

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

JUL 25 '83

For NPS use only

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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Kitson Woolen Mill

and/or common Holland Thread Company

**2. Location**

street & number 411 Main Street \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Stroudsburg \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Monroe code 089

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Owen Kugel

street & number 8 North Queen Street, Suite 504

city, town Lancaster \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Pennsylvania

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Monroe County Courthouse, Recorder of Deeds Office

street & number 7th and Sarah Streets

city, town Stroudsburg \_\_\_\_\_ state Pennsylvania

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Comprehensive Historic Sites Survey # 089-stbg-05  
has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1979-1980 \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state  county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Monroe County Planning Commission

city, town Stroudsburg \_\_\_\_\_ state Pa.

## 7. Description

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

The four major buildings which make up the industrial complex now known as the Holland Thread Company were largely built between 1893 and 1904. The red brick buildings are arranged in a "U" shape open to Main Street. This provides natural light to all sides of the buildings, and controlled access to the complex. The courtyard is partially filled by the one story boilerhouse and its tall brick smokestack. The principal factory buildings are three and four stories tall, functional in style, and minimally ornamented.

The four story "west wing" was originally constructed as a three story building with its five bay gable end to the street. The west wing may include the 1865 mill established on the site, although it has been incorporated into later additions if it in fact still exists. The 1865 mill was said to be two stories tall and 36' x 80'. The present west wing alone is 134' x 40'. A bell and stair tower with arched windows and brick corbels at the cornice was attached to the west wing, at the north corner. The tower's details were reminiscent of the Italianate style's interpretation of a campanile. The tower has lost its pyramid shaped roof and corbeling, and some windows have been covered on the exterior by a false brick veneer.

In 1904, more floor space was required at the mill, and a fourth story was added to the west wing. A single pitch roof replaced the original gable one, and brought the main building nearly to the height of its attached tower. The street facade of this wing has been altered by a veneer of aluminum panels and false brick. At the rear of the west wing there is a hoist attached to the roof, and double doors on each floor for the handling of bulky goods.

The three story "east wing" which forms an "L" with the west wing, was built in 1893. It was described in a 1933 deed to the property as an addition, which gives support to the theory of the west wing's greater age. This addition is larger than the original building, measuring 115' x 68'. The east wing has a low-pitched gable roof, and simple brackets at the eaves. Both factory buildings have large, multi-paned (15 over 20, 16 over 16) wooden sash windows, under a low relieving arch of brick. Both east and west wings are of red brick, laid in a Common Bond pattern, over a fieldstone foundation.

The main factory buildings are constructed in a typical mill building fashion for the 19th century. In order to support the great weight of three or floors of machinery, the load-bearing masonry exterior walls were supplemented by a point loading system inside. Developed in New England textile mills in the 19th century, the mill system used the tensile strength of wooden beams to complement the compressive strength of cast iron. In the Kitson Mill, cast iron "caps" were put on wooden columns, and these wooden columns were regularly spaced through the vast interiors.

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The floors of both buildings were originally all narrow-width tongue and groove. These wooden floors were laid diagonally to the walls for even greater floor strength. Some of these floors were replaced in the 20th century by concrete.

The mill was originally water-powered, and the race still runs through the building below the first floor. Its path is marked on the exterior of the building by a low brick arch at ground level, where the tunneled race exits on the east side.

In later years, the mill turned to steam power, and the necessary furnaces and boilers were placed in a boiler house. This one story brick building has windows similar to those in the east wing, suggesting that they were built at the same time (1893). The attached smokestack, tapering up from its square base, has an arch motif outlined in cream-colored firebrick at its top. This simple decorative touch complements the arch motif of the west wing's stair tower. The original furnace is now a crumbling heap of firebrick, but the second furnace remains in place in the boiler house. Its heavy iron doors are emblazoned with the monogram "IBW" - International Boiler Works, a company founded in Stroudsburg at the turn of the century, and which exists to this day.

The last of the four major surviving buildings of the mill complex is the office, a two-story, two bay building which projects to Main Street and complete the "U" on the east side of the property. Also of brick, the office has been refaced with stucco, scored and tinted to resemble yellow brick. The building has a flat roof, modestly accented by a simple moulded cornice. On the southwest corner of the office is the cornerstone for the mill complex. It reads:

BUILT 1893  
THOMAS KITSON  
M.L. PHILLIPS  
CONTRACTOR

All the buildings of the Kitson Mill complex are in good condition. Their simple, sturdy construction, and lack of ornament has allowed them to survive periods of minimal maintenance and years of hard use.

A few buildings listed in the 1933 deed are no longer standing - a frame storage house, a small brick pump house, and framed barn. None of these, however, formed an integral

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part of the 1893 building program. A few concrete and corrugated iron structures were added to the rear of the mill in the 20th century. They are already collapsing, and were never part of the mill structure, and so do not mar its integrity.

