

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295

Name, Location, Ownership

1. Historic name Abbot & Downing Blacksmith Shop
2. District or area 19th C. Manufacturing/South Main
3. Street and number 7 Perley Street
4. City or town Concord
5. County Merrimack
6. Current owner Concord Post #21 American Legion

Function or Use

7. Current use(s) Social/Commercial
8. Historic use(s) Industry: Blacksmith shop

Architectural Information

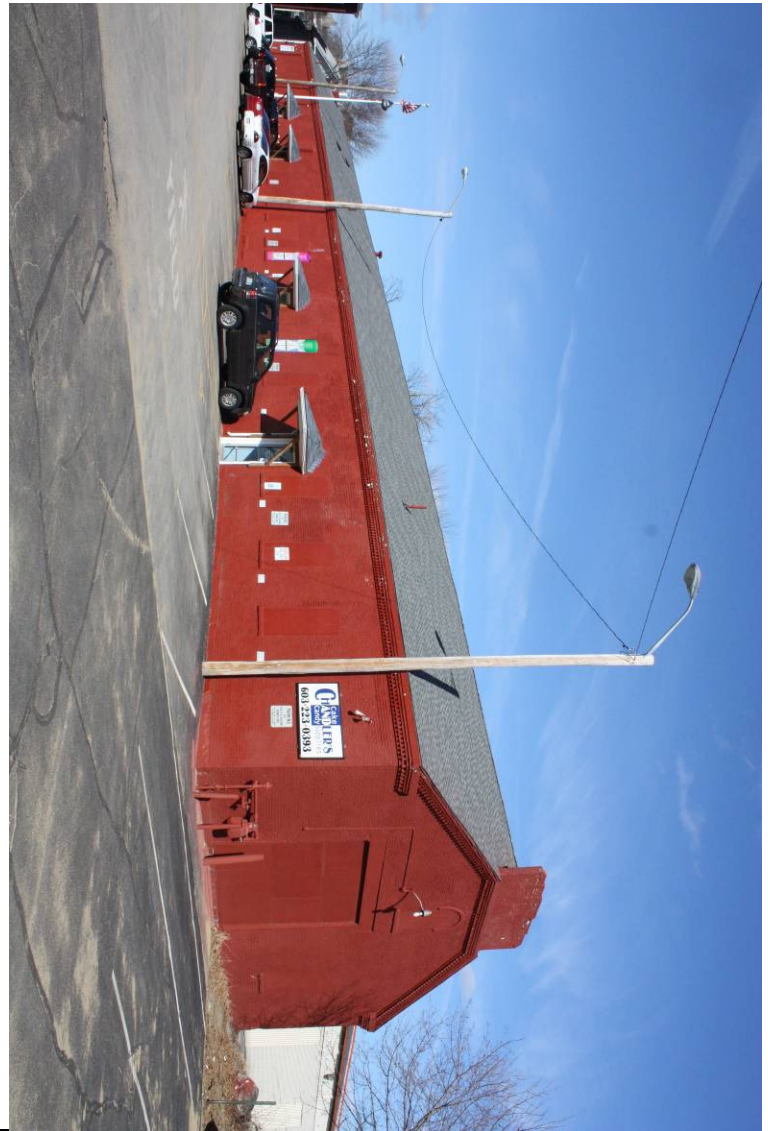
9. Style Italianate
10. Architect/builder unknown
11. Source ---
12. Construction date c.1860 (south part)
13. Source maps
14. Alterations, with dates c.1880 – north addition;
20th c. – windows & doorways filled, new entrances,
north wall boards, chimneys/ventilators removed
15. Moved? no ☒ yes ☐ date: _____

Exterior Features

16. Foundation Granite
17. Cladding Brick
18. Roof material Asphalt shingles
19. Chimney material ---
20. Type of roof Gable
21. Chimney location ---
22. Number of stories 1
23. Entry location multiple (west side)
24. Windows filled with concrete block
Replacement? no ☐ yes ☐ date: _____

Site Features

25. Setting Mixed use neighborhood
26. Outbuildings none
27. Landscape features parking lot



35. Photo #1 Direction: NE
36. Date Feb. 2012
37. Reference #: CON0295 1

28. Acreage 0.77 acre
29. Tax map/parcel # 28/2/7
30. UTM reference Z19 4785689N 294149E
31. USGS quadrangle and scale Concord 1:24000

Form prepared by

32. Name Lisa Mausolf
33. Organization Concord Heritage Commission
34. Date of survey February 2012

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295

39. LOCATION MAP:



40. PROPERTY MAP:



INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295

41. Historical Background and Role in the City's Development:

This is one of only two remaining main buildings of Concord's world-famous Abbot-Downing Company (see also 82 S. Main Street, CON0293). (Portions of other buildings may exist as well.) The building at 7 Perley Street originally served as the company's blacksmith shop.

