and overproduction, soon reverberated throughout the southern New England textile economy. The cyclical booms and busts of New England textile manufacture continued throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. See Anthony Connors, *Ingenious Machinists* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014), 169-80.

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With the advent of practical, stationary, steam-powered mill engines in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, textile entrepreneurs were no longer required to purchase a water privilege. This newfound freedom allowed them to site factories in emerging urban areas close to population centers. There were other significant factors as well. As noted by Patrick Malone and Robert Gordon in *The Texture of Industry* (1994):

...[C]ities had many advantages over rural villages as settings for manufacturing enterprises once canals and railways linked them to markets, sources of fuel, and raw materials. Cities had existing physical and cultural infrastructures that reduced or eliminated the need for direct company expenditures on housing, stores, parks, churches, meeting halls, recreational facilities, domestic water supply, and waste disposal. Newly arrived immigrants came to them seeking employment opportunities.<sup>10</sup>

Observing the more practical side of mill operation in the early years of the stationary steam engine, Oliver Evans spoke of the benefits of steam as compared to other forms of motive power in *The Young Steam Engineer's Guide* (1805):

Water-falls are not at our command in all places, and are liable to be obstructed by frost, drought, and many other accidents. Wind is inconstant and unsteady: animal power, expensive, tedious in the operation, and unprofitable, as well as subject to innumerable accidents. On neither of these can we rely with certainty. But steam at once presents us with a faithful servant, at command in all places, in all seasons.<sup>11</sup>

While remote waterpower sites offered relatively inexpensive energy, mill owners struggled to attract workers—often necessitating the construction of factory villages—and were forced to address periodic conditions of low water, spring freshets, winter icing, and not infrequent litigation over water rights and flowage. When weighed against the cost of procurement of coal and purchase/maintenance of an expensive steam engine, early 19<sup>th</sup>-century textile entrepreneurs increasingly abandoned waterpower sites, choosing to install more reliable steam plants to provide prime or supplemental power. Some textile companies, including those along the Woonasquatucket, continued to make the most of their riverside sites by using the water for washing, printing, dyeing, and bleaching.

Meanwhile, Providence was undergoing dramatic population growth. In 1776 this center of maritime commerce had a population of about 4,000. This number had increased more than fourfold to 17,000 by 1829, when Waterman chose to site his factory in Olneyville.<sup>12</sup> Peter Coleman broadly described the urban growth of Providence in this period in *The Transformation of Rhode Island* (1963). Between 1830 and 1840 in Providence "...the number of mills rose from

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<sup>10</sup> *The Texture of Industry*, 185.

<sup>11</sup> Oliver Evans, *The Young Steam Engineer's Guide* (Philadelphia: Fry and Kammerer, Printers, 1805) 1.

<sup>12</sup> Determining precise statistics for the population of greater Providence population can be difficult due to the fact that villages like Olneyville spanned two municipalities—Providence and Johnston. A complete reckoning of the number of potential workers living in the vicinity of Waterman's planned factory would need to take into consideration the population on the Johnston side as well. The Town of Providence adopted a City Charter in 1831, the same year that John Waterman's plant was fully outfitted and running.

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four to thirty, capital quadrupled, production increased sevenfold, and the labor force expanded more than six-fold.”<sup>13</sup>

Several other factors contributed to Providence’s development as a center for textile production. Improvements in transportation included more and improved turnpikes, the introduction of steamship routes, and the development of rail transport. In *Rhode Island: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites*, Gary Kulik and Julia Bonham point out that “The port of Providence served as an important center for receiving raw cotton and marketing finished goods, and the city itself soon solidified its position as the commercial, banking, and transport capital of the state.”<sup>14</sup> The development of the local textile machinery and machine tool industries also supported the state’s textile economy.

John Waterman’s Eagle Steam Mill, an imposing, three-story, T-plan, stone-masonry mill (referred to as the Main Mill in this nomination) with an attached masonry First Engine/Boiler House was fully outfitted and in operation by 1831 (Figure 3). The plant, capitalized at \$80,000, housed 4,000 cotton spindles and 108 power looms, producing print cloth and providing employment to 28 men, 54 women, and 55 children. Waterman chose as a power source a 40 HP high-pressure steam engine built by the Troy, New York, firm of Starbuck & Elliott (see *Additional Information*). The mill was located next to the tracks of the brand-new steam-powered Providence and Stonington Railroad (1837) for convenient transport of raw materials and finished products.<sup>15</sup> John Waterman employed his two sons, John Olney Waterman (1811-1881) and Albert Waterman (1813-1869) from the beginning.

Apparently successful, Waterman expanded his operation in 1836 with the construction of a second mill (Eagle Steam Factory No. 2, no longer extant)<sup>16</sup> on a lot to the immediate east of the original mill. Eagle Steam Mill (at this time differentiated under the name Eagle Steam Mill No. 1) continued to operate under that name by John Waterman, Sr. until 1846-47.

### **The Harrison Steam Mill Company** 1846-1874

In 1846, Waterman, then 60 years old, divided the mill property, with the original Eagle Mill No. 1 to be operated by son Albert and Eagle Mill No. 2 to be operated under the name “John Waterman and Company” by J. C. and R. Peckham.<sup>17</sup> Albert Waterman formed a new

<sup>13</sup> Peter Coleman, *The Transformation of Rhode Island, 1790-1860* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1959) 121.

<sup>14</sup> Gary Kulik and Julia C. Bonham, *Rhode Island: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites* (Washington: Historic American Engineering Record, 1978), xx.

<sup>15</sup> *Providence Industrial Sites*, 8.

<sup>16</sup> That adjacent stone factory (demolished in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century) eventually became the core building of the Weybosset Mill Company complex during the Civil War-era. The Weybosset Mills Historic District was listed on the National Register in 2008.

<sup>17</sup> It appears that there remained an administrative connection between the two mills for some time, as J.C. Peckham was acting as agent for the Harrison Steam Mill Company as late as 1851. Providence directories as late as 1847-48 list both John O. and Albert Waterman as associated with the Eagle Mill. By 1847 John O. Waterman had removed

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partnership, the Harrison Steam Mill Company, in the same year with partners William Viall (1805-1880) and Frederick Burgess (1818-1879).<sup>18</sup>

An inauspicious event occurred just as the property division was unfolding. In the early morning of January 13, 1846, one of the seven boilers at the neighboring Eagle Steam Mill No. 2 exploded. According to a contemporary account:

The boilers are in a building separate from the factory, and the only damage to the latter was by the concussion by which some thirty feet of the wall was blown down. The boiler house was torn to pieces.... This shows the great advantage of placing the boilers in a separate building.<sup>19</sup>

This incident at the then-ten-year-old mill may well have contributed to the elder John Waterman's retirement plans.

The 1850 Federal Census *Products of Industry* schedule reported a decreased capitalization of \$35,000 from the 1830-31 Census, a decrease in the number of cotton spindles to 2,300, and a reduced count of 80 looms for the Harrison Steam Mill Company. In that year the company produced 647,000 yards of print cloth. As was common at the time, former partnerships often restructured themselves as corporations under a charter ratified by the Rhode Island General Assembly. Harrison Steam Mill Company was incorporated in 1851 with the same partners and recapitalized at \$100,000.<sup>20</sup>

The plant's First Engine/Boiler House remained in use until 1851 when the newly-incorporated Harrison Steam Mill Company placed a June 30, 1851 advertisement in the *Providence Journal* to sell "One low pressure<sup>21</sup> steam engine, 40 horse power, now running and in good order; can be delivered September 1<sup>st</sup>. Also, four 30 inch cylinder boilers for sale..." The statement that the engine was running and could be delivered by September 1 is significant as it indicates that the newly-formed corporation planned substantial improvements. The 40 HP engine advertised was the Starbuck & Elliott engine installed twenty years earlier by John Waterman. Major improvements in the efficiency and power of steam engines had occurred in the intervening

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to Warren, R.I. to establish the Warren Manufacturing Company, a steam cotton mill on the Warren River in what is now the Warren Waterfront National Register Historic District.

<sup>18</sup> Burgess was the younger brother of Thomas Mackie Burgess (1806-1856), who served as Mayor of Providence from 1841 to 1852. A newspaper article on Rhode Island industry noted that Waterman's original partner in the Eagle Steam Mill was Thomas M. Burgess; see "Manufacturing and Mechanical Industry of Rhode Island: Twenty-second article," *Providence Journal* (28 July 1870): 2. No biographical material on Waterman found to date has corroborated the existence of that partnership. It is significant, however, that Thomas Burgess's younger brother Frederick became one of the partners in the Harrison Steam Mill corporation during his period as mayor.

<sup>19</sup> "Explosion," *Providence Journal* (14 January 1846).

<sup>20</sup> *An Act to Incorporate the Harrison Steam Mill Company*. Private Acts of the General Assembly, January session. Charter Book 1851-1853.

<sup>21</sup> The description of this engine as "low pressure" in this advertisement was an error. The engine reported for John Waterman and Co.'s Eagle Mill in the 1838 *Steam-Engines* survey was a 40 HP high-pressure engine. *Steam-Engines*, 25th Congress, 3<sup>rd</sup> session, 1839. H. Doc. 21. Serial 345, 88. The same report noted only three low-pressure mill engines in operation at that time in the entire state.

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years, attributable in no small measure to innovations carried out by George H. Corliss of Providence.

George H. Corliss (1817-1888) was born in Easton, New York. Showing an early aptitude in mechanics, he devised a sewing machine capable of stitching leather, receiving a U.S. patent in 1842. He removed to Providence in 1844 taking a job as a draftsman for steam engine and boiler manufacturer Fairbanks, Bancroft and Company. It was during this period that he devised a new cut-off type of valve that dramatically increased the efficiency of steam engines.<sup>22</sup> To exploit this patent in 1848 he formed a partnership with John Barstow and E.J. Nightingale to be named Corliss, Nightingale and Company. On June 23, 1851, the Harrison Steam Mill Company entered into a contract with Corliss which stated that Corliss, Nightingale and Company

...agrees to build an Engine complete with pumps, pipes, main shaft, balance Wheel, main pulley and heater and everything necessary for complete operation of the same and to convey them and put them in operation in the mill in Olneyville belonging to the said Harrison Steam Mill Co. The engine is to be of the same size and pattern as the one lately built for the Elm Street Woolen Manufactory by the said Corliss, Nightingale and Co. and is to be connected with the boilers now in said mill, and also to be connected with the heater to be put in by them...<sup>23</sup>

The contract specified that the engine to be built for the Harrison Steam Mill would be “of sufficient size and strength to drive 110 looms.”<sup>24</sup> The boilers then in operation at the Harrison Steam Mill were apparently of sufficient horsepower to meet the capacity of the new Corliss engine—likely the 60 HP engine shown on the 1874 Sanborn drawing (Figure 6).<sup>25</sup>

The Panic of 1857 had major effects on the cotton industry, causing temporary closure of the plant in the following year (at the time operating 5,000 cotton spindles and employing 75 operatives).<sup>26</sup> Resuming operation by 1860, the *Products of Industry* schedule for that year reported Harrison Steam Mill Company capitalized at \$70,000, with 85 operatives producing annually 1,394,000 yards of print cloth valued at \$78,000.<sup>27</sup> The census also reported a machinery complement of 137 looms and 5,300 spindles, a sizable increase over the machinery reported in 1850 and likely due to incorporation and recapitalization in 1851.

Over the course of the following decade the Harrison Steam Mill Company would experience serious setbacks, including difficulty in procuring southern cotton during the Civil War and

<sup>22</sup> United States Patent No. 6,162. George H. Corliss, *Cut-off and working valve for steam engines*. 8 March 1849.

<sup>23</sup> George H. Corliss Collection, John Hay Library Box 4, Folder 18:9. Contract between Corliss, Nightingale and Co. and Harrison Steam Mill Company (23 June 1851).

<sup>24</sup> The 1874 Sanborn drawing of the Elm Street Woolen Manufactory shows a 50 HP engine, likely the engine built and installed by Corliss in 1851 as referenced in the contract.

<sup>25</sup> The 1874 Sanborn drawing of the Elm Street Woolen Manufactory shows three boilers with a combined power of 60 HP powering a 50 HP steam engine. This power plant is similar in scale to the power plant (four boilers and a 60 HP engine) shown on the 1874 Sanborn rendering of the Harrison Steam Mill.

<sup>26</sup> “Stopped Mills.” *Providence Journal* (7 January 1858).

<sup>27</sup> In that year, the plant had in operation 137 looms and 5,052 spindles.

