

Overlay map of the historic and current paths of the lower Quequechan River, with the current location of I-195. The river drops about 130 feet in one-quarter of a mile on its way to the navigable tidewaters of Mt. Hope Bay. The river was easily adapted for waterpower with a mill privilege located at each of eight natural waterfalls. The falls ranged in height from 10 to 21 feet, offering an average of 163 HP each. In the 1960s, the river was relocated into an underground culvert for the construction of the highway. Only the Metacomet Mill and American Printing Company (APC) Mill #7 remain.

The falls are still visible in two places.



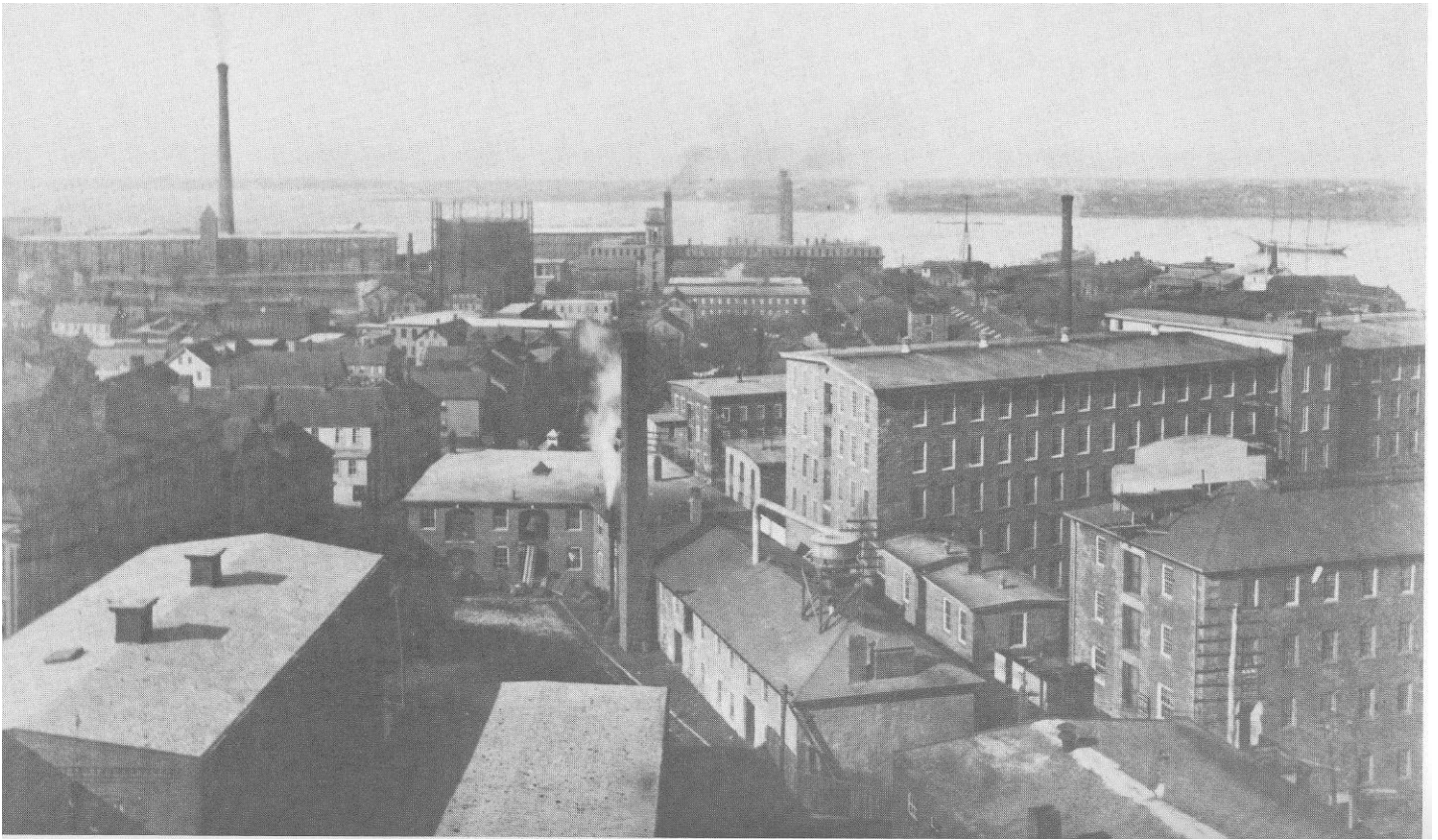
1901 view looking west from city hall over the lower Quequechan River valley. The Pocasset Mills are in the foreground. Pocasset Street is on the lower left. The American Printing Company complex is in the distance, along the waterfront. The Pocasset Mills were destroyed in the Great Fire of 1928 that began in the mills while they were in the process of being dismantled. The fire also consumed a large portion of the central business district. Afterward, the site was used as a bus terminal and parking lot until the construction of I-195 in the 1960s.



