

IDENTIFICATION 6 Rock Street (mailing address: 1 Cushing) MAP SHEET # 139

- 1) CURRENT OWNER Advanced Heat-Treat Corp. OWNER OCCUPIED yes
- 2) HISTORIC NAME D. Lovejoy & Sons
- 3) CURRENT NAME Advanced Heat-Treat Corp.
- 4) PROPERTY TYPE industrial 5) ZONING CLASSIFICATION IA
- 6) TAXES: PAYMENTS current STATUS clear
- 7) WITHIN BOUNDARIES OF LHPD

HISTORICAL ABSTRACT

- 1) CONSTRUCTION DATE 1848, 1853
SOURCE company histories, 1853 date is on part of the building
- 2) ARCHITECT OR BUILDER _____
- 3) HISTORIC OWNER D. Lovejoy & Sons
- 4) ORIGINAL USE: GF manufacturing UF manufacturing
- 5) PREVIOUS BLDGS ON PROPERTY no DATE _____
SOURCE _____

DESCRIPTIVE DATA

- 1) ARCHITECTURAL STYLE vernacular
- 2) PRESENT USE:
GF manufacturing
UF vacant
- 3) NO OF STORIES 1, 2,
2 1/2
- 4) PROP SQ FT 11,442
irregular
- 5) PLAN Part I: almost flat
- 6) ROOF II: facade
gable
- 7) STRUCTURAL SYSTEM lead bearing masonry II:
- 8) OUTBUILDINGS none
- 9) MATERIALS:
FOUNDATION not visible II: stone

VIEW FROM east PHOTO TAKEN Nov. 1992



FACADE Part I: random rubble set in courses; Part II: asbestos siding over wooden boards

TRIM Part I: granite, brick Part II: wood

- 10) NOTABLE SURFACE & LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS courtyard between two sections

ADDRESS 6 Rock Street (One Cushing Street)

VISUAL ASSESSMENT

- 1) CONDITION OF BUILDING FABRIC Stone/brick section needs minor repair; frame section is derelict
- 2) IF DETERIORATED, CAUSES lack of maintenance
- 3) INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC BLDG FABRIC: GF major & irreversible changes at front corner, some sections largely intact
UF major & irreversible changes at front corner, some sections largely intact
- 4) SURROUNDING LAND USES commercial, light industrial
- 5) INTEGRITY OF PROPERTY'S HISTORIC SETTING intact with minor intrusions and/or losses
- 6) IMPORTANCE OF PROPERTY TO HISTORIC SETTING integral to character

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION

This irregularly-shaped manufacturing complex has a substantial one- and two-story stone section (1848 and 1853), a new concrete block front section (c.1981-2), a rear brick section, and a wood frame section (pre-1879) in deteriorating condition. The stone portions of the building are uncoursed granite rubble notable for the brick quoin treatment around the windows, which have granite sills and lintels. The two-story portion facing Cushing Street has a shallow pitched roof and a large second floor opening with double wood paneled doors and a bar for hoisting. Windows openings are now boarded or blocked with concrete or glass blocks.

The concrete block/metal roofed section at the corner of Fletcher and Rock Street replaced a two-story late 19th century wood frame attached office (c.1880) which was destroyed in an 1981 fire. Pre-fire photographs show this frame section with a large octagonal oriel projecting out from the second story, marking the corner in an emphatic fashion. The owner has a supply of early bricks and would like to use them to improve the front facade if funds were available.

The 3 X 6 bay frame section is 2 1/2 stories and has a facade gable roof with asphalt shingles. The original wood exterior boarding is covered with asbestos siding. The three-bay Rock Street facade has large center openings at each level with the double wood paneled doors needed for industrial and storage uses. A largely intact machine shop has survived in this building, which the owner would be willing to donate to a museum.

The original wooden water tower survives, in deteriorating condition, behind the complex. In a small courtyard between the stone and frame sections, above a door, is the date, 1853, in brick numerals. The interior of the building retains original mechanical features and an interesting roof trussing system.

