

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	IPS.H
Historic Name:	Brownville Avenue Mill Housing
Common Name:	
Address:	
City/Town:	Ipswich
Village/Neighborhood:	Ipswich
Local No:	
Year Constructed:	
Architect(s):	
Architectural Style(s):	
Use(s):	Residential District; Workers Housing
Significance:	Architecture; Community Planning; Ethnic Heritage; Industry
Area(s):	
Designation(s):	
Building Materials(s):	



The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has converted this paper record to digital format as part of ongoing projects to scan records of the Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth and National Register of Historic Places nominations for Massachusetts. Efforts are ongoing and not all inventory or National Register records related to this resource may be available in digital format at this time.

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

This file was accessed on: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at 10:26 AM

FORM A - AREA SURVEY

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

Form numbers in this area
372-376; 336; 384-405;
136; 303

Area no.
H

IPS.H



in Ipswich

Name of area (if any) Brownsville Ave.

all Houses

General date or period 1893-1910

Area uniform (explain):

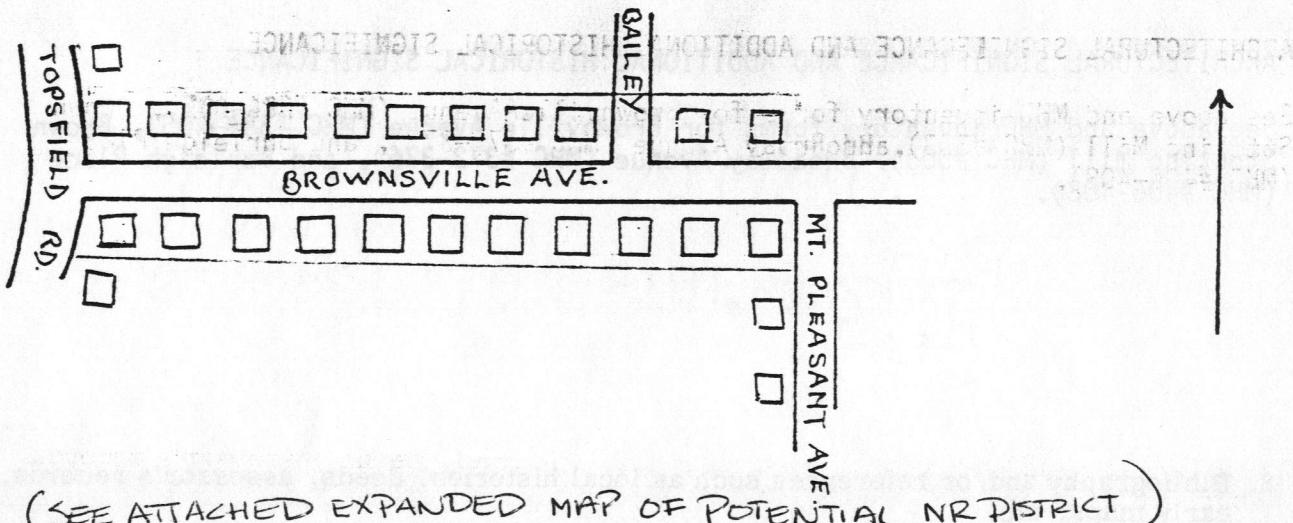
Style? yes (mill housing)

Condition? yes (well maintained)

Type of ownership? yes (private)

Use? yes (residential)

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 Margaret E. Welden

Organization Ipswich Historical Comm.

Date Oct. 1978

(over)

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

At the turn of the 20th century, Harry Brown established a hosiery mill called the Brown Stocking Mill Co. atop the hill northeast of the center of Ipswich. In the first optimistic flush of his enterprise (which briefly employed 800 operatives), Brown laid out Brownsville Ave. just south of his factory and built 22 houses, extending west from the factory down the slope of Brownsville Ave. to Topsfield Rd.