1926 view of Pocasset Street, looking toward the Pocasset Mills.



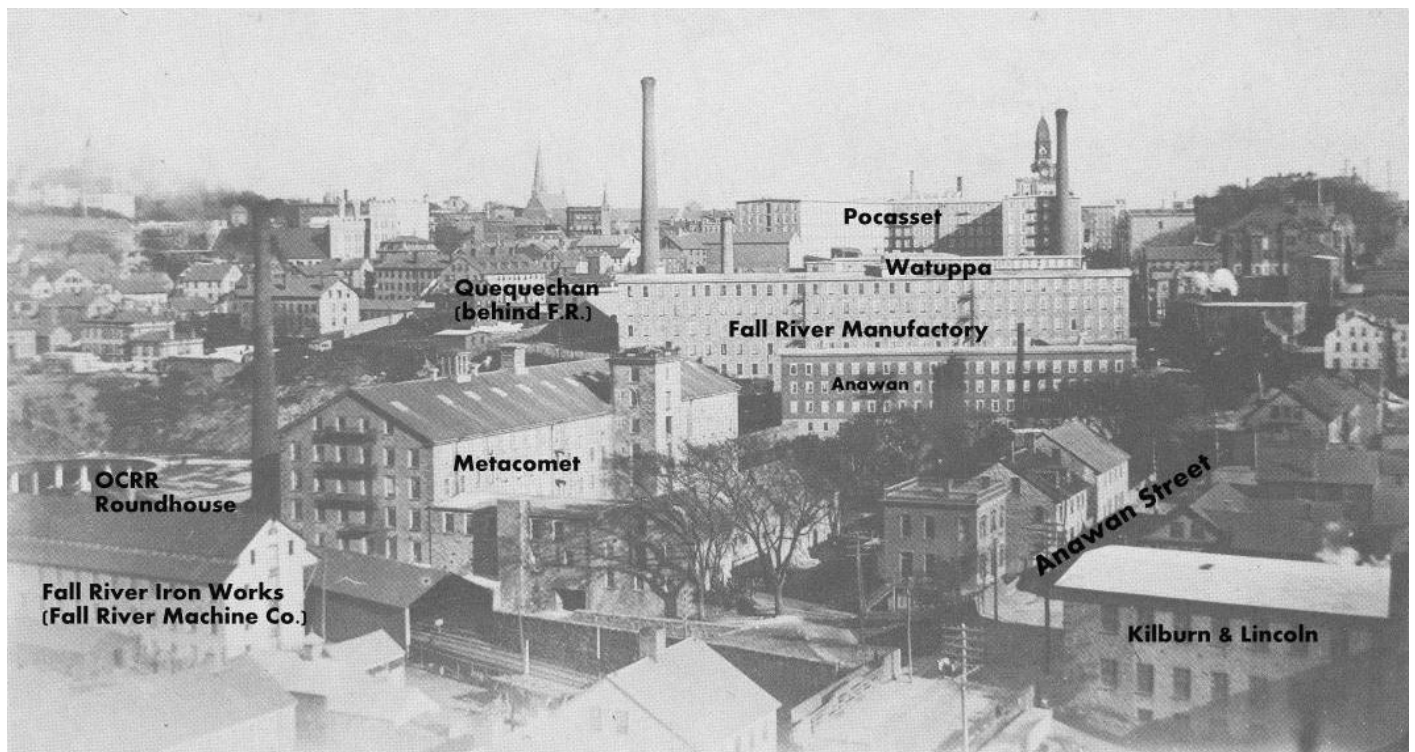
1940s view of the Robeson Print Works complex (aka Fall River Print Works, Quequechan Mills, Massasoit MFG Co.) The site was established in 1826 by Andrew Robeson, who introduced cloth printing to Fall River in 1824. The Quequechan "stream" is visible at the lower right flowing between the two center buildings. The tall stack in the middle is part of the Fall River Manufacturing Company Mill. This complex was demolished for the Milliken Boulevard overpass, completed in 1962 to provide a much-needed cross connection between the south and north parts of the city.



Circa-1898 view of Pocasset Street area looking west. The Robeson Print Works Mill #3 is at the lower right, followed by the Fall River MFG. Co, the small Anawan Mill and the Metacomet Mill (perpendicular to the others with short tower). The newly constructed 750,000 cubic-ft iron gasholder of the Fall River Gas Co. is visible in the distance, as is the American Printing Company complex with its 350' tall stack.



