

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 FEB 21 1986

date entered MAR 20 1986

**1. Name**

historic

and/or common Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies Mill

**2. Location**

street & number 31 Mohawk Avenue not for publication

city, town Waterford ☒ vicinity of

state New York code 036 county Saratoga code 091

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Garrean Enterprises Inc.

street & number 31 Mohawk Avenue

city, town Waterford vicinity of state New York 12188

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Saratoga County Government Center

street & number High Street

city, town Ballston Spa state New York

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Statewide Inventory of Historic Resources has this property been determined eligible? yes ☒ no

date 1979 federal state county ☒ local

depository for survey records NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation

city, town Albany state New York

## 7. Description

### Condition

☐ excellent  
☒ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☒ unaltered  
☐ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved date NA

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies Mill is located on Mohawk Avenue on the southeast shore of an island defined by the fourth branch of the Mohawk River to the south, the New York State Barge Canal, Erie Division (Lock #2) to the north, and the Old Champlain Canal to the west. During the early nineteenth century, a small manufacturing community known as Dial City developed on the island, which is considered part of the town of Waterford to the north and west. The Ormsby Laughlin Mill is the only industrial structure on the island that retains sufficient integrity to warrant nomination. Fire, demolition, and construction of a town park and treatment facilities have substantially altered the island's historic industrial setting. The two-acre nominated property has no outbuildings.

Constructed in 1894, the Ormsby-Laughlin Mill is a four and one-half story, Romanesque Revival style brick industrial building with a gable roof. A six and one-half story tower with tent roof dominates the eight-bay facade. At the center of the rear (south) elevation is a five-story elevator/stairwell tower with a hipped roof. A one-story flat-roofed wing with monitor projects from the rear of the mill and has a one-hundred-foot square brick smokestack at its southern end.

The building is distinguished by a corbelled cornice and vertical brick piers with decorative moldings which divide the bays. The gable ends have corbelled ellipses filled with windows. Paired segmental-arched nine-over-nine double-hung sash predominate with corbelled or patterned brick spandrels. Long monitors with four-pane sash mark both sides of the main gable roof.

The main entrances to the mill are located on the sides of the tower base. The central tower, which contains the main stairwell and water tank, has a prominent first floor window with round-arched transom and decorative brick surround. The tower fenestration consists of round-arched and segmental-arched nine-over-nine double-hung sash with molded brick window heads and decorative surrounds. The top floor of the tower is marked by a flaired shingled string course supported by brick brackets and has three small round-arched windows with four-over-four double-hung sash and molded window heads. The tent roof is topped by an ornate copper weathervane.

The three-bay, five-story stairwell/elevator tower on the rear has a corbelled cornice and hipped roof. The fenestration consists of segmental-arched twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash and narrow nine-over-nine double-hung sash. The three-bay, one-story rear wing has a parapet with corbelled cornice, a brick monitor, wooden double door entrances, and paired segmental-arched nine-over-nine double-hung sash windows. The one-hundred-foot tapered square brick chimney has a corbelled cornice. Long monitors with four-pane sash mark each side of the main gable roof.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies Mill, Waterford,  
Continuation sheet Saratoga County, NY Item number 7

For NPS use only  
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date entered

Page 2

The interior structural system of the mill consists of heavy timber floor framing and thick masonry bearing walls. The original textile machinery has been removed and the vast interior spaces have been divided by various partitions. The interior of the tower remains intact.

The original wool storage shed, finished stock warehouse, cotton warehouse, and coal shed were demolished in February, 1985.

## 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1894

Builder/Architect ~~Architect~~ Medard Breault

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies Mill is historically significant as the only surviving factory associated with the major industrial community known as Dial City. Located on an island between the Mohawk River and the Champlain Canal and fed by the King's Power Canal, the small community of Dial City developed into an important manufacturing center in the mid-nineteenth century with its own factories, mills, support businesses, residential areas, and school. On a small scale, the growth and development of Dial City closely paralleled that of the surrounding textile manufacturing region of Waterford and Cohoes, one of the major areas of its kind on the East Coast. The Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Mill is the only intact historic industrial building surviving in the Dial City community, which has been greatly altered by demolition and modern construction. Built in 1894, the large, imposing industrial building, with its elaborate corbelled brickwork, is an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival style of architecture popular for industrial and commercial buildings during the second half of the nineteenth century. The mill is distinguished by a six-story tower and a one-hundred-foot chimney which dominates the Dial City landscape and is the only surviving building from the original mill complex. Retaining an outstanding level of architectural integrity, the Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies Mill recalls an important episode in the history of the Hudson-Mohawk region of New York State.