The hosiery mill soon failed, but the houses remain. All are front-gabled with front porches, and vary from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ stories in height. Decorative detailing is minimal and consists of gable returns, turned porch balusters, and simple brackets. Uniformity of lot size and setback, repetition of very similar designs, and a stair-step effect of the rooflines create a cohesive streetscape on the steep hill. Though closely spaced on narrow lots, the Brownsville houses have unusually deep rear yards, many with large gardens.

Today some of the houses have been altered through synthetic siding, enclosed porches, and other additions, but many retain original detailing. The cohesiveness of the streetscape, reliant as it is on uniformity of placement and massing, remains largely unaffected by these alterations. Brownsville Ave. represents a group of late 19th-early 20th century mill houses that were and are far more successful than the factory that spawned them.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND ADDITIONAL HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

See above and MHC inventory forms for Brownville Avenue (MHC #384-405), Brown Stocking Mill (MHC #303), Broadway Avenue (MHC #372-376), and Burleigh Place (MHC #406-408).

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

Harold Bowen, Tales of Olde Ipswich, vol. I.
T.F. Waters, Ipswich Mills and Factories, p.33.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Form No.:

Ipswich

Property Name: Brownville Ave

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

✓ ps. H



NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT

This area appears to be eligible for listing on the National Register under Criteria A and C. Its well-preserved mill building and cluster of houses, all built by the Brown Stocking Mill Company, are representative of industrial development in Ipswich in the late 19th and early 20th century. The houses are well-preserved and the historic streetscape is retained.

FORM A - AREA SURVEY

185.A



Form numbers in this area Area no.

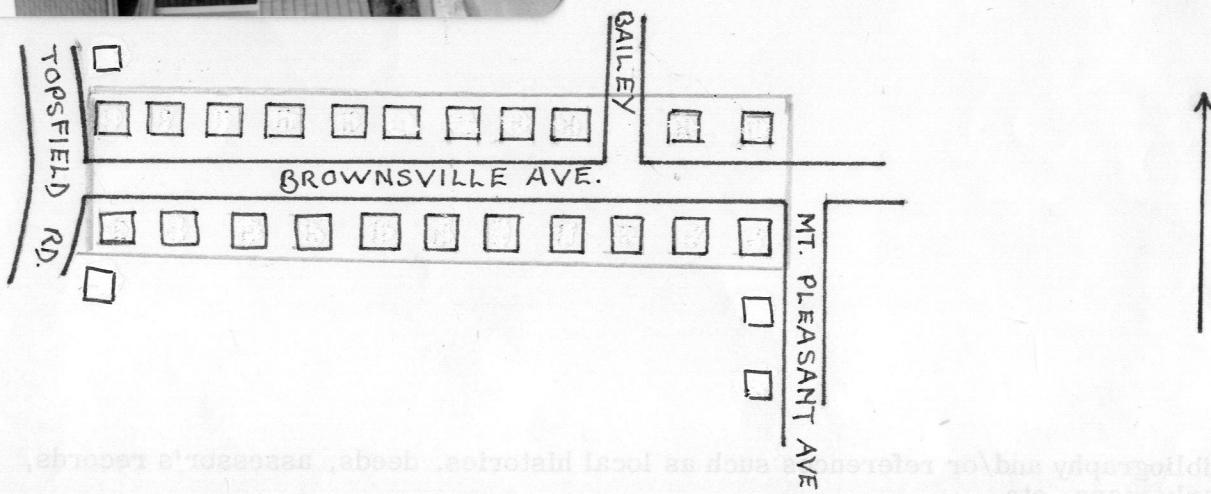
H

1. Town IpswichName of area (if any) Brownsville Ave.Mill Houses3. General date or period 1893-1910

4. Is area uniform (explain):

in style? yes (mill housing)in condition? yes (well maintained)in type of ownership? yes (private)in use? yes (residential)

map of the area involved. Indicate any historic
e completed on Forms B thru F, using corres-
cluding route numbers, if any) and indicate north.
nventoried on Form B.