ADDITIONAL HISTORICAL INFORMATION

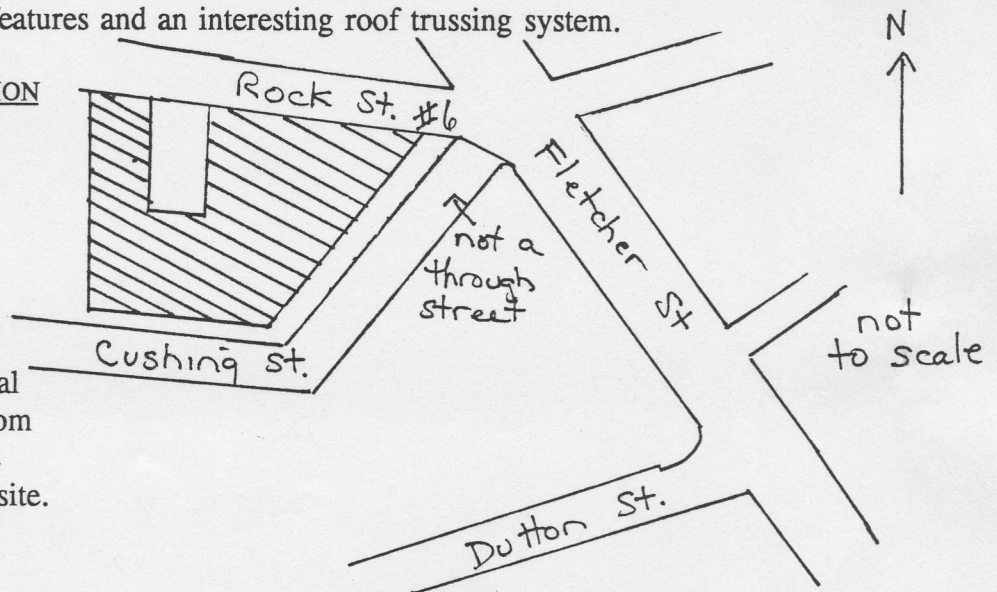
See Research Report

SOURCES

See Research Report

ARCHEOLOGICAL COMMENT

The first building activity occurred on this site about 1850. Archeological remains which could be recovered from the rear yard area would relate to the subsequent manufacturing use of the site.



Research Report
6 Rock Street (One Cushing Street)
1848,1853

The manufacturing buildings at 6 Rock Street were built for the firm of D. Lovejoy & Son, manufacturers of machine knives for machinery used in the manufacture of leather, paper, wood, textiles and other industries which require machine knives. The company was established by Daniel Lovejoy in 1848 in a small shop on this site. According to the 1975 H.A.E.R. inventory, the original shop became incorporated into the present complex. Daniel Lovejoy was said to be the second man in the United States to own and operate a machine knife plant. When his rival sold out, Lovejoy became the oldest established company of its kind in the United States. The Lovejoy Company is still in existence and presently rents space in the building, where the company continues to manufacture machine knives, in some cases using the same early equipment.

A 1920 business history says that Daniel Lovejoy lived in Hollis, New Hampshire and Worcester, Massachusetts before coming to Lowell. He learned his trade partly by working in blacksmith shops, always seeking to become expert in forging machine parts. After coming to Lowell, he initially went into business with his brother Lund Lovejoy, a blacksmith in Lowell. Their firm soon dissolved and Daniel Lovejoy came to his present site, where he started his first small shop in 1848 and expanded in 1853. Lovejoy's shop manufactured all the iron work for the Lowell Jail on Thorndike Street in 1856. Daniel Lovejoy continued to operate the firm until age 54, when he turned over management to his son Elwyn W. Lovejoy.

A 1928 history of the firm describes "striking developments in the production of a high speed steel knife that will run continuously day after day and which is manufactured with the utmost care from a Lovejoy grade of high-speed steel exclusively produced for the concern. These knives are heat-treated in modern furnaces which are designed and made especially for this type of product..." The account gives examples of how businesses such as shoe and leather work are dependent on the specialized blades and knives produced by the Lovejoy company. At that time the firm also had a branch plant in Anderson, Indiana and a sales office in New York City, and branches in New Orleans, St. Louis and Atlanta. The firm had a large foreign market in Europe, Japan, Central America and elsewhere. In 1928 the company was owned by Roy and Elwyn Lovejoy and employed 125 operatives.

After World War II the business had declined considerably, due to the closing of manufacturing plants and competition from abroad. In the late 1940's, the Lovejoy family sold the business to an employee, Elmer Fortier. In 1985, the building and equipment were sold to Advanced Heat Treat Corp, which wanted to use the Lovejoy equipment and furnaces for its business of hardening and softening of metal parts used in industry. The Lovejoy Company continued in existence under the direction of Fred Sanville, the son-in-law of Elmer Fortier. The company remained at 6 Rock Street, where they now rent space and make a limited number of blades for cutting of wood, textiles, and plastic.