The village of Waterford, known originally as "Halfmoon Point," was first settled in 1622 by traders and trappers from Manor Rensselaerwyck. In 1664, the land was sold to two Dutch settlers, Philip Pietersen Schuyler and Goosen G. Van Schaick, who wanted to keep English fur traders from buying and settling in the area. The land grant changed hands several times until 1687 when the settlement of Halfmoon Point was opened for development. The community grew rapidly and flourished as a center of trade. In 1784 a group of thirteen settlers purchased the village site, surveyed the land, and divided it into lots. Ten years later the village was formerly incorporated under the name of "Waterford" and became the oldest incorporated village in the United States.

Located at the junction of the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers, Waterford played an important role in the strategic defense of the country during the American Revolution. The community's location at the juncture of a major transportation route made the village a natural site for



## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2 acres

Quadrangle name Troy North, NY

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 

1	8
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6	0	7	6	8	0
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4	7	3	7	9	4	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See Attached

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

state NA code county NA code

state NA code county NA code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lucy Breyer, Field Representative

organization New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation date May 1985

street & number Empire State Plaza Agency Building #1 telephone 518-474-0479

city or town Albany state New York 12238

## 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 Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation date 2/6/86

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the  
National Register

date 3/20/86

Jaime M. McPherson  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies Mill, Waterford,  
Continuation sheet Saratoga County, NY Item number 8

For NPS use only  
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Page 2

industrial growth as well as a much-used transportation center. Waterford's water power was developed in the late 1700's with sloop trade becoming active by 1799. In 1795, a bridge was built over the Mohawk River between the area known as "Northside" and the newly settled village of Cohoes.

Waterford's role as a major industrial area was not established until the early nineteenth century when an elaborate system of canals was built. The Champlain Canal opened in 1825 with Waterford as its southern terminus. The canal linked the Hudson River with Lake Champlain and opened a water route to Canada, Vermont and northern New York. During the same year, the Erie Canal was constructed with the Hudson River as its terminus and provided access to the Great Lakes. However, the greatest stimulus to Waterford's industrial development was the King's Power Canal built in 1828 by John Fuller King. The canal was regarded as one of the major engineering feats of its time. King constructed two dams across the fourth branch of the Mohawk River and built a canal one-half mile in length parallel with the river in the southwestern portion of the island. River water was diverted into the canal by the dams. Known locally as "King's ditch," the canal was a major success and a tremendous stimulus to Waterford's development. Dozens of factories were built along the canal, each with its own serviceway and gate.

The construction of the canals coincided with the advent of the Industrial Revolution which had a tremendous effect on the greater Hudson-Mohawk area due to its strategic location and readily available water power source. With the use of automatic machinery and the development of railroads, the region surrounding Waterford became a major industrial/manufacturing center. By the 1830's, a wide variety of mills, factories and manufacturers existed throughout West Troy and Cohoes, and by the mid-nineteenth century, the area had emerged as the state's second largest manufacturing center. The area was known for its flour mills, textile production, iron works, and knitting industries.

The construction of the Champlain Canal in 1825 formed a long, narrow lowland island separated from the village of Waterford to the north and from the "Northside" neighborhood of Waterford to the west and south. The southeasternmost portion of this lowland area appears as a distinct island known as "Coster's Island," on early maps of the region.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies Mill, Waterford,  
Continuation sheet Saratoga County, NY Item number 8

For NPS use only  
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Page 3

In the 1680's, Hendrick Coster married Gertje Van Schaick, a member of one of the founding families of the area, and received the land that became this island as her dowry. By the 1780's this land was divided in half with Mr. Vanderwerken and Col. Jacobus Van Schoonhoven each owning four acres. It was here in 1784 that the village's first known industry, a saw mill, was built on a creek by John Land. The construction of the King's Canal in the southwestern portion of the area in 1828 led to the industrial development of that region. By the 1840's, factories and mills along the King's Canal produced buttons, nuts, twine, cotton, lathes, and knitting machines. There was also a dyeworks, two sawmills, an engine works, machine works, a paper mill and various flour mills.

Ironically, the southeastern portion of the island, the area closest to the developed community of Waterford, was not settled until 1846. Until that time, it was the site of a farm and orchard owned by the Davis family. In 1846, Main Street was opened and the small community which developed was known as "Dial City" for the sundial which graced the main avenue.

