NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name **ABERNATHY FURNITURE COMPANY FACTORY**
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number **200-210 SENECA STREET** _____ not for publication ____
city or town **LEAVENWORTH** _____ vicinity ____
state **KANSAS** code **KS** county **LEAVENWORTH** code **209** zip code **66048**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this XX nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property XX meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide XX locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Richard D. Pankratz DSHPO — August 27, 2004
Signature of certifying official — Date

Kansas State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

____ entered in the National Register _____
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined eligible for the National Register _____
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined not eligible for the National Register _____
____ removed from the National Register _____

____ other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper — Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property: Contributing	Noncontributing	
_X_ private	_2_ building(s)	__2_	_____	buildings
___ public-local	__ district	_____	_____	sites
___ public-State	___ site	_____	_____	structures
___ public-Federal	___ structure	_____	_____	objects
		__2_	_____	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
__N/A_____

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
____0_____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
INDUSTRIAL/manufacturing	DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY MOVEMENTS

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation **STONE: Limestone**
roof **OTHER: Composition**
walls **BRICK**
other **HEAVY TIMBER**

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
See continuation sheets.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

_X_ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

___ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

_X_ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

____ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance
1883 - 1950

Significant Dates
1883 .
1889-1890.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

____ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
____ B removed from its original location.
____ C a birthplace or a grave.
____ D a cemetery.
____ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
____ F a commemorative property.
____ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
See continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
___ previously listed in the National Register
___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:
_X_ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
_X_ Other
Name of repository:
Kansas Room, Leavenworth Public Library

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property LESS THAN ONE ACRE

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	15	335360	4353800	3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description
(See Continuation Sheet 10)

Boundary Justification
(See Continuation Sheet 10)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title STEVEN D. FOUTCH, PRESIDENT

organization ALLIED DEVELOPMENT, L.L.C. date APRIL 2003

street & number 3668 MADISON telephone (816) 520-3948
city or town KANSAS CITY state MO zip code 64111

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs
Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)
name ABERNATHY LOFTS, LP
street & number 3668 MADISON telephone 816-520-3948
city or town KANSAS CITY state MO zip code 64111

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.0. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION STATEMENT

LOCATION AND SETTING

The Abernathy Furniture Company Factory located in Leavenworth, Kansas (Figure 1) at 200-210 Seneca Street (the northwest corner of Seneca and Second streets) is on the north side of Leavenworth's commercial district (Figure 2). The Missouri River is two blocks to the east of the building. Three connected buildings[1] facing onto Seneca Street, each erected at different times, comprise the factory complex. The buildings sit flush with the interior of the public sidewalk with no setback. Directly behind and across the alley to the north are two ancillary brick structures constructed in 1902 and 1908 by the Abernathy Furniture Company and originally used for storage and offices.[2] A surface parking lot abuts to the west. Residential buildings occur to the east and southeast. A modern high-rise apartment building set well back from the street is across Seneca Street to the south.

The earliest building, constructed in 1883, comprises the east end of the primary façade, which faces onto Seneca Street. It is a three-story brick building with a heavy timber post-and-beam structural system. Around 1890, the company erected a second building – a five-story, three-bay building – to the west of the first building. At this time, a vacant lot separated the two buildings. The 1890 West Building is also of post-and-beam construction. Although the 1890 West Building is five stories tall, its parapet height–varies only a few feet from that of the three-story 1883 East Building. Between 1890 and 1905, the company erected a five-story addition in the lot between the two buildings that linked the buildings into one complex. The second-floor of the 1883 East Building and the third floor of the 1890 West Building connected at the same level. As a result, this addition facilitated the movement of goods and materials between the buildings and provided additional workspace on other floors. The resulting building complex is a U-shaped plan that creates a shallow courtyard on the north (rear) side (Figure 3).

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[1] For National Register purposes, the conjoined buildings in the complex are counted as two buildings. Because they were constructed separately, the 1883 East Building and the circa 1890 West Building count as two buildings. Between 1890 and 1905, the construction of a third building, which connected the two earlier buildings, is considered an addition and is not counted as a building.