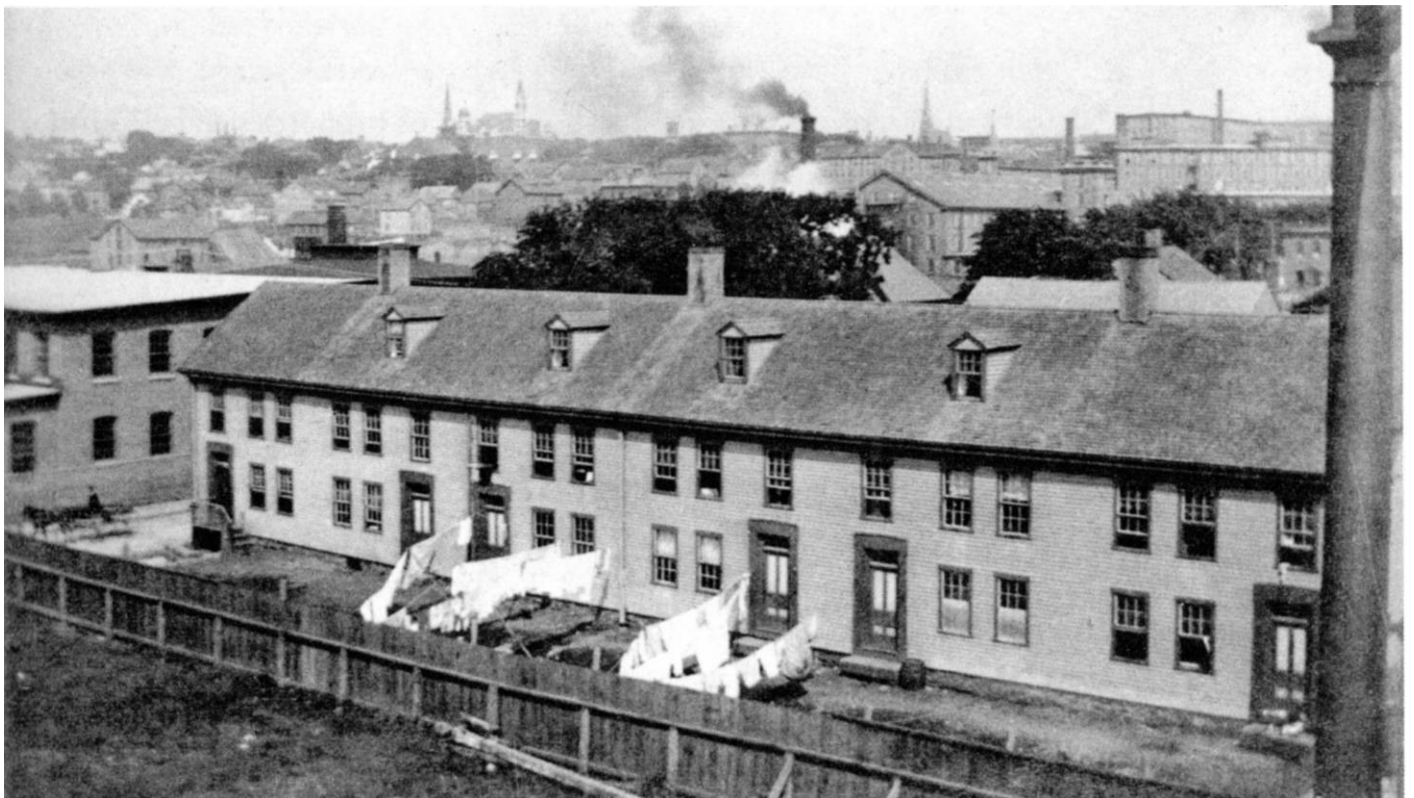
View of the Anawan Mill. Rebuilt after an 1888 fire, but demolished in 1905 for American Printing Company Mill #7.