Dial City's industrial heritage was firmly established in the 1840's with the founding of two important manufacturing enterprises. In 1842, the William Burton and Sons Sawmill was located on the general site of the earlier land sawmill. One of the country's earliest and finest veneer works, the company imported mahogany, rosewood, satin and zebra wood and shipped five million feet of veneer a year to all parts of the world. Five years later, the Eddy Valve Company was founded by George Washington Eddy as the Mohawk and Hudson Iron Foundry and Machine Shop. The company originally made iron castings and steam car wheels, lathe chucks, wine and straw presses, iron statuary and stoves before entering the field of valve and hydrant manufacturing. The company operated until the early 1960's but was destroyed by fire in 1978.

The community of Dial City did not fully develop until after the Civil War. By the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the small community consisted of several factories surrounded by small, frame working-class residences, support businesses and commercial enterprises, and a public school.

By the 1890's, Waterford, like Cohoes and Troy, was a thriving center for the manufacturing of textiles with a number of relatively small but prosperous knitting operations.



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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies Mill, Waterford,  
Continuation sheet Saratoga County, NY Item number 8

Page 4

From the late 1800's to the 1920's, the knitting industry in Waterford was dominated by a trio of local industrialists acting as partners in various textile making ventures: Thomas Breslin, Charles C. Ormsby, and C.L. Mitchell, all residents of the village of Waterford. They were, in fact, partners in a real estate investment corporation called the "Trio Company."

In 1894, Breslin and Ormsby were already involved in the successful Waterford Knitting Company, located on the King's Canal, and Breslin was also president of the J.M. King Company, machinery manufacturers, in Waterford.

In the same year, they organized the Ormsby Textile Company, maker of knit goods and gloves, constructing an imposing new mill along the Mohawk River in the "Dial City" section of Waterford. The new Ormsby Textile Company was headed by Breslin as president, with Ormsby as treasurer and C.L. Mitchell as vice president. The mill originally employed 160 workers and produced high quality knit underwear for men, women, and children.

By 1900, the area's textile industry was at its peak with thousands of workers employed in mills throughout Cohoes, Waterford and Troy. In 1899, the McLaughlin Silk Company was incorporated with capital of \$5,000 and moved into a portion of the Ormsby Textile Mill. The company manufactured silks and knit clothes but closed in 1901.

The Ormsby Textile Company continued to prosper until 1911 when it was reorganized due to Thomas Breslin's failing health. C.L. Mitchell succeeded Breslin as president with Breslin's son, Louis, acquiring the role of treasurer. Breslin's death in 1912 broke up the trio which for years had dominated the local knitting industry.

By 1914, the Ormsby Textile Company had become part of the Ormsby-Morris Company/Ormsby-Morris Glove Corporation, now operating both in the Dial City plant and at an old mill at Fourth and Division Streets in Waterford.

The two-plant operation was apparently overly ambitious, however, as in 1919 the Ormsby-Morris Company disposed of the Dial City mill, which was taken over and occupied by Laughlin Textile Mills, formerly of Cohoes, manufacturers of cloth tapes and braids for the region's clothing and textile industry. Laughlin Textile was owned by Edwin B. Laughlin of 114 Saratoga Avenue in Waterford and Albert Laughlin of 17 Fairview Avenue.



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies Mill, Waterford,  
Continuation sheet Saratoga County, NY Item number 8

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Page 5

The Laughlin Company was extremely successful and by the mid-twentieth century, the mill was producing synthetic yarns, nylons, rayon and other materials used in the interior of automobiles. The company employed over 100 people, who operated 36 looms in the 35,000-square-foot factory. In addition to its large domestic trade, the Laughlin Company had a large foreign trade exporting textiles to countries all over the world. The company recognized Waterford's first name by adopting as its trade brand the name "Halfmoons."

The Laughlin Company operated until the 1960s although the community of Dial City had been abandoned by the mid-twentieth century. The construction of the New York State Barge Canal in 1914 resulted in the demolition of many of the residences and commercial structures at the southeastern end of the island. Although the world wars kept some of the area's textiles and iron manufacturing complexes open, the Depression of the 1930s and cheaper competition from the west ended the region's manufacturing and industrial dominance in the early twentieth century. The few companies that survived were eventually forced out of production due to antiquated operations, the growing number of cheap foreign imports, and the general decline of the United States textile industry. People who lived in Dial City and worked in the surrounding mills left the area. In 1955, the center of the low-lying island was filled in and a playground built. In the 1970s, treatment plants were constructed near the old King's Canal. Today, the small community once known as Dial City consists of the Laughlin Mill, a few worker's houses (which have lost their architectural integrity), and the remains of the Eddy Valve Company, which burned in 1978. Although the island is still referred to by some as "Dial City," the area is fully integrated into the town of Waterford.

In the 1970's, the Laughlin Mill was purchased by Ursula of Switzerland, makers of quality women's fashions, which now uses the upper floors to manufacture cloth and to design clothes. The Laughlin Textile Company still occupies the first floor of the structure.

Built in 1894 by local contractor Medard Breault, the large mill building is an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival style popular during the last half of the nineteenth century. The structure exhibits such stylistic characteristics as monochromatic brick, segmental-arched doors and windows, a corbelled cornice, and decorative brickwork. Distinguishing features of the mill include a six-story tower and a 100' tapered brick chimney which, according to local sources, tilted approximately 28.5" when built and was straightened without rebuilding by Ira Parker, a local contracting engineer.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies Mill, Waterford,  
Continuation sheet Saratoga County, NY Item number 8

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Page 6

The Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies Mill remains as one of the last surviving intact industrial structures associated with the small community of Dial City and Waterford's once thriving textile manufacturing industry.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies Mill, Waterford,  
Continuation sheet Saratoga County, NY Item number 9

For NPS use only

received

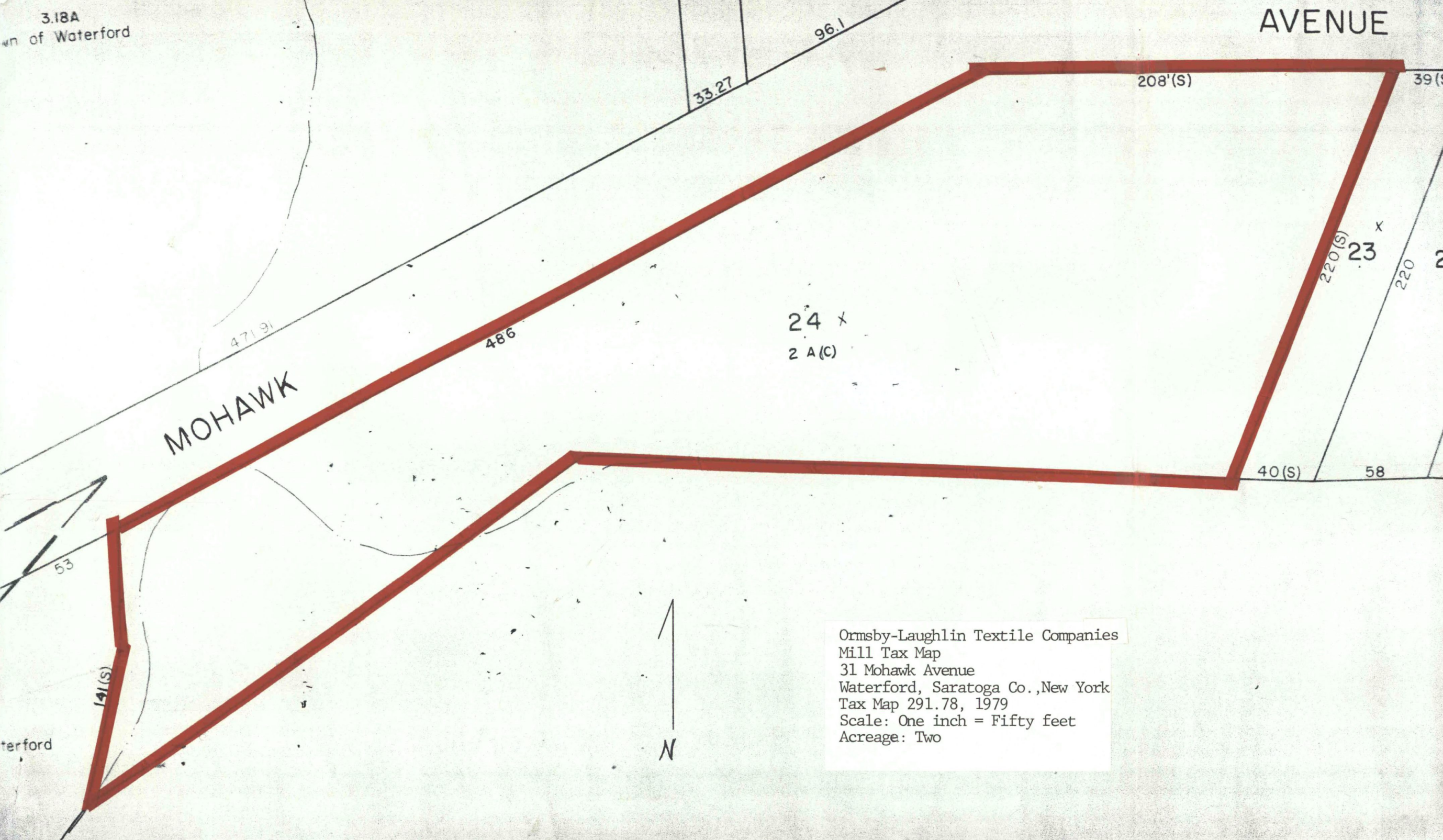
date entered

Page 1

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Ref. # 86000470

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies Mill  
Saratoga County  
NEW YORK

Entered in the  
National Register

Working No. FEB 21 1986  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87  
Date Due: 3/20/86 4/7/86  
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 3/20/86  
☐ RETURN  
☐ REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ resubmission  
☐ nomination by person or local government  
☐ owner objection  
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_  
Discipline \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
\_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input 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

- ☐ summary paragraph  
☐ completeness  
☐ clarity  
☐ alterations/integrity  
☐ dates  
☐ boundary selection

---

**8. Significance**

Period      Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates      Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title      date

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**13. Other**

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies  
Mill

31 Mohawk Avenue

Waterford, Saratoga Co., NY

Photos: MJ Martin, 1985

Negs: OPRHP, Albany, NY

View: Facade (north)

