

Hallowell Cotton Mill, Steam Room
Hallowell
Kennebec County
Maine

HAER No. ME-2

HAER
ME,
6-HAL,
9-1

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington DC 20240

HAER
ME,
6-MAL,
9-

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

ME-2

Hallowell Cotton Mill

Steam Room

Location:

Kennebec County
Hallowell, Maine

Date of Construction:

1844

Present Owner:

Present Use:

Being considered for rehabilitation
as housing for the elderly.

Significance:

The Hallowell Mill was originally
used for the manufacture of cotton
goods; later it was used by various
other industries. It is one of
Hallowell's most prominent buildings
and is a contributing architectural
element in the Hallowell National
Register Historic District.

Significance of Hallowell Cotton Mill

On September 23, 1844, the Eastern Argus reported:

The construction of the Steam Cotton Factory in Hallowell is going on rapidly. . . . The brick work and the entire outside will probably be finished in about a month. The materials are of the best and most durable description, and the work appears to be done in a faithful manner.

Freeman & McClinch are building the engine, which is to be finished in the spring.

Thus is recorded the erection of one of the City of Hallowell's most prominent buildings, dominating to this day the center of the community's waterfront commercial district.

As originally built, the Cotton Mill was typical of industrial architecture of the Greek Revival period in Maine, with simple granite sills and lintels set into brick walls, which were covered by a gable roof. In 1867, expansion of business required the addition of another story, and at that time the nearly flat roof seen today was constructed.

At the peak of its production late in the 19th century, the mill employed 200 workers and used nearly 16,000 spindles. Items produced there included sheets, fancy dress cloth, and imitation lace, most of which was sent by rail to New York markets.

In 1890, cotton manufacture ceased, and the machinery was sold six years later to a Georgia firm. Since then many owners and industries have made use of the building, most extensively the shoe industry.

The only serious damage suffered by the mill was due to a storm on New Year's Eve 1895, when part of the roof was torn off by high winds. Although this damage was immediately and effectively repaired, the building has generally been neglected during this century.

The Cotton Mill dominates the Hallowell National Register Historic District. Its loss would have been an irreparable blow to the historic and architectural environment of this important community. The currently projected re-use of the building, which respects and preserves its impressive exterior, will be most welcome to local residents and the citizens of Maine.