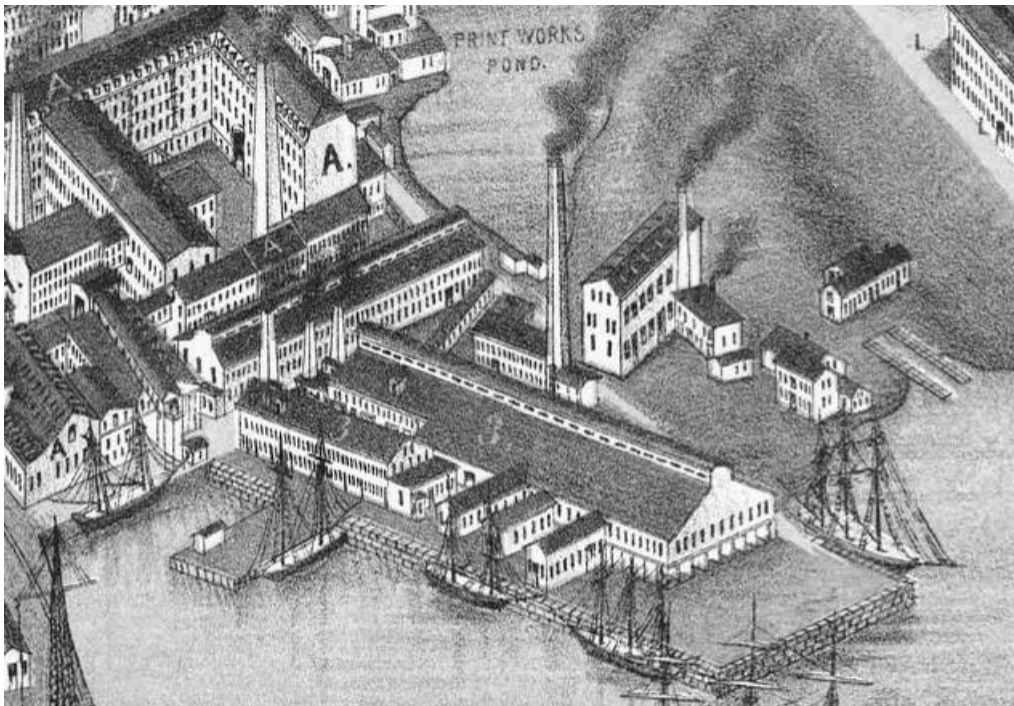
Circa 1900 photo of lower the Quequechan Valley taken from the gasholder. City hall tower is in the distance.

The names of the various mills have been added. Note the OCRR roundhouse on the left.

The roundhouse was removed by the New Haven Railroad and relocated to Almond Street after the 1902-05 Grade Elimination Project.



1890 photo of the lower Anawan Street tenement block, taken from the Gas Works property. The middle storehouse of the American Printing Company is visible across Anawan Street, before the third floor was added. This tenement was demolished for expansion of the gas works.