#1 of 8





Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies  
Mill

31 Mohawk Avenue  
Waterford, Saratoga Co., New York

Photos: MJ Martin, 1985

Negs: OPRHP, Albany, NY

View: Detail at base of central  
facade tower #2 of 8



Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies  
Mill

31 Mohawk Avenue

Waterford, Saratoga Co., NY

Photos: MJ Martin, 1985

Negs: OPRHP, Albany, NY

View: East elevation

#3 of 8





Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies  
Mill

31 Mohawk Avenue

Waterford, Saratoga Co., NY

Photos: MJ Martin, 1985

Negs: OPRHP, Albany, NY

View: Cornice and Decorative

Brickwork #4 of 8



Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies  
Mill

31 Mohawk Avenue

Waterford, Saratoga<sup>Co.</sup>, NY

Photos: MJ Martin, 1985

Negs: OPRHP, Albany, NY

View: Brickwork detail

#5 of 8



Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies  
Mill

31 Mohawk Avenue

Waterford, Saratoga Co, NY

Photos: MJ Martin, 1985

Negs: OPRHP, Albany, NY

View: East side of central tower

#6 of 8





NOTICE

CAUTION  
DO NOT PLAY  
IN OR ON EQUIPMENT

; Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies  
Mill

31 Mohawk Avenue

Waterford, Saratoga Co., NY

PHotos: MJ Martin, 1985

Negs: OPRHP, Albany, NY