[2] These buildings are not nominated and have different owners.

The materials and construction methods of the buildings are similar. Typical of late nineteenth-century industrial architecture, while the exterior elevations feature little decorative ornamentation overall, the locally produced red brick of the walls provides evidence of the craftsmanship of the era. Rows of windows on all elevations create regular patterns of fenestration typical of industrial and manufacturing buildings and which result in a symmetrical appearance on all elevations. The solid, dark red brick masonry walls rest on a limestone foundation. A series of brick pilasters create a total of eight bays on the south elevation and eight bays on the east elevation. The west (secondary) elevation has six bays created by single windows arranged in a symmetrical fashion. Much of the north (rear) elevation and the lower level of the west elevation of the 1890 West Building, which are secondary elevations, have synthetic stucco covering. The entire complex has a series of flat (low-slope) roofs covered with a modified bitumen roofing system.

When viewed from the exterior, the types of alterations that occurred over the complex's history do not inhibit the viewer's understanding of its evolution, historic form, function, or architectural design. While changes to the interior initially inhibit the lay viewer's understanding of the complex's historic use and appearance overall, a sufficient amount of the complex's original interior features remain visible to communicate its original function and plan. Moreover, these alterations are reversible. The complex retains a high degree of integrity in its location, historic structural system, materials, and important elements of its historic setting and character-defining architectural elements to convey feelings of its period of construction and associations with the historic architectural and commercial contexts of Leavenworth. Because of the high percentage of original materials retained, the complex's historic exterior and interior character-defining elements also convey evidence of skilled craftsmanship.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

FACTORY COMPLEX EXTERIOR

As noted above, the building complex has a limestone foundation, dark red brick walls, a flat roof system, and symmetrical fenestration. Each building unit appears as a distinct component. A series of brick pilasters define the bays on the east and south walls that face onto Seneca and Second streets, respectively.

1883 East Building

The three-story 1883 East Building has five bays on the south (primary) façade and eight bays on the east façade, which faces onto Second Street. On the south (primary) façade, a large double entrance door is in the center bay, filling the original entrance. On each floor of this façade, each of the remaining bays contains two windows. Defining the north (rear) elevation are windows and freight door openings. The bricks on the first story are painted white. The brick patterns on the first and second stories reveal a series of historic additions and alterations that coincide with changes in the building footprint shown in the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps. A brick pediment incorporating and rising above the parapet spans the width of the center bay on the east and south elevations. The gable areas of the pediment provide a place for painted signage on the building. The parapet features a corbelled blind arcade on the south and east elevations. The building's original fenestration featured wood frame, six-over-six light, double-hung sash windows. Wood frame window units that match the originals in configuration and profile now fill the original openings on the east and south façades. Aluminum clad, double-hung sash windows with applied interior muntins in the upper and lower sashes fill the original window openings on the west and north elevations. The window openings have segmental brick arches and cast iron sills, which are now painted white. Another architectural element that lends minor ornamentation to this industrial building is the use of cast iron star washers that tie the brick wythes and the wood structure together. The star washers appear on all elevations of the building at each floor line. The use of cast iron shutter hinges and windowsills further define the period of construction. Adjacent to the window opening, each cast iron shutter hinge, installed by the brick mason, is the size of a brick. The hinges supported iron shutters that covered window and door openings.

Circa 1905 Central Building Addition

Two single windows on the third, fourth, and fifth floors define the one-bay-wide Central Building Addition. The color of the addition's red brick differs from the attached buildings on either side. Flanking the addition's one bay are brick pilasters that extend the height of the building. Spanning the width of the bay and the height of the first and second floors is an opening the size of a large overhead door, which previously occupied this space. A large, modern multi-light metal window unit fills the second-floor façade space. Directly below on the first story, is an identical window unit; however, it is slightly recessed and incorporates an entrance. On the upper floors, wood double-hung sash window units match the original wood frame, six-over-six light, double-hung sash windows in configuration and profile. The window openings remain unaltered and have segmental brick arches and cast iron sills, which are painted white. A simple brick corbel forms a stringcourse at the base of the parapet. Limestone caps the parapet.

