

ADDRESS: 1809-11 N HOWARD ST

Name of Resource: Clifton Mills Building Four

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Evergreen Brothers LP

Nominator: Oscar Beisert, Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Megan Cross Schmitt, megan.schmitt@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 1809-11 N. Howard Street and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the former Clifton Mills Building Four satisfies Criteria for Designation G and J. Under Criterion G, the nomination argues that the subject property is “part of and related to a distinctive industrial area and block which should be preserved for its ties to Philadelphia’s manufacturing history, exemplifying the economic heritage of Kensington and Philadelphia.” Under Criterion J, the nomination contends that the Clifton Mills Building Four is part of “an exemplary surviving textile mill complex that rose in Kensington’s textile district during an important period of economic and technological advancement,” when small-to-medium sized manufacturers were requiring larger spaces to accommodate new machinery in the production of their goods.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 1809-11 N. Howard Street satisfies Criterion for Designation J, but not G. Criterion G is intended to facilitate the designation of groups of discrete buildings that together form an ensemble, like rowhouses around a city square; it is not intended to facilitate the designation of sites related to broader neighborhood themes like textiles in Kensington or banking in Center City.



Photos courtesy of Oscar Beisert

NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT

PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE (must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)

Street address: **1809-11 N. Howard Street**

Postal code: **19122**

Councilmanic District: **7**

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: **Clifton Mills (originally Chatham Mills)—Building 4**

Current/Common Name:

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

☒ Building

☐ Structure

☐ Site

☐ Object

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Occupancy: ☒ occupied ☐ vacant ☐ under construction ☐ unknown

Current use: **Artist's Live/Work Space**

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach

6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

Period of Significance (from year to year): **c1852-63 to 1973**

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: **c1852-63, Rebuilt 1878**

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: **Unknown**

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: **Unknown**

Original owner: **Unknown**

Other significant persons: **Unknown**

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- ☐ (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- ☐ (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☐ (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- ☐ (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- ☐ (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☐ (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- ☒ (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- ☐ (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- ☐ (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- ☒ (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach

9. NOMINATOR: KEEPING SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA

Author: **Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian**

Date: **5 November 2019**

Email: **keeper@keepingphiladelphia.org**

Street Address: **1315 Walnut Street, Suite 320**

Telephone: **717.602.5002**

City, State, and Postal Code: **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107**

Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: November 5, 2019

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete

Date: 12/10/2019

Date of Notice Issuance: 12/12/2019

Property Owner at Time of Notice

Name: Evergreen Brothers LP

Address: PO Box 285

City: Chester

State: PA

Postal Code: 19016

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: _____

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: _____

Date of Final Action: _____

☐ Designated

☐ Rejected

3/12/18

NOMINATION

FOR THE

PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES



Figure 1. Top: Looking west at the subject property. Source: Pictometry, Atlas, City of Philadelphia, 2019. Figures 2. and 3. Bottom: The primary elevations of Building 4. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

THE CLIFTON MILLS — BUILDING 4

(BUILT C 1852-63, REBUILT 1878)

—
ORIGINALLY KNOWN AS
THE CHATHAM MILLS

—
1809-11 N. HOWARD STREET
KENSINGTON
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, Fall 2019
Clifton Mills—Building 4, 1809-11 N. Howard Street, Kensington, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

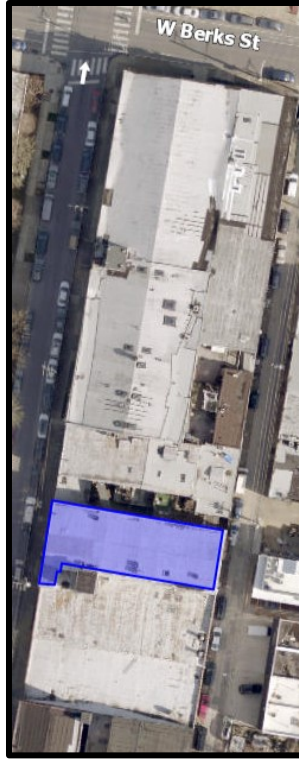


Figure 4. The boundary for the proposed designation is delineated in blue in the two images shown. Source: Atlas, City of Philadelphia, 2019.

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the designation of the subject property is as follows:

ALLTHAT CERTAIN lot or piece of ground with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, SITUATE in the 18th Ward of the City of Philadelphia:

BEGINNING at a point on the Easterly side of Howard Street (50 feet wide) at the distance of 264 feet 8 inches Southward from the Southerly side of Berks Street (70 feet wide); thence extending Eastwardly, parallel with said Berks Street, the distance of 110 feet, 0 inches to a point on the Westerly side of Hope Street (22 feet 6-3/4 inches); thence extending Southwardly, along the said Westerly side of Hope Street, the distance of 38 feet 7-1/8 inches to a point; thence extending Westwardly parallel with said Berks Street, the distance of 98 feet 9-1/4 inches to a point; thence extending Southwardly, parallel with said Howard Street, the distance of 6 feet 1-1/2 inches to a point; thence extending Westwardly parallel with said Berks Street, the distance of 2 feet 7-1/4 inches to a point; thence extending Southwardly parallel with said Howard Street, the distance of 7 feet 4-3/8 inches to a point; thence extending Westwardly, parallel with said Berks Street the distance of 8 feet 7-1/2 inches to a point on the Easterly side of Howard Street; thence extending Northwardly along the said Easterly side of Howard Street, the distance of 52 feet 1 inches to the first mentioned point and place of beginning. BEING assessed as 1809-1811 North Howard Street.

Map Registry No. 014N220282

OPA Account No. 871297860



Figure 5. Looking east at the subject property. Source: Pictometry, Atlas, City of Philadelphia, 2018.

6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Originally known as the Chatham Mills and later the Clifton Mills, the subject property is part of a remarkably intact example of a small, but densely-built industrial complex in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia. In keeping with the ubiquitous built environment of Philadelphia, the buildings are all of red brick, masonry construction. The enumeration of the following buildings are based on the 1888 Hexamer General Survey of the Clifton Mills: 1. Carding, Mule Spinning & Storing (Built c1863, Rebuilt 1878), 2. Carding & Mule Spinning (Built c1863, Rebuilt 1878), 3. Picker, Spreader, Willow & Steam Engine (c1863), **4. Weaving & Silk Spinning (Built c1852-63, Rebuilt 1878)**, 6[a]. Tentrehook Card & Storing Stock (circa 1863), 6[b]. Stock House (circa 1863), 7. Rag Picker, Rag Sorting & Storing (c1863, Rebuilt 1878), 8. Boiler House (Built c1863, Rebuilt 1878), 9. Engine Room (Built c1852-63, Rebuilt 1878, Rebuilt 1880), and 11. Boiler House (Built c1881-88).¹



Figure 6. Left: The east and north elevations of Buildings 6a and 1. Figure 7. Right: The Howard Street Streetscape. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

¹ Please note that only Building 4 is presented in this nomination because it is situated on a separate parcel and is under different ownership. The other buildings are listed above for contextual purposes, as relates to the larger historic mill complex.



Figure 8. Left: Looking east at Building 4. Figure 9. Center: Looking west at Building 4. Figure 10. Right: The east and north elevations of Building 4. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

BUILDING 4: WEAVING & SILK SPINNING (BUILT c1852-63, REBUILT 1878)

Building 4: Weaving & Silk Spinning (Building 4) is a rectangular red brick building, standing three-stories with its gable front facing onto Howard Street. Spanning roughly five bays at both the east and west elevations, the building features a fenestration with two windows on the first floor, along with two vehicle loading bays. The second and third floor features a symmetrical fenestration with five window openings per floor. Attached to the east elevation, an iron fire escape provides emergency egress. The north elevation features a symmetrical fenestration of eleven bays on the second and third floors. A low-slung, one-story brick addition connect this building to Building 3.