The Kitson Mill is a good example of 19th century industrial building, and a tangible reminder of the historic presence of the textile industry in Monroe County. Today, the mill is visually separated from McMichael's Creek, source of its early water power, by an embankment created in 1956 for flood control purposes by the Army Corps of Engineers. By its great size, the mill is already a local landmark. By recognizing that its architecture and history have much to tell us about 19th century attitudes toward work and the workplace, it can be even more of a landmark.

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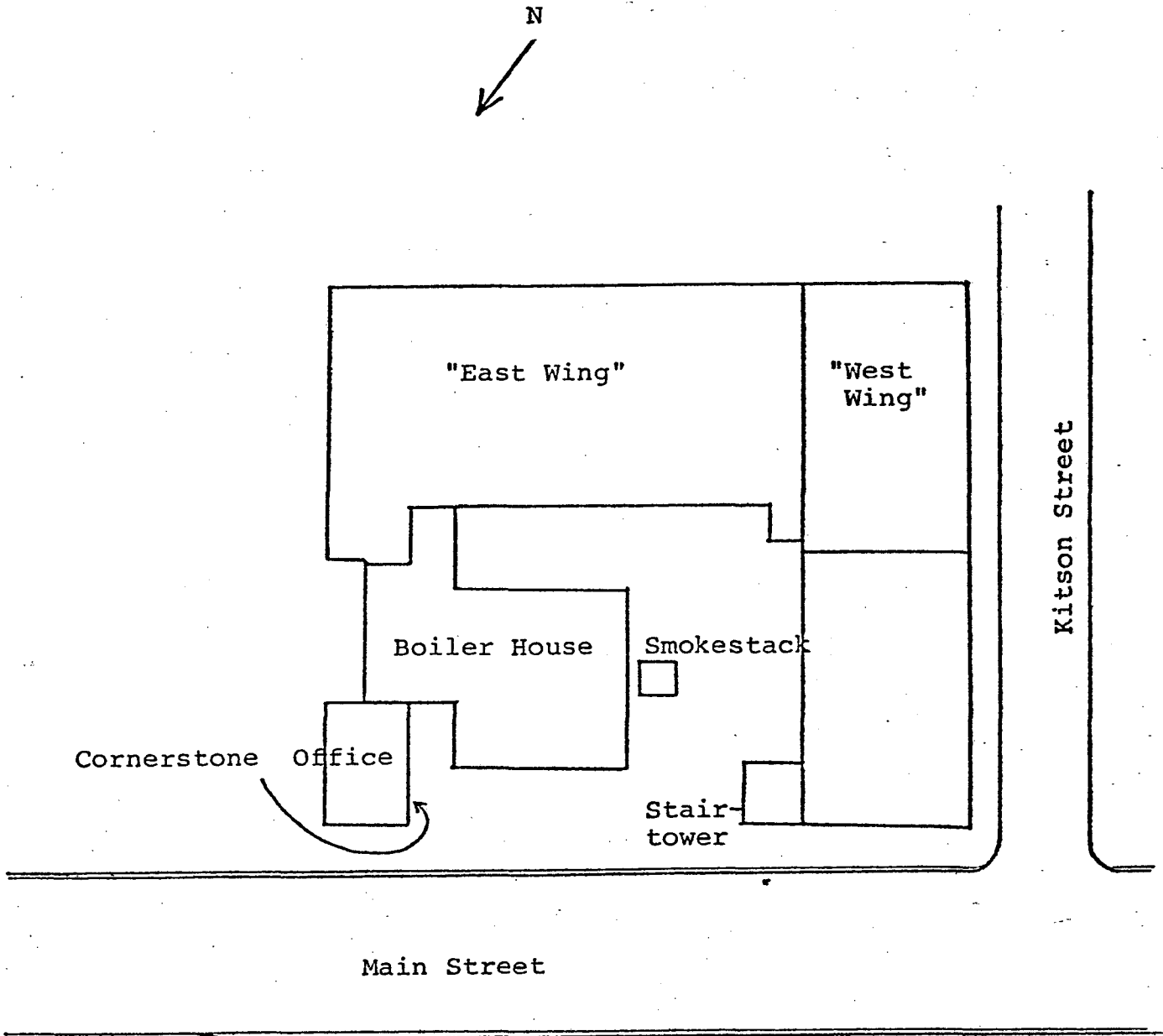
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SITE PLAN - KITSON WOOLEN MILLS, STROUDSBURG, PA.  
not to scale



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

Specific dates 1893/1904

Builder/Architect 1893 - M.L. Phillips, contractor

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The industrial complex now called the Holland Thread Company was best known as the Kitson Woolen Mills, a name it carried from 1883-1928. During that time, Kitson Woolen Mills, on the bank of the McMichael's Creek in Stroudsburg, produced sturdy wool cloth, praised and advertised by the slogan "All wool and a yard wide." It is the oldest and largest of the textile mills in Monroe County, and the building complex still survives looking much as it did in the late 19th century.