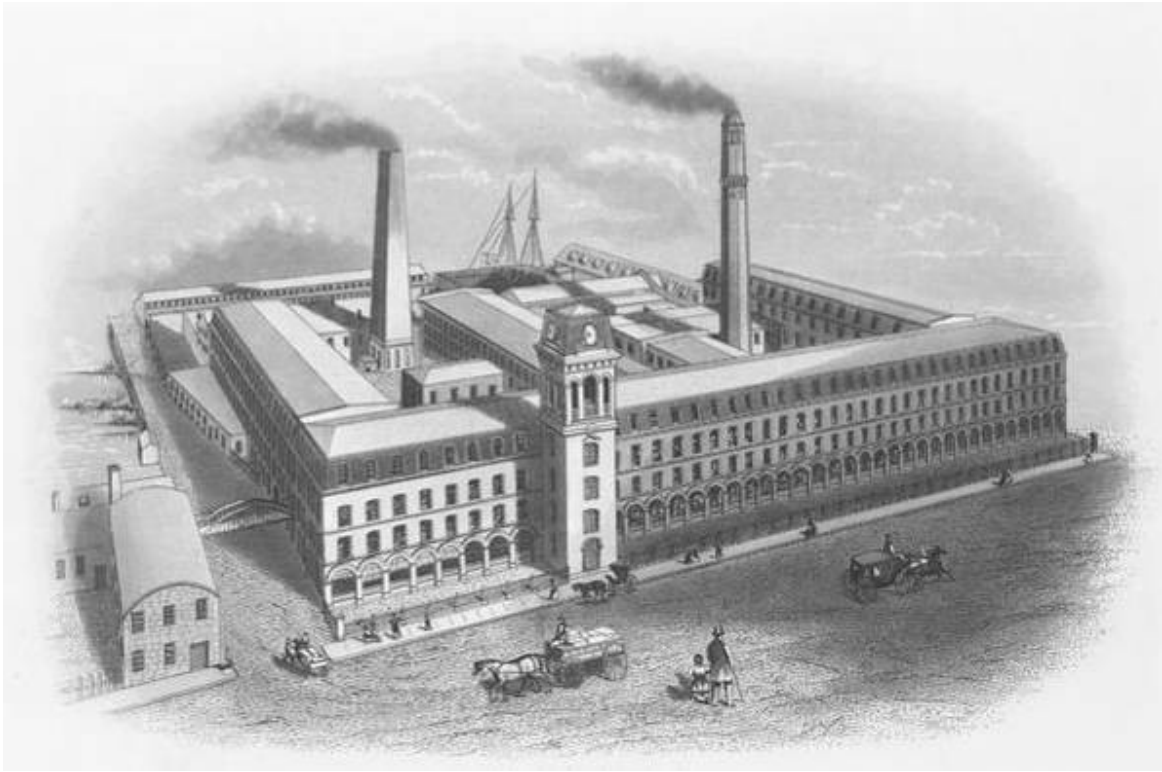


1877 bird's eye view of the Fall River Iron Works, with the large rolling mill (built 1840, and rebuilt in 1843 and 1858 after fires). The smaller nail mill is to the left of the rolling mill. The American Print Works is at the upper left. Established in 1821 at the site of the Metacomet Mill by Richard Borden and Bradford Durfee, the success of the Iron Works played a major role in the early development of Fall River. The profits from the Iron Works were used to establish textile mills, railroads, steamships, banks and other businesses. The Iron Works employed 600 workers when this image was made, but was closed just a few years later with the advent of cheaper steel from other parts of the country.



1904 view of the American Printing Company complex, with the main print works at center left, and the five large cotton mills, known as the "Iron Works Division" on the right. The Fall River Line Pier is at the lower left, with the New Haven Railroad's freight shed behind, and the three large storehouses along Anawan Street and the Metacomet Mill far left in the distance. After Mill #7 was built in 1905-6, the APC operated 488,000 spindles and 12,700 looms, with a capacity to print 100,000 pieces per week. It employed over 6,000 people. However, in the early 1920s, the print market collapsed, as buying patterns changed. The company built a new mill in Kingsport, TN in 1924, and left Fall River in 1934. The waterfront complex was sold to Firestone Rubber Company in 1937. A large portion of the complex was destroyed in a fire in 1941 and another in 1973.

More recently, Mills #1 and #3 have been demolished by the current owner, Boremco.



1876 lithograph of the ornate American Print Works (built 1868), later known as the American Printing Company. Established by Holder Borden in 1834, the company soon grew to be the largest print works in the country, and operated in Fall River until 1934, when it moved to Kingsport, TN. The main plant was sold to Firestone Rubber Company in 1937, and soon employed 2,600 people. Then, in October 1941, this building, along with Iron Works Mills #4 and #5 were lost in a massive fire that also destroyed \$7,000,000 of US Government-owned rubber, just weeks before Pearl Harbor. Firestone continued to operate in the other parts of the complex, and soon added new buildings at the site, producing gas masks and other items for the war effort. Firestone continued to operate at the site until the late 1960s.



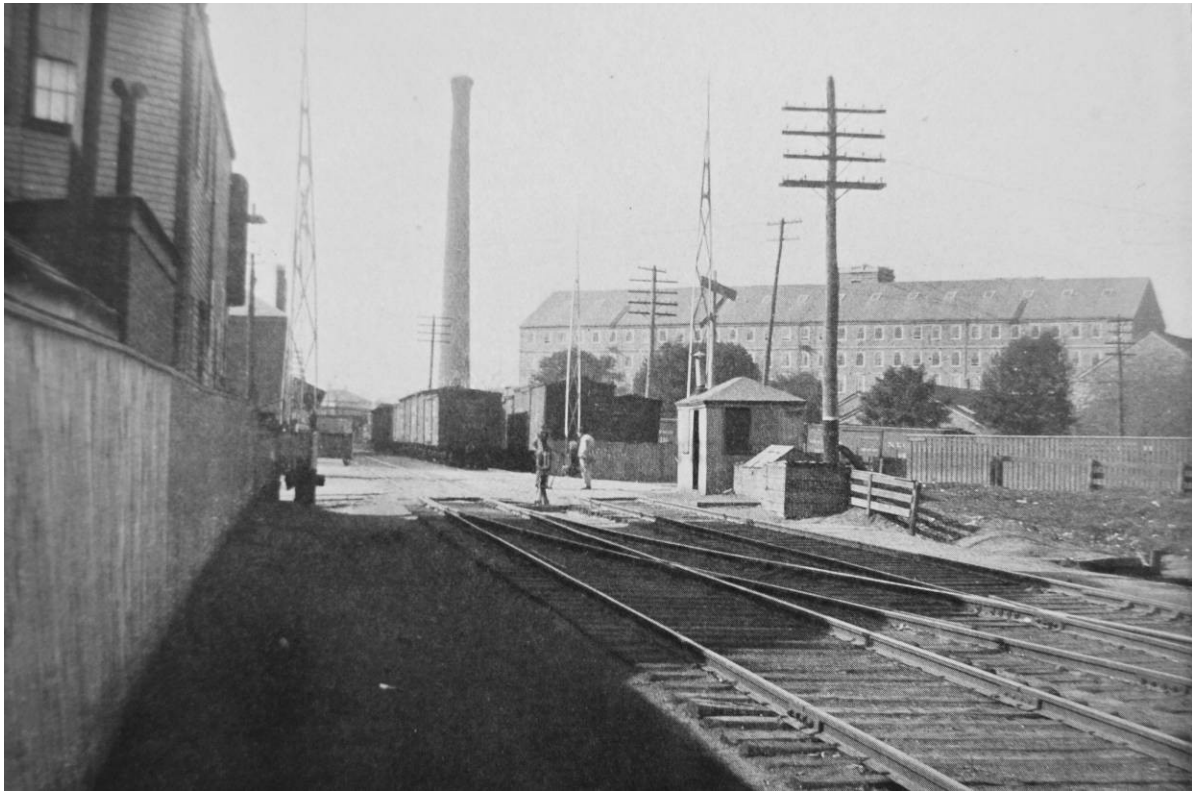
Circa 1910 view of the American Printing Company office building at the corner of Anawan and Water Street. The top floors were destroyed in the October 1941 fire that started across the street in the main print works building.