Lewis Downing, a 21 year old wheelwright, produced his first wagon in 1813. He built his business building freight vehicles to transport goods from Concord to Boston and by 1825 had a workshop of twelve employees. In 1826 he expanded his product line to include stagecoaches and two years later J. Stephens Abbot of Massachusetts joined the business which became Downing and Abbot. In 1847 the initial partnership between Lewis Downing and J. Stephens Abbot dissolved with each establishing his own firm. The J.S. and E.A. Abbot Company occupied the original Abbot and Downing facilities at South Main and Perley Streets. By the 1860s the Abbots employed about 200 workers. Meanwhile Lewis Downing and sons operated in another location on North Main Street, opposite the Phenix Hotel. Lewis Downing retired in 1865 and his sons subsequently merged his business with the Abbot Company. The new firm, known as Abbot-Downing Company consolidated its operations at the original South Main Street facility. At the company's peak in 1890, over two hundred workers were employed. More than forty different types of vehicles were produced by Abbot-Downing including the well-known Concord Coach. It is estimated that approximately 3,000 Concord Coaches were made during the company's lifetime.

The exact date of construction of this building is not known. There is no building on this site at the time of the 1851 map. The oldest portion of the building is the section to the south which was definitely constructed prior to 1868. Sometime between 1879 and 1884 the building was expanded northward and was more than tripled in size. In the early 20th century the building functioned as an Assembling Room.

The company declared bankruptcy in 1909 and was reorganized as the Abbot-Downing Truck and Body Company. The last Concord Coach was made about 1915 and the last wagon was made in December 1919. The company finally dissolved in 1925.

In 1930 the building at 7 Perley Street was sold by the Abbot-Downing Truck and Body Company to Boutwell Lumber which utilized it for many years. Nearly all of the other extant Abbot-Downing Company buildings were demolished in 1971. The Perley Street building was sold by Boutwell Lumber in 1972. It was purchased by the American Legion in 1985. It currently contains a social hall and commercial space.

42. Applicable NHDHR Historic Contexts:

Carriage and wagon manufacture, 1820-1890

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295

43. Architectural Description and Comparative Evaluation:

Dating to the 19th century, the former Abbot-Downing Company blacksmith shop is a single-story painted brick structure measuring approximately 40' x 260'. It is oriented with its narrow gable end to Perley Street to the north. The building is set on a stone foundation and capped by a gable roof which is sheathed in asphalt shingles. Until recently two sets of ventilators rose from the ridge of the roof.

The southern portion of the structure was constructed first c.1860 and c.1880 the building was extended northward and tripled in size with attention paid to match the earlier structure. The south end of the building displays a clipped gable with a brick parapet resting on the broken gable. Extending behind the parapet originally was the line of ventilators. The gable end displays a denticulated brick cornice which ends in returns. The brick cornice also extends along the lateral eaves and trims the north full gable which has been covered in vertical boards in recent years. All of the original segmental window openings have been filled with concrete block although their brick lintels and granite sills are still visible. On the south end of the building the location of an off-center former loading door opening is still visible, capped by a steel I-beam lintel and also filled with concrete. Originally there was a central arched doorway on this end, flanked on either side and above by semi-circular windows. At the top of the south gable the former window with brick header lintel and granite sill is still visible but filled with concrete block.

There are four modern glass and metal doors on the west elevation, each is sheltered by a modern hip door hood on simple wooden trusses. Historic views indicate that there were originally four loading doors on the east elevation and a series of six exterior chimneys and two vents on the east side. Another eight chimneys or vents were located on the west elevation. Although all of the extensions above the roof line have been removed, the lower sections of some of the exterior chimneys are still visible.

44. National or State Register Criteria Statement of Significance:

Criterion A: This property is not eligible for the National Register under Criterion A. Although it was part of the locally important Abbot-Downing industrial complex in the late 19th and early 20th century, it is no longer able to convey its 19th century historic function due to extensive alterations in the 20th century. It may still be eligible for the State Register due to the historic significance of the Abbot-Downing complex.

Criterion B: This property is not eligible for the National or State Register under Criterion B. It lacks long term associations with any persons known to have made significant contributions to history.