The site of the mill has long been occupied by industry of one sort or another, dating from the late 18th century when Jacob Stroud, founder of Stroudsburg, had a grist mill and saw mill near here along the creek. In July 1865, a group of Monroe County citizens formed a corporation to establish a "Hosiery and Woolen Manufactory", which they called Stroudsburg Mills. They built a "house" (as the local newspaper put it) two stories high, 36 feet by 80 feet, along the mill raceway paralleling the McMichael's Creek. Business was officially begun in March 1866, making cloth for the local market. This was not a great success, and a year later, the group leased the mill to an experienced mill operator, Dester Brothers of Bethlehem, Pa. Dester Brothers expanded the market for the Stroudsburg Mill's goods, and apparently were able to make a profit for several years. The Panic of '73 brought serious losses to the mill, however, and it was closed that year.

In 1873, an enterprising young man named Thomas Kitson (1840-1900) arrived in Stroudsburg from Thomaston, Connecticut. He formed a partnership with a leading Stroudsburg businessman of the day, William Wallace, to reopen the mill. Kitson had worked in a mill in Leeds, Greene County New York, and perhaps also had knowledge of mill operations from a youth spent in Connecticut, where so many textile mills were in operation at the time. His partner owned all the property on the south side of Main Street, and operated a store on one side of the Stroudsburg Mill, and a saw mill on the other side of it. He no doubt gave Kitson his backing in order to preserve the value of his own property, as well as to gain any profits the mill might produce in the hands of this skilled and ambitious newcomer.

The mill began with four looms and thirteen employees, and it grew and prospered under Kitson's guidance. The wool cloth was sold in New York for making men's and women's suits. In 1883, Kitson bought out William Wallace's shares in the Stroudsburg Mill, and henceforth it became known as the Kitson Woolen Mill. By 1886, the mill had twenty-eight looms and one hundred twenty employees. The county history written in that year stated, "The product is chiefly material for over-coatings, of which fourteen thousand yards of six-fourths goods [54"]

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are produced per month and consigned to the New York market... Both steam and water-power are employed in running the mills."

Records of this period are unclear whether the 1865 mill was demolished or incorporated into the additions and plant expansion that corresponded with the mill's financial success. In 1893, though, a major building program was underway which "practically doubled" the size of the mill. The cornerstone in the office building is dated 1893, and a photograph of the mill taken in 1896 shows the complex largely as it appears today. In 1904, additional improvements were made, most notably the addition of a fourth floor and alteration of the roofline in the west wing of the factory.

Responsive to Kitson's success, several other textile mills were erected in Stroudsburg and neighboring East Stroudsburg after 1885. By the 1890's, silk mills were a major industry in the area, and factories producing ribbon and other fancy trim for the garment industry continue in operation to this day.

Thomas Kitson was a true believer in the 19th century vision of industrialization and prosperity. In addition to his mill, he also helped to establish the Stroudsburg Brewery (no longer extant), a bank, a real estate development company, and the first municipal gas company. In 1898, he brought great publicity to the mill and the town by establishing a new world's record for "sheep to suit", accomplishing the shearing, weaving, dying, and tailoring of a suit in six hours and two minutes. Kitson lived in a fine house on Main Street, four blocks from the mill, which is still standing, although severely altered from its Second Empire style to a 20th century diner.

Thomas Kitson died in 1900. His son, Thomas J. Kitson took over the mill operations. The mill turned to blanket production during World War I to supply American and European troops. During this period the Kitson Mill was at its largest, with sixty looms and 225 employees. Separate warehouses were built near the New York, Susquehanna, and Western Railroad, which ran a few blocks from the mill, for the storage of the mill's vast output.

The Kitson Mill had a variety of specialized processes in the early 20th century. These included design and pattern-making, dying of cloth, reprocessing old wool and cotton rags, carding to produce yarn, spinning, weaving, and fulling to shrink the 72 inch woven cloth to 54 inches of tight, solid wool. The final processes at the factory involved "napping" the fabric, shearing the nap off, steaming, and pressing.

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Business began to fall off after the boom brought by the war. After Thomas J. Kitson's death in 1920, a strong manager was lacking as well. According to Kitson (Jr.'s) will, should the business not be operated profitably for one year, the Kitson family should sell the mill. Apparently business went bad in the 1920's, and the mill was sold at a Sheriff's sale in January 1930.