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increased local competition. The number of cotton mills in Providence had grown from eight with 1,138 workers in 1850 to fifteen with 1,730 workers in 1860.<sup>28</sup> Several events indicate the company's instability. By 1866 the plant was under new management: William H. Taylor (president) and Henry Jacobs (secretary). This directorship was short lived: a December 1868 *Public Notice* published in the *Providence Journal* announced that the Harrison Steam Mill Company was to be "linked" to Reynolds Manufacturing Company of Bristol, Rhode Island.

The notice was placed by Jeffrey Hazard, the recently-elected secretary/treasurer of both companies. The following day a counter notice disputing Hazard's claim was signed by A. Knight, agent of both the Reynolds and Harrison Mills. The dispute was, by all indications, resolved after the death of Albert Waterman in 1869. The following year directories listed William H. Reynolds as president and Jeffrey Hazard as treasurer of the Harrison Steam Mill Company. There are indications that this management change did little to improve the fortunes of the company. The 1870 *Products of Industry* Federal Census schedule provided no information on the company, an indication of inactivity. Shortly after, the Panic of 1873, a major national economic depression, sealed the fate of the Harrison Steam Mill Company. Cotton entrepreneur John L. Ross purchased the shuttered Olneyville plant in April 1874 combining its capacity with the three cotton mills he owned and operated elsewhere in Rhode Island and in Connecticut.<sup>29</sup>

### **The Harrison Steam Mill Company as operated by John L. Ross 1874-1898**

Born in Coventry, Rhode Island, John L. Ross (1819-1908) purchased a mill privilege on the Clear River in the Oakland section of Burrillville in 1845. There he built a substantial stone mill, leasing it to a Woonsocket worsted manufacturer. By 1853 he began operating the mill on his own. Over time his holdings expanded to include cotton mills in the Burrillville industrial village of Oakland and Lincoln, Rhode Island, as well as mills in East Killingly and Mansfield, Connecticut.<sup>30</sup>

After purchasing the Harrison Steam Mill in Olneyville in 1874, Ross continued to operate the plant under that name, producing print cloth and sheeting until he sold the property in 1898 (Figure 8). Although little is known of the mill's operation as part of the Ross holdings, he made significant changes to the physical plant. Soon after his purchase in 1874, Ross repurposed the original Engine/Boiler House as a Picker House and, following what was by then an established practice, erected the Second Engine/Boiler House (Addition 1) at the east end of the Main Mill

<sup>28</sup> *Providence Industrial Sites*, 12.

<sup>29</sup> Providence Deed Book 244:220.

<sup>30</sup> As of 1892 Ross's combined operations utilized 25,000 cotton spindles and 404 looms. For a brief biography of John L. Ross, see *Industries and Wealth of the Principal Points in Rhode Island* (1892), 109 and "John L. Ross" [obituary], *Woonsocket Call* (19 February 1908): 8. See also Robert O. Jones, National Register of Historic Places Nomination form for Oakland Historic District, Burrillville, Providence County, Rhode Island (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1997).

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with an eye toward a larger power plant as well as more efficient and practical power transmission.

In 1893 Ross built a new Carding/Twisting/Spinning House (Addition 2) attached to the south elevation of the Main Mill, the same year the national economy entered another major depression the effects of which persisted well into the decade. The plant was shut down for a period in 1896 due to poor business conditions. At the time of this closure, the plant housed 8,000 cotton spindles and 176 looms, powered by a 150 HP steam engine, the latter likely installed after 1874 to replace the Corliss engine of 1851.<sup>31</sup> In 1898 Ross's trustee sold the Olneyville plant to Harold Lawton of Warwick for conversion to cotton yarn spinning.<sup>32</sup>

### **Lawton Spinning Company** 1898-1902

Harold Lawton (1852-1916), born in Yorkshire, England, immigrated to the United States at age twenty. He served as superintendent of several Rhode Island and Connecticut mills and was, by 1898, general manager of the Warwick Mills at Centreville. In that same year, investors associated with Charles Fletcher's Pocasset Worsted Mill<sup>33</sup> of Johnston, Rhode Island, incorporated the Lawton Spinning Company and purchased the Harrison Steam Mill in Olneyville. Lawton immediately removed all the weaving machinery associated with the former operation and installed 8,000 cotton spindles to produce fine Sea Island and Egyptian yarns.<sup>34</sup> The 1899 Sanborn drawing (Figure 10) shows a 756 HP steam engine in Addition 1.<sup>35</sup> This substantial increase in steam power likely was carried out by Lawton. Another major alteration to the original mill during this period was the installation of new floors as noted in a September 1902 newspaper item.<sup>36</sup> The slow-burning, plank-on-beam construction visible today in the Main Mill likely reflects this improvement.

Despite investing in major repairs and alterations to the aging plant, the Lawton operation in Olneyville was short lived. A year after commencing operations, the Harris Privilege Mill, a massive water-powered plant on the Blackstone River in Woonsocket, came on the market.

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<sup>31</sup> See *Rhode Island 1636-1896 Illustrated* (1896) and *The Blue Book Textile Directory of the United States and Canada* (1897-1898).

<sup>32</sup> Providence Deed Books 419:243 and 419:268.

<sup>33</sup> Notably, textile industrialists Frederick Fletcher (son of Charles) and Leander Peck. Fletcher's Pocasset Worsted Company Mill was listed on the National Register in 2010.

<sup>34</sup> Joseph D. Hall, ed., *Biographical History of the Manufacturers and Business Men of Rhode Island* (J.D. Hall, 1901) 78-79. The entry on Lawton Spinning discusses at length the extent of the former Harris plant in Woonsocket, making only brief mention of the plant in Olneyville, which was run simultaneously until closed by Lawton in 1902.

<sup>35</sup> The 1904 Sanborn rendering of the plant as owned by Pocasset Combing comprises paste-overs representing changes that had taken place since publication of the 1899 drawing. A southerly expansion of Addition 1 (Chamber B) is shown among these pasted changes. Also shown is what appears to be a paste-over error: a single boiler appears at the very south of the boiler room despite the *Blue Book Textile Directory* reporting two boilers in the 1905-06 edition. The final *Blue Book* listing for the Harrison Steam Mill (as owned by John L. Ross) in 1897-98 reported three boilers in operation.

<sup>36</sup> Item, *Providence Journal* (19 September 1902).

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Lawton Spinning Company purchased that mill in 1899, phasing out the Olneyville plant by 1902. In the same year the original 1.5-acre Eagle Steam Mill No. 1 parcel was divided, the southern half sold to Crown Worsted Company. This parcel is currently occupied by Mars Plastics.

### **Pocasset Combing Company** 1903-1908

By late in the century, small cotton mills like Lawton Spinning often found it difficult to compete with the economies of scale of massive spinning and weaving plants, choosing to convert to woolen or worsted manufacture. In 1903, Lawton Spinning sold its Olneyville property to its parent company, the Pocasset Worsted Company,<sup>37</sup> which operated it for five years as the Pocasset Combing Company in the manufacture of “worsted tops”<sup>38</sup> (Figure 11). The transition was made from more than seventy years of cotton spinning and weaving to worsted manufacture, a use that would continue until the end of textile manufacturing on the site in 1954.

Beginning with the establishment of the Valley Worsted Mill in Providence in 1842, Rhode Island figured prominently in the manufacture of worsted cloth.<sup>39</sup> By the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the state’s worsted industry had surpassed the long-dominant cotton industry with 51 establishments and 14,896 employees. Rhode Island was the third ranking state for the production of worsted goods, and Providence contained the largest concentration of worsted production in the country. When Pocasset Combing began production in 1903, the majority of Providence’s worsted mills were clustered in the Woonasquatucket River Valley, most of them located in Olneyville.<sup>40</sup>

### **Providence Combing Company** 1908-1954

In February 1908, Pocasset Combing Company leased the Olneyville plant to Edmund Hills and Charles J. Nichols, two Boston-based worsted entrepreneurs. Operating initially under the name Providence Combing Company, the worsted top manufacturer underwent corporate restructuring

<sup>37</sup> Providence Deed Book 455:121.

<sup>38</sup> The *Callaway Textile Dictionary* (1947) offers two definitions of worsted tops: “1) A continuous, untwisted strand or sliver of the longer wool fibers from which the shorter fibers have been removed by the worsted comb. 2) A commercial commodity consisting of a ball of such material, usually weighing from 5 to 15 pounds.”

<sup>39</sup> Worsted yarn manufacture differs from that of ordinary wool in that the wool fibers are sorted either by length (the English or Bradford system) or by fineness (the French or Continental system) and then combed before spinning. Worsted yarns are smoother and lighter than regular wool and produce higher quality cloth.

<sup>40</sup> Edward Connors, National Register of Historic Places Nomination form for Lymansville Company Mill, North Providence, Providence County, Rhode Island (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2012), 11.

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and name changes until 1954. For simplification, in this document these companies will be referred to collectively as Providence Combing Company.<sup>41</sup>

The most significant physical changes to the plant occurred during this ownership. In 1919 Providence Combing Company added a fourth, brick floor to the Main Mill and its stair tower/ell, at the same time adding two floors to the Carding/Twisting/Spinning House (Addition 2). It also erected a 4-story expansion following the alignment of Agnes Street as it widened northerly to its intersection with Dike Street (Figure 12).

By 1932 the company was owned solely by Edmund Hills. In the same year the company continued its expansion with the erection of a free-standing, two-story, flat-roofed brick building that housed the company offices, a store house, and a garage (Addition 3, Figure 13).<sup>42</sup> Two years later in 1934, in the depths of the Great Depression, the company was forced to close for a period due to extremely difficult business conditions. Shortly before Hills' retirement in 1940 he sold the plant to Theodore W. Jenks of East Providence, who operated it until 1947, at which time he sold it to Hills and Nichols' successor company, Nichols and Company (Boston). In 1948 this company carried out the final improvement to the plant with a new Store House (Addition 4), infilling to the corner of Dike and Agnes Streets and attached to the Main Mill and Addition 3 (Figure 14). This building comprised a low-ceilinged ground floor and a full-height second story. Because the new store house shared a wall with part of the north exterior wall of the Main Mill, the original 1829-1831 window openings were filled with concrete block. Aerial photographs indicate that the loading/rigging dock on the east side of the Main Mill was installed by 1951.

After reaching a peak in the early 20th century, Rhode Island's worsted industry contracted during the 1910s. The demand for worsted cloth for military uniforms stimulated the industry during World War I, but the wartime boom was followed by a prolonged period of decline for the New England textile industry as a whole. As conditions worsened in the Great Depression, manufacturers cut production and wages causing widespread protests and work stoppages. Rhode Islander mill operatives joined in local actions and the Great Textile Strike in 1934, which involved four hundred thousand textile workers on strike for 22 days throughout the country.

These demonstrations convinced many textile manufacturers to close their mills or leave New England for the American South (and subsequently, overseas). Worsteds, as a finer good, fared better than cottons and coarse woolens during the depression years, and Rhode Island worsted production once again benefited from a wartime boom with the onset of World War II. This

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<sup>41</sup> The corporate changes are as follows: Hills and Nichols operating as Providence Combing Company (1908-1921); Providence Wool Combing Company (1921-1940); Providence Wool Combing, Inc. (1940-1948); a return to the original name Providence Combing Company (1948-1954); Wellman Combing Company (briefly during liquidation of the Olneyville plant).

<sup>42</sup> At some point after 1932 Providence Combing built an enclosed overhead walkway from the second floor of Addition 3 to the offices on the second floor. This walkway was removed sometime after 1956. "Building Shows Slight Increase," *Providence Journal* (18 September 1932): D1.

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activity could not be sustained and in the decade following the war's end, the major worsted mills in Rhode Island closed, leaving only small niche producers.<sup>43</sup>

In February 1954 Arthur Wellman, Vice President of Nichols and Company, effected a short-lived change of corporate ownership of the Olneyville plant. This entity, Wellman Combing Company, began liquidation of the property in the same year. Worsted equipment was removed and shipped to the new, \$3 million Wellman Combing Company plant in Johnsonville, South Carolina. Like many Rhode Island textile businesses that closed shop after World War II, Providence Combing Company could no longer compete with the South and its cheap labor, new machinery, and lower costs of doing business. In a rapid series of transactions in late 1954, Wellman also subdivided the property, creating the two parcels that exist today, selling the former mill property to holding company Rhedon Corporation of Providence.<sup>44</sup> Rhedon, in turn, sold the property to Domenic Patriarca of Providence in December 1954.<sup>45</sup> The southern parcel (Plat 35, Lot 345, 19,151 sq. ft.) comprised the Main Mill and attached First Engine/Boiler House and Additions 1 and 2. The northern parcel (Plat 35, Lot 536, 12,381 sq. ft.) comprised Additions 3 and 4.

