

LAWRENCE MACHINE SHOP, BUILDING 20
70 General Street
Lawrence
Essex County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-988-Q

HABS
MASS
5-LAWR,
1Q-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Northeast Area Office
National Park Service
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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LAWRENCE MACHINE SHOP, BUILDING 20 HABS No. MA-988-Q

Location: 70 General Street (bounded by General and Canal Streets), Lawrence,
Essex County, Massachusetts
USGS Lawrence, Massachusetts - New Hampshire Quadrangle,
UTM Coordinates 19.323783.4730371

Present Owner: GenCorp Inc.
175 Ghent Road
Fairlawn, Ohio 44333-3300

Present Use: Vacant.

Significance: This structure was built in 1955 by General Tire & Rubber Co. as part of its vinyl manufacturing plant. It is in the former Lawrence Machine Shop yard. It is one of approximately 100 buildings in the 60-acre, mile long complex of textile mills and related buildings in the North Canal Historic District. The North Canal is part of the original town plan and is the focus of the central city's major streets.

PART I - HISTORY OF THE LAWRENCE MACHINE SHOP, BUILDING 20

Building 20 is part of the North Canal Historic District. It was constructed in 1955. It is one of approximately 100 buildings in the district of textile and other manufacturing mills, and related buildings.

It is one of the last structures built in the former Lawrence Machine Shop yard. These buildings were the last of the mills to be constructed along the North Canal. In 1845 the Essex Company established Lawrence and made the North Canal its industrial focus. The city plans were laid out by the Essex Company's engineer, Charles S. Storrow. Most major improvements to the city were made between 1845 and 1855.

General Tire & Rubber Company built this building as part of its plastics and rubber manufacturing plant which it bought from the Bolta Company in 1954. It was part of the vinyl manufacturing plant that ran three full shifts per working day and employed hundreds of people until its closure in December 1980. It was used for the inspection, printing and embossing of vinyl products such as automobile upholstery. The company changed its name to GenCorp Inc. in 1984.

The Bread & Roses Labor Strike of 1912 took place near this site. Confrontations between strikers and militia occurred, a person was killed, and many union leaders were arrested and tried. The Bread & Roses strike forever changed the labor practices for women and children.

PART II - DESCRIPTION OF THE LAWRENCE MACHINE SHOP, BUILDING 20

Building 20 is a two story steel frame built around 1953 or 1955 in a courtyard between Buildings 16 and 16A on the north, Building 8, 18, and 3A on the south, and the walls of former Buildings 13, 13A, 15, 15A, and 12 on the west. Parts of Buildings 15 and 16 were removed at the time to make room for Building 20. Except for the east wall, the perimeter walls of Building 20 belonged mostly to the older buildings. Buildings 13, 13A, 15, 15A, and 12 were recently demolished and the walls common with Building 20 were left in place and attached to the Building 20 structure. The perimeter walls consist of a variety of materials, including granite block, CMU, and brick. it is approximately 60,800 square feet.

The roof of the building is typically gypsum concrete planks on steel joists and beams, and there is a central monitor in which the planks are supported on steel purlins and trusses. The second floor is concrete slab on steel beams. The roof and floor are supported on steel columns except at the perimeter of the building where some of the beams are supported by the old walls. Most of the columns are supported on spread footings; however, over the raceway the columns are supported on combined footings which span to the walls of the raceway arches. The ground floor is a concrete slab on grade.

Two overhead walkway bridges extend from the second floor on the east side of the building. they are framed with steel beams and columns and the exterior of the walls and roofs are covered with corrugated metal. the floors are concrete slabs. there is a two story elevator shaft and one story machine room at the northeast corner. The walls of the shaft and machine room are CMU. Adjacent to this area, on the north side, is an elevated steel frame equipment platform. There is a small, one story entrance area at the northwest corner. The roof over this area is plywood on wood joists and the walls are CMU.

PART III - SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Interviews

Devaney, Robert J. Jr., Gauvin, Mark R. and Kfoury, Kasper J. *November 1995 - March 1996 GenCorp Inc. - Lawrence.* GenCorp Inc. - Lawrence Location employees and retired employee.

Bibliography

Gwardyak, Chester T. and Keating, John W. *Main Buildings Demolition Structural Report.* Cambridge: Camp Dresser & McKee Inc., 1995.

Grasso, Darren R., Kfoury, Robert T. and Stupich, Martin. *Graphic Sketch Plans.* Lawrence and Boston, 1996.

Poirier, Clarisse A. *Massachusetts Historical Commission - Form No. 809 (Form B - Building).* Lawrence: Planning & Community Development Department, 1981.

Zellie, Carole. *National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form.* Cambridge: Landscape Research, 1983.