Criterion C: The property is not eligible for the National Register under Criterion C. The building is no longer able to convey its historic function as a blacksmith shop due to the loss of a number of character-defining features including multiple chimneys, roof ventilators and numerous loading bays.

45. Period of Significance: NA

46. Statement of Integrity:

The former Abbot-Downing Company blacksmith shop retains integrity of location. Its integrity of setting, feeling and association is lost by the demolition of the rest of the industrial complex. Integrity of design, workmanship and materials is greatly lessened by the filling in of the original doors and windows, the introduction of new modern entries and the removal of the character-defining chimneys and roof ridge ventilators. The building is no longer able to convey its historic use or associations.

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295

47. Boundary Discussion: NA

48. Bibliography and/or References:

Concord Public Library, Historic Photos.

Hengen, Elizabeth Durfee and Gary Samson. *Capital Views: A Photographic History of Concord, New Hampshire, 1850-1930*. Concord: New Hampshire Historical Society and Heritage Concord, Inc., 1994.

New Hampshire Historical Society, photographic collection.

Sanborn Insurance Maps, various dates.

Sanford, E.F. & J.H. Goodhue. *Map of the City of Concord, New Hampshire*. Philadelphia: F. Bourquin, 1868.

Wilding-White, Sherry. "The Abbot-Downing Company and the Concord Coach", *The Journal of the Society for Industrial Archeology*, vol. 20, no. 1 & 2, 1994.

Surveyor's Evaluation:

NR listed: individual _____
within district _____

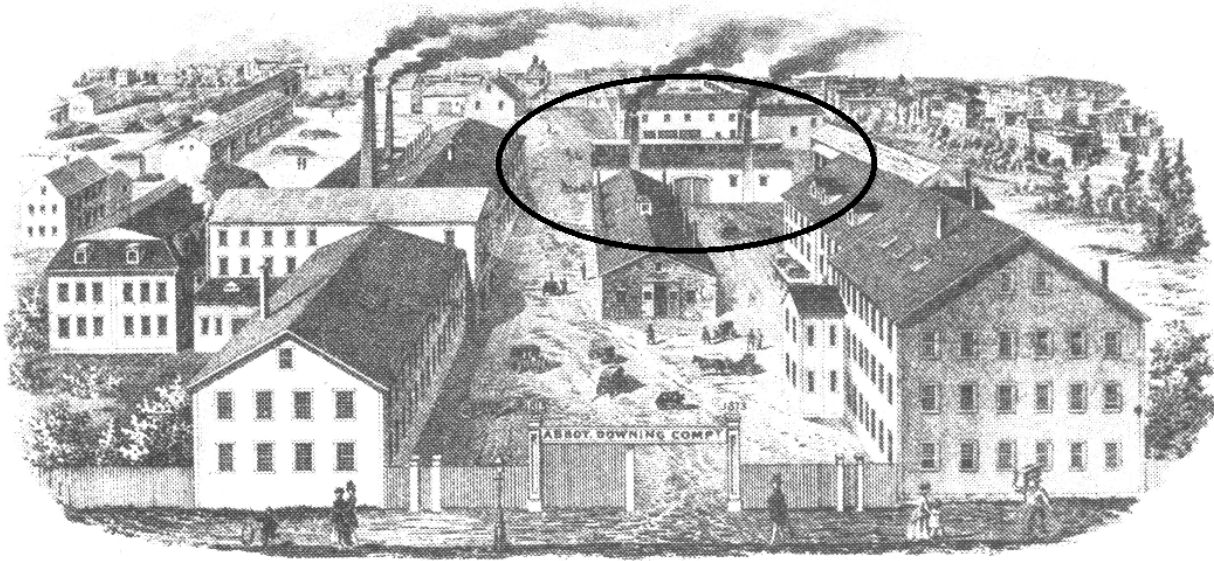
Integrity: yes _____
no _____x_____

NR eligible: individual _____
within district _____
not eligible _____x_____
more info needed _____