### Post-textile Uses

By 1955 subdivided spaces within the buildings on both parcels were being rented to industrial and commercial tenants. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Providence, drawing on its expertise in metalwork, emerged as a center of jewelry manufacture. As was the case with many former textile mills at the time, the dominant post-textile use of the plant was for varied aspects of jewelry manufacture. The most prominent among these enterprises were artificial pearl manufacturers, including Crown Pearl and Del-Ray Pearl. The last was Victory Pearl, which rented space from 1973 to ca. 2000. In 2002, Eagle Steam Mill was included in Providence's new Industrial and Commercial Buildings District, a discontinuous local historic district comprised of 19th and 20th-century industrial and commercial buildings.

Recent uses of the former plant (as subdivided into the present parcels in the 1950s) have included light manufacturing and artists' lofts. The northern portion of the plant (which includes Additions 3 and 4), known as the "Versailles Building," contains workspaces for artists and entrepreneurs. The southern portion (which includes the Main Mill and attached First Engine/Boiler House, Additions 1 and 2, and the Chimney) is undergoing rehabilitation for adaptive reuse and is currently under consideration for the Federal Historical Preservation Tax Credit. In a nod to the plant's long and remarkable history, current owners have renamed the southern parcel *Harrison Steam*.

<sup>43</sup> Connors, Lymanville Company Mill, 11-12.

<sup>44</sup> "Three Industrial Buildings Sold." *Providence Journal* (24 October 1954): V4.

<sup>45</sup> Providence Deed Book 1024: 34.

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## CRITERION C - ARCHITECTURE

The Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-Providence Combing Company Plant is significant under Criterion C at the state level in the area of Architecture. As constructed in 1829-1831 and enlarged in phases until 1948, it represents several important stages in the evolution of textile factory design and responses to new product lines, industrial power, and architectural technology.

The oldest part of the plant is a 3-story, *T*-plan cotton spinning and weaving mill (referred to as the **Main Mill** in this nomination) of wetlaid, parged, rubble masonry with an attached engine/boiler house (**First Engine/Boiler House**) of similar construction. Although altered, the original components of the plant are highly significant as a rare survival of one of the earliest steam-powered textile mills in the country. Steam power afforded textile entrepreneurs the ability to erect mills in closer proximity to established transportation routes and emerging population centers—the latter obviating the need to erect factory housing. Steam-powered plants, dependent primarily on the availability of coal, were not subject to the vagaries of the low water, icing, and periodic flooding events that bedeviled water-powered mills. The transition in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century from timber-framed mills to larger, sturdier, and more durable masonry mills also reflected a growing confidence on the part of textile entrepreneurs like John Waterman in the stability—and profitability—of cotton manufacture.<sup>46</sup>

A notable artifact of early masonry mill construction can be seen in the configuration of window openings in the 1829-1831 Main Mill. While these openings are relatively small as compared to those of mills built even twenty years later, the sides of the window openings on the first three floors are splayed—expanding in width from the exterior of the mill to the interior—to maximize penetration of natural light. Similar angled window openings are found at the 1812 Wilkinson Mill in Pawtucket.

Also significant is the siting of the First Engine/Boiler House near the mid-point of the narrow, main block of the Main Mill (see Figures 3 and 6). The First Engine/Boiler House was subdivided into two chambers: the west chamber housed the original 40 HP steam engine; the east chamber housed the original boilers. To reduce the risk of relatively common boiler explosions to other parts of the plant, the engine and boiler chambers were separated by an internal masonry wall, and a stone masonry party wall divided the First Engine/Boiler House from the Main Mill. A pass-through wall opening between the Main Mill and the First Engine/Boiler House (now partially filled) is likely a surviving artifact of this early power arrangement (see Photo 12). This opening allowed leather belting attached to the engine pulley to pass into the Main Mill to drive overhead shafting running the length of the building. The sill and lintel were sloped to accommodate the alignment and sag of the belt. Later steam mill construction practice typically would site engine/boiler houses at the end of a mill building,

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<sup>46</sup> Two other nearby, surviving examples of parged stone masonry mill construction from this period are found at Providence Dyeing Bleaching and Calendering's Valley Bleachery plant (listed in the National Register in 2004) on Valley Street in the Olneyville section of Providence. The plant's Grey/Singe Room (Building 2) was built between 1843 and 1849. The plant's Packing House (Building 3) was built between 1849 and 1857.

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which can be seen in John Ross's placement of the **Second Engine/Boiler House** (Addition 1) ca. 1875.

Other updates made between 1874 and 1898 during the ownership of John Ross reflected new developments in building and insuring industrial facilities. The Second Engine/Boiler House (Addition 1) departed from the 1829-1831 stone masonry construction in its use of brick, a construction material that was cheaper and more generally available in the years after the Civil War. Erected in 1893, the brick **Carding/Twisting/Spinning House** (Addition 2) was initially two stories in height, built in the pier-and-spandrel style common to textile factories of the era. The Factory Mutual insurance system encouraged standardized construction forms—among them, slow-burning, plank-on-beam flooring; chamfered posts and beams; and flat or near-flat roofs. Kulik and Bonham argue that mills with flat roofs could be built with deeper footprints to hold more machinery but necessitated larger windows to draw more natural light into the center of the mill.<sup>47</sup> This is also evident in Addition 2 with its large paired windows set in segmental arch openings.

The Providence Combing Company made substantial investments to modernize the plant over the course of four and a half decades. A major project completed in 1919 employed similar construction to that used by Ross in 1893. Additional stories were erected atop the Main Mill (its original hip roof removed), First Engine/Boiler House,<sup>48</sup> and Addition 2 (also extended westerly to Agnes Street at the same time). The **First Store House/Office/Garage** (Addition 3) constructed of brick in 1932 presented a spare, modern appearance with a flat roof and recessed doorways and accommodated a deep, single-story garage, suggesting that shipping and receiving had shifted from trains to trucks. The last major addition (**Second Store House**/Addition 4) represented a significant departure from previous construction. Interior framing was steel with a concrete floor, and the exterior was concrete block and clad in brick.<sup>49</sup> The roof is flat and surfaced with membrane. Columns are a mix of round-section steel and square-section timber.

As built and expanded between 1829 and 1948, the Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-Providence Combing Company encompassed multiple eras of industrial architecture and embodied a typical pattern of accretive industrial growth. The original mill building and boiler house became the core of a larger plant with a complex arrangement of attached spaces that would cover half of a city block in the most heavily industrialized part of Providence.

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<sup>47</sup> Kulik and Bonham, 18-19.

<sup>48</sup> Around the same time, a new floor was inserted into the First Engine/Boiler House to facilitate wool processing functions.

<sup>49</sup> Segmental arch openings on this elevation and a change in the brick bonding pattern from prevailing stretcher bond to a single course of header bond at the height of the second floor provides some evidence that Providence Combing Company may have incorporated the rear wall of the 1919 one-story brick garage that stood at the corner of Dike and Troy Streets from ca. 1919 to 1932.

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***Additional Information***

**The Introduction of Stationary Steam Engines to Rhode Island**

Construction by John Waterman of the cotton mill known as the Eagle Steam Mill in 1829-1831 occurred in the context of the very early use of stationary, steam-powered mill engines in Rhode Island and throughout the expanding nation. Rhode Island witnessed its first use of a Newcomen—or atmospheric type—stationary engine as installed by the Brown family for pumping water out of the bog ore deposits in rural Cranston in 1780.<sup>50</sup> This type of engine, while inefficient, bulky and slow in operation, worked effectively to pump water. Its reciprocating motion, however, was ill-suited for the smooth rotational motion necessary to drive mill machinery, as water- and wind power had long provided.

James Watt (1736-1819) patented major improvements to the Newcomen engine beginning in 1765. These improvements included the “double acting” release of steam alternately above and below a moving piston, which ensured smoother and more rapid rotational motion. Watt also introduced a separate steam condenser, effecting a dramatic increase in thermal efficiency. Well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was considerable debate on both sides of the Atlantic as to the benefits vs. dangers of high-pressure boilers.

Oliver Evans (1755-1819), a brilliant American machinist and inventor of the first practical, high-pressure “mill,” or stationary, steam engine in the United States, introduced a working mill engine in Philadelphia in 1802. Based on this success, in 1807 he established the Mars Works in Philadelphia for manufacture of a high-pressure engine he named the “Columbian.” By 1812 he had manufactured ten engines in use nationally; by 1816 there were about fifty in use, mostly in the eastern United States.

Evans made several early sales in southern New England, among them an engine installed at the Middletown Woollen Manufactory (Middletown, Connecticut) in 1811. This successful installation was followed soon after with the purchase in 1812 of a 30 HP Evans engine by the Providence Woollen Company—the first installed in Rhode Island.<sup>51</sup> This success encouraged the Providence Dyeing Bleaching and Calendering Company to purchase a Columbian Engine during the hostilities of the War of 1812 and ship it secretly to Providence at a cost of \$17,000.<sup>52</sup> In 1827 Samuel Slater, more than three decades after establishing the nation’s first successful water-powered cotton spinning mill in Pawtucket, Rhode Island in 1793, secured land on the Providence waterfront for erection of a steam-powered cotton spinning and weaving mill. He

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<sup>50</sup> Thomas Newcomen developed this engine for pumping water from coal mines in England in 1712. The engine installed by the Browns pumped water from the Cranston ore bogs for their Hope Furnace (Scituate). This was the third such engine installed in the United States.

<sup>51</sup> Providence Woollen Company occupied a waterpower site in the northern part of the city, later the site of the Allen Print Works.

<sup>52</sup> It is estimated that \$15,000 of this cost was attributable to the difficulties of transport.

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chose a 24 HP Evans engine for this operation.<sup>53</sup> These early adopters of stationary steam engines for textile manufacture provided the setting for John Waterman's entry into this field.

Two Federal studies from the 1830s provide context for the adoption of steam to drive Rhode Island mills of the period. The first, *Documents Relative to the Manufactures in the United States* (commonly known as the *McLane Report*), was commissioned by the House of Representatives in 1832 to assess the general state of manufacturing in the new republic. The respondent for Rhode Island was industrialist Samuel Slater. In the narrative section of his report, he remarked that at the time of his survey "...three cotton mills are now driven by steam, and two more to be operated by that agent, are in progress." Slater did not make note of John Waterman's steam mill in the narrative part of his report, but he did list it in the tabular data. Reported in the tabular data were, in chronological order, the Providence Steam Cotton Mfg. Co. (1828), the East Greenwich Manufacturing Co. (1829), Eagle Steam Mill (1829-1831)<sup>54</sup>, and the Newport Steam Mill (1831).

The use of steam engines in boats, locomotives and mills increased dramatically in the 1830s. Concurrent with this increase was the occurrence of boiler explosions and steam engine accidents. In order to assess the extent of these occurrences, the U.S. Treasury in 1837 mandated that the states and territories (where feasible) provide detailed data on steam engine use. The report, entitled *Steam-Engines*, was delivered to the House of Representatives in January 1839. Data on mill engines furnished for Rhode Island showed some 55 steam mills in operation, among them 32 engaged in textile work.<sup>55</sup> The data furnished included the name of each factory, owners, engine horsepower, manufacturing use, high- or low-pressure boilers, date of installation, engine maker, and the length of time the engine had been in operation. The entry for John Waterman reported "Eagle mill, John Waterman and Co., 40 HP engine, cotton cloth manufacture, high pressure, engine built 1831, Starbuck & Elliott, seven years in service."<sup>56</sup>

Below is a partial inventory of early stationary steam engines in Rhode Island from the first Newcomen, or atmospheric, engine installed in 1780 to 1836. The latter was chosen as an end date because of the rapid adoption of steam power at the time. The surviving fabric of the Eagle Steam Mill No. 1 (1829-1831) is the earliest surviving among the first generation of the state's textile mills powered solely by steam. As noted below, the surviving Newport Steam Mill was built in 1831; the surviving Bristol/Namquit Steam Mill was built in 1836.

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<sup>53</sup> David Wilkinson was associated with Slater in this important early steam mill. Wilkinson had installed a steam engine of his own design at the Pawtucket mill built by his father Oziel Wilkinson in 1810-11. Little is known of the specifications of this engine, which provided supplemental power for the Wilkinson Mill (powered primarily by a breast wheel). This steam engine likely continued in operation until a regional collapse of the textile economy forced Wilkinson into bankruptcy in 1829.

