

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
TOWN NO.:	SITE NO.:		
UTM: 18/	/	/	/
QUAD:			
DISTRICT:	S	NR:	ACTUAL POTENTIAL

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
For Buildings and Structures

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME: Common: P & H Bliss Company Historic: Manufacturing Company Sanseer
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: _____ COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 215 East Main Street
4. OWNER(S): Harry W. Dickerson PUBLIC PRIVATE
5. USE: Present: Storage Historic: Factory
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: yes no
Interior accessible: yes, explain _____ no

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Mid-19th Century Industrial DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: c. 1847
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
 ___clapboard ___asbestos siding brick
 ___wood shingle ___asphalt siding ___fieldstone
 ___board & batten ___stucco ___cobblestone
 ___aluminum siding ___concrete: type: _____ cut stone: type: brownstone
 ___other: _____ foundation
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
 wood frame: post and beam ___balloon (interior framing)
 load bearing masonry ___structural iron or steel
 ___other: _____
10. ROOF: type:
 gable ___flat ___mansard ___monitor ___sawtooth
 ___gambrel ___shed ___hip ___round ___other _____
 material:
 ___wood shingle ___roll asphalt ___tin ___slate
 asphalt shingle ___built up ___tile ___other: _____
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 3 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 52'x30'
12. CONDITION: Structural: ___excellent ___good fair ___deteriorated
 Exterior: ___excellent ___good fair ___deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY: Location: on original site ___moved, when: _____
 Alterations: ___no yes, explain: Windows boarded; small tower removed
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
 ___barn ___shed ___garage other landscape features or buildings: adjoining
 ___carriage house ___shop ___garden large brick building, north; large wood
building, east; See Form 95B
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
 ___open land ___woodland residential ___scattered buildings visible from site
 commercial ___industrial ___rural high building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This three-story structure is one of three industrial buildings that share a secluded, well-kept site. Separated from Main Street Extension by trees and undergrowth, these small landscaped grounds are behind a row of East Main Street buildings. This inconspicuous structure adjoins a large brick building, north; nearby to the east is a large wooden barn-like structure.

17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

SIGNIFICANCE

Architect: _____ Builder: _____

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This factory building stands on the site first occupied by an early shop of the Sanseer Manufacturing Company. Incorporated in 1823 by Gilbert Brewster, Samuel Gill, Richard Hubbard and Samuel D. Hubbard, the company produced machinery and may have made the first back-gearred lathe. Fire destroyed the shop in 1845. Lewis, Prior & Company then obtained the company and subsequently rebuilt the shop, the present building. During their ownership, the company, employing approximately sixteen workers, also manufactured wooden screws. The Russell Manufacturing Company, whose principal mills were situated further up the Sanseer River, purchased the site in 1884. The company probably built the large mill that adjoins this structure. (See Form #95B) The property in 1937 was obtained by Phillip Bliss, a former owner of the P & H Bliss Company.

This plain brick structure, one of the city's oldest factory buildings, was powered by the Sanseer River that bordered the property. Sanseer Pond, created by a dam that extended from the building's south corner, fed the mill race which ran beneath the shop. Remnants of the arched openings that the water flowed through are evident on the sides of the building. The dam and race have long since disappeared. The Sanseer River (currently called Summer Brook) was diverted from this spot through the construction of Main Street Extension

PHOTOGRAPH in the 1930s.

photographer: Robert Svec
date: 9/78 view: south
negative on file: Roll 31, #26



COMPILED BY:

name: Robert Svec date: 9/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; 1874 Beers Atlas; History of Middlesex County (New York: J.B. Beers, 1884); H.F. Donlan, Middletown Tribune: Souvenir Edition (Middletown: 1896)

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

none known highways vandalism developers other: _____
 renewal private deterioration zoning explanation: _____