NR Criteria: A _____
B _____
C _____
D _____
E _____

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295

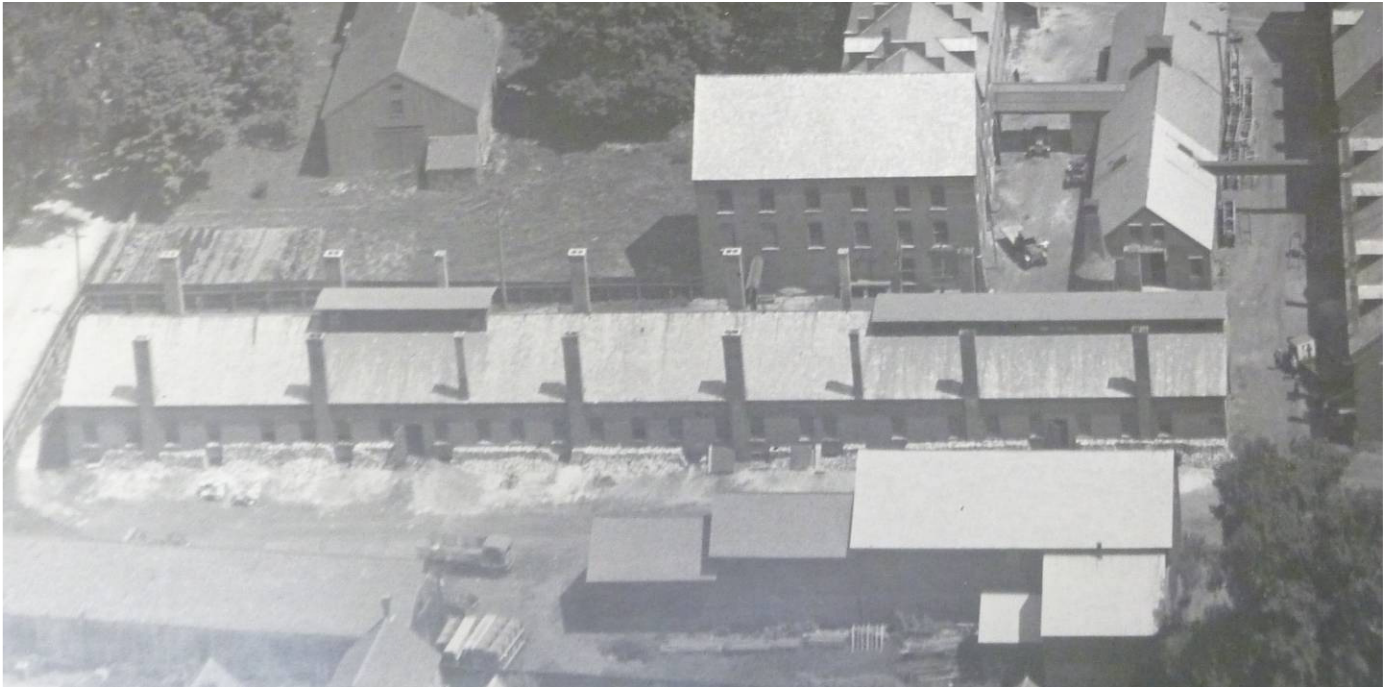


View of Abbot-Downing Company, 1873, looking west from S. Main Street

Note: Blacksmith Shop had not yet been expanded northward.

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295



Detail, Undated aerial view of Abbot-Downing Company looking east showing west elevation of Blacksmith Shop during period of operation. Original portion of building is at right.

