

SIMONDS MANUFACTURING COMPANY, BUILDINGS Nos. 2 AND 3  
(Simonds Saw and Steel Company)  
23-55 North Street  
Fitchburg  
Worcester County  
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-1265-B

HABS  
MASS  
14-FIT  
4B-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
Northeast Region  
U.S. Custom House  
200 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HABS  
MASS  
14-FIT  
4B-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SIMONDS MANUFACTURING COMPANY, Buildings Nos. 2 and 3  
(Simonds Saw and Steel Company)

HABS No. MA-1265 -B

Location: 23-55 North Street  
Fitchburg  
Worcester County, Massachusetts

USGS Fitchburg Quadrangle  
UTM Coordinates: 19.270740.4717800

Significance: The building is significant as part of the plant of Simonds Manufacturing Company, a maker of circular saws, band saws, and machine knives. From the late 19th century to the present, the company has been one of Fitchburg's major manufacturers. This building was used for the several machining, grinding, and polishing processes involved in saw manufacture. It also accommodated the company's offices in the north end of the building.

The building is a typical example of standard early 20th-century mill construction. Its long and narrow proportions, brick-pier walls, shallow-pitched roof, slow-burn floors, and heavy timber internal framing are characteristic of general-purpose manufacturing buildings of the period. It was designed by Dean & Main, a Boston firm.

Description: Though numbered by the company as two separate buildings, the structure appears as a single 3-story, flat-roofed brick building, 350' x 60' in plan, divided at its midpoint by a brick fire-wall. Built on a granite foundation, its walls are formed of thick piers between 10'-wide window bays, which have segmental-arched openings with stone sills and double-hung wooden sash. The openings are graduated in size: those on the first floor have 15-over-15 sash and a pivoting transom; the smaller second-floor openings have just the 15-over-15 sash; and the third floor openings, 10-over-15 sash. There is a large arched entry centered on the North Street elevation of the north part of the building, where a granite keystone gives the date of construction, 1905. Doorways and windows are all boarded up. On the west and north elevations the roof is concealed by a parapet and

**SIMONDS MANUFACTURING COMPANY, Buildings Nos. 2 and 3  
(Simonds Saw and Steel Company)**

**HABS No. MA-1265 -B**

(Page 2)

Description: sheet-metal cornice, with exposed beams and a  
(continued) wooden cornice on the rear or east elevation. The roof is pitched slightly toward the east and has rectangular openings for skylights at alternating bays. All have been removed except for one at the north end, which lights a stairway accessing the roof.

The interior is entirely open except for the firewall, a brick partition for offices at the north end, and a stairway and elevator at the south end and northeast corner. The interior framing is supported on two rows of square chamfered posts, graduated in size from 10" x 10" in the basement to 7" x 7" on the top floor. The posts have cast-iron fittings for the cross-beams, which are similarly graduated from 11" x 15" to 8" x 14". The beams are set into mortises in the masonry where they rest on cast-iron anchor plates. Floors consist of tongue-and-groove planking, 3" thick and about 8" in width, with a narrow-board hardwood finish floor. Walls and timber framing member are painted. There are no window surrounds; however, the window openings are framed in rounded brick. Stairways are also plainly finished, with beaded-board railings and sheet-metal-clad fire doors.

The office area at the north end also has brick walls, but it is embellished with oak window sills and a chair rail; paneled casings on the posts; and beam casings, false beams, and moldings applied to the ceiling so as to create a coffered effect. Each floor has access to a large brick vault, and there is a separate stairway for the office area with remnants of its original paneled walls and fluted newel posts.

Another elevator and stairway are appended near the northeast corner; however, these represent remnants of a large 3-story brick factory, known as Building No. 4, which formerly joined this building at right angles; it was demolished c.1950.

**SIMONDS MANUFACTURING COMPANY, Buildings Nos. 2 and 3  
(Simonds Saw and Steel Company)  
HABS No. MA-1265 -B  
(Page 3)**

History: This building was built as part of the 1905-1906 reconstruction of the company's Fitchburg plant.

Sources: Sanborn Map and Publishing Co. Insurance Maps of Fitchburg. New York, 1902; updated to 1921. Fitchburg Historical Society.  
Simonds Manufacturing Co. Seventy-Five Years of Business Progress and Industrial Advance, 1832-1907. Cambridge, Mass.: University Press, [1907].  
Index to Drawings, c.1930, Simonds Industries Archives, Fitchburg.

Historian: Bruce Clouette  
Historic Resource Consultants, Inc.  
July 23, 1992