Repositories Searched

1. City of Lawrence Planning & Community Development Dept. and Historical Commission
225 Essex Street
Lawrence, MA 01840
Tel: (508) 794-5891
2. Essex Company
200 Bulfinch Drive
Andover, MA 01810
Tel: (508) 681-1900
3. GenCorp Inc. - Lawrence Location
70 General Street
Lawrence, MA 01840
Tel: (508) 683-7123

4. Immigrant City Archives
6 Essex Street
Lawrence, MA 01840
Tel: (508) 686-9230
5. Museum of American Textile History
800 Massachusetts Avenue
North Andover, MA 01845
Tel: (508) 686-0191
6. Society For Preservation Of New England Antiquities (SPNEA)
141 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA
Tel: (617) 227-3956

The above repositories were thoroughly searched and are all appropriate sources of information for this project. Very few historic photographs (two or three) of this site exist, and those that do are copyrighted. They can be viewed at the Immigrant City Archives and The Society For Preservation Of New England Antiquities which are both open to the public. These photographs do not show any of GenCorp's buildings separately, and the two or three group photos show a large area of buildings partially consisting of GenCorp buildings. The best historic photo, which is owned by GenCorp Inc., has previously been submitted to the National Park Service and is now in the Library of Congress and Massachusetts State Archives (Reference: HABS No. MA-988-18 photograph). The Museum of American Textile History has historic site plans of the general area, but all are copyrighted, though they can be seen at the museum which is open to the public. There were no original drawings of the site available.

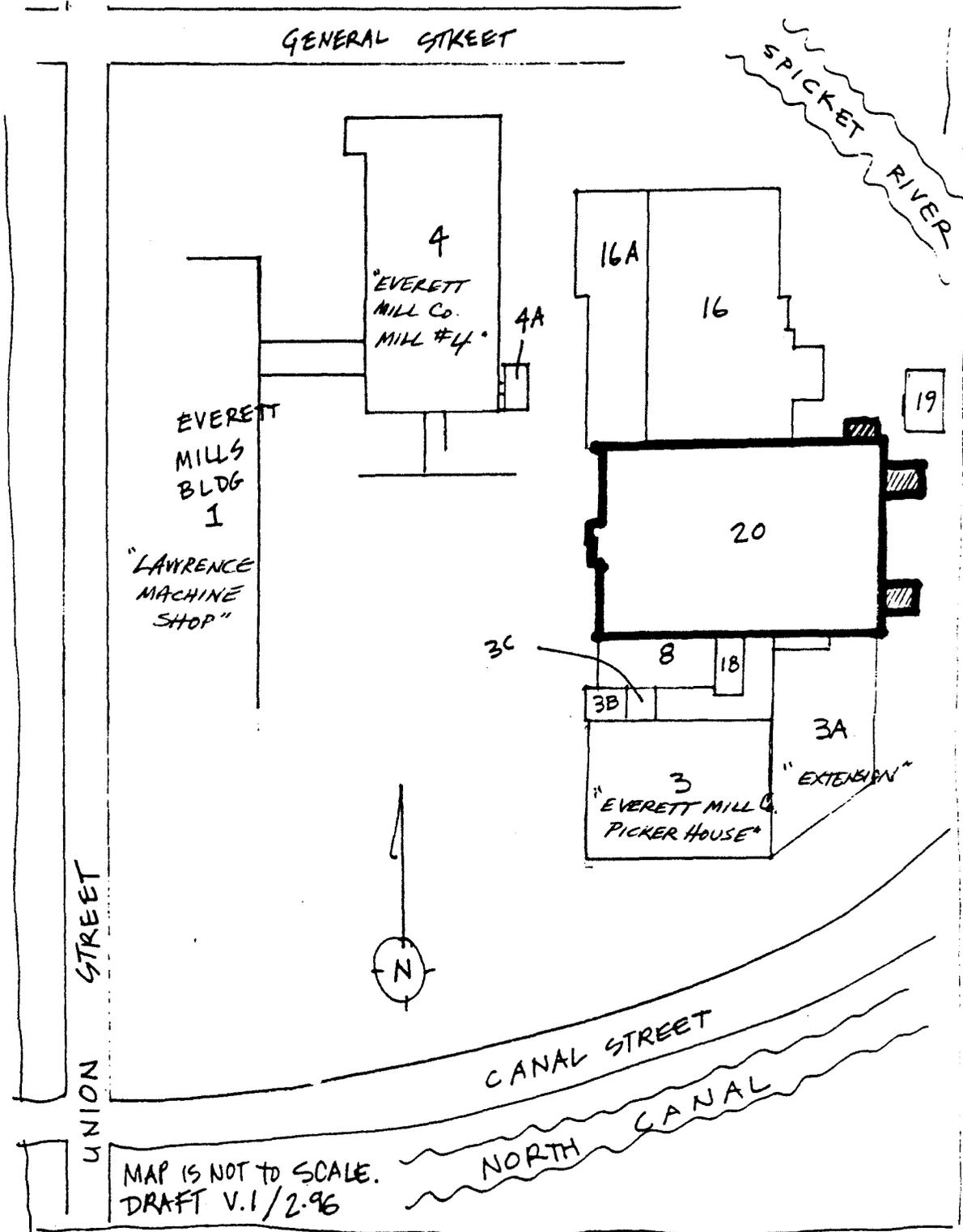
The historical and descriptive information was all found in the records of GenCorp Inc. - Lawrence Location and the City of Lawrence Planning & Community Development Department and Historical Commission (Please see Bibliography). Lawrence Community Development and Historical Commission information included information that could also be found in the state archives with the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