Source: Concord Public Library

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

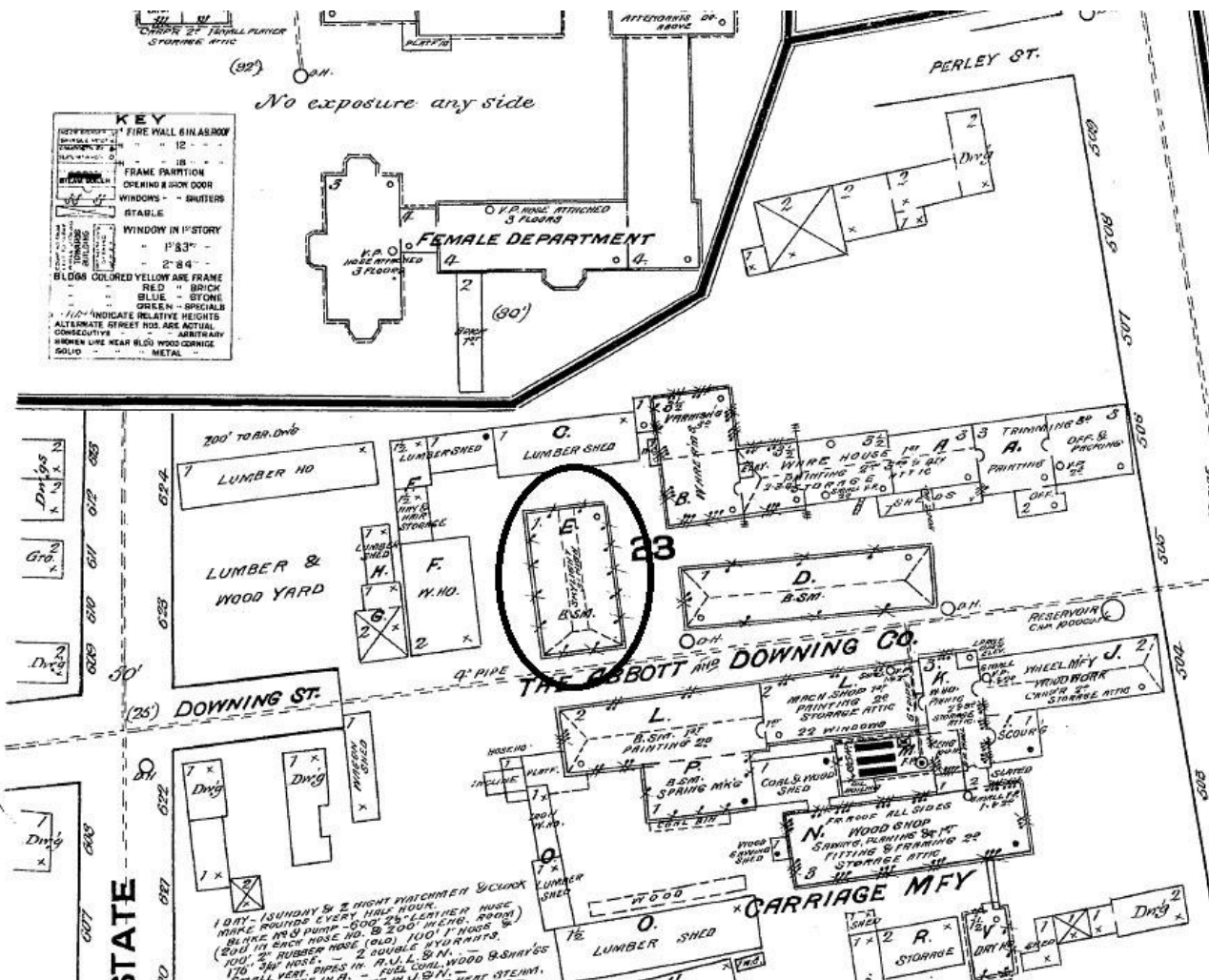
NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295