View: Rear (south) and west ele-  
vations #7 of 8



Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies  
Mill

31 Mohawk Avenue

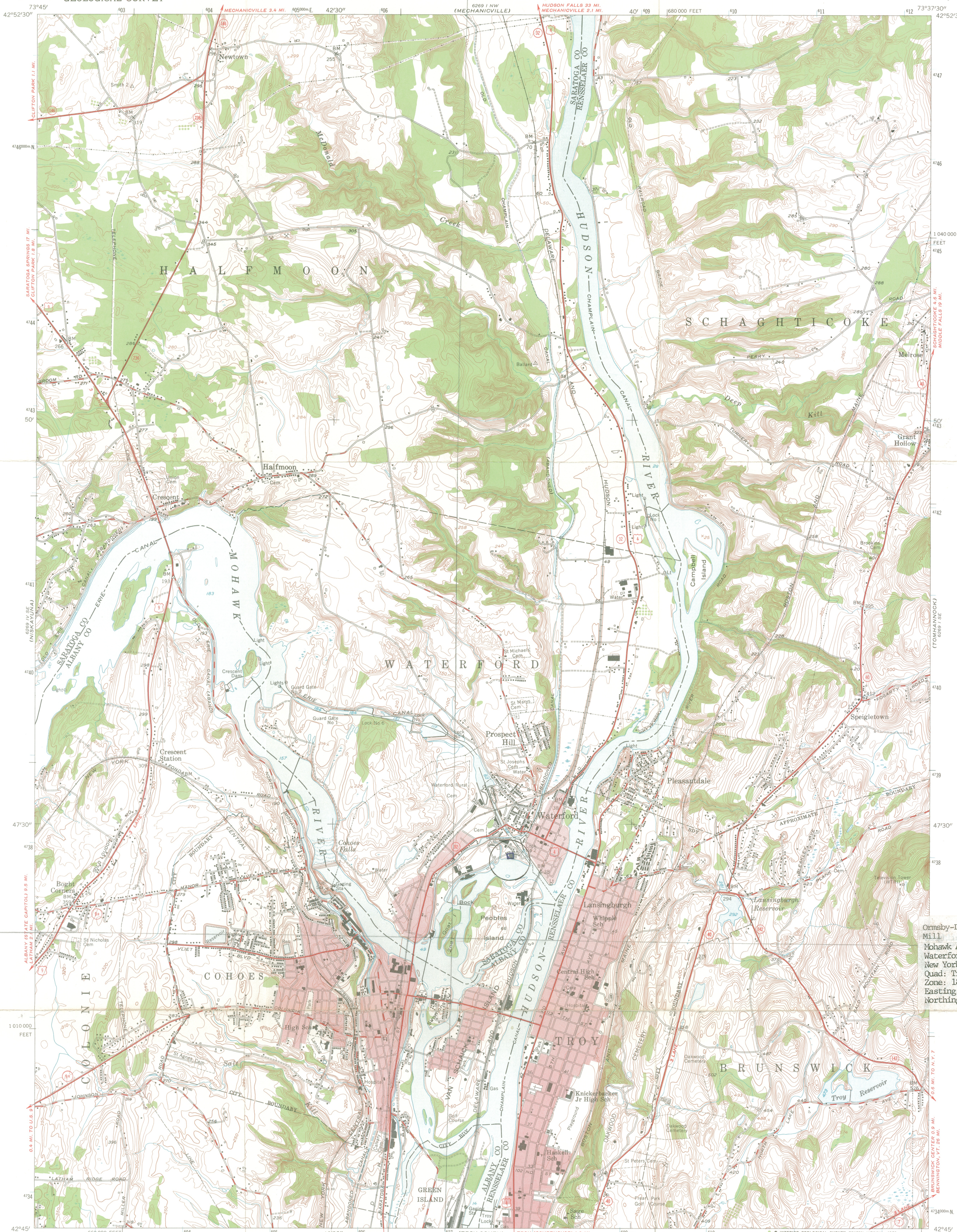
Waterford, Saratoga Co., NY

Photos: MJ Martin, 1985

Negs: OPRHP, Albany, NY

View: Smokestack on rear elevation  
#8 of 8





Ormsby-Laughlin Textile Companies  
Mill  
Mohawk Avenue  
Waterford, Saratoga County  
New York  
Quad: Troy North, N.Y.  
Zone: 18 Scale: 1:24,000  
Easting: 607680  
Northing: 4737940

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

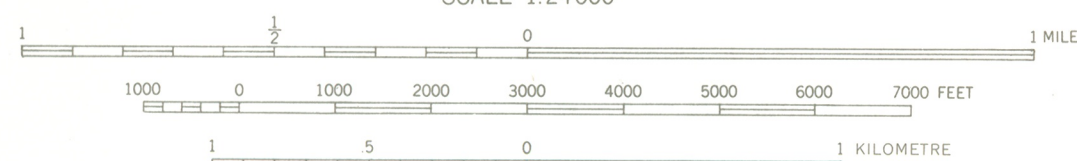
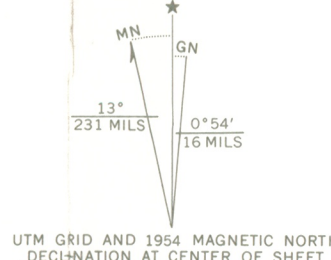
Topography from aerial photographs by stereophotogrammetric methods. Aerial photographs taken 1952. Field check 1954

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on New York coordinate system,  
east zone

Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings  
are shown

Unchecked elevations are shown in brown

1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 18, shown in blue



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929



ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———  
U.S. Route ——— State Route ———

TROY NORTH, N. Y.

N 4245—W 7337.5/7.5

1954

AMS 6269 1 SW—SERIES V821

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