<sup>54</sup> Slater's dating of the Eagle Steam Mill as 1831 likely reflects the commencement of manufacturing in that year.

<sup>55</sup> *Steam-Engines*, 85-89. This tally included cotton and woolen manufacturers as well as textile finishers and printers. The collector for the Providence district was W.R. Danforth (1787-1861). During the period of the steam engine study, Danforth was serving as collector for the Providence Custom House. He served as Mayor of Providence in 1853.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 88.

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**Stationary Steam Engines in Rhode Island (1780-1836)**

*Date column refers to year procured or placed in service*

| Date        | Purchaser  | Location                       | Builder/Type  | Building Status         | Notes  |
|-------------|--|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------|--|
| 1780        | Brown family/Hope Furnace                        | Scituate                       | Newcomen/<br>atmospheric type. Some sources attribute this engine to builder Joseph Brown of Pawtucket. | Not extant              | Built to pump water from bog ore deposits. At the time one of only three such engines in operation in US.  |
| 1811        | David Wilkinson, Wilkinson Mill                  | Pawtucket                      | Custom built, specifications unknown  | Extant                  | Provided supplemental—not primary source of—power for Wilkinson Mill, built 1810-11 (NR/NHL, 1966).  |
| 1812        | Providence Woollen Company                       | Providence                     | Oliver Evans, 30 HP high pressure   | Not extant              |  |
| 1814        | Providence Dyeing, Bleaching & Calendering       | Providence                     | Oliver Evans, Columbian 20 HP   | Not extant              |  |
| Pre-1820    | Rhode Island Coal Company                        | Portsmouth                     | Oliver Evans, unknown specifications  | Not extant              | Date of installation between 1809 and 1820.  |
| 1827-8      | Samuel Slater, Providence Steam Cotton Mill      | Providence (waterfront)        | Rush/Muhlenberg (successors to Oliver Evans), Columbian 24 or 30 HP engine (see note).                  | Not extant              | Reported in 1833 <i>McLane Report</i> . Accounts vary as to the actual horsepower of the original engine. Replaced in 1837 with a 70 HP Fairbanks, Clark and Co. engine. |
| 1828        | Otis Walcott (textile)                           | Pawtucket                      | 8 HP engine of unknown manufacture  | Not extant              |  |
| 1829        | East Greenwich Manufacturing Co.                 | East Greenwich                 | J.P. Allaire 55 HP high-pressure  | Not extant.             | Reported in <i>McLane Report</i> , 1833. Original 1829 mill destroyed by fire in 1840. Replaced by “Bay Mill,” which survives  |
| <b>1831</b> | <b>John Waterman/<br/>Eagle Steam Mill No. 1</b> | <b>Providence (Olneyville)</b> | <b>Starbuck &amp; Elliott, 40 HP high-pressure engine</b>   | <b>Partially extant</b> | <b>Reported in <i>McLane Report</i>, 1833. Original engine replaced in 1851 with Corliss engine</b>  |
| 1831        | Newport Steam Mill                               | Newport waterfront             | Holmes Hinckley, 25 HP high-pressure engine   | Extant                  | Reported in <i>McLane Report</i> , 1833. Building survives with additions/alterations. NR-listed 1972 as Newport Steam Factory.  |
| 1832        | Hazard/  | South                          | Troy Company, 18  | Not extant              | Two Hazard mills used  |

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|      |   |                            |   |                                       |   |
|------|---|----------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|
|      | Peacedale<br>Factory  | Kingstown                  | HP high-pressure  |                                       | identical Troy Company<br>engines.  |
| 1836 | Bristol/Namquit<br>Steam Mill   | Bristol<br>waterfront      | Providence Steam<br>Engine Co., 50 HP<br>high-pressure engine | Extant                                | Contributing resource in<br>Bristol Waterfront Historic<br>District (NR, 1975).   |
| 1836 | John<br>Waterman/<br>Eagle Steam<br>Mill No. 2 (later<br>known as<br>Weybosset Mill<br>No. 1) | Providence<br>(Olneyville) | Unknown   | 1836 mill<br>not extant<br>(see note) | Although the 1836 mill was<br>demolished in the early 1980s,<br>the 1836 "Mill No. 1 Boiler<br>House" survives and is a<br>contributing resource in the<br>Weybosset Mills Historic<br>District (NR, 2008). |
| 1836 | Elm Street<br>Woolen<br>Manufactory   | Providence                 | Babcock<br>(Providence) 25 HP<br>high-pressure engine         | Not extant                            | Replaced by 50 HP Corliss<br>engine in 1851.  |

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*Providence Deed Books.*

*Providence Tax Books.*

*Steam-Engines.* 25<sup>th</sup> Congress, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, (Serial no. 345), 1839, House Document 21.

U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Products of Industry* (1850, 1860, 1870).

U.S. Congress. *Steam-Engines.* 25<sup>th</sup> Congress, 3<sup>rd</sup> session, 1839. House Document 21. Serial 345.

U.S. Patent No. 6,162. George H. Corliss, *Cut-off and working valve for steam engines.* 8 March 1849.

Woodward, William McKenzie and Edward Sanderson. *Providence: A Citywide Survey of Historic Resources.* Providence: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, 1986.

**Articles:**

“Building Shows Slight Increase.” *Providence Journal.* 18 September 1932.

“Dispatch.” *Providence Journal.* 28 January 1846.

“Explosion.” *Providence Journal.* 14 December 1846.

Item. *Providence Journal.* 19 September 1902.

“John L. Ross.” *Woonsocket Call.* 19 February 1908.

Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-  
Providence Combing Company Plant

Providence County,  
Rhode Island

Name of Property

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“Larger Capital: Lawton Spinning Co. will make an increase to \$500,000.” *Providence News*.  
31 August 1899.

“Manufacturing and Mechanical Industry of Rhode Island: Twenty-second article.”  
*Providence Journal*. 28 July 1870.

“New Plant to Start Up.” *Providence Journal*. 29 May 1908.

“Olneyville: Speculation as to Future of Old Ross Mill on Dike Street.” *Providence Journal*.  
30 January 1899.

“Stopped Mills.” *Providence Journal*. 7 January 1858.

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### Unpublished materials:

Contract between Corliss, Nightingale and Co. and Harrison Steam Mill Company (23 June  
1851). Corliss Collection, John Hay Library, Brown University. Box 4 Folder 18.9.

Field notes for HAER survey of RI Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites, 1978. On file,  
Mary Elizabeth Robinson Research Center, 121 Hope Street, Providence, RI.

### Maps consulted:

*Listed chronologically*

- 1835 Cushing, S.B. and B. Lockwood. *Map of the City of Providence and North  
Providence*
- 1848 Atwater and Schubarth. *Plot of the Eagle Steam Mill Estate Belonging to John  
Waterman and Co.*<sup>57</sup>
- 1849 Cushing, S.B., and Henry F. Walling. *A Map of the City of Providence*.
- 1851 Walling, Henry F. *Map of Providence County*.
- 1855 Walling, Henry F. *Map of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*.
- 1857 Walling, Henry F. *City of Providence*.
- 1870 Beers, D.G and Co. *Atlas of the State of Rhode Island*.
- 1874 Hopkins, G.M. *Plat Book of the City of Providence* (also 1882, 1908, 1918, 1926,  
1937)
- 1874 Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. (also 1889, 1899, 1904, 1920, 1951, 1956)
- 1895 Everts and Richards. *New Topographical Atlas of Surveys: Providence County*

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<sup>57</sup> Note: There are two similar versions of this drawing on file as City of Providence Plat Cards 81 and 855.

Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-  
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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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**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**

**Acreege of Property:** less than one acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: <u>41.8155184</u> | Longitude: <u>-71.4420169</u> |
| 2. Latitude:                   | Longitude:                    |
| 3. Latitude:                   | Longitude:                    |
| 4. Latitude:                   | Longitude:                    |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-  
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Name of Property

Providence County,  
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- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

The bounds of Eagle Steam Mill/Harrison Steam Mill/Providence Combing Company Complex are coterminous with outer bounds of two adjoining lots in the Olneyville section of Providence, Rhode Island: Plat 35, Lot 345 (50 Agnes Street/37 Troy Street) and Plat 35, Lot 536 (62-68 Dike Street).

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These boundaries represent the .86-acres of land occupied historically by the Eagle Steam Mill and its successors from 1829 to 1954. The original 1.5-acre 1829 Eagle Steam Mill lot was subdivided in 1898 to form the .86-acre area that is the subject of this nomination (see Figures 2 and 3); it was subdivided again in 1954 into two adjacent parcels, Lot 345 and Lot 536.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Edward Connors with Kim Smith Barnett  
organization: Edward Connors & Associates  
street & number: 39 Dyer Avenue  
city or town: East Providence state: RI zip code: 02915  
e-mail: noconnors@cox.net  
telephone: 401-595-0699  
date: February 2026

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**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.

Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-  
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- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### 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 photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Eagle Steam Mill/Harrison Steam Mill/  
Providence Combing Company Plant  
City or Vicinity: Providence  
County: Providence  
State: Rhode Island  
Photographer: Kim Smith Barnett, Mary Kate Harrington  
Dates Photographed: August 2025 (Harrington),  
October and December 2025 (Smith Barnett)  
Location of Original: Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage  
Digital Files: Commission, 150 Benefit Street, Providence, RI 02903  
Number of Photographs: 20

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

- Photo #1: (Left to Right) Addition 2, Main Mill, First Engine/Boiler House, Addition 1 at south alley, view east (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #2: (L-R) Addition 2, First Engine/Boiler House, Chimney, Main Mill, Addition 1 at south alley, view northwest (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #3: (L-R) (43 Troy Street on far left) South alley, Addition 1 with Chimney behind, fourth story of Main Mill with loading/rigging dock extension, Addition 4, view northwest (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #4: (L-R) First Engine/Boiler House with cotton storage/other addition in foreground, Chimney, Main Mill, Addition 2 from south alley, view north (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #5: (L-R) (40 Agnes Street at far left) Addition 2, Main Mill from south alley, view west (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #6 Streetscape from corner of Agnes Street and south alley with (L-R) Addition 4, Addition 2, First Engine/Boiler House, Addition 1, and south alley, view northeast (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #7: Streetscape from corner of Dike and Troy Streets with (L-R) Addition 4, Main Mill (fourth floor) and Addition 2, view southeast (Smith Barnett)

Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-  
Providence Combing Company Plant

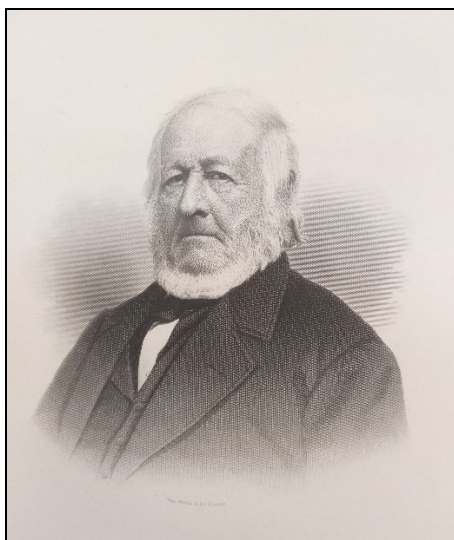
Providence County,  
Rhode Island

Name of Property

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- Photo #8: Elevator loading dock and entrances at Addition 2 (Addition 4 visible at far left), view southeast (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #9 Streetscape from corner of Dike and Troy Streets showing (L-R) (43 Troy Street on the far left) Addition 1, Main Mill (loading/rigging dock), Addition 3, Addition 4, view southwest (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #10: South alley from Agnes Street with (L-R) Addition 4, Addition 2, and First Engine/Boiler House (40 Agnes Street on right), view east (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #11: Interior of Main Mill's east wing (fourth floor), view northeast (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #12: Interior of Main Mill's west wing (first floor), view east (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #13: Interior of Main Mill staircase in south ell (first floor), view west (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #14: Interior of First Engine/Boiler House (second floor), view southeast (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #15: Interior of Addition 1 staircase (first floor), view south (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #16: Interior of Addition 2 lobby (first floor), view southwest (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #17: Interior of Addition 2 commercial unit (first floor) viewed from west wing of Main Mill, view southeast (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #18: Interior of Addition 2 commercial unit (fourth floor), view northwest (Smith Barnett)
- Photo #19: Interior hallway in Addition 4 with former exterior wall of Main Mill at right (first floor), view east (Harrington)
- Photo #20: Interior commercial unit in Addition 4 (second floor), view north (Harrington)

