

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic Winsted Hosiery Company

and/or common Winsted Hosiery Company

2. Location

street & number Whiting at Holabird St.

n/a not for publication

city, town Winsted

n/a vicinity of

state Connecticut

code 09

county Litchfield

code 005

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	n/a <input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. Frank J. Mairano (building #s 1,2)

street & number 60 Dyer Ave.

city, town Collinsville

n/a vicinity of

state Connecticut

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Town Clerk

street & number Main St.

city, town Winsted

state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 S. Prospect St.

city, town Hartford

state Connecticut

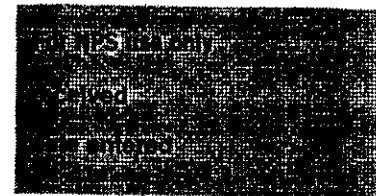
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4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

Mr. Frank Prelli (building #s 3-8)
Old North Road
Winsted, CT 06098

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

(BUILDING NUMBERS KEYED TO SKETCH MAP)

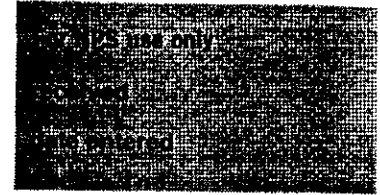
The Winsted Hosiery Company is situated at the intersection of Whiting and Holabird streets on the east bank of the Still River in the town of Winsted. Winsted (pop. 9000), once an important manufacturing center in the Litchfield Hills region at the head of the Naugatuck Valley, was home for over twenty factories whose products included clocks, hosiery, knit goods, hardware and electrical appliances. The nominated property is close to the downtown area west of the Still River. The property slopes up to the east from the river bank, with building #s 1 and 2 at the low point and #s 4 and 5 at the high point. The ensemble of six masonry industrial buildings was constructed within the period 1901-1911, forming a cohesive and well preserved example of industrial architecture typical of the period. The original Winsted Hosiery Company mill building (1882), a frame structure which burned in 1900, was located on the site of building #3. The mill complex consists of a stone-faced office block (#1) attached to a long brick structure (#2), two manufacturing buildings situated across the street (#s 3 and 4), storage and shipping (#s 5 and 6), and two small outbuildings (#s 7 and 8). The Winsted Hosiery Company (reorganized as Winchester Spinning Company in 1960) moved from Winsted to Ashboro, North Carolina in 1965. No hosiery mill machinery is extant. With the exception of building #4, all of the buildings are underutilized and have been subdivided on the interior for use by multiple tenants.

The three-story four-by-three-bay office block (building #1, ca. 1911) faces Whiting St. and adjoins Building #2 on the south side (photograph #s 1,2). Distinguished from the other five mill buildings by its coursed, ashlar granite exterior walls and denticulated roof cornice, the formalism of its exterior is complemented on the interior by oak-paneled wainscoting, window and door trim, and flush-boarded walls and ceilings. The carefully proportioned granite exterior walls feature semicircular-arched bays extending from the third floor to ground level. Third-floor windows are accented by keystones and surmounted by a string course and an enriched roof cornice in the Renaissance Revival style. Inset window spandrels are solid rock-faced granite panels, inscribed as square blocks. Rectangular sash on the first and second floors are framed by granite sills and lintels. The first-floor entrance on the (east) facade features an oak paneled door with a solid-glass panel in the upper half, and provides access to a small vestibule and reception area (paymaster's office). Most original varnished millwork, including oak paneled doors, trim and wainscoting, is intact. The large first-floor president's office faces Holabird St., and features molded architrave trim around window openings and paneled wainscoting (trim recently painted) (see photograph #3). Second-floor offices retain boarded walls and ceilings (painted white); radiators are encased in oak with brass grillwork.