Figure 11. Left: The west elevation of Building 4. Figure 12. Right: The north and west elevations of Building 4. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2019.

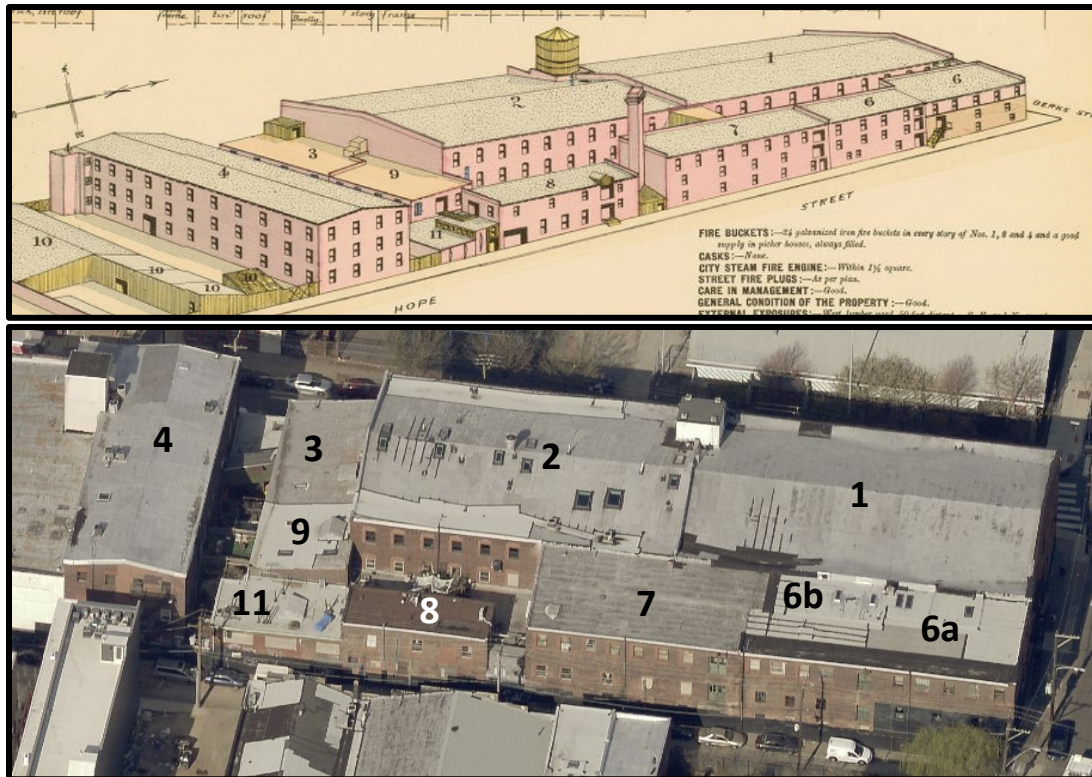


Figure 13. Top: Looking northwest, the 1888 Hexamer General Survey of Clifton Mills. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network. Figure 14. Bottom: Looking west, the remarkably intact Clifton Mills. Source: Pictometry, Atlas, City of Philadelphia, 2019.

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Known for much of its history as the Clifton Mills, the subject property is a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The subject property satisfies the following Criteria for Designation, as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code:

- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; and
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.²

The period of significance dates from the time the complex was first constructed as a textile mill between c1852-63 through the last known year that The Andrew Y. Michie Co. occupied the site c1973.

² Criterion J is presented in two parts.

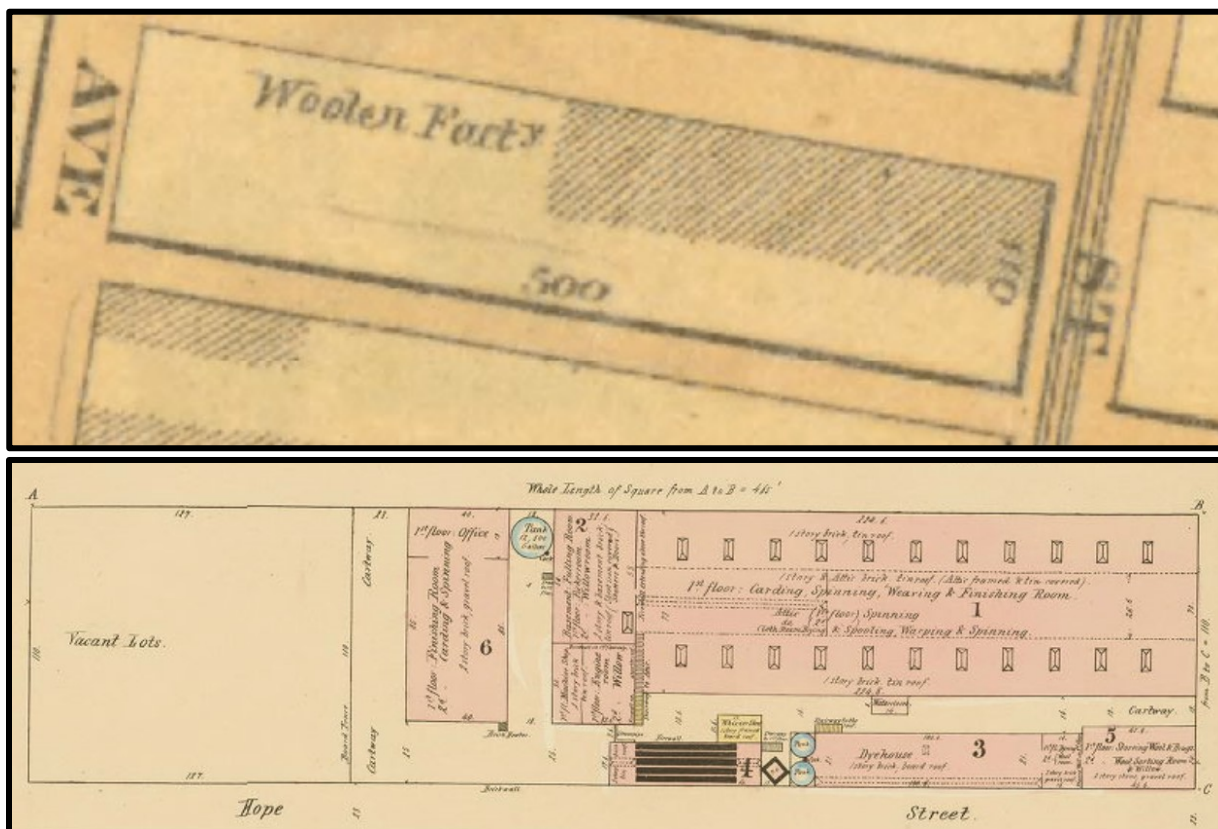


Figure 15. Top: The 1862 Philadelphia Atlas by Samuel L. Smedley, showing the original woolen factory on the site. Figure 16. Bottom: The 1866 Hexamer General Survey of Chatham Mills, the subject property, showing that Buildings 3 (labeled 2), 4 (labeled 6), 6a (labeled 6), 6b (labeled 3), 7 (labeled 3), 8 (labeled 4), and 9 (labeled 2) originated by 1866, as had the footprint of Buildings 1 and 2. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

CRITERION J – PART I

The Clifton Mills is a significant industrial complex related to the history of the textile industry in Kensington from c1852-63 to c1973, exemplifying the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the community. Specifically, the subject property and its eight extant buildings were significant for their role in local manufacturing as an owner-occupied, tenanted mill that hosted the following manufactures: woolen, cotton and merino yarns; shoddy; upholsters' goods; ingrain carpets and curtains; and wire goods. With so much of its early built environment intact, the Clifton Mills is an exemplary surviving textile mill complex, that rose in Kensington's textile district during an important period of economic and technological advancement in the industry, as space for machinery and greater mechanization was required by small- to medium-size manufacturers that experienced growth beyond the walls of their home and/or workshop in the second half of the nineteenth century.