PART IV - PROJECT INFORMATION

This project is a continuation of an ongoing remediation project with this particular segment known as the GenCorp Inc. Phase II Demolition/Main Buildings Project (Phase II). It is part of a phased comprehensive remediation project addressing environmental, health and safety concerns with the objective to return the property to productive use in the City of Lawrence. Phase II demolition, scheduled to begin in June 1996, is primarily needed to remove contaminated buildings, to provide access to subsurface areas for investigation and potential remediation, and to continue the remediation process in order to achieve compliance with government environmental, health and safety standards. This program is being conducted under the Massachusetts Contingency Plan with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection as the lead agency. Since there are many environmental statutes applicable to this project, the Environmental Protection Agency - Region I, New England (EPA) is the lead federal agency involved. Both agencies concur with GenCorp on the project. Also, EPA, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Massachusetts Historical Commission and GenCorp have all agreed to and signed a Memorandum of Agreement regarding this project. This record was prepared February 23, 1996.

Prepared by: Robert T. Kfoury, Esq.
Title: Consultant
Affiliation: GenCorp Inc.
Date: May 14, 1996

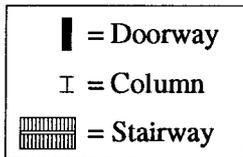
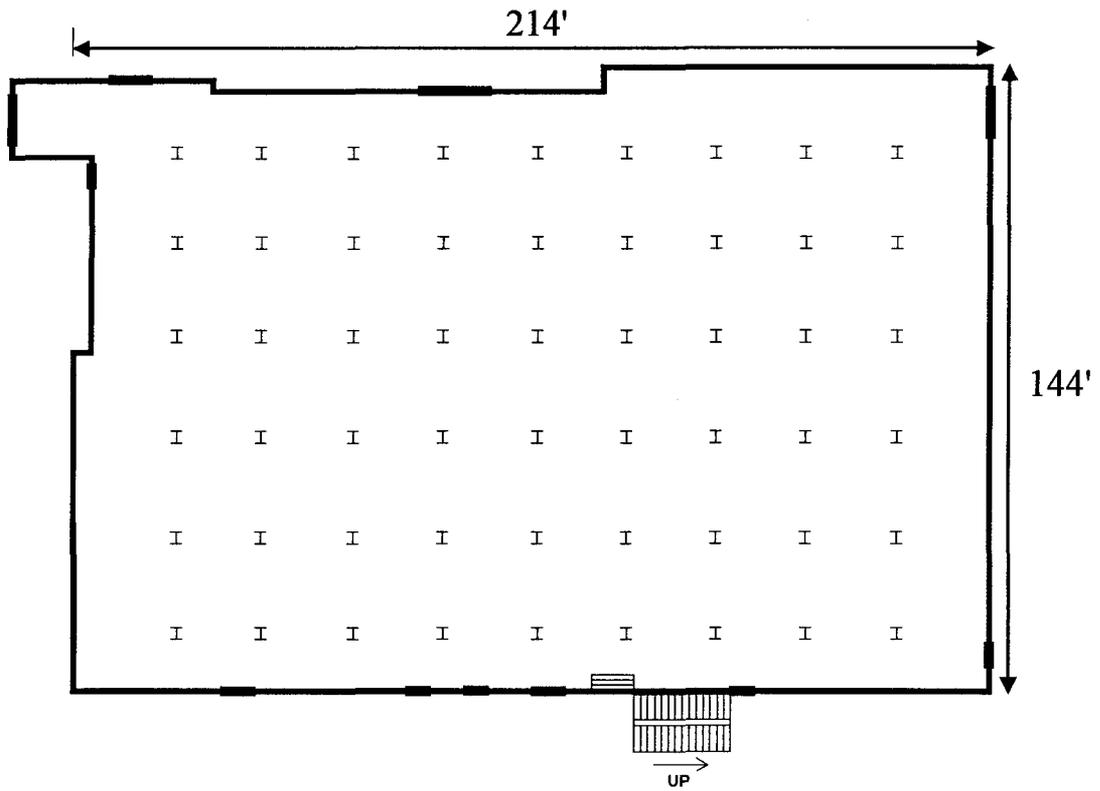
BUILDING 20 SITE PLAN



MAP IS NOT TO SCALE.
DRAFT V.1/2.96



Building 20
Floor 1



LAWRENCE MACHINE SHOP, BUILDING 20
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Building 20
Floor 2