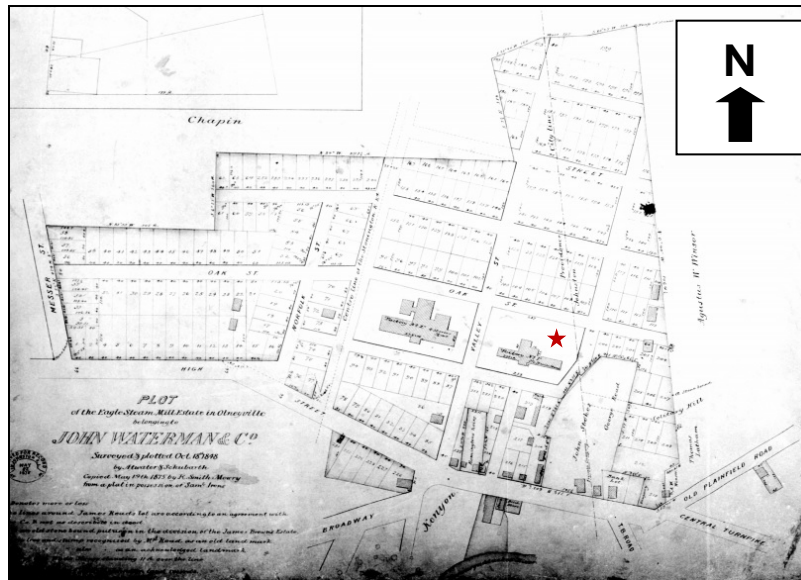
## FIGURES



**Figure 1**  
John Waterman (1786-1879)  
from *Representative Men and Old Families of Rhode Island* (1908)

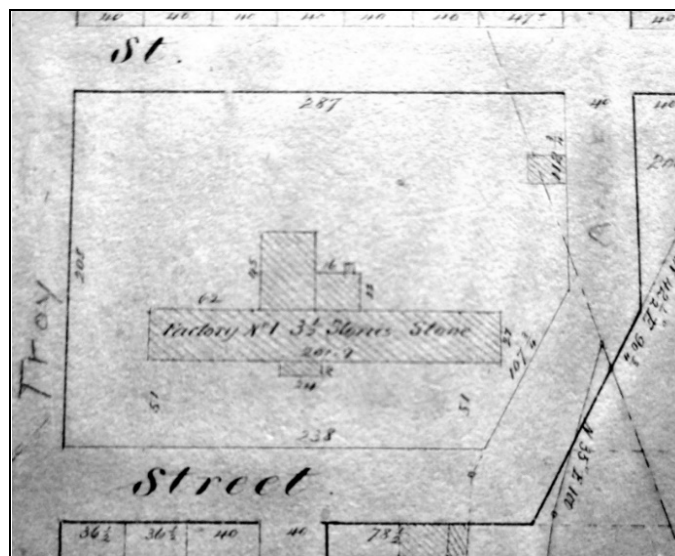
Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-  
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**Figure 2**  
*Plot of the Eagle Steam Mill Estate in Olneyville*  
Atwater and Schubarth (1848)  
Providence Plat Card 855

*Note: This drawing is oriented south-north. Eagle Steam Mill No. 1 indicated by star.*



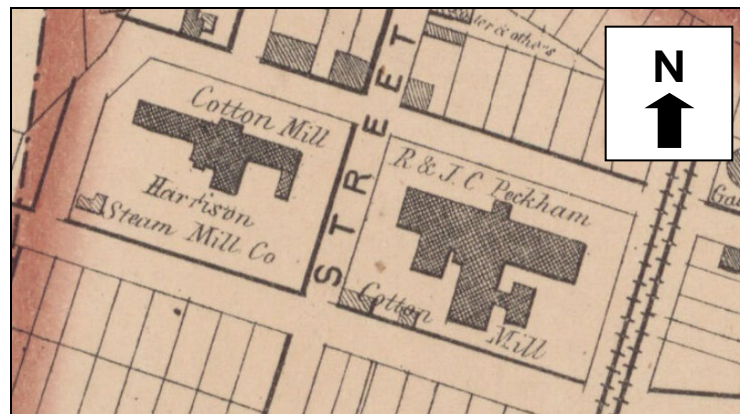
**Figure 3**  
*Detail from Plot of the Eagle Steam Mill Estate*  
Providence Plat Card 81  
Atwater and Schubarth (1848)  
*showing Main Mill and First Engine/Boiler House*  
*Note: This drawing is oriented south-north.*

Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-  
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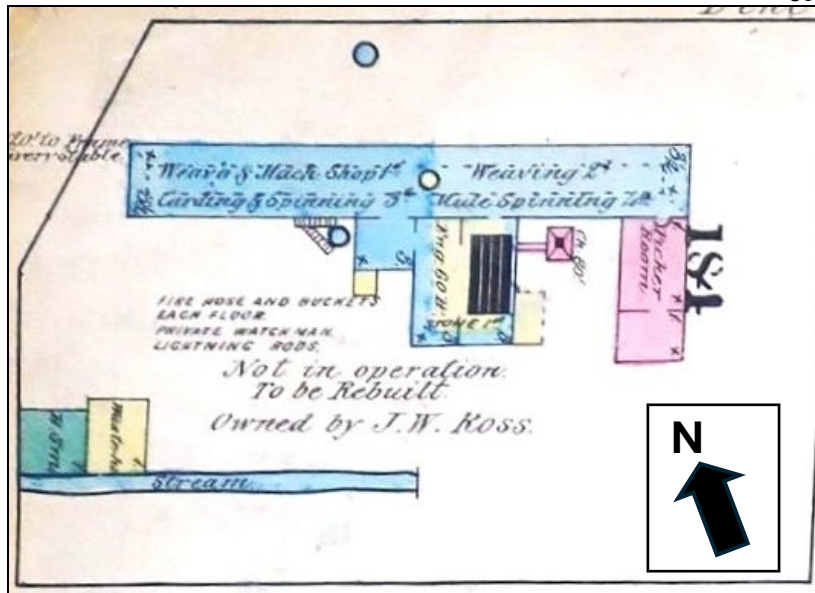
**Figure 4**  
Detail from *A Map of the City of Providence* (1849)  
Cushing and Walling  
showing (l-r) Eagle Steam Mills Nos. 1 and 2  
and proximity to Providence and Stonington Railroad.



**Figure 5**  
Detail from *Map of the City of Providence* (1857)  
Henry F. Walling  
showing Harrison Steam Mill (new brick Picker House at west end of mill)  
and R. & J.C. Peckham's Cotton Mill on parcel to east (later, Weybosset Mill).

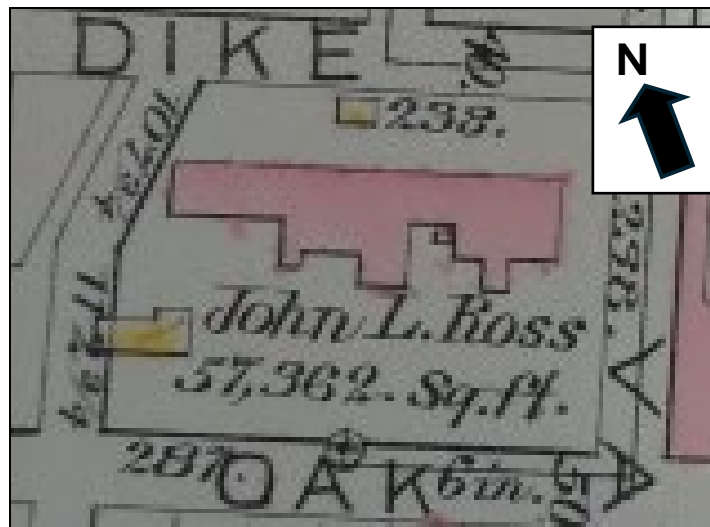
Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-  
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**Figure 6**

Detail from *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* (1874)  
showing Harrison Steam Mill as purchased by John L. Ross  
*Note: This drawing made after the failure of Harrison Steam Mill Company ca. 1870*  
Showing 60 HP engine from Corliss, Nightingale in First Boiler/Engine House.

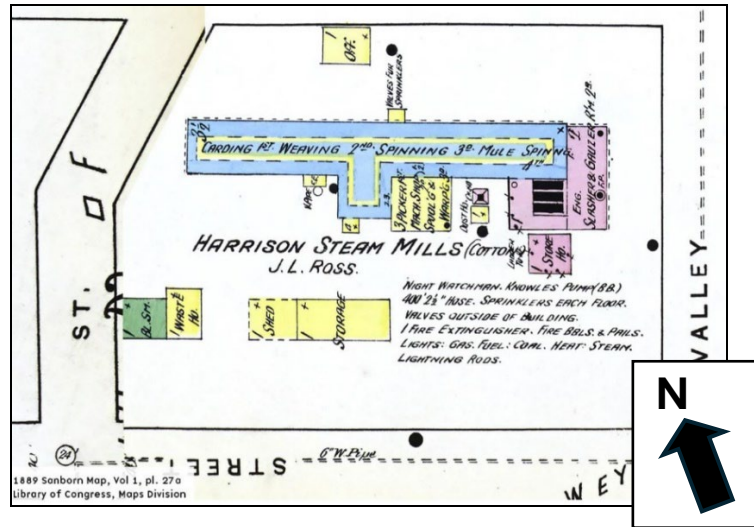


**Figure 7**

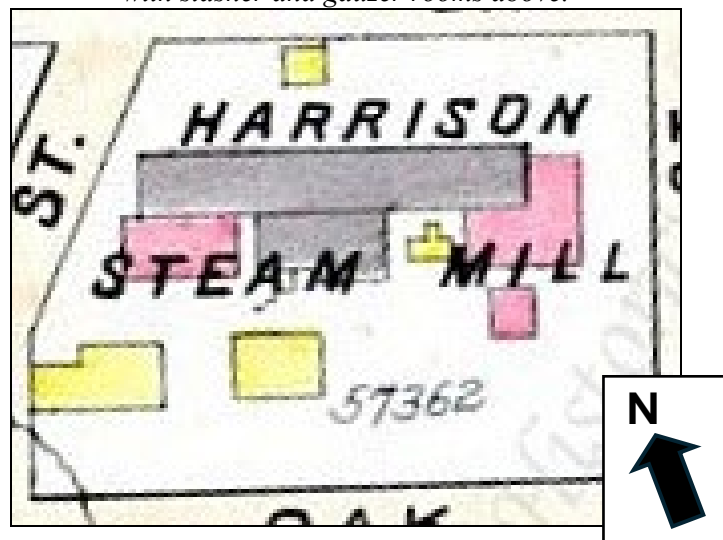
Detail from *Atlas of the City of Providence* (1882)  
G.M. Hopkins  
showing Second Engine/Boiler House (Addition 1) at east end of mill as built by John L. Ross  
and frame office building (no longer extant) fronting on Dike Street.

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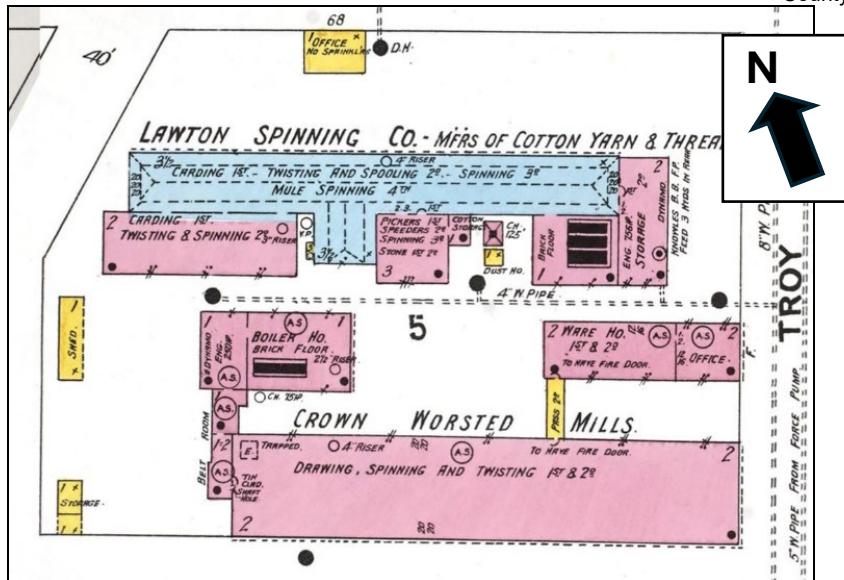
**Figure 8**  
Detail from Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (1889)  
showing three boilers installed in Second Boiler/Engine House (Addition 1)  
with slasher and gauzer rooms above.