1968 photo of Iron Works Mill #2 (left) and #3 (right, with Firestone sign on roof). The 1892 Mill #2 was destroyed by fire in March 1973. The current Tillotson Rubber building was built on the brick foundations of Mill #2.



2008 photo of Iron Works Mill #1 (1889) before it was demolished in 2011.



Ferry Street Crossing prior to the 1902-1905 Grade Crossing Elimination Project by the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad. The American Linen Company is in the distance. Broadway did not extend beyond Columbia Street until 1955.



View looking south from Central Street before the 1902-05 Grade Crossing Elimination Project. The Metacomet Mill is on the left. On the right is one of the original Iron Works buildings, then part of the Fall River Machine Company. Note the shed over the tracks between the mills. The viaduct that was built here provided a much needed north-south connection. The original 1905 viaduct was replaced in 1985. The upper level viaducts were added in the 1960s for the Route 79 interchange.



Circa 1905 view of Fall River looking east from city hall. The Troy Mills are in the foreground, before the flattening of the southern portion of the mill. On the right with the double mansard towers is the Troy Store, known as the “Cheapest Store in the World”, located at the corner of Pleasant Street and Fourth, and build directly over the river at the dam that held back the “mill pond” of the upper Quequechan River. Further down Pleasant Street are the Union, Durfee, Granite and Merchants Mills. The twin spires of the newly-built Notre Dame Church can be seen in the distance.



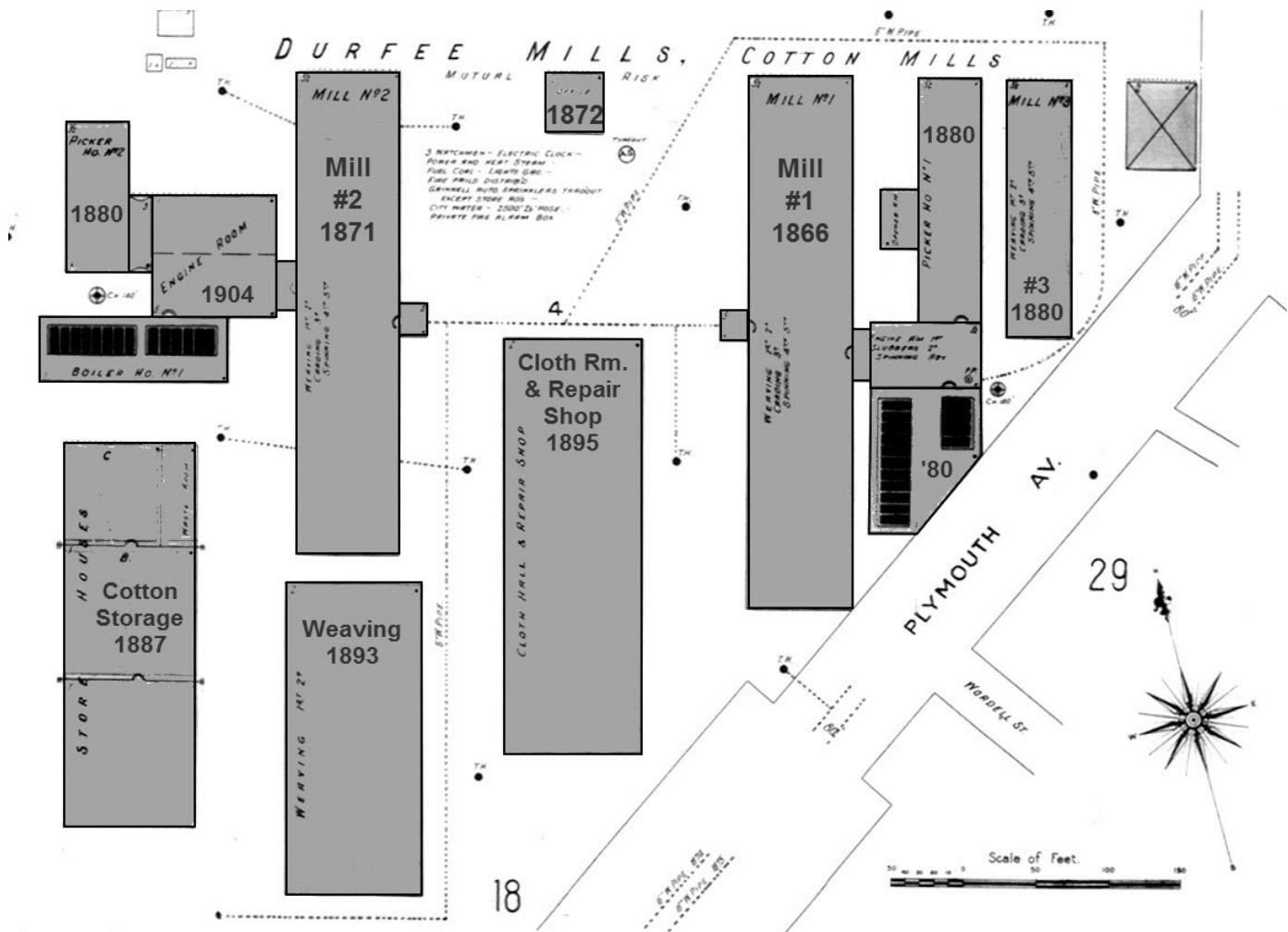
Postcard of the Troy Cotton & Woolen Manufactory (est. 1813). The left portion dates from about 1843 (with later tower addition), while the right portion was built in 1860 to replace the 1823 mill. The roof of the 1843 mill was later flattened to a full story. This complex was demolished in the 1960s for I-95 and the realignment of Pleasant Street.