Building #2 (ca. 1905), a four-story brick structure resting on a rock-faced coursed granite foundation wall, retains virtually all original exterior fabric including all windows and door openings. The impressively sited mill building stretches thirty bays along the east bank of the Still River (photograph #2). A six-bay four-story extension (ca. 1911) attached on the south side repeats the semicircular-arched bay configuration of the original building, and a small single-story garage (ca. 1940) is appended to the extension of 1925. A ground-level loading

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7. DESCRIPTION

dock entry consists of narrow, six-part hinged doors with three fixed-glass panels in the upper halves and wood panels in the lower halves. The interior of the building (subdivided on the ground floor) retains its open plan on the second, third and fourth floors. On the first floor, steel I-beams are supported by square wooden posts. Brick interior walls are painted white; wood flooring is intact on the four levels. On the fourth floor, chamfered posts support wood beams which slope down at the center, joined to posts by triangular-shaped iron joist hangers (photograph #4). Elevator shafts are situated near the north and south sides of the building. The north elevator remains in working order, retaining its original wood-slatted cage and elevator machinery manufactured by Salem (MA) Elevator Works (photograph #5). The building originally contained company shipping and carpentry departments on the first floor, packing department on the second, sewing department on the third, and storage on the fourth.

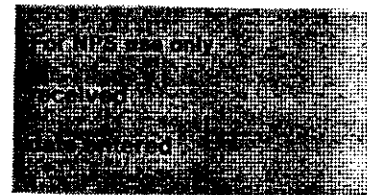
Building #3 (constructed in 1901), was the central manufacturing structure of the mill complex containing most major manufacturing departments including garnetting, carding, spinning and knitting. The twenty-nine-bay structure faces Holabird and Whiting streets. The Holabird St. (north) facade is distinguished by a raised, pedimented roof parapet with 1901 inscribed at the center (photograph #6). Brick piers rise four stories from a coursed-stone foundation wall, and culminate on the fourth floor with semicircular window arches. The Whiting St. (west) elevation has segmental-arch window openings. Double-hung wood sash and granite lintels are intact. Alterations of the first-floor door openings on the north (facade), south and west elevations represent the only conspicuous changes in the appearance of the building. The interior is similar to building #2, although first-floor joists are of wood instead of steel. Posts are capped by rectangular-shaped wood plates, supported at the walls by diagonal wood braces (photograph #7).

Building #4, also constructed in 1901 and facing Holabird St., is a two-story, twelve-bay structure with semicircular-arch window bays on the second floor and a corbeled roof cornice (photograph #8). On the (north facade, double-hung sash are set within segmental-arch openings; replacement sash on the west side are fixed-glass panels. A roof monitor (ca. 1920) with glass panels intact runs approximately thirty feet east/west near the front of the building. The interior, now subdivided into smaller manufacturing operations and storage areas, originally consisted of an open plan with wooden posts and beams. Featuring an L plan, building #4 adjoins #3 along its west side; an enclosed second-floor bridge facing Holabird St. also connects the two buildings and forms a small interior light court.

Building #s 5 and 6 (ca. 1911) were constructed as materials storage and shipping facilities for Winsted Hosiery Company. Building #5 is a single-story rectangular brick block built on a stone foundation.

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The twelve-bay (west) facade is defined by fixed sash set within segmental-arch window openings, and three entrances with wood-paneled doors. Eaves of the extended low-pitch gable roof are punctuated by exposed wooden rafter ends. Building #6 is a two-story L-shaped brick structure built on a stone foundation. A loading dock on the (west) facade is sheltered by a shed roof and surmounted by fifteen-light fixed sash on the second floor (photograph #9). The east elevation features four segmental-arch openings, each with a granite sill, paired wood paneled doors, and a transom (photograph #10). A simple gabled shed (ca.1950), constructed of plywood and metal support posts, is attached on the southwest side of the west elevation, and extends west about twenty feet.

Building #s 7 and 8 are two deteriorated frame storage sheds (ca.1940) which do not contribute to the architectural merit of the ensemble of mill buildings. Building #7 has a standing-seam metal roof, vertical flush-boarded wood siding, and a concrete pier foundation. Building #8 has a gabled metal seamed roof, corrugated metal walls and a cinder-block foundation (photograph #11).