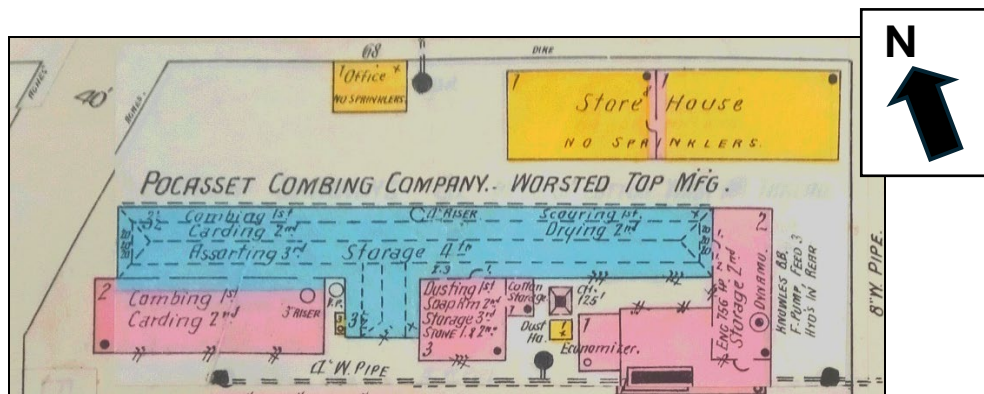
**Figure 9**  
Detail from *New Topographical Atlas, Providence County* (1895)  
Everts and Richards  
showing brick Carding/Twisting/Spinning House (first portion of Addition 2)  
as erected by John L. Ross in 1893.

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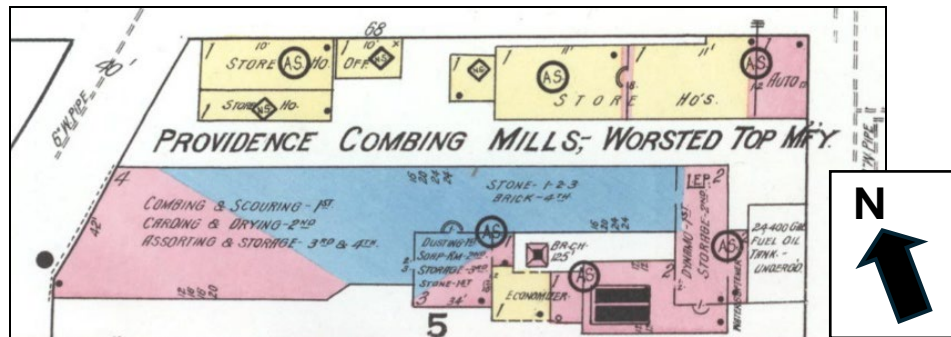
**Figure 10**  
 Detail from Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (1899)  
 showing Lawton Spinning Company ownership and subdivision of original lot.  
 Southern half of lot was sold to Crown Worsted Mills in 1898.  
 Chimney has been raised to 125’.



**Figure 11**  
 Detail from Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (1904)  
 showing additions as pasted onto 1899 base map (see Figure 10).  
 This drawing represents the plant’s first use as a worsted mill,  
 showing new frame store house (no longer extant) at corner of Dike and Troy Streets,  
 756 HP engine in Second Engine/Boiler House (Addition 1) and first economizer (no longer extant)  
 built from west wall of Addition 1.  
 Note likely pasting error showing a single boiler in southern enlargement of Addition 1.

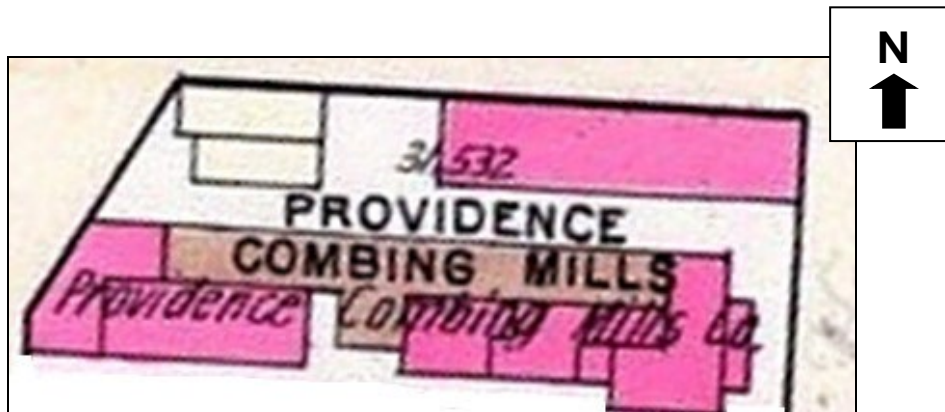
Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-  
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**Figure 12**

Detail from Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (1920)  
showing addition of fourth (brick) floor to Building 1, addition of two floors to 1893 portion of  
Addition 2 and expansion of Addition 2 west to Agnes Street,  
angled infill of former alley between Addition 2 and Main Mill ell,  
reduction to two boilers, second economizer, and brick garage at corner of Dike and Troy Streets.

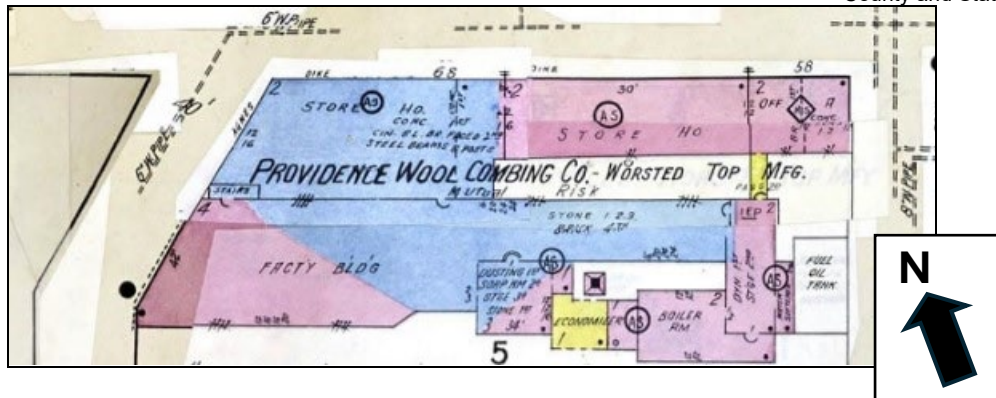


**Figure 13**

Detail from Hopkins Plat Map (1937)  
showing new Office/Store House (Addition 3) at upper right corner  
and narrow "water softener" addition to east end of Second Engine/Boiler House (Addition 1).

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**Figure 14**

Detail from Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (1951)  
showing new Store House (Addition 4).

*This drawing represents the final layout of the plant before Providence Wool Combing Company's relocation to South Carolina in the same year.*



**Figure 15**

Detail from aerial photo of Olneyville taken during construction of  
Huntington Expressway (Route 10) in 1951

*View east showing (l-r) Providence Combing Company (with star) and Crown Worsted Company  
(now Mars Plastics).*

Rhode Island State Archives

Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-  
Providence Combing Company Plant  
Name of Property

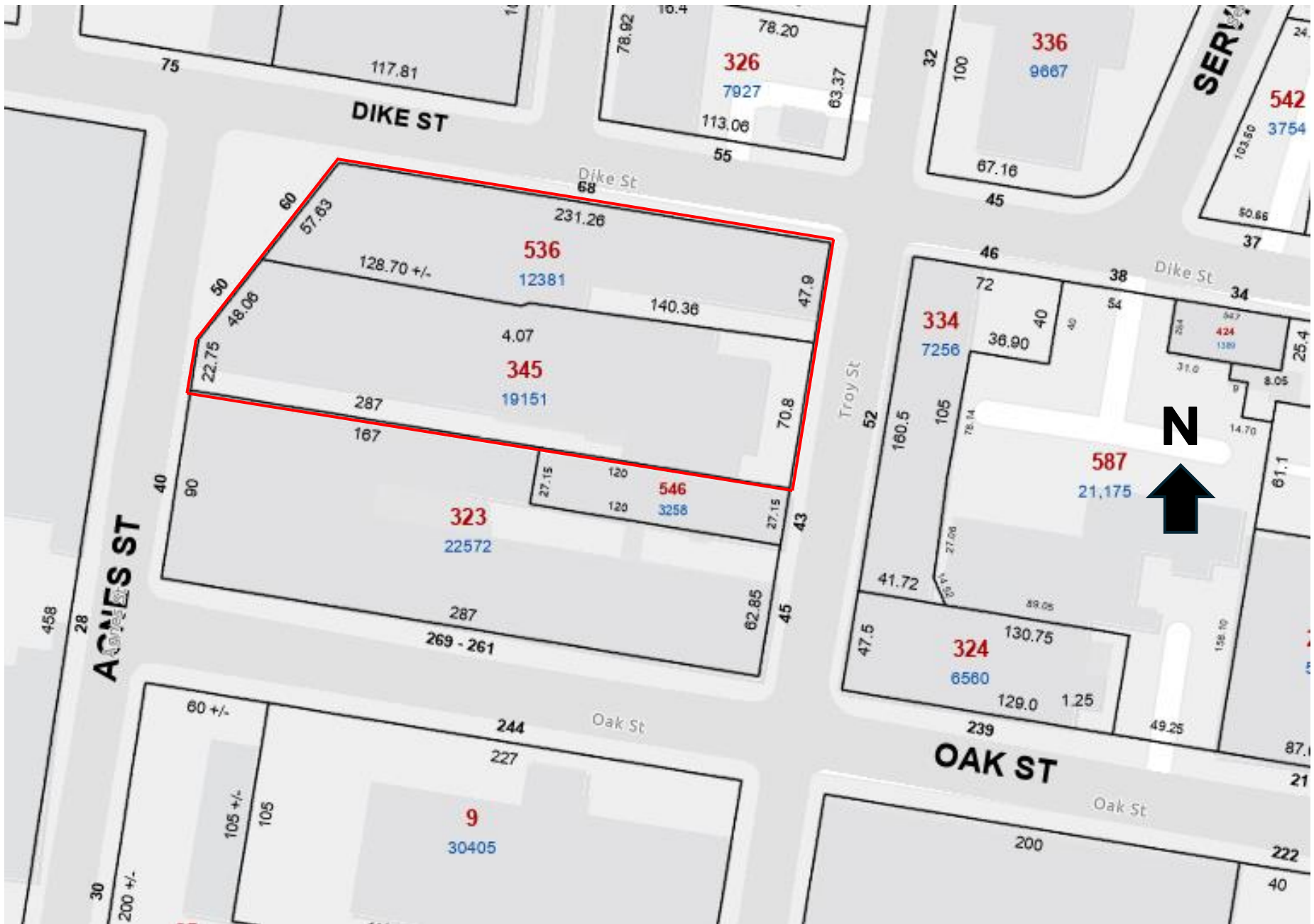
Providence County,  
Rhode Island  
County and State



**Figure 16**  
Detail from aerial photo of Olneyville taken during construction of  
Huntington Expressway (Route 10) in 1951  
*View west showing (l-r) Crown Worsted Company (now Mars Plastics)  
and Providence Combing Company (with star).*  
Rhode Island State Archives

**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.



**PARCEL MAP:** Eagle Steam Mill – Harrison Steam Mill – Providence Combing Company Plant is outlined in red. It comprises Lots 536 and 345 in Plat 35. Source: Providence GIS

# Eagle Steam Mill- Harrison Steam Mill- Providence Combing Company Plant

50 Agnes Street, 37 Troy Street, 62-68 Dike Street  
Providence, Providence Co., Rhode Island

Latitude: 41.815518° Longitude: 71.442017°

Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-Prov. Combing Co. Plant



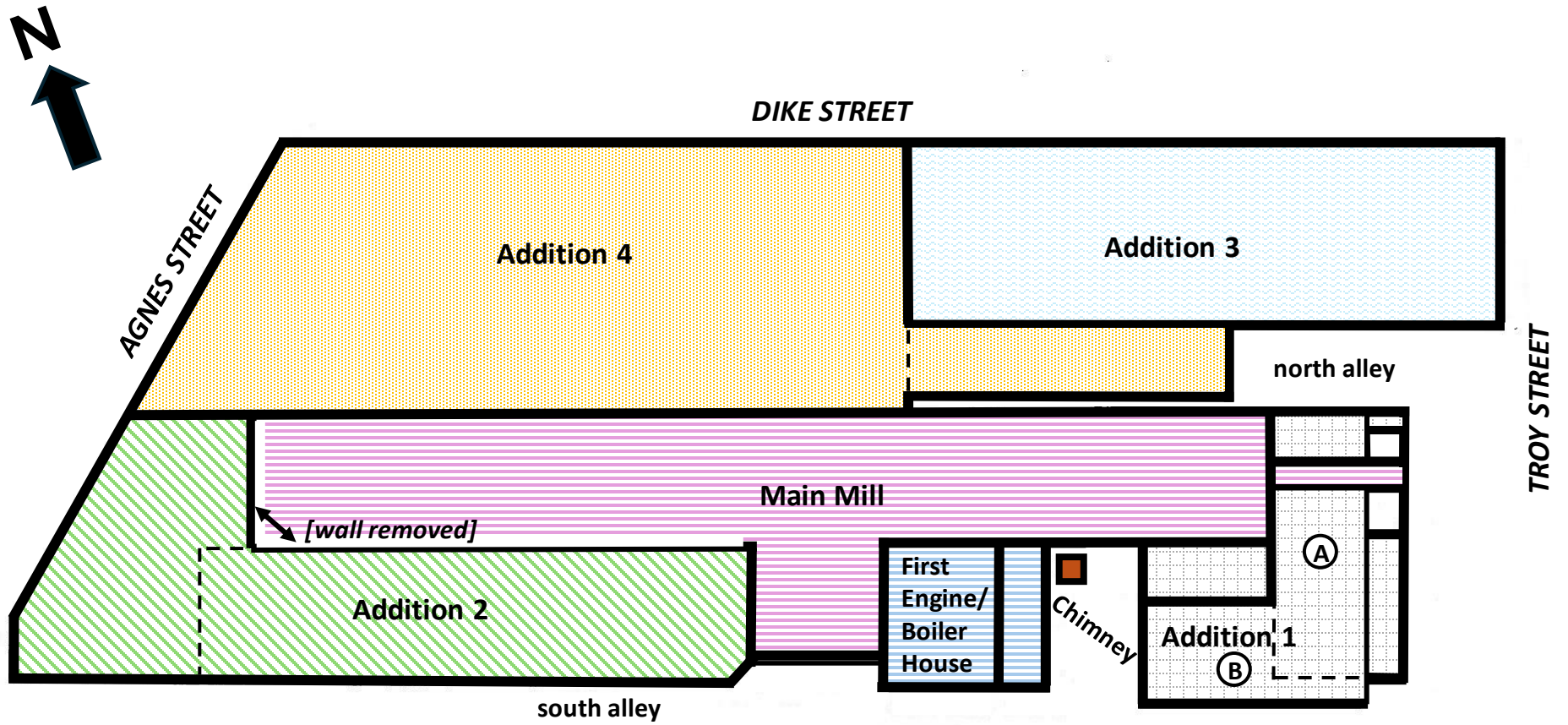
# Eagle Steam Mill- Harrison Steam Mill- Providence Combing Company Plant








50 Agnes Street, 37 Troy Street, 62-68 Dike Street  
Providence, Providence Co., Rhode Island

Latitude: 41.815518° Longitude: 71.442017°

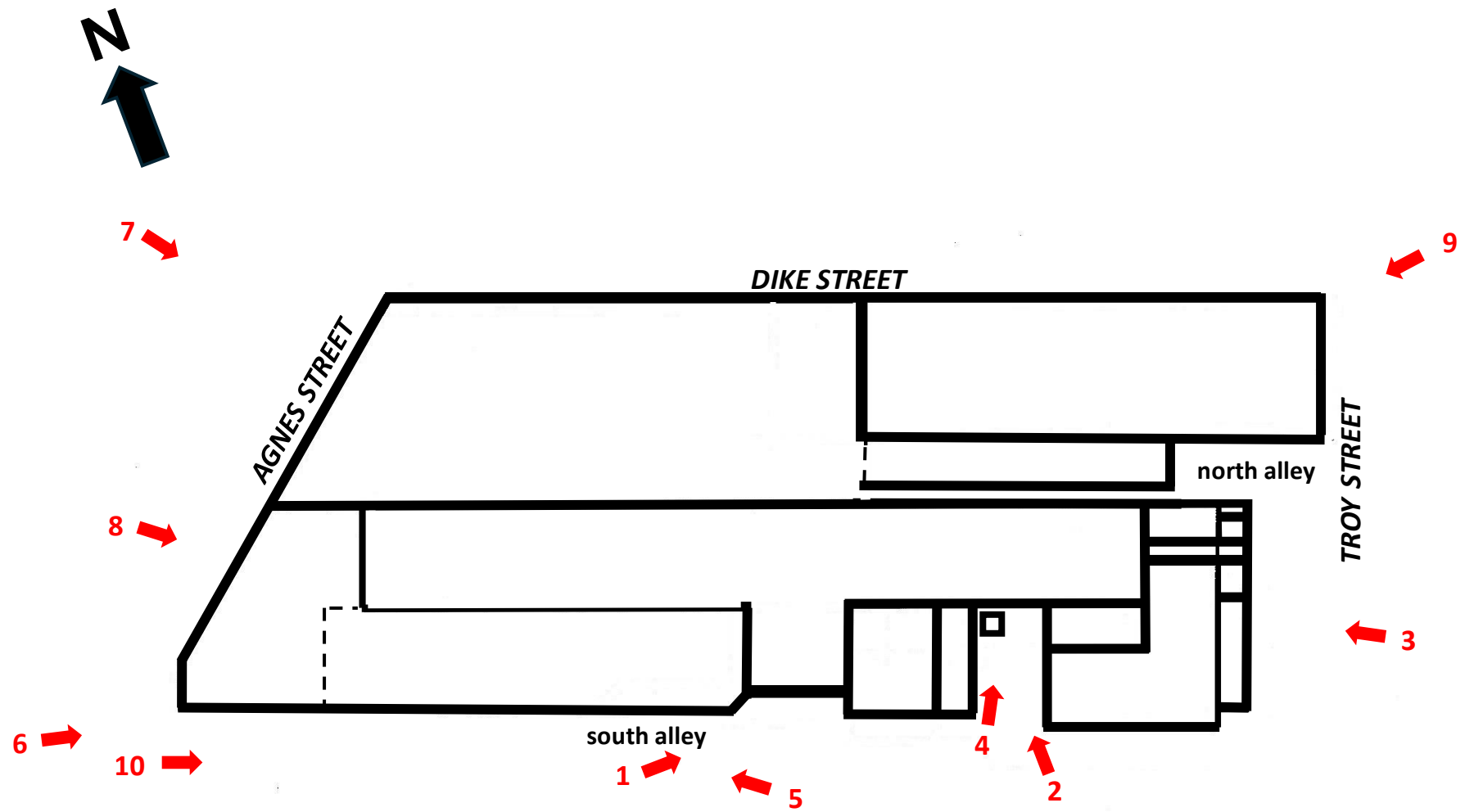
Eagle Steam Mill-Harrison Steam Mill-Prov. Combing Co. Plant



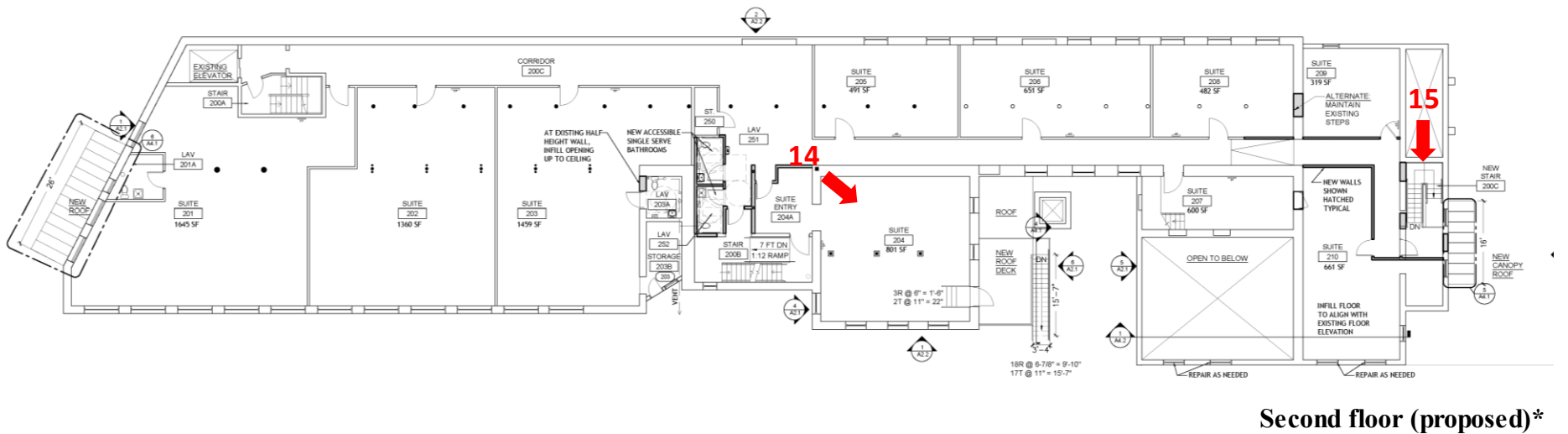
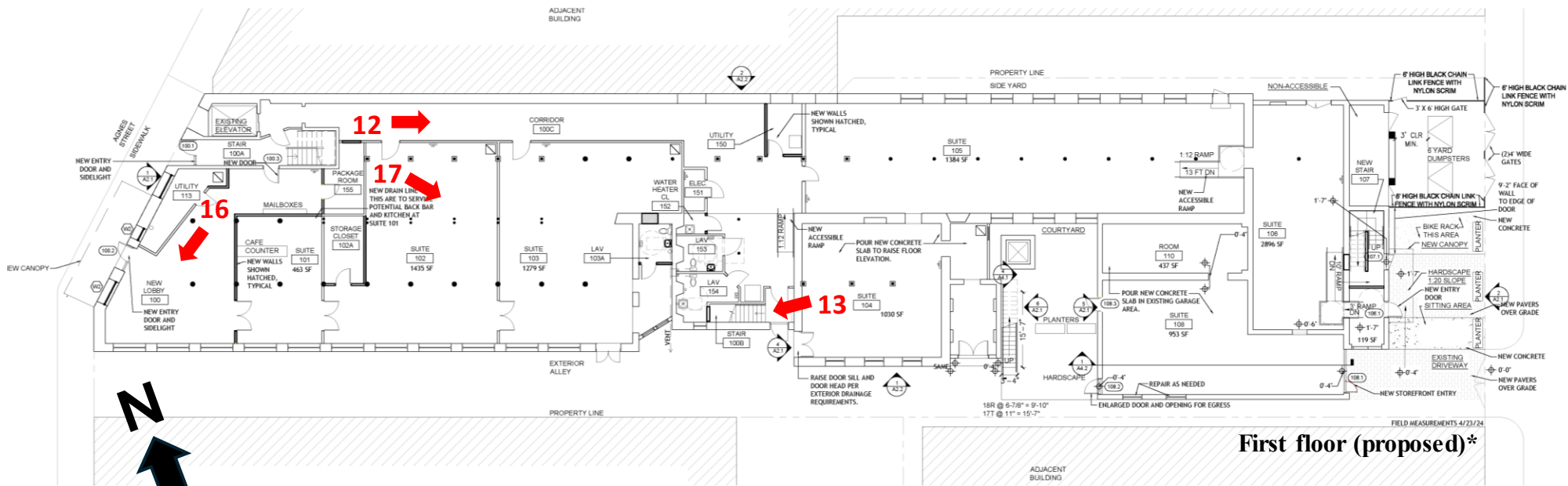


-  Main Mill
  -  First Engine/Boiler House
  -  Addition 1: Second Engine/Boiler House
-  Addition 2: Carding/Twisting/Spinning House
  -  Addition 3: Office/Store House/Garage
  -  Addition 4: Store House
  -  Chimney

