

PROPERTY REPORT

Property ID: -1922255993

Property Name: William Strange Mills
Address: 44 Beech ST

Ownership: Private
Apartment #: ZIP: 07501

PROPERTY LOCATION(S):

County:	Municipality:	Local Place Name:	USGS Quad:	Block:	Lot:
PASSAIC	Paterson	Paterson	6209	1	

Property Photo:



Old HSI Number: PAS1608-005, 215

NRIS Number:

HABS/HAER Number:

Description:

The William Strange Mills site features a ca. 1875, 3-story brick silk mill, square in plan so as to form a courtyard, with an extending ell at the northeast corner of the square. Inclusive of the ell, this mill stretches 400 ft., the entire length of the block along Beech Street. At the northwest corner of the block is an L-shaped, 4-story brick mill constructed between 1899 and 1915. A silk storage house, a boiler house, and a carpentry shop, all brick, are located within the courtyard, but were not accessible at the time of this survey. Several other auxiliary buildings at the interior were also inaccessible at the time of this survey.

Setting:

The William Strange Mills occupy a 1.83-acre rectangular city block bound by Morton Street to the north, Beech Street to the east, Essex Street to the south, and Madison Street to the west. The setting is a mixed-used urban neighborhood with the historic Erie Railroad corridor located 3 blocks west of the mill site. Most buildings within view of the mill are 20th-century residences; although Roberto Clemente Park is located just 2 blocks east and a 19th-century industrial building is located immediate northwest of the mill site.

Survey Name: Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills

Principal Investigator: Patrick Harshbarger

Organization: Hunter Research, Inc.

☒ (Primary Contact)

Property ID:

-1922255993

Page 1

**Registration
and Status
Dates:**

National Historic Landmark?: ☐

National Register:

New Jersey Register:

Determination of Eligibility:

Certification of Eligibility:

SHPO Opinion: 1/29/1999

Local Designation:

Other Designation:

Other Designation Date:

☒ Eligibility Worksheet included in present survey?

☐ Is this Property an identifiable farm or former farm?

Location Map:



Site Map:

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Author:	Title:	Year:	HPO Accession #: (if applicable)
Guzzo, Dorothy P	William Strange Mills SHPO Opinion	1999	H143
Hunter Research, Inc.	Phase IA Archaeological Investigation: Proposed Hope VI Public Housing (Beech Street), City of Paterson, Passaic County, New Jersey	1999	
News Golden Issue	One of Paterson's First Major Silk Factories	1940	
Shirner, Charles A	Paterson, New Jersey	1890	
Heusser, Albert H	The History of the Silk Dyeing Industry in the United States	1927	
Department of Community Development	City of Paterson Survey	1987	
Archimede, Gianfranco	Paterson Historic Mills Group Municipal Historic Site Designations Staff Opinion of Eligibility	2012	
Hyde, E B	Atlas of Passaic County, New Jersey	1877	
Robinson, E	Atlas of the City of Paterson, New Jersey	1884	
Robinson, E	Atlas of the City of Paterson and Haledon, New Jersey	1899	
Mueller, A H	Atlas of the City of Paterson, New Jersey	1915	

Survey Name: Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills

Principal Investigator: Patrick Harshbarger

Organization: Hunter Research, Inc.

☒ (Primary Contact)

Property ID:

-1922255993

Page 2

Sanborn Map Company	Insurance Maps of Paterson, New Jersey	1915
Sanborn Map Company	Insurance Maps of Paterson, New Jersey	1931
Sanborn Map Company	Insurance Maps of Paterson, New Jersey	1950

Additional Information:

HPO Inventory ID#: 3797

More Research Needed? ☒ (checked=Yes)

INTENSIVE-LEVEL USE ONLY:

Attachments Included:	0 Building	0 Bridge
	0 Structure	0 Landscape
	0 Object	2 Industry

Historic District ? ☐**District Name:** not applicable**Status:****Associated Archeological Site/Deposits?** ☒

(known or potential sites. If Yes, please describe briefly)

Potential for industrial archaeology (interior and courtyard)

Conversion Problem? ☐ **ConversionNote:** 6*Date form completed:* 9/7/2012

Survey Name: Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills**Principal Investigator:** Patrick Harshbarger**Organization:** Hunter Research, Inc.☒ (Primary Contact)**Property ID:****-1922255993**

Page 3

INDUSTRIAL BUILDING ATTACHMENT

Common Name: 44 Beech Street

Historic Name: Mills #1-5 at William Strange Mills

Present Use: Industrial, light industrial

Historic Industry: Textiles

Construction Date: 1875 **Source:** Historic Aerials

Construction Start Date: 1875 **Construction End Date:** 1883

Building ID: 1-5

Style: ☐ Vernacular?