1868 Map – Original Blacksmith Shop is circled

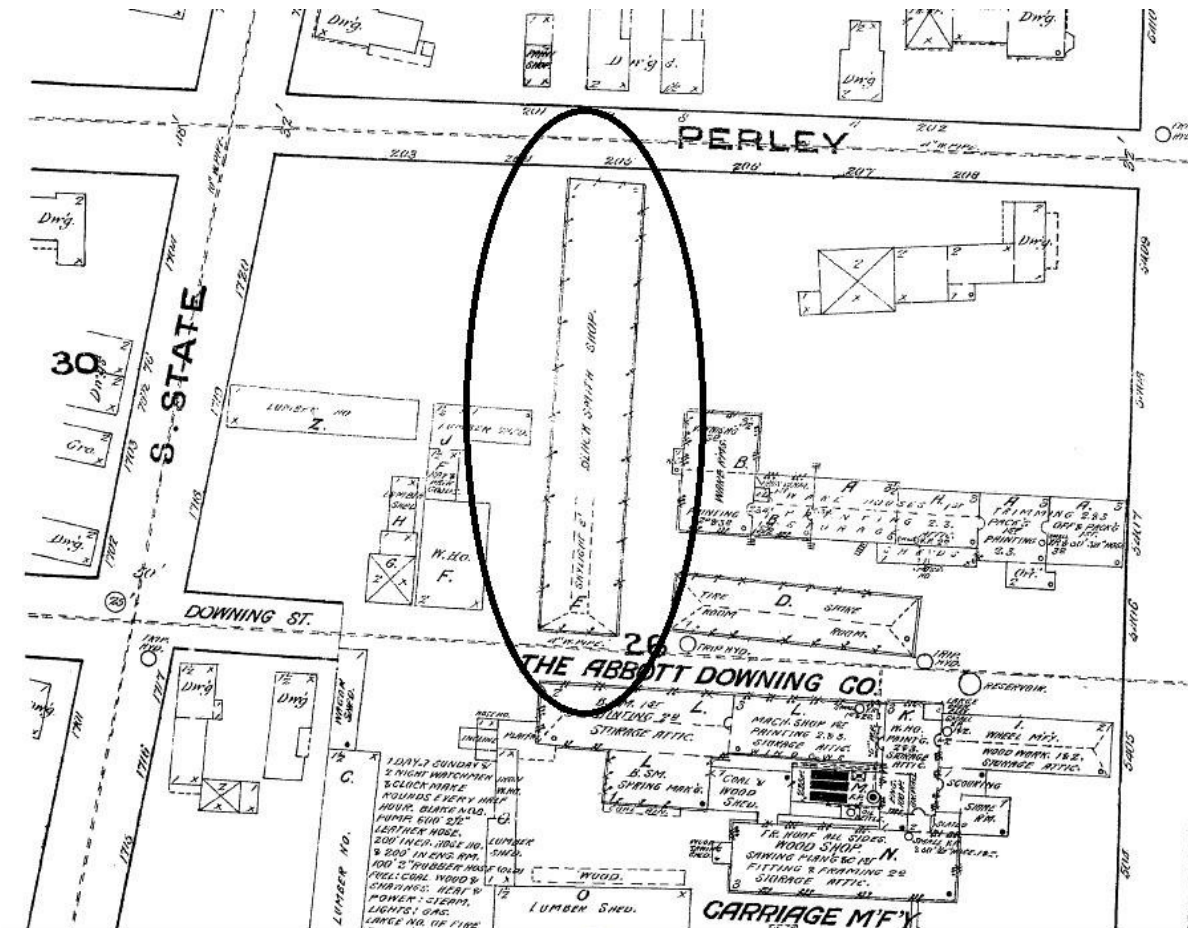
Source: Concord Public Library

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295

Sanborn Map, Oct. 1879

Original Blacksmith Shop is circled.