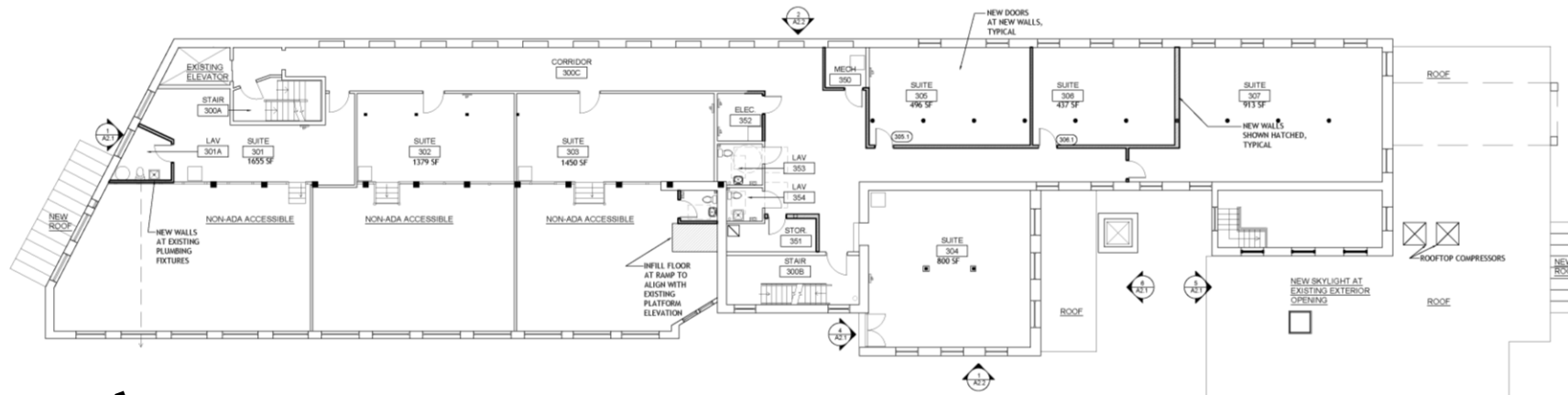
SKETCH MAP: Eagle Steam Mill – Harrison Steam Mill – Providence Combing Company Plant



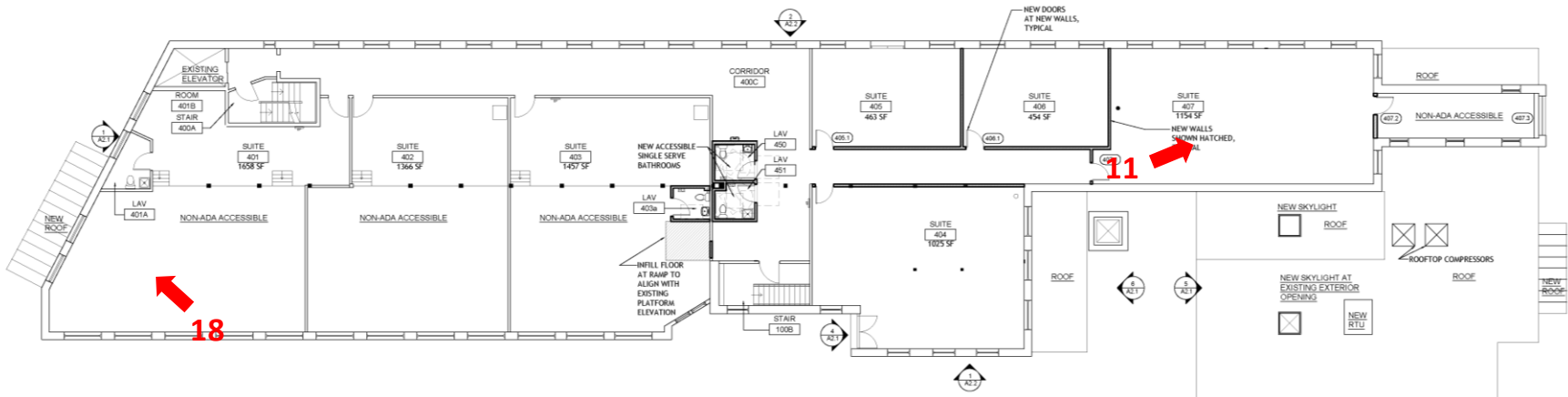
**PHOTO KEY - MAP/EXTERIORS:** Eagle Steam Mill – Harrison Steam Mill – Providence Combing Company Plant



**PHOTO KEY – FLOOR PLANS/INTERIORS:** South parcel (50 Agnes St/37 Troy St - Plat 35, Lot 345)  
 Eagle Steam Mill – Harrison Steam Mill – Providence Combing Company Plant  
 \*Proposed plans prepared in 2023 generally convey conditions in 2026.

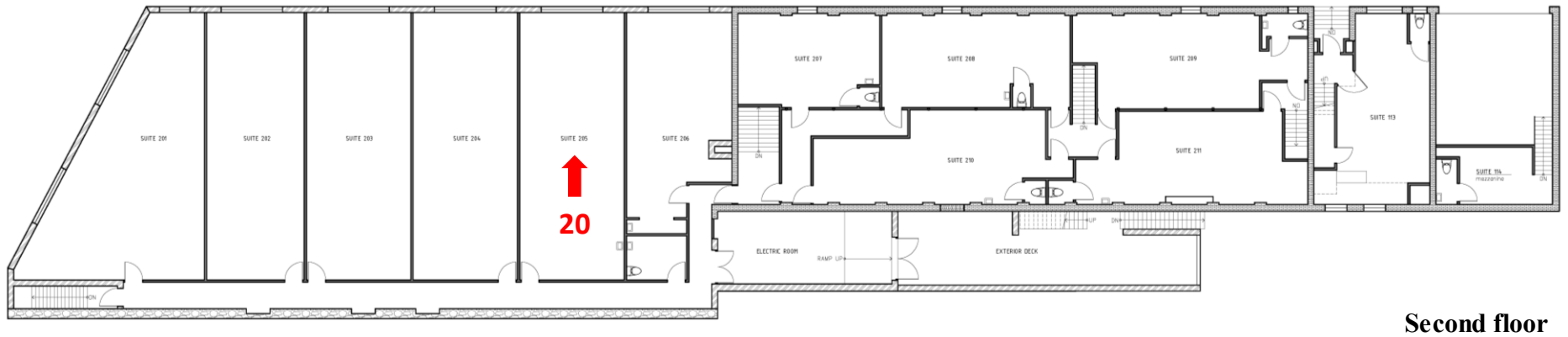
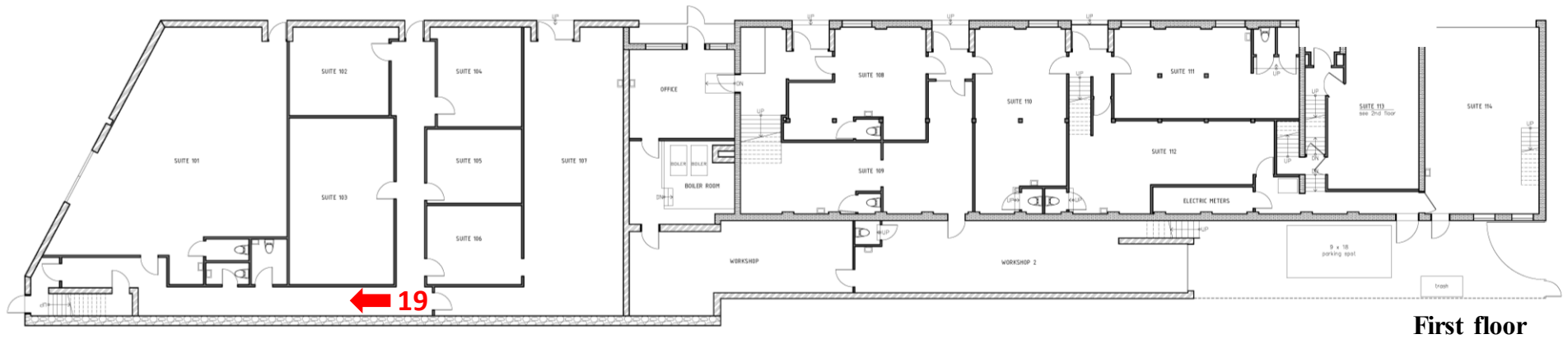


**Third floor (proposed)\***

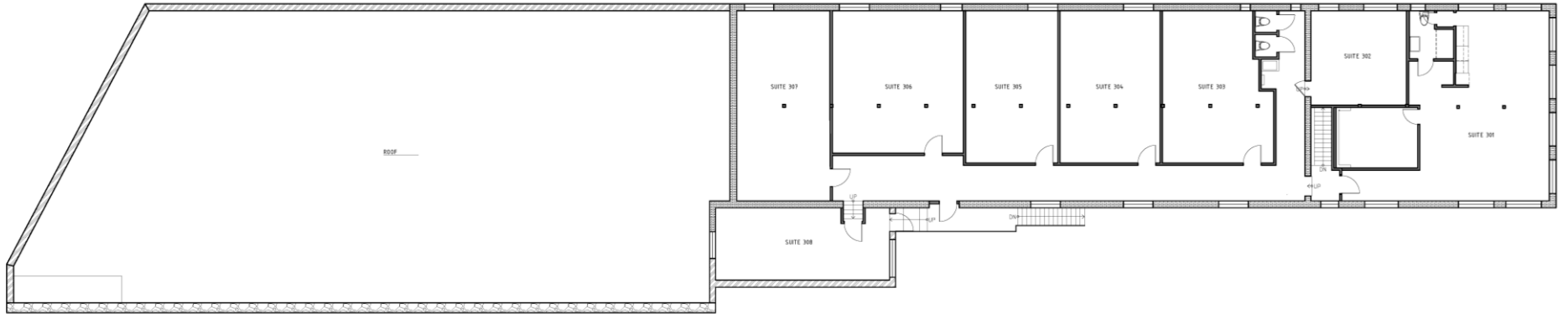


**Fourth floor (proposed)\***

**PHOTO KEY – FLOOR PLANS/INTERIORS:** Southern parcel (50 Agnes St/37 Troy St - Plat 35, Lot 345)  
 Eagle Steam Mill – Harrison Steam Mill – Providence Combing Company Plant  
 \*Proposed plans prepared in 2023 generally convey conditions in 2026.



**PHOTO KEY – FLOOR PLANS/INTERIORS:** North parcel (62-68 Dike Street - Plat 35, Lot 536)  
 Eagle Steam Mill – Harrison Steam Mill – Providence Combing Company Plant



**Third floor**

**FLOOR PLANS/INTERIORS:** North parcel (62-68 Dike Street - Plat 35, Lot 536)  
Eagle Steam Mill – Harrison Steam Mill – Providence Combing Company Plant



Photo 1. (L-R) Addition 2, Main Mill, First Engine/Boiler House, Addition 1 at south alley, view east



Photo 2. (L-R) Addition 2, First Engine/Boiler House with cotton storage/other extension in foreground Chimney, Main Mill, Addition 1 at south alley, view northwest



Photo 3. (L-R) (43 Troy Street on far left) South alley, Addition 1 with Chimney behind, fourth story of Main Mill with loading/rigging dock extension, Addition 4, view northwest.



Photo 4. (L-R) First Engine/Boiler House with cotton storage/other extension in foreground, Chimney, Main Mill, Addition 2 from south alley, view north



Photo 5. (L-R) (40 Agnes Street at far left) Addition 2, Main Mill from south alley, view west



**mars plastics**  
40 AGNES ST  
PROVIDENCE, RI 02909  
**MAIN  
OFFICE**  
421-5275

40

GEAR'S

Photo 6. Streetscape from corner of Agnes Street and south alley with (L-R) Addition 4, Addition 2, First Engine/Boiler House, Addition 1, and south alley, view northeast



Photo 7. Streetscape from corner of Dike and Troy Streets with (L-R) Addition 4, Main Mill (fourth floor) and Addition 2, view southeast



Photo 8. Elevator loading dock and entrances at Addition 2 (Addition 4 visible at far left), view southeast.



Photo 9. Streetscape from corner of Dike and Troy Streets showing (L-R) (43 Troy Street on the far left) Addition 1, Main Mill (loading/rigging dock), Addition 3, Addition 4, view southwest.



Photo 10. South alley from Agnes Street with (L – R) Addition 4, Addition 2, and First Engine/Boiler House (40 Agnes on right), view east



Photo 11. Interior of Main Mill's east wing (fourth floor), view northeast.



Photo 12. Interior of Main Mill's west wing (first floor), view east.



Photo 13. Interior of Main Mill staircase in south ell (first floor), view west.



Photo 14. Interior of First Engine/Boiler House (second floor), view southeast



Photo 15. Interior of Addition 1 (first floor), view south.



Photo 16. Interior of Addition 2 lobby (first floor), view southwest



Photo 17. Interior of Addition 2 commercial unit (first floor) viewed from west wing of Main Mill, view southeast



Photo 18. Interior of Addition 2 commercial unit (fourth floor), view northwest



Photo 19. Interior hallway in Addition 4 with former exterior wall of Main Mill at right (first floor), looking east



Photo 20. Interior commercial unit in Addition 4 (second floor), looking north