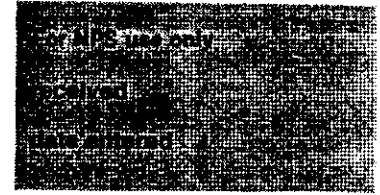
Manufacturing Process

The Winsted Hosiery produced a variety of wool and wool-blend hosiery for men. During the 1950s the company began manufacturing wool sweaters, and after 1960 changing market conditions caused the company to reorganize as the Winchester Spinning Company, and to convert all operations to sweater manufacture. The majority of mill spinning machines were purchased from Scot and Williams Machine Company of Laconia, NH; the majority of sewing machines were produced by the Singer Company. A number of knitting machines were imported from Britain.²

Scoured bales of wool were trucked to the mill (most wool imported from Australia) and stored in building #s 5 and 6. The first step in the manufacture of hosiery, underwear and sweaters was garnetting—the process whereby wool was mixed with cotton in percentages ranging from 25%/75% wool/cotton blend to 100% raw wool mix. The garnetting department was located on the second floor of building #3. The blend of wool mix was then moved to the carding department on the third floor, where the material was poured into carding machines and processed into one-inch-diameter rope. The rope was wound onto five-foot bobbins. In the fourth-floor spinning department the rope was spun into yarn; a portion of the yarn was brought down to the basement and dyed in vats. After spinning and dyeing, the yarn was ready for knitting. Three separate operations were required for knitting hosiery, underwear and sweaters. Socks were knitted on looping machines and toe openings were machine stitched. The finished sock was then mended (single stitch), washed, inspected, remended, boarded, shaped, steamed, dried and boxed. Sweaters were knit in larger circular knit machines, underwear on twin needle machines; both products were then washed, dried, and packed for shipping. Sewn materials were transported from the third floor of building #2 to the second floor,

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7. DESCRIPTION

where they were pressed, folded, boxed and labeled. Boxed goods were shipped out from the first floor. The entire fourth floor of building #2 was used for storage--boxes were placed off the floor on wood palettes.³ While manufacturing occurred year round, goods were kept in storage and shipped out in the Fall.

NOTES

1. The first floor of the office block (building #1) and building #2 were under water during the flood of 1955.
2. Robinson Gaylord, grandson of E.B. Gaylord. Telephone interview with Jack A. Gold, August 14, 1984.
3. State fire codes required use of palettes in materials storage areas in order to prevent water damage from sprinkler systems during a fire.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Criteria A,C

Specific dates 1901, ca. 1905, ca. 1911 Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Winsted Hosiery Company is representative of large manufacturing concerns established in Winsted between 1850 and 1910 (Criterion A). The company, founded in 1882 by local industrialist William L. Gilbert as a small manufacturer of men's hosiery, capitalized on expanding markets and new product lines to become the largest hosiery manufacturer in the state by 1936. The company's success was due largely to the management of Edward B. Gaylord, company treasurer in 1885, general manager in 1888 and president from 1910 through the 1930s. Exemplifying the Italianate and Renaissance Revival design influence in large industrial complexes constructed between 1880 and 1920, the ensemble of mill buildings retains a high degree of architectural integrity (Criterion C).

Historical Development

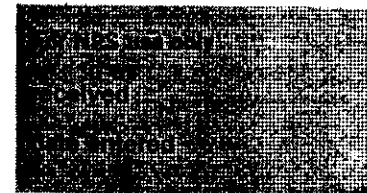
Winsted, situated at the intersection of the Mill Brook and Still rivers at the head of the Naugatuck valley, was ideally suited for the proliferation of manufacturing after 1850. Among the largest of these were the William L. Gilbert Clock Co., The Strong Manufacturing Company, Winsted Foundry and Machine Company, Beardsley Scythe Company, New England Pin Company, Winsted Manufacturing Company, and the Winsted Hosiery Company. William L. Gilbert (1806-1890), industrialist and public benefactor, was probably the most important individual associated with the town's development as a manufacturing center. Gilbert, with Lucius Clarke, purchased in 1841 the Luther Hoadley Clock Company under the name Clark, Gilbert & Co.¹ Clarke retired in 1845 and Gilbert reorganized the company as the William Gilbert Clock Company in 1871. Gilbert's financial success was mirrored in his continuing entrepreneurship in the town, and his role as local politician and benefactor. A state legislator in 1848 and 1868, he also established in 1867 a private banking business with Henry Gay, and in 1874 was elected president of Hurlbut National Bank. He promoted formation of the Connecticut Western Railroad, later serving as a director and treasurer of the company. He established in 1889 the William L. Gilbert Home (for dependent children) with an endowment of \$400,000, stipulating that \$10,000 annual income be added to the fund for one hundred years. He offered a \$20,000 matching grant to the town to promote foundation of a local seminary; following his death in 1890, Gilbert willed \$600,000 to the town in order to establish the Gilbert School, which opened in 1895.

Gilbert founded the Winsted Hosiery Company in 1882 with \$40,000 capital. Leverett W. Tiffany served as secretary/treasurer, and W.F. Taylor as selling agent. The original factory building was a three-story frame structure measuring 48 x 100 feet (burned in 1900). Directories listed the company as manufacturers of "full and regular-made underwear."² Tiffany, listed as company selling agent from 1887 to 1900, had sales offices in New York City at 99 Franklin St.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

Edward B. Gaylord, appointed treasurer of the company in 1885 and general manager in 1888, is credited for the rapid expansion of the company after 1885.³ Gaylord served as president and treasurer from 1910 through the 1930s, succeeded by his son Robert. Grandson Robinson Gaylord reorganized the company in 1960 as Winchester Spinning, and in 1965 moved all operations to Ashboro, NC.

In step with the increase in textile manufacturing in the northeast, the company experienced tremendous growth between 1900 and 1935, expanding output from \$300,000 in 1911 to \$1.5 million in 1935.⁴ Capitalization increased from \$40,000 in 1882 to \$200,000 in 1911.⁵ The full-time work force increased from 55 in 1882 to 300 in 1911 and 500 in 1935, establishing the company as the second largest manufacturer of knit underwear and half hose in Connecticut, after the Norfolk Hosiery Company.⁶ In 1936, Davison's Directory listed Winsted Hosiery Company as the largest of twenty-one hosiery companies in the state, listing \$600,000 capital, 14 sets of carding machines, 4500 wool spinning machines, 125 loop machines, 150 sewing machines, dye, bleach and finish departments, and two boilers which electrified the facility.⁷

The company's product line evolved in response to changing fashions and fluctuating markets. Marketed after 1906 by selling agents Valentine and Flagler (man's half-hose) and the American Knitting company (men's underwear), Winsted Hosiery products were well known for high quality and durability. All-wool and wool/cotton-mix underwear were popular because they eliminated the scratchiness usually associated with men's wool and wool-mix underwear.⁸ Later additions to the company's product line included men's work suits and sweaters for men and women.

In addition to product marketing, technological advances and a changing work force facilitated after 1850 the hosiery industry. Mills such as Norfolk Hosiery, Winsted Hosiery and New England Hosiery capitalized on the introduction of automatic wool feeding devices, shifting the bulk of hosiery and knit wear manufacture from homes and small shops to large manufacturing centers and enabling the introduction of new product lines.⁹ The growth of the hosiery industry caused the percentage of women and children involved with hosiery and knitwear manufacture to decrease greatly during the nineteenth century, from over 75% women and children in 1850 to 39% women, 6% children in 1889; 34% women, 3% children in 1909; and 33% women, 1.5% children in 1919.¹⁰ The withdrawal of women and children from manufacturing during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century paralleled the increase in the adult male work force available for work in manufacturing.

World War II had a great impact on the company, from the standpoint of both its work force and its manufacturing capabilities. A number of experienced workers left the company at this time and moved to Hartford to take jobs with larger manufacturers geared for the war effort.¹¹

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

In addition, federal government inspectors forced the company to discontinue certain popular product lines such as English-rib knit socks and wool/cotton-blend men's union suits. Underwear and hosiery manufactured under Army specifications replaced the discontinued lines. After World War II automation of the wool spinning and knitting process caused additional reductions in the company's manufacturing work force--to 275 by 1948. New spinning machines, operable by women, contributed to the increase in the proportion of female-to-male workers after 1950 (about 2:1 during the 1950s). The company's move south in 1965 was hastened by the attraction of a more plentiful labor force and a generally lower wage scale.

Architectural Significance

The Winsted Hosiery Company is typical of large manufacturing complexes in the northeast which began as small operations and grew at astounding rates after 1900. The rhythmic repetition of corbeled cornices, four-story brick piers, and segmental-arch fenestration (especially apparent on the west elevation of building #2) is the source of the buildings' esthetic interest, giving the ensemble proper scale and texture, and exemplifying the Italianate influence in late nineteenth/early twentieth-century industrial design in America. The development of this type of continuous form of architectural expression, incorporating massive horizontal surfaces with heavy structural systems, epitomized the utilitarian spirit of early industrial design. In providing expansive, homogenous settings for industrial activity, maximizing natural lighting through open plans, continuous rows of windows and use of roof monitors, its designers developed pragmatic solutions to the needs of a large manufacturing facility such as the Winsted Hosiery Company. The obvious stylistic differentiation between the Renaissance Revival-inspired stone-faced office block and the brick mill buildings is enhanced by the alternating window sizes and shapes in the office block, the addition of inset spandrels beneath the second and third floors, and the enrichment of the interior with plaster-and-lath walls and varnished millwork.

NOTES

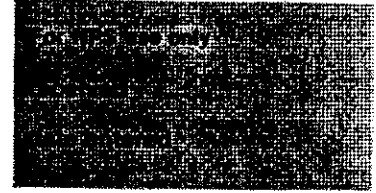
1. Captain Luther Hoadley erected a wooden clock factory building in Winsted in 1807. See Winsted Tercentenarian, August 1935, p.63.

2. Winsted and Torrington Directory, 1883-1888. New Haven: Price and Lee Co.

3. Tiffany and Gaylord were evidently convinced that the market for knit knit wear was large enough to bear establishment of another hosiery mill. The two men organized in 1887 the New England Knitting Co. The company occupied buildings leased from New England Pin Co. The hosiery company manufactured wool knit underwear under the "Nekonit" label, and "Spinnaker" label shirts and outerwear.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

4. Winsted Tercentenarian, p.4.

5. Connecticut Magazine, Francis Trevelyan Miller, ed. "Winsted--the Development of an Ideal Town." Vol.8, no.3, p.595.

6. Winsted Tercentenarian, p.3. The Norfolk Hosiery Co., organized by J.J. Hinchman and Jonathan Kilbourn in 1857, was the first company of its kind in the state and the largest until 1936. Kilbourn was responsible for perfecting an automatic knitting machine during the 1860s. Norfolk Hosiery eventually reorganized as the Norfolk and New Brunswick Hosiery Co., and relocated all manufacturing to New Brunswick, NJ after 1940.

7. Davison's Hosiery and Knit Goods Trade, 1936 Directory. New York: Davison Publishing Co., 1936, p.210.

8. Winsted Evening Citizen. "60th Anniversary Edition," April 30, 1948.

9. The American Wool Manufacture. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, vol.I, p.367. Automatic circular knitting machines, which knit the entire stocking from top to toe, facilitated development of "full fashion" seamless hosiery. Each machine knit eighteen to twenty-four stockings simultaneously by needles running within metal cylinders.

10. American Wool Manufacture, vol.II, p.102. After World War II the trend reversed as modern, safer machinery coupled with generally lower wages caused an increase in the percentage of women in the textile industry.

11. Margaret Finn, former payroll office employee, Winsted Hosiery Company. Telephone interview with Jack A. Gold, August 8, 1984.

12. Ibid.

9. Major Bibliographical References

The American Wool Manufacture. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926.
Vols. I, II.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 4.4

Quadrangle name Winsted

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

18	660960	4642860
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

Zone	Easting	Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

As recorded in Deed Book Vol.161, p.168 (Mairano); and Deed Book Vol.177, p.54 (Prelli); filed at Town Clerk's Office, Winsted.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jack A. Gold Architectural Historian

organization Jack A. Gold
Historic Preservation Consultant date August 1984

street & number 277 Dwight St. telephone 203/624-4673

city or town New Haven state Connecticut

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title _____ date _____

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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Crissey, Theron Wilmot. History of Norfolk. Everet, MA: Massachusetts Publishing Company, 1900.

Davison's Hosiery and Knit Goods Trade. New York: Davison Publishing Company, 1898.

Miller, Francis Trevelyan, ed. Connecticut Magazine. E.B. Eaton, "Winsted—the Development of an Ideal Town," "The Financial and Industrial History of Winsted." Vol.8, no.3.

Norfolk, Connecticut, The First 200 Years. Bicentennial Committee of Norfolk, 1958.

Taylor, George William. Knitting Equipment of the Seamless Hosiery Industry. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1934.

Winsted Evening Citizen. Industrial Edition, 1911.

_____ 60th Anniversary Edition, April 30, 1948

Winsted Tercentenarian. Winsted Tercentenary Commission, August 1935.