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
USGS Quadrant _____

MHC Photo no. _____

6. Recorded by Margaret E. WeldenOrganization Ipswich Historical Comm.Date Oct. 1978

(over)

on page 7 sets off by a double line

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

At the turn of the 20th century, Harry Brown established a hosiery mill called the Essex Hosiery Co. atop the hill northeast of the center of Ipswich. In the first optimistic flush of his enterprise (which briefly employed 800 operatives), Brown laid out Brownsville Ave. just south of his factory and built 22 houses, extending west from the factory down the slope of Brownsville Ave. to Topsfield Rd.

The hosiery mill soon failed, but the houses remain. All are front-gabled with front porches, and vary from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ stories in height. Decorative detailing is minimal and consists of gable returns, turned porch balusters, and simple brackets. Uniformity of lot size and setback, repetition of very similar designs, and a stair-step effect of the rooflines create a cohesive streetscape on the steep hill. Though closely spaced on narrow lots, the Brownsville houses have unusually deep rear yards, many with large gardens.

Today some of the houses have been altered through synthetic siding, enclosed porches, and other additions, but many retain original detailing. The cohesiveness of the streetscape, reliant as it is on uniformity of placement and massing, remains largely unaffected by these alterations. Brownsville Ave. represents a group of late 19th-early 20th century mill houses that were and are far more successful than the factory that spawned them.

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

Harold Bowen, Tales of Olde Ipswich, vol. I.
T.F. Waters, Ipswich Mills and Factories, p.33.

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
USE OTHER SPACES
WHICH Page

Collection of Ipswich Historical Society

Date Oct. 1989

(over)

Original yellow form: Eligibility file
copies: Inventory form
Town file (w/corresp.)
Macris
NR director

1PS.H

Community: Ipswich

MHC OPINION: ELIGIBILITY FOR NATIONAL REGISTER

Date Received:

Date Due:

Date Reviewed: 4/21/93

Type: Individual

District (Attach map indicating boundaries)

Name: Brown Stocking Mills HD

Inventory Form: Area H

Address:

Requested by:

Action: Honor

ITC

Grant

R & C

Other:

Agency:

Staff in charge of Review:

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

- Eligible
- Eligible, also in district
- Eligible only in district
- Ineligible
- More information needed

CRITERIA:

(A)

B

(C)

D

LEVEL:

Local

State

National

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE by pp

THIS AREA INCLUDES THE BROWN STOCKING MILL AND RELATED WORKER HOUSING. APPEARS TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR LISTING AS A DISTRICT PRIMARILY FOR ITS ASSOCIATION WI THE INDUSTRIAL AND SOCIAL/ETHNIC HISTORY OF IPSWICH & SECONDARILY IS A SURVIVING COMPLEX OF INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS, WORKERS' BUILT HOUSING & OTHER RESIDENCES RELATED TO INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE SITE.

THE BROWN STOCKING MILL WAS BUILT C. 1906 BY HARRY BROWN WHO ALSO LAD OUT BROWNSVILLE AVE & CONSTRUCTED 22 HOUSES ON BROWNSVILLE AVE FOR HIS WORKERS. THE MILL CLOSED IN 1910 AND AT THIS TIME THE WORKER HOUSING WAS SOLD OFF. THE ESSEX FISHING COMPANY OCCUPIED THE MILL FROM 1910-1916; FROM 1929 TO THE 1950S THE MILL WAS OCCUPIED BY F. L. BURKE & SON LEATHER STREET HEELING COMPANY. CURRENTLY THE MILL IS OCCUPIED BY OTHER COMMERCIAL INTERESTS.

THE MILL APPEARS TO BE IN GOOD SHAPE & RETAIN INTEGRITY. MOST OF THE ADDITIONS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN DONE C. 1950. MORE DOCUMENTATION IS NEEDED. THE HOUSES HAVE ALL BEEN ALTERED BY SIDING AND ROOFING & POSSIBLE WINDOW REPLACEMENTS, BUT RETAIN THEIR BASIC ENCLAVES AND FORM. A SMALL "MOM & POP" GROCERY STORE APPEARS TO BE THE MOST INTEGRAL BUILDING IN THE AREA, OUTSIDE OF THE MILL. VISITS TO THIS AREA NEED TO BE DONE TO DETERMINE OVERALL INTEGRITY OF AREA. 10/86