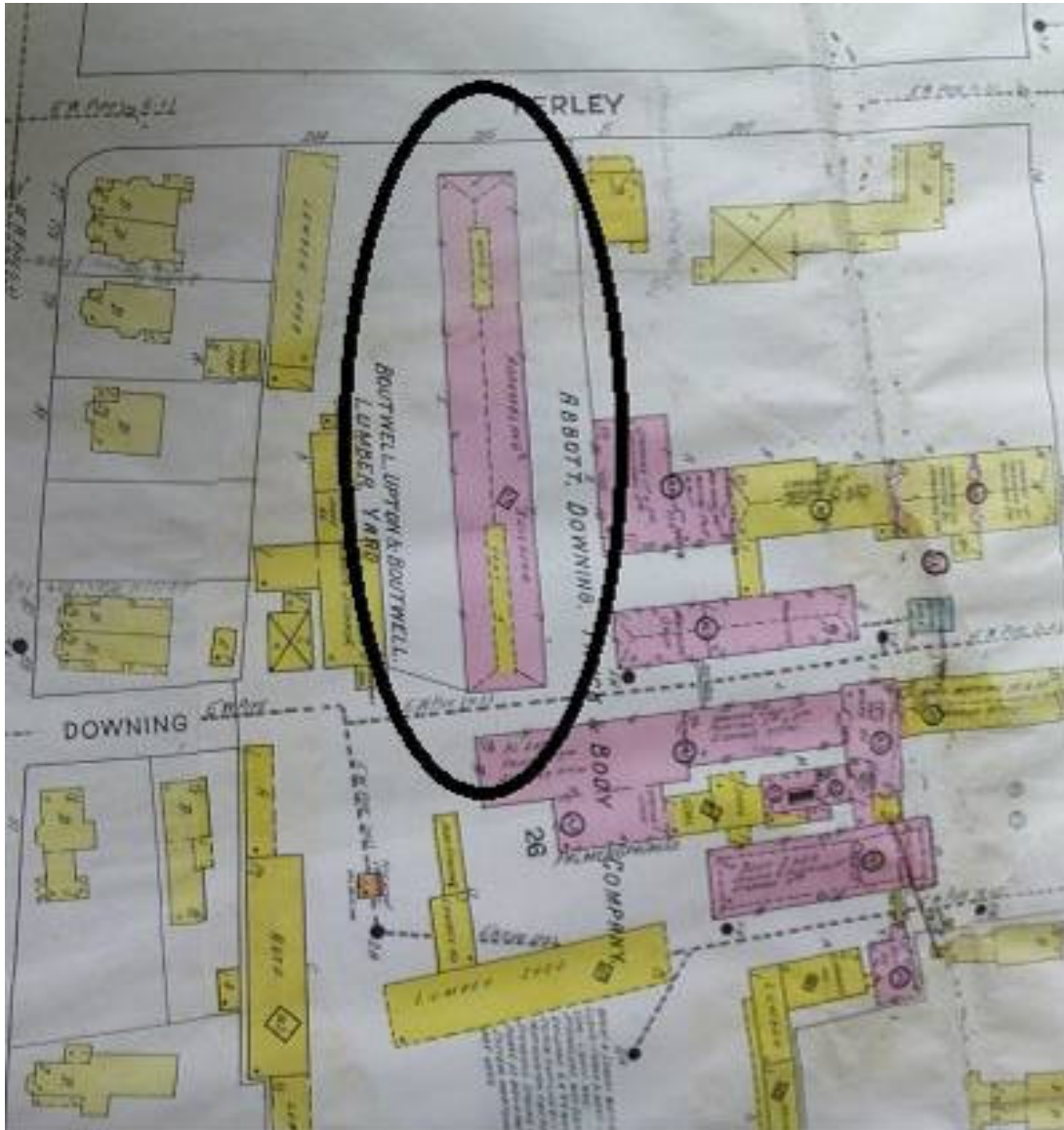


Sanborn Map, Oct. 1884, Sheet 7

Note: Blacksmith Shop has been greatly expanded since 1879

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295

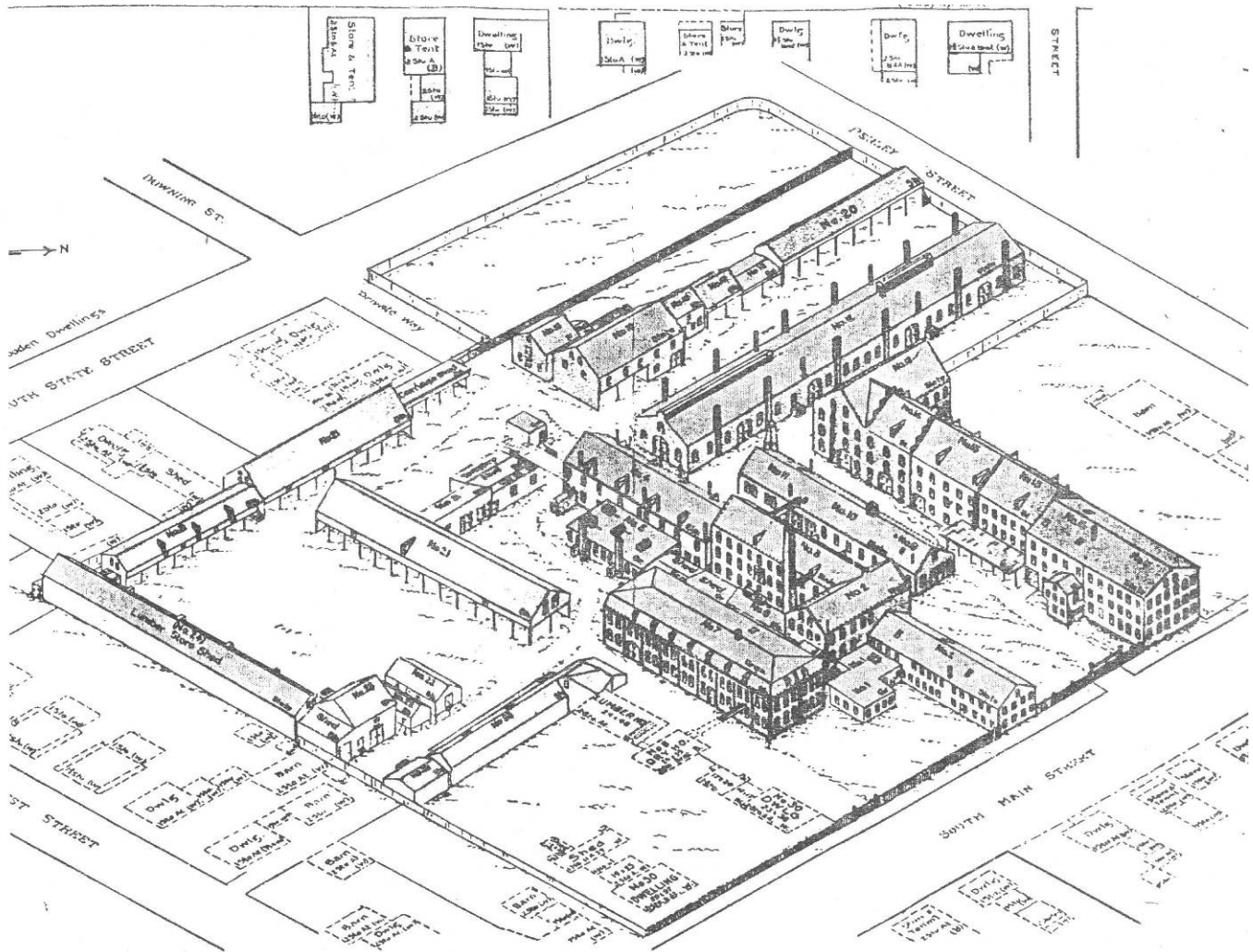


Sanborn Insurance Map Nov. 1914, updated to Aug. 1923

Source: Concord Public Library

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295



Source: *Concord Coach Society Newsletter* 1:VII, May-June 1978
(NH Division of Historical Resources files)

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295

Date photos taken: February 2012



Photo # 2 Description: North and west elevations
Digital file name: CON0295_2

Direction: SE



Photo # 3 Description: East elevation
Digital file name: CON0295_3