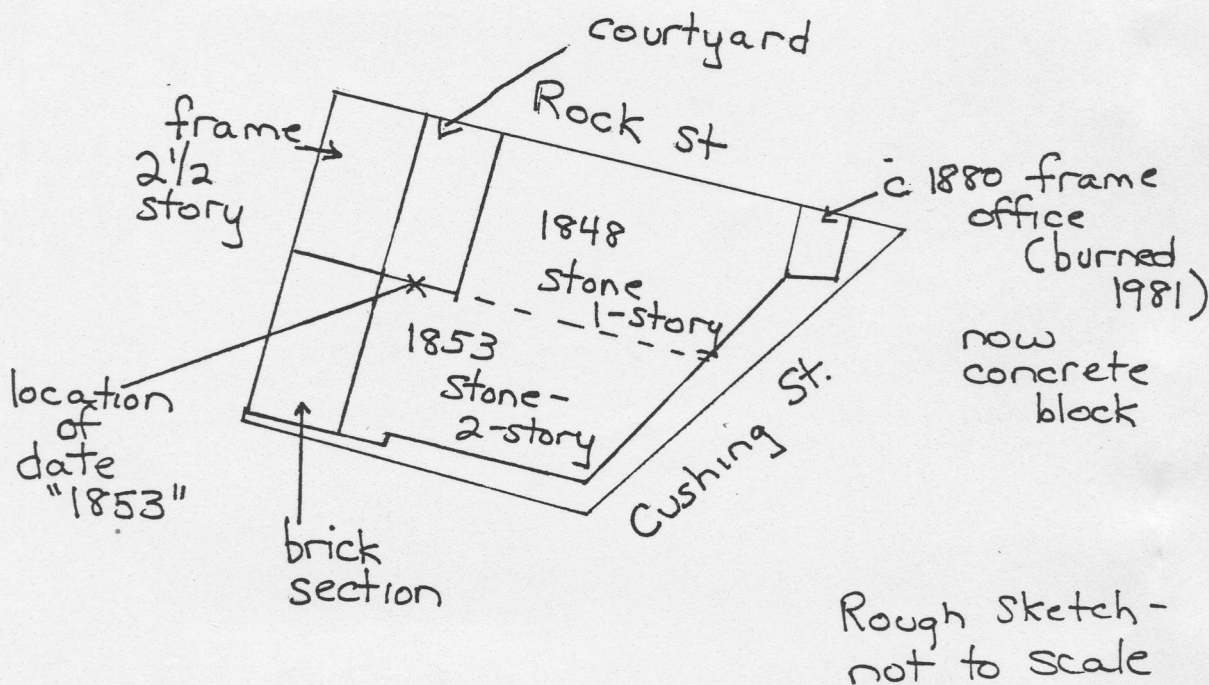
According to the H.A.E.R. inventory form done in 1975, the original shop, which contained furnaces and machine tools, is a 40' X 60' one-story building with a pitched roof, constructed of uncoursed granite rubble. According to this report, Lovejoy added a second shop in 1853 with a sizeable boiler house to complement the small boiler house and engine next to the original building. This 1853 structure, 90' X 30', was two stories, uncoursed granite rubble, with a shallow pitched roof. According to Mr. Bert Joy, a part of this 1853 addition was wood frame, burned at a later date, and was rebuilt. Yet another ^{addition} section, built of wood with a pitched roof and measuring 20' X 30', was in place by 1879, when it appears on the 1879 atlas. Around 1880 the small, two-story wooden office with a mansard roof was added to the front of the 1848 building. It was this section that burned in 1981 and was rebuilt in a different form using concrete blocks. Fire codes dictated the use of fire-proof materials for this rebuilding.

The H.A.E.R. inventory form notes that an interesting part of the 1848 building is the roof trussing system. The trusses are basically of the queen post style, but the center panel contains a king post truss and the two outer panels contain additional vertical and diagonal struts. In addition, columns support the trusses directly beneath their centers. This unusual system was built with the hope of strengthening the roof beam, to which pulleys and blocks and tackles were attached.

The 1882 Sanborn atlas shows how the various parts of the complex were used at that time. The frame front section contained a passage on the first floor and office on the second floor. The one-story Rock Street portion of the stone structure was used for forging and tempering. The two-story section facing Cushing Street was used for grinding on the first floor and as a machine shop on the second. Iron was stored in the rear section. The frame building contained coal bins on the first floor (raised basement level), a machine shop on the second, and pattern and tinware manufactory on the third floor, and storage of leather in the attic.

SOURCES

1. "The Lower Merrimack River Valley," An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites; U.S. Department of the Interior, H.A.E.R., National Park Service, ed. by Peter M. Molloy, 1976. Includes information supplied by Mr. Fred Sanville.
2. Coburn, Frederick A. History of Lowell and Its People (N.Y. 1920) Vol.II, p.272.
3. Orra Stone, Massachusetts Industries (Boston, 1928), Vol.I, p.744
4. Newsclipping, 1911, Lowell Historical Society scrapbook, J1995.
5. Massachusetts Historical Commission Inventory Form, 1980.
6. Information supplied by owner, Mr. Bert Joy.





6 Rock Street (One Cushing Street)

(before 1981 fire)

photo copied from previous inventory form

location of photo unknown