The rear elevation of this addition has a modern multi-pane aluminum window wall that matches that of the primary façade. It too incorporates the space created by a loading dock opening — extending two stories in height and spanning the width of the bay. There are three single windows on the third and fourth floors. Stucco covers the fifth floor, which has two windows.

1890 West Building

Framing the 1890 West Building's primary façade that faces onto Seneca Street are full-height brick pilasters that create two bays containing two single windows on each of the building's five floors. Wood window units match the original wood frame, six-over-six light, double-hung sash windows in configuration and profile. The window openings remain unaltered and have segmental brick arches and cast iron sills, which are painted white. A brick dentil corbel defines the cornice at the base of the parapet. An undulating brick corbel stringcourse occupies the space between the first and second stories, capping the segmental arched windows. On the west side of the building, stucco now covers the first story and parts of the second story. The fenestration creates four bays: the end bays contain single windows; the second bay from the north has three single windows; and the third bay contains single windows. These windows are aluminum-clad, double-hung sash

units with applied interior muntins. The rear elevation has stucco covering and fenestration defines its four bays. The east end bay has a pair of windows installed in an original dock entrance. The second and third floors retain the original single window openings. The fifth floor contains two small single windows installed in an opening that originally accommodated an elevated passageway to the buildings on the north side of the alley. Single windows define the remaining three bays. This building extends northward past the rear façade walls of the other buildings. The east elevation of the extension has a new addition that houses the elevator and stairwell for the residential units. The new addition has no ornamentation and a stucco covering; a single door leading to a stairway fire exit is on the ground floor level.

BUILDING INTERIOR

The owner of the Abernathy Furniture Company Factory rehabilitated the complex in 2003 for State of Kansas and Federal rehabilitation tax credits in consultation with the Kansas State Historical Society Historic Preservation staff. The building now contains residential "loft" apartment units. The main entrance to the apartment complex is in the circa 1905 Central Building Addition. In this area, the original brick walls, heavy timber structural elements, and original masonry openings and windows remain exposed. All floors in the Central Building Addition serve as common space for the residential complex and feature refinished hardwood floors, exposed brick walls, and exposed rafters and other structural elements. The adaptive reuse plan retained all of the original openings to the flanking buildings on all floors. The original open floor plans of the factory loft spaces in the 1883 East Building and the 1890 West Building contain individual living spaces created by drywall partitions. The conversion retained all of the important structural and architectural features, including the star washers, exposed heavy timber structural elements, and brick walls. The wood elements (columns, beams, joists, and planks) are painted white. Carpet and vinyl tile cover the original floor areas. These changes, including the drywall partitions, are reversible.

INTEGRITY ANALYSIS

The types of alterations that occurred during the complex's period of significance and its subsequent uses and adaptive reuse for residential units do not inhibit the viewer's understanding of its historic function or the evolution of its form, plan, and architectural

design. The complex retains sufficient integrity of location, setting, design, and materials to convey feelings related to its time of construction and to its associations with industrial architecture and commerce in Leavenworth during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Changes made to the building as part of its rehabilitation for adaptive reuse are as follows.

Exterior

Treatment of the various elevations during the rehabilitation differed. Deterioration of mortar joints on the brick and stone foundation of the 1883 East Building required complete repointing. Repointing of the joints throughout the circa 1905 Central Building Addition and the 1890 West Building occurred as needed. Masonry repair on all of the elevations included the replacement of deteriorated and damaged brick with matching brick. The masonry work retained all original masonry features on the primary (east and south) façade elevations. On the west elevation, removal of a one-story addition occurred. A stucco wall treatment delineates where this addition attached to the wall. The masonry of the two north elevations that project the furthest north (ends of the U-shape) also received a stucco coating. Additionally, the east side of the 1890 West Building, which extends from the rear of the complex, received a stucco wall treatment. Restored cast iron star washers remain on the exterior walls of the 1883 East Building.

All of the elevations retain their original window and door openings, including numerous reclaimed/renovated filled openings. In general, appropriate wood panels that resemble doors now fill the historic door openings. An original metal sliding door remains on the north elevation, although it no longer is operational.

The circa 1905 Central Building Addition's first floor originally had oversized freight doorways on both the north (rear) and south (front) elevations. Prior to rehabilitation, the original north doorway opening contained no door and the south doorway contained a metal rolling overhead door. The spatial relationships of the original north-south open passageway on the ground floor of the Central Building Addition remains and is now defined by aluminum full-height, grid-frame windows in the original loading dock doorway openings on each of the façades.

The 1883 East Building retained some original windows that were extremely deteriorated. The circa 1905 Central Building Addition and the 1890 West Building contained no original windows at the time of rehabilitation. Since the original window openings are similar in size in all three buildings, new replacement windows for the entire complex match the original windows found in the 1883 East Building. The east and south (primary) elevations feature six-over-six light, double-hung wood sashes. The north and west (secondary) elevations feature aluminum-clad, six-over-six light, double-hung sash windows with applied interior muntins.

Two new rectangular additions on the rear (north) elevation house stairwells required by code. Minimizing the visual impact of these additions is their placement at the rear of the courtyard and their stucco covering, which blends with the existing stucco-clad brick on the north elevation.

The original painted signs reading "Abernathy Furniture Company" remain on the parapets of the east and south elevations of the 1883 East Building and on the west elevation of the 1890 West Building. Non-original galvanized scuppers and downspouts on the south elevation of the 1890 West Building assist with drainage. New scuppers and downspouts are also present on the 1883 East Building, their placement and appearance matching that of the originals.

Interior

The open floor plan of the industrial lofts facilitated the manufacturing and warehousing functions of the buildings. Heavy timber columns and beams support wood floors throughout all three buildings. Elevators in the 1883 East Building and the 1890 West Building aided in the movement of materials and goods. The adaptation of the complex to residential space necessitated the division of each floor into numerous apartment units, breaking up the open floor plan. These alterations are reversible. The rehabilitation retained all historic structural features and materials, which remain visible where possible. Although wood framing with applied insulation and wallboard covers the original masonry walls, the plan includes exposed interior brick walls where possible. Generally, the brick in the corridors remains unpainted, while the brick walls in the apartment units are painted white. Wood columns and beams remain exposed throughout the complex to show the

original construction materials and methods. Wood columns, beams, and joists are painted white. In the 1883 East Building, the first-floor joists remain exposed, but fire-rated wallboard covers the second- and third-floor joists to meet current fire code requirements. Interior partition walls within the apartment units do not extend fully to the ceiling to allow exposure of the original beams and structural elements.

The circa 1905 Central Building Addition, which now provides the apartment complex's public space and is the main entrance, retains a high percentage of exposed original material, including brick walls, floor joists, hardwood floors, windows, and doors. Illuminating all four floors of the circa 1905 Central Building Addition are new art glass pendant light fixtures and wall sconce light fixtures. The original openings in the interior walls that traditionally allowed for passage between the east, central, and west buildings remain and function as they did in the past. These passageways exist on every floor of the Central Building Addition, with some adapted for modern use with stairs and ramps. An original sliding metal gate remains in place at the first-floor doorway, providing access from the Central Building Addition into the 1890 West Building.

In the 1883 East Building, a membrane protects the original wood floors. Over this membrane is a layer of lightweight concrete that levels the floor. Carpeting or tile covers the concrete. Thus, this treatment is reversible and prevents damage to the original wood floors. In the 1890 West Building, due to damage beyond repair, the original wood floors were removed and new floors installed. Carpeting or tile covers new tongue-and-groove plywood decking. The refinished original wood floors of the circa 1905 Central Building Addition remain exposed.