Direction: NW

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295

Date photos taken: Feb. 2012



Photo # 4 Description: South elevation
Digital file name: CON0295_4

Direction: NE

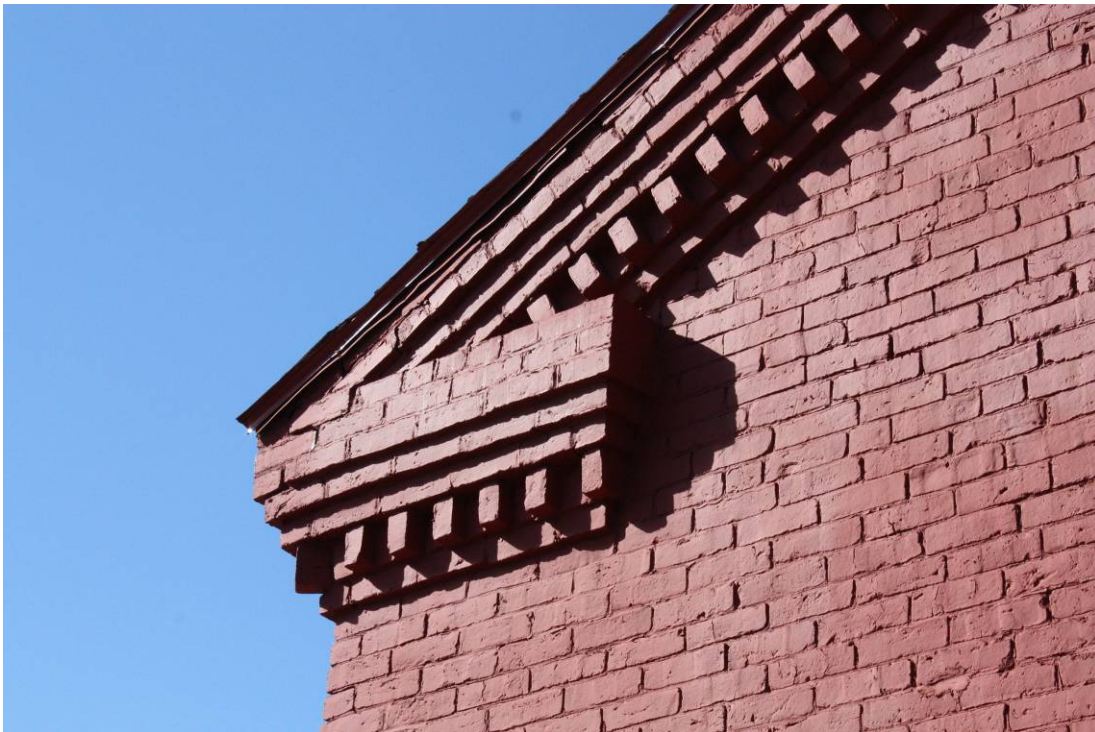


Photo # 5 Description: Detail, south elevation cornice
Digital file name: CON0295_5

Direction: NW

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY # CON0295

PHOTO KEY



I, the undersigned, confirm that the photos in this inventory form have not been digitally manipulated and that they conform to the standards set forth in the NHDHR Photo Policy. These photos were printed using an Epson Stylus Photo R2880 Printer and Epson papers and inks. The digital files are housed at my office in Reading, Mass.

SIGNED: