

FORM A - AREA SURVEY

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

Form numbers in this area 67-82	Area no. B
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1. Town Newburyport
Name of area (if any) Ocean Mills
Historic District
2. Photo (3x3" or 3x5")
Staple to left side of form
Photo number LL-8 PP-25, PP-34,
99-18.
3. General date or period 1845-1890
4. Is area uniform (explain):
No, Area has a variety of
in style? 19th century styles.
No, Buildings range from
in condition? poor to excellent in condi-
tion. Yes, Nearly all
in type of ownership? properties are owned
by private individuals.
in use? No, the area includes an indus-
trial complex & the surrounding residential neigh-
borhood.
5. Map. Use space below to draw a general map of the area involved. Indicate any historic properties for which individual reports are completed on Forms B thru F, using corresponding numbers. Show street names (including route numbers, if any) and indicate north. Indicate with an "x" existing houses not inventoried on Form B.

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
USGS Quadrant _____
MHC Photo no. _____

6. Recorded by Mary Jane Stirgwolt
Organization Office of Community
Development
Date 8-11-80

(over)

7. Historical data. Explain the historical/architectural importance of this area.

The development of the territory between Munroe and High Streets began with the building of the Ocean Mill. Prior to 1845 there were few buildings of any type and much of the land in this area was used for pasture and tillage.

The Ocean Mill was incorporated in 1845. The land for the factory between Kent Street and Carter Street from Munroe Street was purchased from the heirs of Reverend James Morse. Ocean Street was laid out at that time and the mill erected on the parcel between Munroe and Ocean Streets. The parcel on Munroe between Warren and Carter was sold to Albert Currier for the erection of a brick block of housing. This was the beginning of the development of the surrounding residential area.

The millworkers, in need of homes close to their work, were the primary reason that speculative housing was constructed on a large scale in the next forty five years. Tenement housing for the Ocean Mills was built on Carter, Kent, Warren, and Munroe Streets. Several real estate speculators owned and built small homes and boarding houses in the neighborhoods adjacent to the cotton mills.

The housing in the neighborhoods around the mill were of several types. The first was a single family cottage, usually Greek Revival or Victorian in style. These were often built in groups of three or four along the streets running toward Merrimack Street. Carter Street is an excellent example. A second type of residence is a larger home that was used as a boarding house. Three such buildings were built on Munroe Street across from the Mill, by James Blood, a real estate speculator. These too were generally Greek Revival in style. The construction of these houses, in the Greek Revival style, continued into the 1880's. Vernacular Victorian buildings and cottages with turned brackets ornamenting the doorways and sometimes the eaves, were also common. Workers inhabited these buildings, which varied from simple rectangular gable roofed homes without architectural detail to simple but comfortable cottages with interesting architectural elements. Row housing, though less common, did occur. Albert Currier built one such brick row on Munroe Street.

The overseers and agents of the mills and the skilled craftsmen associated with the industry also built homes within this district. These homes were slightly more elaborate, as can be seen on upper Kent St. (cont.)

8. Bibliography and/or references such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.

1851 Plan of Newburyport, Mass. H. McIntire

1872 Map of the City of Newburyport, Mass.

J.J. Currier, History of Newburyport 1764-1905, vols. I and II, reprint, Newburyport 1977.

R. Cheney, History of Merrimac River Shipbuilding, Newburyport, 1964.

O. B. Merrill, "North End Papers", Newburyport Daily News, Sept. 1, 1906.

E. Smith, History of Newburyport, Newburyport, 1854.

S. Emery, Reminiscences of a Newburyport Nonagenarian, Newburyport, 1879.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newburyport	Form No: Area B
Property Name: Ocean Mills Historic District	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

FORM A - AREA SURVEY (CONTINUED)

7. Historical data.

They were often a vernacular interpretation of one of the many popular Victorian styles such as the Second Empire or Victorian Gothic.

The Ocean Mills Historic District is an excellent representation of Newburyport's 19th century industrial neighborhood. Its occupants worked in the Ocean Steam Mills or in shoemaking which had become a popular cottage industry in Newburyport. The area is clearly distinct from the elaborate formal homes of the High Street district to the South and the Merrimac Street shipbuilding area to the North.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom