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick, Common Bond

Physical Condition: Good

Foundation Materials:

Remaining Historic Fabric: Medium

Roof Finish Materials: Rolled Asphalt

Length: 200 **Stories:** 3

Structural System:

Width: 400 **Bays:** 60

Roof System:

Equipment/Machinery:

Transportation Links: ☐ airstrip ☐ loading dock ☐ slip
(checked if applicable) ☐ dock ☐ rail siding ☐ other

Exterior Description:

Mills numbered 1-5 on the William Strange complex consists of a mill originally constructed for the American Velvet Co. ca. 1875. This original building appears on an 1877 map of Paterson, but its footprint is unclear as it appears as a solid block at the south end of the lot. By 1884, the current configuration of the mill was achieved, showing a square mill with a courtyard and an ell extending north from the square's northeast corner. The building is a 3-story, brick structure with a hipped roof covered with rolled asphalt. Below the metal cornice is denticled brick detail. Projecting brick pilasters divide the bays. Windows in the original American Velvet Co. portion of the building (Mill #1) have denticulated arched brick openings and stone sills. Windows on the additions have arched brick lintels which are not denticulated. Windows on the south elevation are 1/1 metal replacements. Windows on the east and west elevations are wooden 12/12 double hung sash, although many have been boarded. The central 5 bays on the south façade project, forming a cross-gabled roof. Below the gable is an arched stone sign engraved "The American Velvet Co." At the southeast corner of the building along Beech Street, the end bay has elongated openings, some maintaining their original doublewide wooden doors. Above these openings is a hoisting mechanism. Other hoisting mechanisms exist where the building phases meet to form the square. The stories along the east elevation are divided by projecting brick courses. The southern portion of the building, labeled as mill #4 on Sanborn maps, is 4 stories and has a sawtooth brick cornice to match along the east elevation of the mill and its ell. The courtyard can be accessed via a pointed arched opening in the brick along the Madison Street elevation. In line with this opening is a cross gable. Decorating the brick at this gable end is a metal sign that reads "William Strange & Co. Silk Manf. 1877." Within the courtyard is a massive, square brick chimney. The ell extension, labeled Mill #5 on Sanborn maps, has a frame monitor roof that rises 6 ft. from the side-gabled roof.

Interior Description:

The interior of this building and the courtyard were not accessible at the time of this survey. Sanborn maps from 1915 indicate a machine shop was housed on the first floor of the Beech Street side of the square, but no other indications in terms of operations are provided on the maps.

Alteration Dates:

Architect/Designer:

Type:	Name:	Person/Firm Description:
-------	-------	--------------------------

Other	William Strange	Manufacturer
-------	-----------------	--------------

Survey Name: Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills

Property ID:

Page 4

Principal Investigator: Patrick Harshbarger

☒ (Primary Contact)

-1922255993

Organization: Hunter Research, Inc.

viii Change

9/27/2012

Page 5

-1922255993

Organization: Hunter Research, Inc.

INDUSTRIAL BUILDING ATTACHMENT

Common Name: 44 Beech Street

Historic Name: Mill #7 at the William Strange Mills

Present Use: Industrial, light industrial

Historic Industry: Textiles

Construction Date: 1908

Source: Historic Maps

**Construction
Start Date:**

**Construction
End Date:**

Building ID:

Style:

☐ Vernacular?

Exterior Finish Materials: Brick, Common Bond

Physical Condition: Good

Foundation Materials:

Remaining Historic Fabric: High

Roof Finish Materials: Built-up Tar

Length: 140

Stories: 4

Structural System:

Width: 180

Bays:

Roof System:

Equipment/Machinery:

Transportation Links: ☐ airstrip
(checked if applicable) ☐ dock

☐ loading dock
☐ rail siding

☐ slip
☐ other

Exterior Description:

Mill #7 at the William Strange Mills complex was constructed between 1899 and 1915, after the death of William Strange. It is a 4-story, L-shaped brick industrial building with a flat roof. Below the roofline is a metal cornice. The north façade stretches 16 bays, whereas the west façade is 24 bays. Windows are wooden 12/12 double hung sash set in arched openings with arched brick lintels and stone sills. Although some windows are boarded, the building maintains a remarkable amount of original fenestration. At the northeast corner along Morton Street is a recessed entry set in an arched brick opening. This entryway is mimicked on the southwest corner along Madison Street. Other than the arched brick lintels, this building is simple in design and features very little ornamentation.

Interior Description:

The interior of this building was not accessible at the time of this survey. Sanborn maps from 1915 indicate that the recessed entries lead to staircases.

Alteration Dates:

Architect/Designer:

Date form completed: 9/27/2012

Survey Name: Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills

Principal Investigator: Patrick Harshbarger

Organization: Hunter Research, Inc.

☒ (Primary Contact)

Property ID:

-1922255993

ELIGIBILITY WORKSHEET - Properties

Property ID **-1922255993**

History:

William Strange is considered one of Paterson's triumvirate to which much of the success of the Paterson silk industry is attributed, the other two giants being John Ryle and Catholina Lambert. The silk ribbon manufacturing firm of William Strange & Company began as the silk importing house of Strange & Brother in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York in 1838. Founded by his father, A.B. Strange, the business was eventually controlled by William Strange. In 1863, seeking to meet clients' color demands, Strange & Brother ventured into manufacturing its own silk ribbons with the purchase of the entire plant of English manufacturer John Day & Co. Five years later, William Strange came to Paterson to perpetuate the business of silk ribbon production. Faced with a prejudice in favor of foreign-manufactured goods, Strange had to convince ribbon houses that he could manufacture a ribbon of equal, if not higher, quality than that of foreign manufacturers. A post-Civil War tariff on silk imports coupled with advancing technology enabled Strange's success as a domestic silk ribbon manufacturer.

Initially, the company rented space in the Greppo Mill on Slater and Dale Avenues. By 1874 demand exceeded the capacity of the rented space, and so Strange purchased the American Velvet Co. mill on Essex and Madison Streets. From there, the business expanded exponentially, and by 1878 the former American Velvet Co. mills had been increased to span over 200 feet between Essex and Madison Streets, as well as half the block along Beech Street. In 1883, another three-story, 200-foot mill addition was added along Beech Street to complete the configuration of a square layout with a center courtyard in which was situated the boiler and engines. By 1890, the mill was manned by 800 workers.

William Strange enjoyed massive success in his business, and further expanded his international notoriety in the manufacturing side of the silk trade by being very active as President of the Silk Association of America throughout the 1880-90s. He also was active in Paterson politics, serving as President of the Board of Trade and also on the Parks Commission establishing Paterson's public parks during the 1890s. William Strange died in 1899, after which his estate disposed of the silk machinery, but kept the buildings.

Statement of Significance:

The William Strange Mills are among the earliest silk mills remaining in Paterson today. After John Ryle, William Strange was one of the first manufacturers to establish silk manufacturing mills in Paterson. Strange was a proponent for domestic silk manufacturing and his efforts contributed to Paterson's rise to becoming the center of the American silk industry at the turn of the century.

Architecturally, the William Strange Mills exemplify traditional textile mill design, as they are linear in form to allow line shafts to distribute power from a central source to weaving and warping machines. Furthermore, Mill #7 has a high level of integrity as it maintains much of its original fenestration.

Eligibility for New Jersey and National Registers: ☒ Yes ☐ No

National Register Criteria: ☒ A ☒ B ☒ C ☐ D

Level of Significance: ☒ Local ☐ State ☐ National

Justification of Eligibility/Ineligibility:

The William Strange Mills are recommended eligible under Criterion A for their contributions to the birth of the Paterson silk industry and domestic silk manufacturing. The mill is recommended eligible under Criterion B for its direct association with William Strange, a leading figure in the development of Paterson's silk industry. The mill complex is recommended eligible under Criterion C for embodying the distinctive characteristics of late-19th-century and early 20th-century textile mill architecture.

Total Number of Attachments: 2

List of Element Names: Mills #1-5 at the William Strange Mills
Mill #7 at the William Strange Mills

Narrative Boundary Description:

Date Form Completed: 9/27/2012

Survey Name: Intensive-Level Survey of Paterson Industrial Mills

Principal Investigator: Patrick Harshbarger

Organization: Hunter Research, Inc.

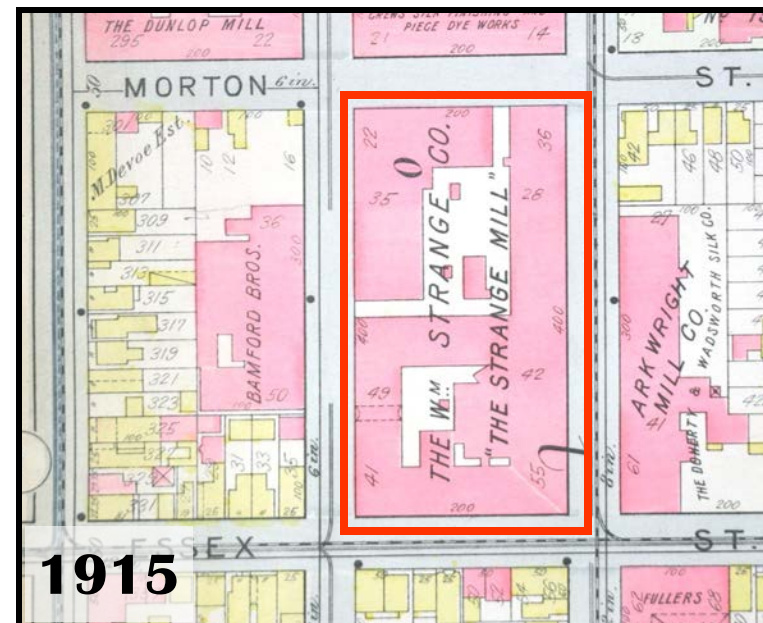
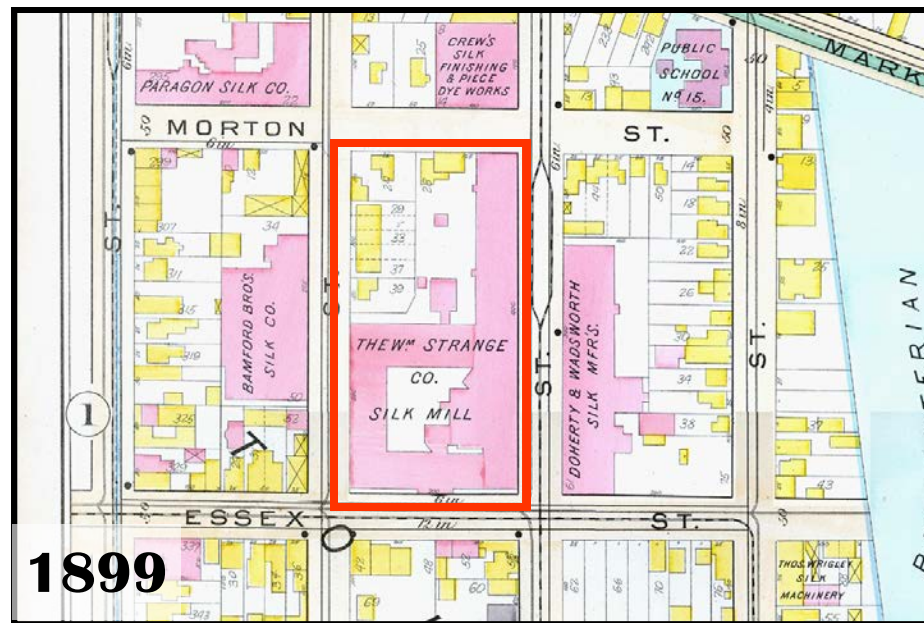
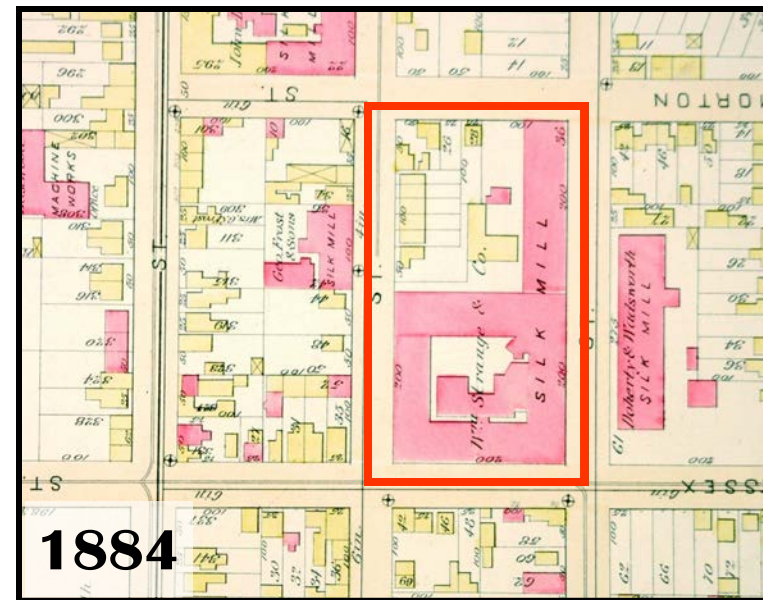
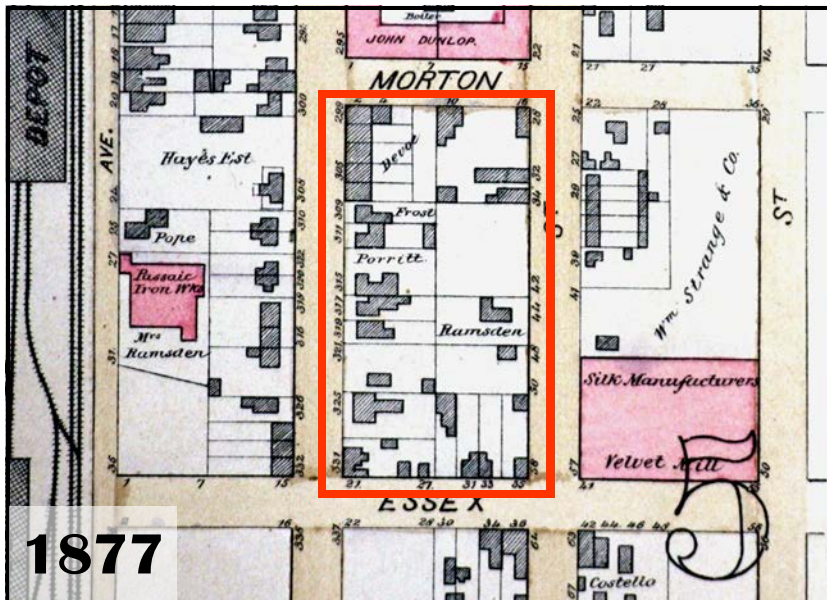
☒ (Primary Contact)

Property ID:

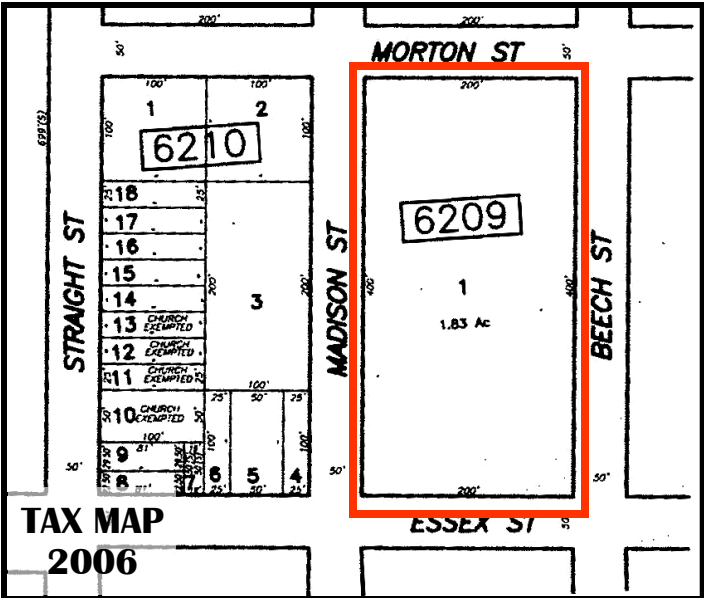
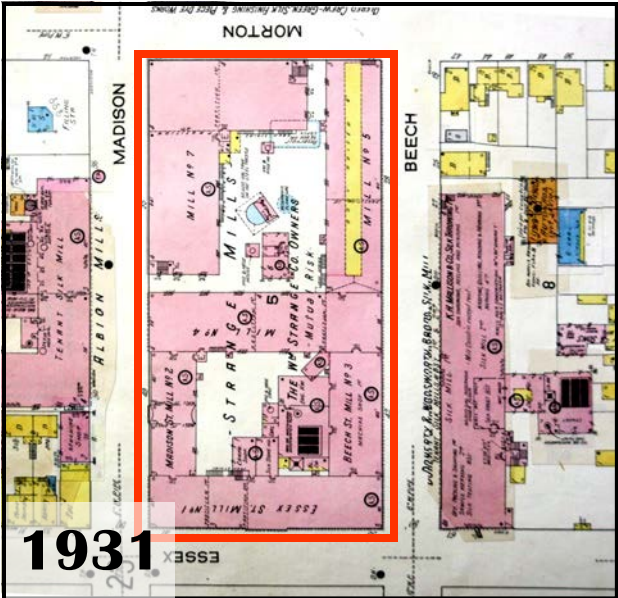
-1922255993

Page 7

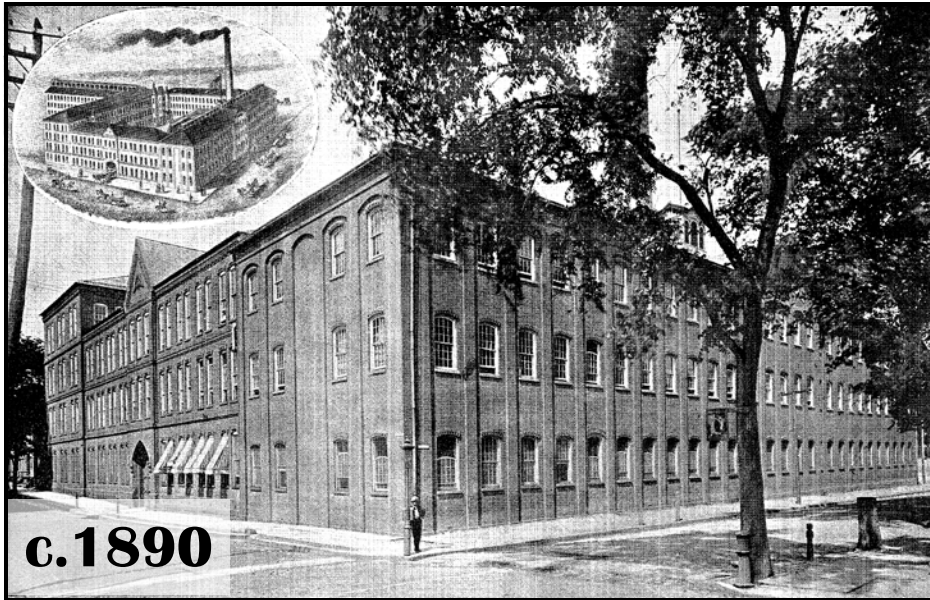
WILLIAM STRANGE SILK COMPANY
 44 Beech Street, Paterson, NJ B 6209 L 01
 Site Development Maps 1877, 1884, 1899, 1915



WILLIAM STRANGE SILK COMPANY
44 Beech Street, Paterson, NJ B 6209 L 01
Site Development Maps, 1931, 2006, 2010



WILLIAM STRANGE SILK COMPANY
 44 Beech Street, Paterson, NJ B 6209 L 01
 Photographs, historic / contemporary



STRANGE 1: c.1890 looking NE from corner of Madison St. (lft) and Essex St. (rgt). The façade along Essex St. (rgt) was the American Velvet Co. mill.



STRANGE 2: looking NE from corner of Madison St. (lft) and Essex St. (rgt) This is today's view of the historic photo in Strange 1 to the left. Note the smokestacks.



STRANGE 3: detail view looking N from Essex St. The name plate in the gable is for the American Velvet Co. an existing L-shaped mill complex that Strange purchased and expanded his new complex from.



STRANGE 4: oblique overview looking NW looking NE from corner of Beech St. (rgt) and Essex St. (lft). The American Velvet Co. building defines the corner, but it is clear by the mismatched roofline where the Beech St. expansion started in the 1880s.

WILLIAM STRANGE SILK COMPANY
44 Beech Street, Paterson, NJ B 6209 L 01
Photographs, historic / contemporary



STRANGE 5: oblique overview looking NE down Beech St. from corner of Essex St.



STRANGE 7: oblique overview looking SE down Beech St. from corner of Morton St. showing the Beech St. side of the complex. The taller central bay is detailed in photo Strange 6 (upper right).

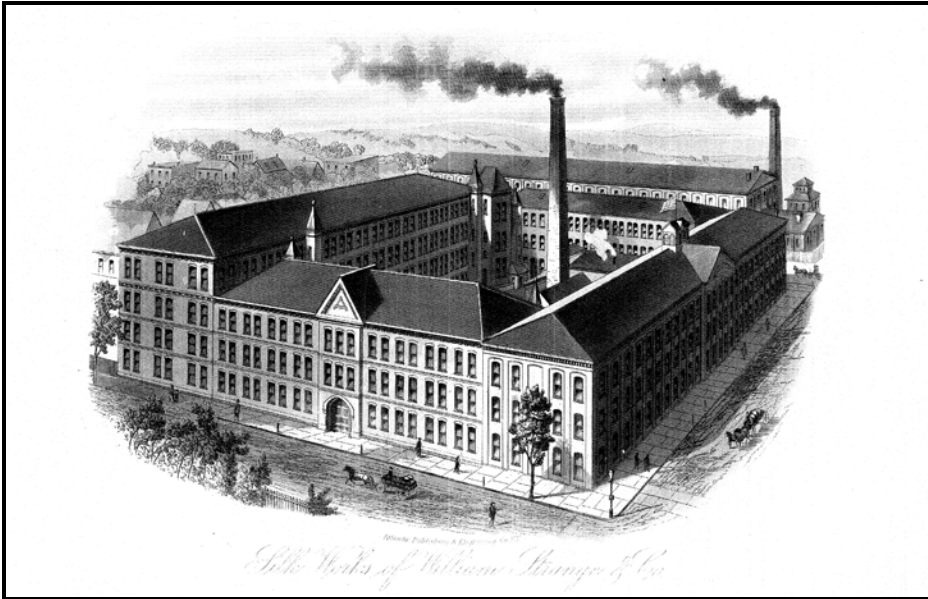


STRANGE 6: detail view looking W from Beech St. showing central bay fronting Beech St. Note the permanent enlargement to the center sets of windows.



STRANGE 8: detail view of N gable end looking SW, showing intact central clerestory that runs the length of the building.

WILLIAM STRANGE SILK COMPANY
 44 Beech Street, Paterson, NJ B 6209 L 01
 Photographs, historic / contemporary



STRANGE 9: historic aerial view looking NE of the Strange complex before the final addition of an independent structure at the corner of Morton and Madison St. The primary façade of the complex was defined by this prominent entrance shown.



STRANGE 11: close up view looking E of the cast iron name plate located in the central entrance gable seen in Strange 10 (upper rgt) "William Strange Silk Man'f."



STRANGE 10: detail view looking SE, showing central entrance on the Madison St. (primary) façade. Note the permanent window conversions to entrances.



STRANGE 12: Oblique overview looking SE from Madison St. showing primary façade and main entrance (yellow) along Madison St.

WILLIAM STRANGE SILK COMPANY
44 Beech Street, Paterson, NJ B 6209 L 01
Photographs, historic / contemporary



STRANGE 13: oblique overview looking SE from corner of Madison and Morton St. of the last Strange complex's 1900s 4-story addition.



STRANGE 14: oblique view looking W, showing Morton St. side of the 1900s addition on the right side, and the N gable end of the 1880s expansion along Beech St. on the left.



STRANGE 15: overview of interior courtyard looking SW, showing non contributing concrete block buildings in foreground.



STRANGE 16: detail view looking NE from interior courtyard, showing detail and integrity of roofline on rear of the Beech St. expansion mill.