The mill was vacant for a few years. Then, in 1933, the Holland Manufacturing Company bought the mill complex, and set up a new textile business. In 1935, Holland Thread Company listed themselves in the local directory as a "Silk Manufacturer", but as the 20th century progressed, they turned to production of nylon and fiberglass cord. The Holland Thread Company continued to manufacture in the old mill until 1978, when a prolonged strike by employees, and rising production costs, closed the mill.

Since that time, the Holland Thread Company buildings have been vacant. Stroudsburg's downtown has recently begun a renaissance, and the Holland Thread Mill buildings proposed as the site for adaptive reuse development projects. If successful, such a project would continue the presence of the large, well-known mill complex in the center of town, and bring to it a use that harmonizes with the plans and image of Stroudsburg today.



# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached bibliography

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 3.14 acres

Quadrangle name Stroudsburg

Quadrangle scale 7.5 minute series

UTM References

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary of the Kitson Woolen Mill is shown as the red line on the accompanying map entitled "Stroudsburg Borough, Parcel Lines, 1983."

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

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janet W. Foster Historic Preservation Consultant

organization none date July 18, 1983

street & number 44 Hill Street 4K telephone 201 539 2755

city or town Morristown, state N.J.

# 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 \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

For NPS use only

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

date \_\_\_\_\_

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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I. BOOKS

Appel, John C., ed. History of Monroe County, Pennsylvania 1725-1976.  
East Stroudsburg, Pa: Pocono Hospital, 1976.

Beers, J.W. County Atlas of Monroe County, Pennsylvania. New  
York: J.W. Beers & Company.

The Bells Ringing in the Message of Progress in Monroe County.  
East Stroudsburg, Pa.: The Hughes Press, 1915.

Commemorative Biographical Record of North-eastern Pennsylvania.  
Chicago: J.H. Beers & Company, 1900.

Directory of the Delaware, Lackawanna, & Western Railroad from  
Portland to Binghamton. 6th ed. New York: Breed Publishing  
Company, 1901.

Historical Reminiscences of Stroudsburg. Stroudsburg, Pa.: Times  
Press, no date. (ca. 1900).

Koehler, LeRoy Jennings. The History of Monroe County, Pennsylvania  
During the Civil War. Stroudsburg, Pa.: Monroe County  
Historical Society and Monroe County Commissioners, 1950.

Lantz, Dr. J. Picturesque Monroe County. Stroudsburg, Pa.:  
Morris Evans, Publisher, 1897.

Mathews, Alfred. History of Wayne, Pike, and Monroe Counties, Penn-  
sylvania. Philadelphia: R.T. Peck & Co., 1886.

Stroudsburg and East Stroudsburg, Pa. Directory. Compiled and  
Published by the Calvin-Kelly Directory Company, Binghamton,  
New York. 1928 and 1935.

II. UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL

Koehler, LeRoy J. Merchandising in Monroe County One Hundred Years  
Ago. Unpublished manuscript of talk delivered to the Monroe  
County Historical Society. No date. (ca. 1952).

Last Will & Testament of Thomas J. Kitson. Will Book Vol. 8, p. 412.  
File 1733. Monroe County Courthouse, Office of Register of  
Wills.

Deed Book 117, pages 574-579. Monroe County Office of Recorder  
of Deeds. 1933 description of property on occasion of sale  
to Holland Manufacturing Company.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION (from Deed Book 117, page 575,  
in the Monroe County Courthouse for the Kitson Woolen Mill property.)

Beginning at a corner on the Southeast side of lower Main Street; thence along said Main Street, South thirty three degrees West sixty four and a half feet to a stake, to a corner of said Main Street and Kitson Street, thence along said Kitson Street South fifty seven degrees East two hundred and six feet to a stone, a corner of land of William Wallace; thence along the same, North thirty three degrees East sixty four and a half feet to a stone; thence along the same North fifty seven degrees West thirty eight feet to a stake; thence North thirty six degrees East one hundred feet to a stake; thence North fifty seven degrees West thirty eight feet to a stake; thence South thirty six degrees West one hundred feet to a stake; thence by the same North fifty seven degrees West one hundred and thirty eight feet to the place of Beginning.

The mill property is located on the southeast side of lower Main Street in Stroudsburg; on the northeast side of Kitson Street, a cul-de-sac which runs along the West Wing of the mill complex; on the northwest side of the continuation of Kitson Street and of the banks of the McMichael's Creek; and the mill is southeast of the property of the Frisbee Lumber Company. The mill site is Lot & Block number 18-1-1-12-22 in the Borough of Stroudsburg.

5966 1/2 SE  
(MOUNT POCONO)

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