View of the end of the western end of the Quequechan River "mill pond". Union Mill #3 is on the far right, with Eddy's Mill (aka Wamsutta Steam Woolen, aka Massasoit Mill) is further downstream. On the left is the Tecumseh Mill, the Globe Street Railway power station (peaked roof), the Fall River Steam Laundry and the Fall River Electric Light Company (middle right in the distance). The "mill pond" was very shallow (about 5 ft deep at high water) and suffered severely from pollution. In 1915, an engineering report was issued by Fay, Spofford & Thorndike that proposed a series of improvements – none of which were ever implemented. In the early 1960s, the river was diverted underground into culverts and I-95 was built through here. The river's quality has been much improved in recent years with the completion of the CSO abatement tunnel project.



1933 photo of the Union Mills, with the office building on the right. Closed in 1929, the Union, like many other mills in the city were soon converted to various other uses, including many garment manufacturers who enticed to come to Fall River from New York with the prospect of cheap rents and a hungry workforce. The Union's prime location on Pleasant Street was also home to automotive businesses. The weave mill (center of photo) was removed for construction of the I-95 ramps. The office survived until the early 1970s.



Map of the Durfee Mills complex, with the various dates of construction added.



Photo of the 1866 Merchants Mill viewed from Pleasant Street, looking west. The largest single mill in the city for many years. It acquired the nearby Crescent Mill in 1892. The mill was destroyed by fire in January 1934, shortly after it shut down. One person was killed when a wall collapsed.

The site is now occupied by Taco, maker of HVAC components.