Figure 17. The context of the subject property in the Kensington of 1862, taken from the 1862 Philadelphia Atlas by Samuel L. Smedley. This shows the relatively unbuilt context in which the subject property was initially developed. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

By 1850, Philadelphia was one of the world's leading manufacturers of textiles with a total product value of \$65 million, an impressive record, then generated by approximately 326 textile firms comprised of 12,369 employees collectively. Kensington was home to 126 of these firms, representing roughly thirty-nine percent of the local industry.³ According to the 1860 Federal Census, the value of Philadelphia's "textile manufacture had grown to \$135 million with 464 firms and 18,521 employees."⁴ It was likely at some point between 1852 and 1863 that a textile mill was established on the subject property, a date ranged gauged by the building age records of the Hexamer General Surveys taken over the years.

³ Logan I. Ferguson. *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Industrial and Commercial Buildings Related to the Textile Industry in the Kensington Neighborhood of Philadelphia*. (Philadelphia: Powers & Company, Inc., 2012).

⁴ *Philadelphia Board of Trade*, 15–20.

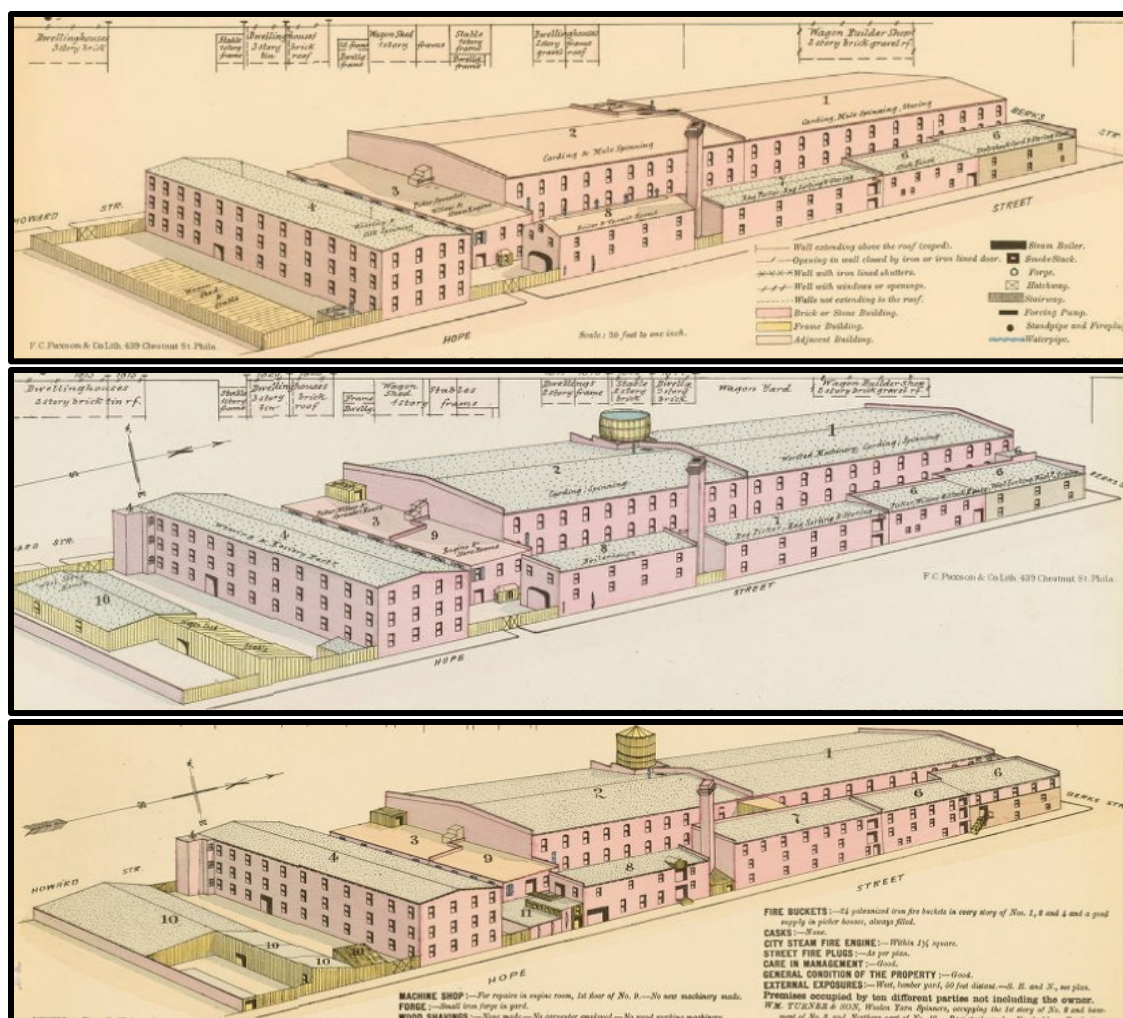


Figure 19. Top: The 1878 Hexamer General Survey of Clifton Mills, the subject property, illustrating that origins of Building 1 and 2 can be traced to 1878, and that Buildings 3, 4, 6a (labeled 6), 6b (labeled 6), 7, 8, and 9 (labeled 3) originated by 1866 and remained basically intact in 1878. Figure 20. Middle: The 1880 Hexamer General Survey of Clifton Mills, the subject property, illustrates that origins of Building 1 and 2 can be traced to 1878 and remained basically the same in 1880, and that Buildings 3, 4, 6a (labeled 6), 6b (labeled 6), 7, 8, and 9 originated by 1866 and remained basically intact in 1880. Figure 21. Bottom: The 1888 Hexamer General Survey of Clifton Mills, the subject property, illustrates that the origins of Building 1 and 2 can be traced to 1878 and remained basically the same in 1880, and that Buildings 3, 4, 6a (labeled 6), 6b (labeled 6), 7, 8, and 9 originated by 1866 and remained basically intact in 1888 with next to no major changes in form and style to-date. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

By 1878, the newly placed firm leased space to five tenants, and the owner, enabling the manufacture of “cotton, woolen and merino yarns; shoddy coverlets and cotton goods woven;” etc. This list of manufactures shows that the building continued to serve as an owner-occupied, but heavily tenanted facility. Likely a result of the fire and subsequent reconstruction, there were just 60 people collectively employed.⁸ Another major fire caused additional destruction to the subject property in 1880, requiring Buildings 1, 2, and 8 to be rebuilt. While the term rebuilt is used in the 1880 Hexamer General Survey, it appears that the general form and style of all the earlier buildings

⁸ “Clifton Mills, Harpst, Montague & Co., Plate 1315,” Hexamer General Surveys, Volume 14. (E. Hexamer, 1878). <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HGSv12.1137> Accessed on 9 September 2019.

remained, aside from slight alterations to the roofline of Building 8. After the fire, it appears that Harpst of Harpst & Montague removed from the partnership, at which time the firm of Montague & White was formed and took over the subject property. The newly rebuilt and refurbished facility was occupied by eight tenants, including the property owner, collectively employing a total of 255 people. This tenancy produced the following textile goods including: worsted, woolen, cotton, and merino yarns; shoddy, shaws, and dress goods; upholstery goods; and hosiery.⁹ By 1880, the manufacture and production of cotton, woolen, and mixed goods was among the most prominent of Philadelphia's industries, with 257 establishments worth a total capital of \$21,190,905, a material value of \$27,982,501, and product value of \$39,465,390, paying \$7,750,092 to 21,493 people. This capital represented approximately 11% of the total capital in Philadelphia industries—the highest amount of any one industry. The number of people this industry employed was rivaled only by the manufacture of children's and men's clothing at 18,946 people.¹⁰ This was just the most successful of the textile manufacturing medley that formed the tenancy. This model of the owner-occupied, tenanted textile mill continued at the subject property through 1888, when Thomas A. White became the sole proprietor of the Clifton Mills. At this time there were ten tenants, not including the property owner, collectively employing 186 people. The building was then home to the following manufactures: "woolen, cotton, and merino yarns; shoddy; upholsters' goods; weaving ingrain carpets and curtains; and wire goods."¹¹



Figure 22. The west elevation of Buildings 2 and 3 in 1898 when Weber & Petzoldt occupied the subject property. Source: Engelhardt, George Washington, *Philadelphia Pennsylvania, The Book of Its Bourse & Co-operating Bodies*, Philadelphia, Lippincott Press, 1898-99., p. 330.

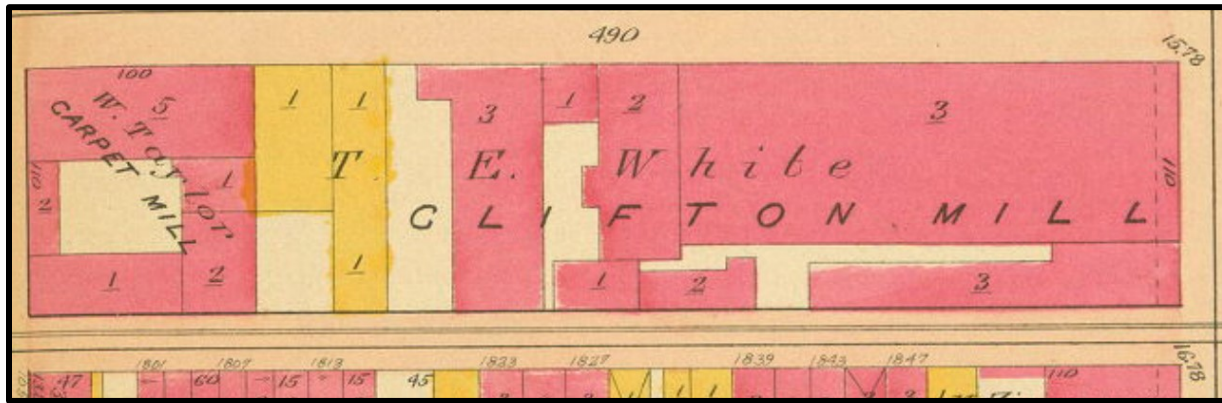
Another firm that occupied the subject property, specifically Building 2, was the carpet manufacturer Weber & Petzoldt. The firm was established in 1870 by Edward Weber; L. Petzoldt joined the firm in 1891. While they first produced high-quality, expensive carpets for the wealthy, the firm eventually produced carpets for all manner of people. In 1892, the firm occupied the

⁹ "Clifton Mills, Montague & White, Plate 1485," Hexamer General Surveys, Volume 16. (E. Hexamer, 1880). <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HGSv16.1485> Accessed on 9 September 2019.

¹⁰ Edwards, Richard. *The Industries of Philadelphia, 1881-82*. (Philadelphia: Richard Edwards Publisher, 1880),

¹¹ "Clifton Mills, Thos. E. White, Plate 2202," Hexamer General Surveys, Volume 23. (E. Hexamer, 1888). <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HGSv23.2202> Accessed on 9 September 2019.

Continental Carpet Mills at the southeast corner of present-day Mascher and Putnam Street, the address being 2121-2123 E. Dauphin Street.¹² By 1898, the firm had moved to the subject property, where they manufactured carpets for at least a decade.¹³



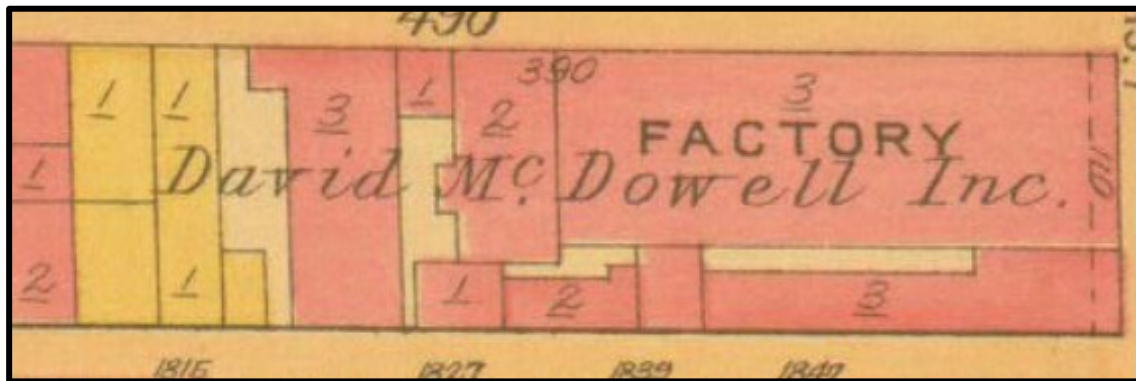


Figure 24. 1922 Philadelphia Atlas showing the subject property when it was the textile manufactory of David McDowell, Inc. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

David McDowell, Inc. occupied the subject property from c1905 to 1922, where the firm manufactured carpets. It is unclear whether or not the company was under the leadership of its namesake David H. McDowell (1850-1922) of Germantown, who also operated the Juvera Mills.¹⁹ McDowell leased space in the building as early as 1905 and later purchased the property.

The Andrew Y. Michie Co. was founded by its namesake, Andrew Y. Michie, in the first decade of the twentieth century. Originally a loom-fixer for John M. Schwehm & Son of Germantown, Michie started his firm at Second and Diamond Streets in Kensington with “ten looms on hair cloth” by 1905.²⁰ Later located at Jasper and York Streets, the company specialized in the manufacture of textile interlining for men’s tailored clothing.²¹ Michie’s company was so successful in its manufacturing operations that in January 1928 it purchased the subject property from David McDowell.²² In November 1929, the subject property was transferred from Andrew Y. Michie to Andrew Y. Michie & Sons, Inc., subject to a mortgage of \$90,000 with an assessed value of \$100,000.²³ By 1938, Andrew Michie & Sons, Inc. occupied and owned the subject property, operating a factory, at which time they made alterations to the premises, including the addition of a tank and pump.²⁴ In 1964, the company began manufacturing a replacement for horsehair cloth, this division of the company being known as Mitchie Textiles, Inc. Andrew Y. Michie passed the company down to his grandson, Richard Michie.²⁵ It appears that the Andrew Y. Michie Co. was operating in the subject property through at least 1973.²⁶

¹⁹ “David McDowell,” *Textile World*, 8 April 1922, 90.

²⁰ “Cotton,” *Textile World Record*. (Lord & Nagle Co., 1905), 164.

²¹ Macfarlane, John James, and Hicks, George W. B. *Textile Industries of Philadelphia: With a Directory of the Textile and Yarn Manufacturers Located in Philadelphia*. (Commercial Museum, 1911), 29.

²² “Activities of Day in Real Estate,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 7 January 1928, 9.

²³ “Activities of Day in Real Estate,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 30 November 1929, 25.

²⁴ *Philadelphia Builders Guide*, v. 53, 18 May 1938, 106.

²⁵ “In the Run,” pinerung.org. (9 October 2017). <http://pinerun.org/2017/10/09/in-the-run-2/> Accessed on 12 September 2019.

²⁶ *Philadelphia Daily News*, 9 May 1973, 76.



Figure 25. Top: The 1895 Philadelphia Atlas by G.W. Bromley, showing the subject property, still being labeled “Chatham Mills,” a name fell away in the 1870s for “Clifton Mills.” Figure 26. Bottom: The 1910 Philadelphia Atlas by G.W. Bromley, showing the subject property, still being labeled “Chatham Mills,” a name fell away in the 1870s for “Clifton Mills.” Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

The primary area of the subject property’s historical significance is embodied in the fact that it served as an owner-occupied, tenanted textile mill, where various component products representative of the community’s larger ecosystem was manufactured. While pre-Civil War Kensington and Philadelphia as a whole was home to a great number of small textile producers, the prominence of these nascent, “home-spun” manufacturing operations was decreasing, as mechanization took over large aspects of the manufacturing process. Those family businesses that were able to adapt and modernize went on to capitalize on the use of these new means and methods, though their operations required additional space for modern equipment and machinery that was often too cumbersome for their small to medium size urban or even semi-urban dwellings. At the same time, many of these budding manufacturers simply could not afford to purchase real estate and/or construct the necessary facilities for their changing operations. As mechanization in the textile industry became wide-spread in the mid-nineteenth century, this trend caught the imagination of capitalists and medium-size textile producers with the means to purchase real estate and/or build factory and/or mill complexes like the subject property. Many of these facilities were tenanted from the time of their establishment. For medium-size manufacturers, like Harpst & Montague, and, later, Montague & White, this meant that their required industrial space was likely subsidized by their tenants, often ensuring their financial success.

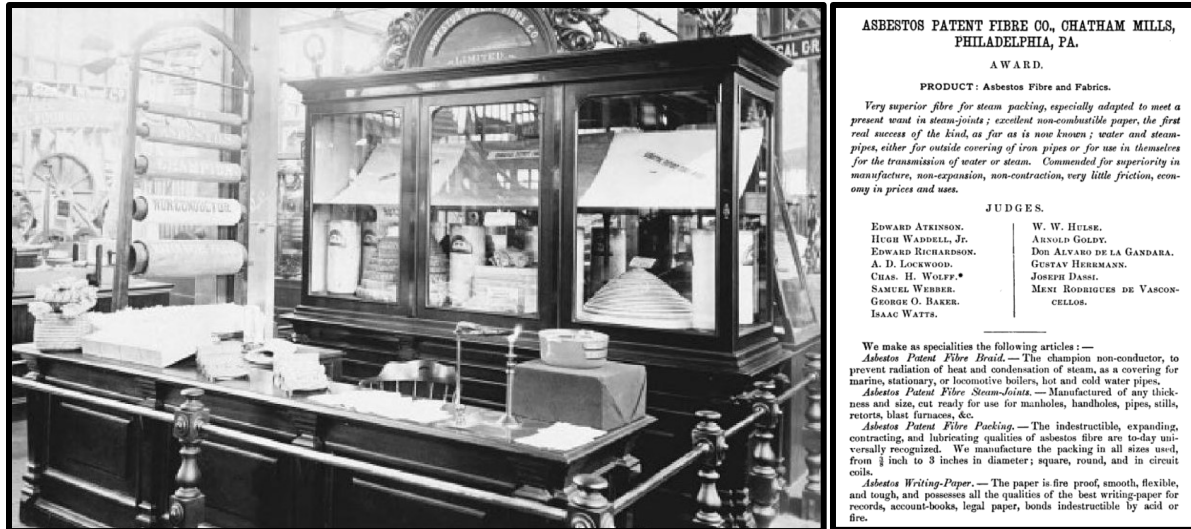


Figure 27. Left: A photograph of the Asbestos Fibre Company, Limited's booth at the Centennial Exhibition of 1876 in Philadelphia. Source: Gross, Linda P. and Snyder, Theresa R. *Philadelphia's 1876 Centennial Exhibition*. (Arcadia Publishing, 2005)—via Google Books. Figure 28. Right: This page from the publication, *The Awards and Claims of Exhibitors at the International Exhibition, 1876*, shows the type of advancements in products achieved at the subject property. Interestingly, the Asbestos Fibre Company, Limited occupied portions of Buildings 6a, 6b, 7, and 7, which survive, in part, to-date. Source: Google Books.

The subject property was home to many small-to-medium-sized producers who went on to own their own factory and/or mill complexes as their enterprises expanded. In 1877, John F. Lodge, manufacturer of carpet yarn and rail road waste, was a tenant at the subject property, but, by 1878, he had built the small, but independent Pequod Mills at the corner of Emerald Street and Hart Lane.²⁷ Topham & Wood, manufacturers of cotton, woolen, and Merino yarns, were leasing space at the subject property in 1877, but, later that year, John Topham was the proprietor of the Branchtown Mills on Mill Street near Twentieth Street in Germantown, where he had expanded his operations manufacturing cotton and woolen yarns.²⁸ Lewis S. Cox & Co. had also started manufacturing knit goods and hosiery on a small scale, being a tenant at the subject property in 1877. Between 1881 and 1884, Cox built the Brighton Mills on the north side of Dauphin Street between Eighth and Ninth Streets, employing approximately 500 people.²⁹ By 1888, one tenant included John Lunn, a manufacturer of cotton, woolen, and Merino yarns, who would go on to patent an "Apparatus for Spinning Different Colored Rovings into Threat or Yarn" in 1894.³⁰ Other tenants of that period would go on to enlarge their capacity for production as a result of their successes: H.B. Thomas, woolen yarn spinner; Jonathan Ring & Sons, manufacturers of woolen yarns; Daniel McDowell, producers of ingrain carpets; etc. These examples illustrate the integral role that owner-occupied, tenanted textile mills like the subject property had in enabling small to medium producers to grow their business and, eventually, establish their own factory and mill

²⁷ "Pequod Mills, John F. Lodge, Plate 1276," Hexamer General Surveys, Volume 14. (E. Hexamer, 1878). <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HGSv14.1276> Accessed on 9 September 2019.

²⁸ "Branchtown Mills, John Topham, Plate 1155," Hexamer General Surveys, Volume 12. (E. Hexamer, 1877). <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HGSv12.1155> Accessed on 9 September 2019.

²⁹ "Brighton Mills, Lewis S. Cox & Co., Plate 1832," Hexamer General Surveys, Volume 19. (E. Hexamer, 1884). <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HGSv19.1832> Accessed on 9 September 2019.