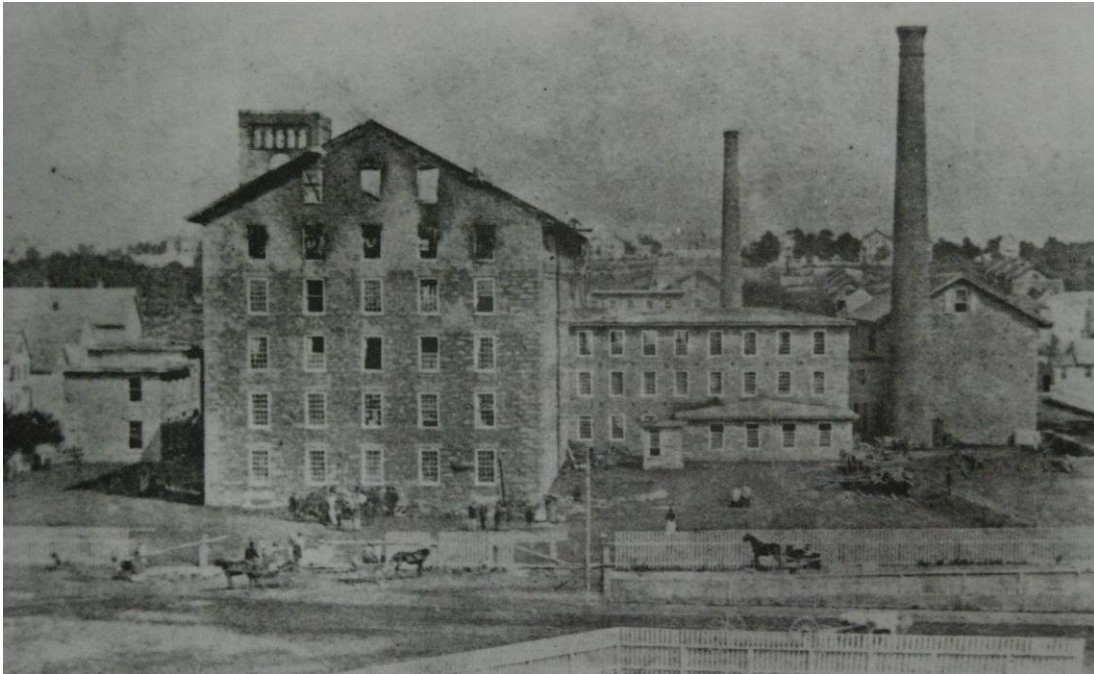
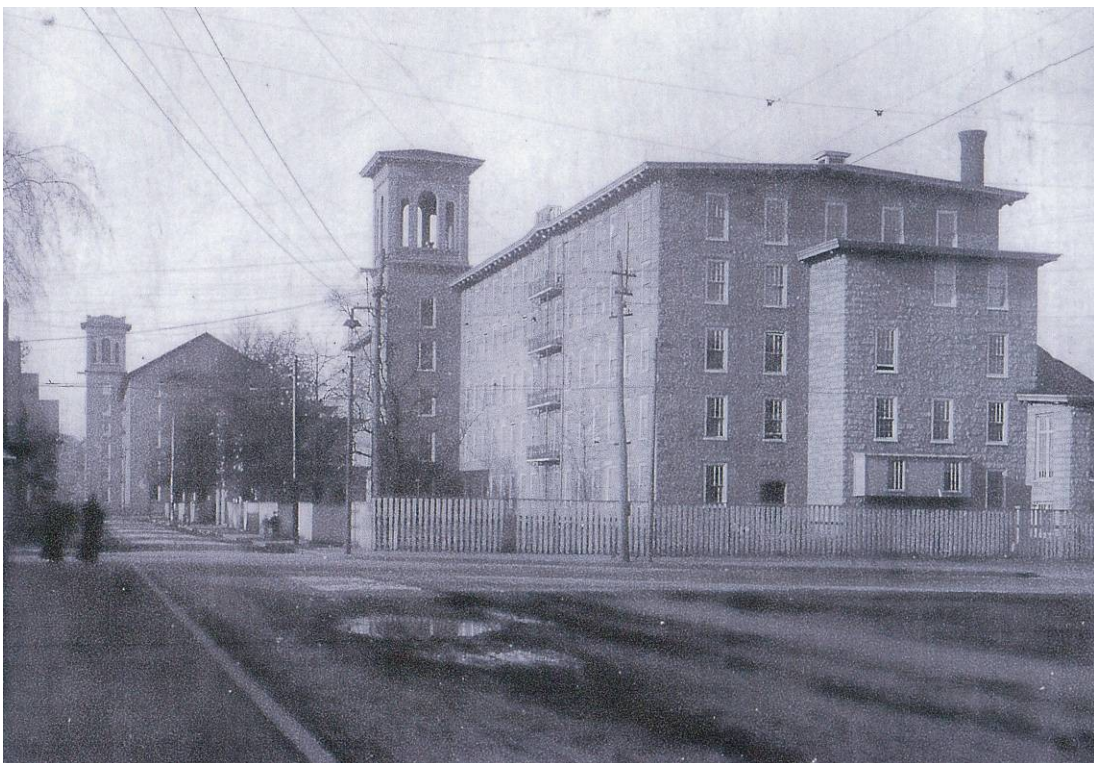


Photo of the 1863 Granite Mill #1 after the September 19, 1874 fire that started in the mule room on the upper floor, and spread quickly. Many workers on the upper floors were trapped and jumped to their deaths. By the time it was over, 23 people were dead, and 33 were wounded, in what is still the deadliest fire in the city's history. The tragic fire brought about many changes in factory design. The mill was soon rebuilt, but with a flat roof, fire escapes and a sprinkler system. Soon after, the barn roof of Mill No. 2 was also flattened to a full sixth floor. The rebuilt Mill #1 was demolished in the early 1960s for a supermarket, that was later converted into the China Royal restaurant, a popular Fall River eatery for many years. The site is now occupied by various commercial properties, including a CVS.



Circa 1900 photo of the rebuilt Granite Mill No. 1 viewed from Pleasant Street. Mill No. 2 is in the distance and still had its original barn roof and tower top details.