³⁰ Lunn, J, Patent No. 520,793, Patented 5 June 1894. Source: <https://patentimages.storage.googleapis.com/a6/84/85/cf80f289daa6ec/US520793.pdf>

complexes. After the turn of the twentieth century, the industry normalized and owner-occupied, tenanted mills were limited to just a few tenants and/or new owners. In the case of the subject property it appears that two textile firms occupied the property for many decades of the twentieth century, including David McDowell, Inc. and Andrew Y. Michie & Sons, Inc.

The subject property is an important surviving representation of this type of industrial complex that served the purposes of multiple textile manufacturers as tenants, enabling both these various manufacturing operations to test their operations to successful ends, while also subsidizing their own business. As early as 1878—and likely before—the subject property served both a primary tenant and owner, and various tenants, including the manufacture of products largely, if not wholly, related to the ecosystem that rendered Kensington a leading international textile powerhouse. The localized distinction of Kensington as a great textile center and district was a boon to the economic, social, and historical heritage of the local community and the larger industrial prowess of the City of Philadelphia—then known as the “Workshop of the World.”

In 2012, the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: *Industrial and Commercial Buildings Related to the Textile Industry in the Kensington Neighborhood of Philadelphia* provided an inventory of forty-four of the most notable surviving properties of this type, in which the subject property proves to be among the oldest and most intact of these owner-occupied, tenanted textile mills within the larger context of Kensington.

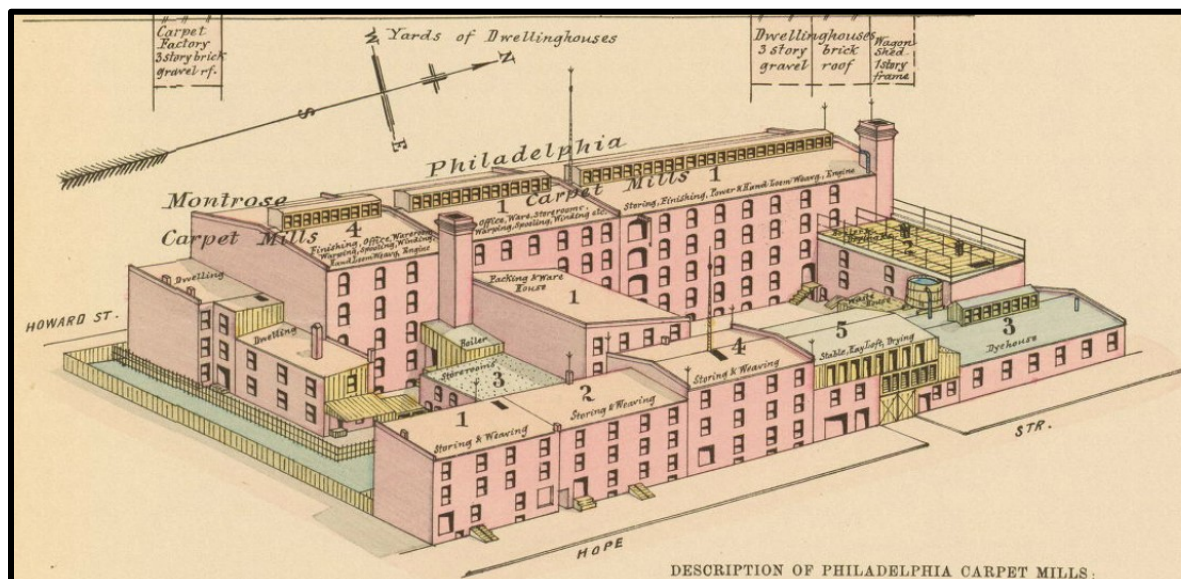


Figure 29. The 1879 Hexamer General Survey of the Philadelphia Carpet Mills (demolished) located between Howard and Hope Streets above York in Kensington. Like the subject property, this complex is based on a large two-part mill with numerous ancillary buildings and structures. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

CRITERION J – PART II & CRITERION G

The Clifton Mills is significant under Criterion J as representative of an era in the Kensington neighborhood that was dominated by factory complexes, including workshops, mills, and plants that formed an indefatigable textile ecosystem. The subject property is also significant under Criterion G as part of and related to a distinctive industrial area and block which should be

preserved for its ties to Philadelphia's manufacturing history, exemplifying the economic heritage of Kensington and the City of Philadelphia.

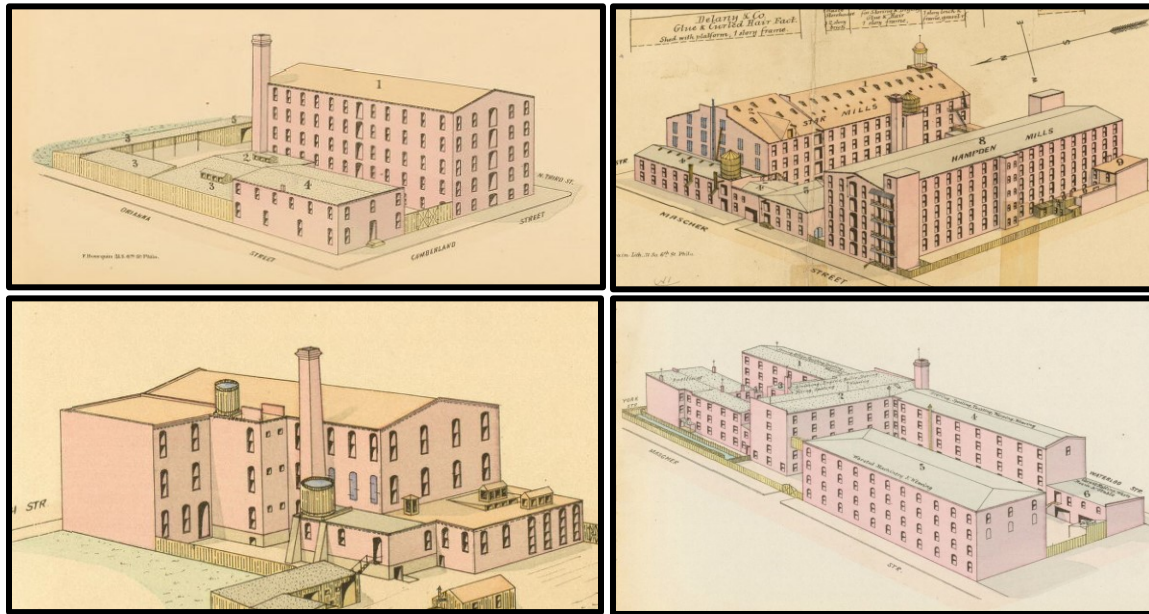


Figure 30. Top left: 1882 Hexamer General Survey of the Hugh French & Bro. Mill (demolished) between Orianna and N. Third Streets above Cumberland. Figure 31. Top right: The 1889 Hexamer General Survey of the Star, Hampden & Malta Mills, Arrott Steam Power Mills, Co. (demolished) located on the south side of Jefferson Street between Howard and Mascher Streets. Figure 32. Bottom left: The 1883 Hexamer General Survey of the Brighton Mills (demolished), previously located on the north side of Dauphin Street between Eighth and Ninth. Figure 33. Bottom right: The 1880 Hexamer General Survey of the Philadelphia Gimp Mill (demolished) on the south side of York Street between Waterloo and Mascher. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

Criterion J. In the nomination for the Wayne Junction Historic District, Kim Broadbent Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner II for the Philadelphia Historical Commission, categorizes industrial buildings as follows:

Industrial manufacturers in Philadelphia can be divided into three types of factories: workshops, mills and plants.³¹

The industrial buildings, structures, and features of the subject property comprise what Chantry describes as a “mill,” being a familiar variety that features one and/or two principal buildings supported by several smaller buildings and structures set in densely built blocks created by the rigid Philadelphia gridiron. These were generally not buildings or collections of buildings and structures with unique architectural distinction nor aesthetic achievement, but were rather utilitarian and representative of a form, style, and overall tone that represents Philadelphia’s industrial Victorianism and the urban landscape that this incredibly productive period created. These buildings are largely of load-bearing red brick masonry with gabled and shed roofs. The facades feature monotonous, symmetrical or semi-symmetrical fenestrations with varying window sizes. In some cases, these symmetrical fenestrations are interrupted by the enlargement or

³¹ Chantry, Kim Broadbent. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Wayne Junction Historic District*. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Historical Commission, 2018), 36.

repurposing to accommodate changes in use. Overall, these buildings have a utilitarian appearance with an occasional architectural detail articulated in cornice, lintel, and pilaster work that is usually part of continuous brick work. While these buildings are not formally stylized, they are set in and/or part of complexes of buildings that often developed over time, creating a built environment that emulates an old village that has grown over time to form an impressive and intense industrial landscape. These mills show the mark of their period of construction in their form, materials, massing, and overall simplicity that speaks to a significant period of the commercial and industrial heritage of the city.

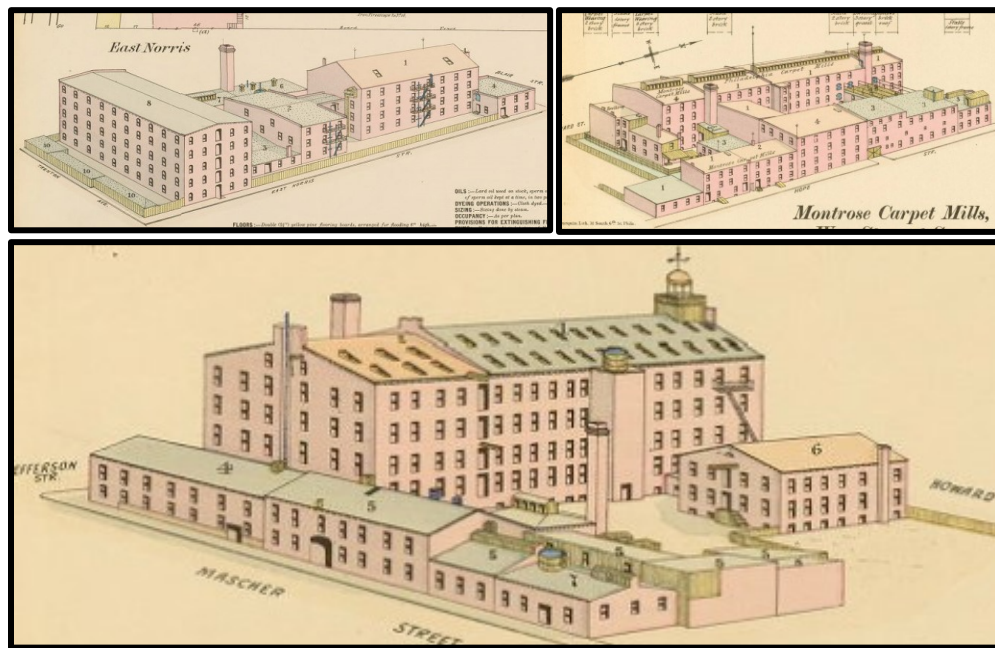


Figure 34. Top left: The 1881 Hexamer General Survey of the Standard Worsted Mills (demolished), located on the north side of E. Norris Street, between Trenton Avenue and Blair Street. Figure 35. Top right: The 1881 Hexamer General Survey of the Montrose Carpet Mills (demolished) and the Philadelphia Carpet Mills (demolished), located in the 2400 block of N. Howard Street at the west and N. Hope Street at the east. Figure 36. Bottom: The 1885 Hexamer General Survey of the Arrott Steam Power Mills Co. (demolished), formerly located on the south side of Jefferson Street between Howard and Mascher Streets. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

Figures 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36 serve as a collective illustration of the mill complexes that characterized the built environment of Kensington and Philadelphia in the nineteenth century.

Criterion G. Beyond the Clifton Mills as a property type, the buildings and structures that comprise the resource are part of and related to a uniquely intact industrial block in the textile district of Kensington. With the subject property stands as a large and distinctive presence at the north and center of the block, another uniquely intact mill is located at the south end, the former Star Carpet Mill. Both complexes mirror their nineteenth century Hexamer General Surveys almost precisely—building and structure by building and structure, being among just a few blocks in the neighborhood that maintain their nineteenth-century industrial appearance and character with no major alterations in building form and/or losses of entire permanent buildings.

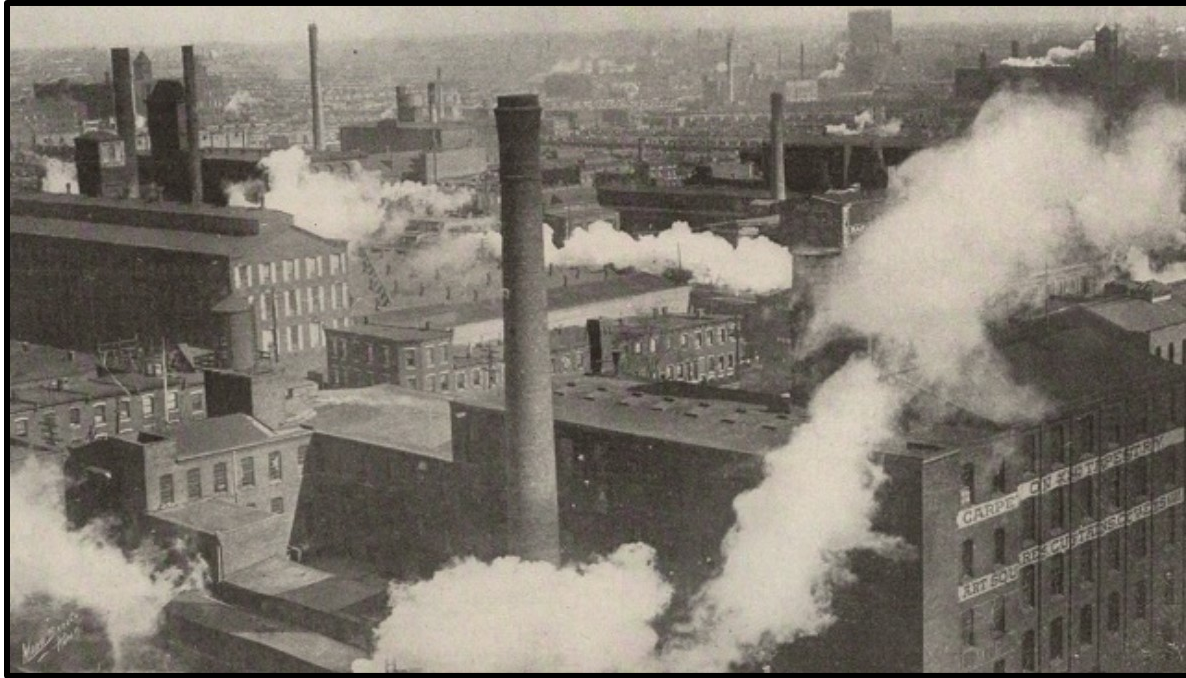


Figure 37. The Industrial District of Kensington, c. 1900. Source: Kensington.”
<http://www.workshopoftheworld.com/kensington/kensington.html>. Accessed on 17 December 2011.

HISTORIC CONTEXT: THE EARLY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF KENSINGTON

Within the larger context of Philadelphia as the former “Workshop of the World,” Kensington was one of the primary neighborhoods of working-class Philadelphia, home to both native and immigrant laborers and workers residing in close proximity to their work sites. The industrial history of Kensington no doubt has its roots in some eighteenth-century enterprises, but its primary period of development was in the nineteenth century. The first of Kensington’s industries were chemical works, glass factories, machine shops, potteries, and wagon manufactories. While much of the city’s nearby industrial development began closer to water, near the Delaware River, the Cohocksink Canal, and Pegg’s Run, Kensington hosted some of these early enterprises west of North Front Street in the area north of Girard Avenue and south of Lehigh. However, no industry would come to define the industrial history of Kensington like that of textiles.

HISTORIC CONTEXT: THE DEVELOPMENT OF KENSINGTON’S TEXTILE INDUSTRY

While the manufacture of textiles was a known and viable industry dating back to the colonial period, Philadelphia’s greatest period of development and productivity as a textile powerhouse took place in the nineteenth century, when Kensington continued to evolve as one of the city’s most important industrial neighborhoods. Located on the cusp of Northern Liberties and Kensington, “the first mill of any considerable size to engage in textile manufacture” was the Globe Mill, which was established in 1804 by Seth Craige at Germantown and West Girard Avenues.³² By the late 1820s, there were approximately 104 textile firms in Philadelphia, employing about 9,500 people.³³ The population of Kensington at that time was approximately 7,259, a population

³² Ellis Paxson Oberholtzer, *Philadelphia: A History of the City and Its People* (Philadelphia: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1912) 1; 441.

³³ Russell F. Weigley, ed. *Philadelphia, A 300-Year History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982), 275, 488.
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Clifton Mills—Building 4, 1809-11 N. Howard Street, Kensington, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

statistic that would double to approximately 16,000 in 1830.³⁴ This population boom is invariably linked to the advent of Kensington’s “specialized cottage industry” for the production of textiles, a system where each part or step of the manufacturing process was completed by “independent, partial-process” component entities and firms.³⁵ This great period of industrial progress led to the establishment of Philadelphia’s first hosiery factory by Martin Landenberg in 1843. The first patents for knitting machinery in the United States followed in 1850, issued in Philadelphia.³⁶ Incidentally, it was Philadelphia’s position as a manufacturer of textile machinery that led to the construction of Building 1 of the subject property in 1867.

As part of the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: *Industrial and Commercial Buildings Related to the Textile Industry in the Kensington Neighborhood of Philadelphia*, completed in 2012, Logan I. Ferguson, of Powers & Company, Inc., summarized the city’s position as a textile manufacturing center:

By the mid-19th century, the textile industry in greater Philadelphia achieved an unprecedented level of prominence and its title as the “world largest and most diversified textile center.”³⁷

In 1850, Kensington was home to approximately 126 textile firms, which represented roughly thirty-nine percent of the larger \$65 million industry in Philadelphia, then employing a reported 12,369 people.³⁸ Five years later in 1855, “the value of the textile fabric in Philadelphia was more than all of the city and state of New York and more fabric was produced than in any other city in the United States.” Textile production had also become one of the city’s top five industries, valued at roughly \$23.5 million, with steel production trailing behind at approximately \$14.7 million. Another comparison was the manufacture of clothing and apparel, valued at \$21.4 million, while wood and publishing and bookbinding were valued at \$6.1 million and \$6.4 million respectively.³⁹

According to the 1860 Federal Census, the value of Philadelphia’s “textile manufacture had grown to \$135 million with 464 firms and 18,521 employees.”⁴⁰ This also reflects the largest increase in Philadelphia’s population, growing from 121,376 in 1850 to 565,529 in 1860, representing a 365 percent boom. In the decades to follow between 1860 and 1920, the population continued to grow with a rate that fluctuated between seventeen to twenty-five percent.

In the book *Workshop of the World*, the neighborhood and its industrial establishments are described in detail:

³⁴ *Kensington: A City within a City* (Philadelphia: Keighton Printing House, 1891), ix.

³⁵ Philip B. Scranton, *The Philadelphia System of Textile Manufacture, 1884–1984* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia College of Textiles & Science, 1984), 28.

³⁶ J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia: 1609–1884* (Philadelphia: L.H. Everts and Co., 1884), 2306–07.

³⁷ Logan I. Ferguson. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Industrial and Commercial Buildings Related to the Textile Industry in the Kensington Neighborhood of Philadelphia. (Philadelphia: Powers & Company, Inc., 2012).

³⁸ Scranton, *Proprietary Capitalism*, 182.

³⁹ Philadelphia Board of Trade, 15–20.

⁴⁰ *Philadelphia Board of Trade*, 15–20.

The textile trades came to dominate Kensington by the mid-nineteenth century. The genesis of the ingrain carpet industry was centered around Oxford and Howard Streets in West Kensington, where some mills still stand. Other early carpet mills in this area are now gone, but they included James Gay's Park Carpet Mill, the Dornan Brothers' Monitor Carpet Mill, William J. Hogg's Oxford Carpet Mill, the Stinson Brothers' Columbia Carpet Mill, and the carpet mills of Horner Brothers, and Ivins, Dietz, and Magee (later of Hardwick and Magee). The earliest carpet factories operated mainly through "outwork" the owners providing yarns to workers who hand loomed the goods in their homes. As these small textile concerns grew, their owners built small factories in East Kensington. Associated textile trades, such as dye works, yarn factories, woolen and worsted mills, cotton mills, and even textile machinery factories were often located in the same building or complex. After the 1860s, Kensington was filled with two story brick rowhouses and steam powered mills. In 1883, Lorin Blodget described the northward expansion of the area as having had rapid and successful development from vacant fields a few years ago, to a densely built up city, all of which is recent, and most of it within ten or twelve years.⁴¹

The National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: *Industrial and Commercial Buildings Related to the Textile Industry in the Kensington Neighborhood of Philadelphia* provided an inventory of forty-four of the most notable surviving properties as of 2012. Among the properties listed, only one building pre-dated the American Civil War, which was the Hosiery Knitters Union Club at 2530–2532 N. 4th Street, which was built circa 1825 as a social club. The inventory listed two buildings from the 1860s, which appear to be the two oldest manufacturing buildings related to the textile industry that survive in Kensington: the Keystone Spinning/Weaving Mills at 1627 N. 2nd Street, built in 1861 by Thomas Dolan for the manufacture of textiles; and the Columbia Works at 155 Cecil B. Moore Avenue, built in 1866–67 by William P. Ullinger for the manufacture of textile machinery. While the largest buildings of the subject property were built in 1878 and rebuilt in 1880, Buildings 3, 4, 6a, 6b, 7, and 8 appear to date to the c1852–63 period, several of which were rebuilt in 1878 and/or in 1880. Beyond being one of the most intact mill complexes in Kensington, the Clifton Mills is also among the oldest in the neighborhood.

⁴¹ *Workshop of the World: A Selective Guide to the Industrial Archeology of Philadelphia* (Wallingford, PA: Oliver Evans Press, 1990), 233.

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This nomination was completed by the Keeping Society of Philadelphia with the primary author as Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian and Historic Preservationist, with assistance from J.M. Duffin, Archivist and Historian and Kelly Wiles, Architectural Historian.

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