All electrical, HVAC, plumbing, and sprinkler systems are new. Spiral metal ducts deliver warm and cool air throughout the complex. The sprinkler system mimics the appearance of the original system. The elevator in the 1883 East Building was removed. The elevator shaft in the 1890 West Building remains and has been upgraded to meet code and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

FIGURE 1:
LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS LOCATION MAP

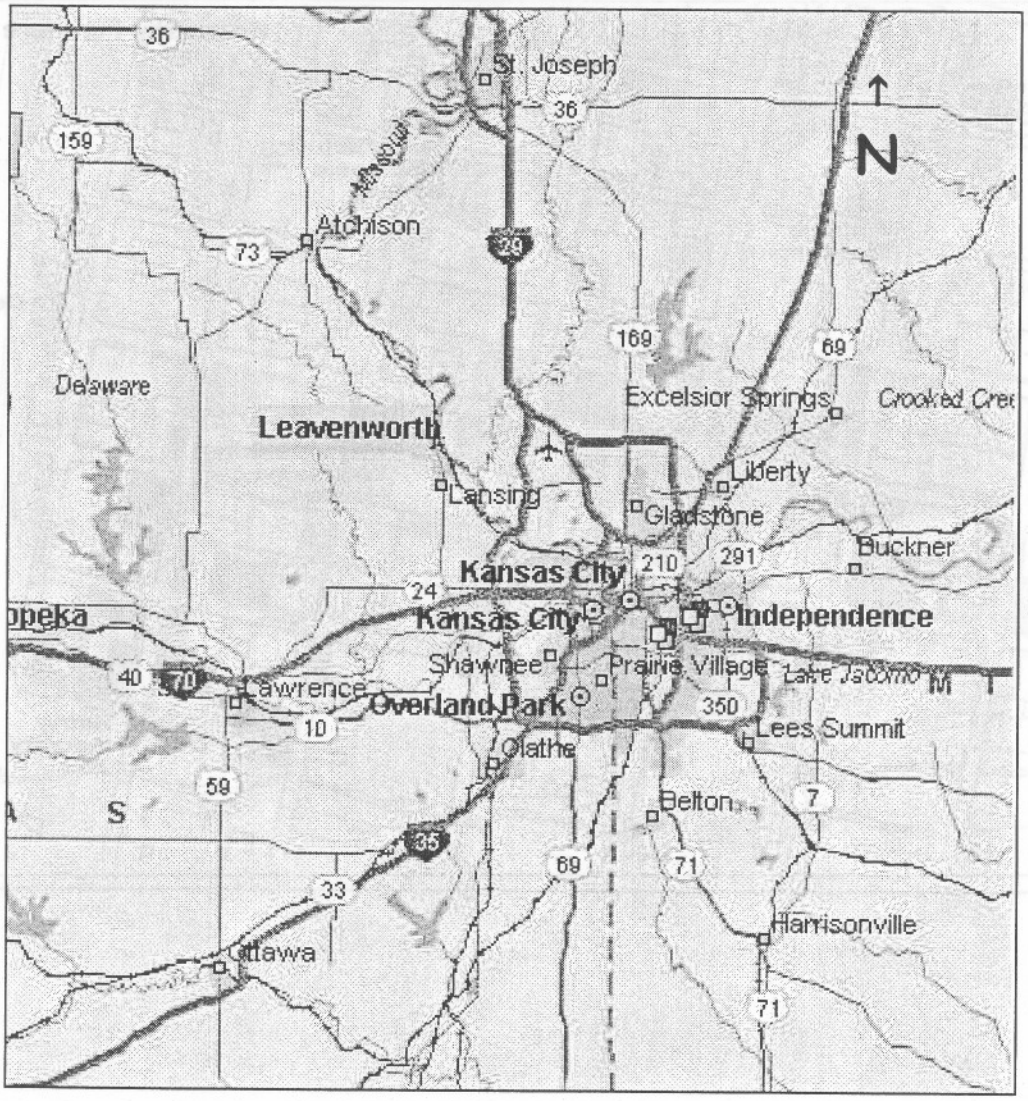


FIGURE 2:
NEIGHBORHOOD PROXIMITY MAP

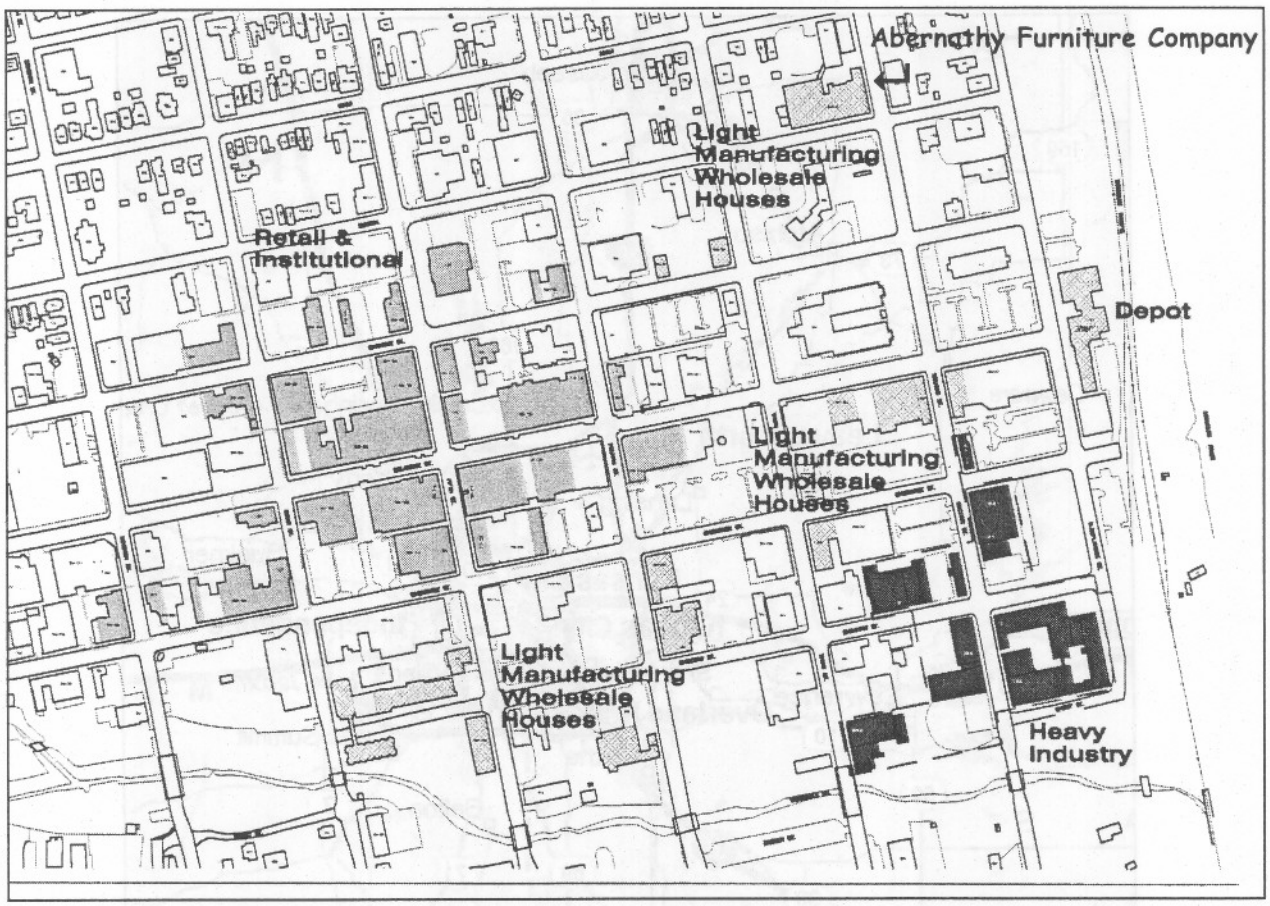
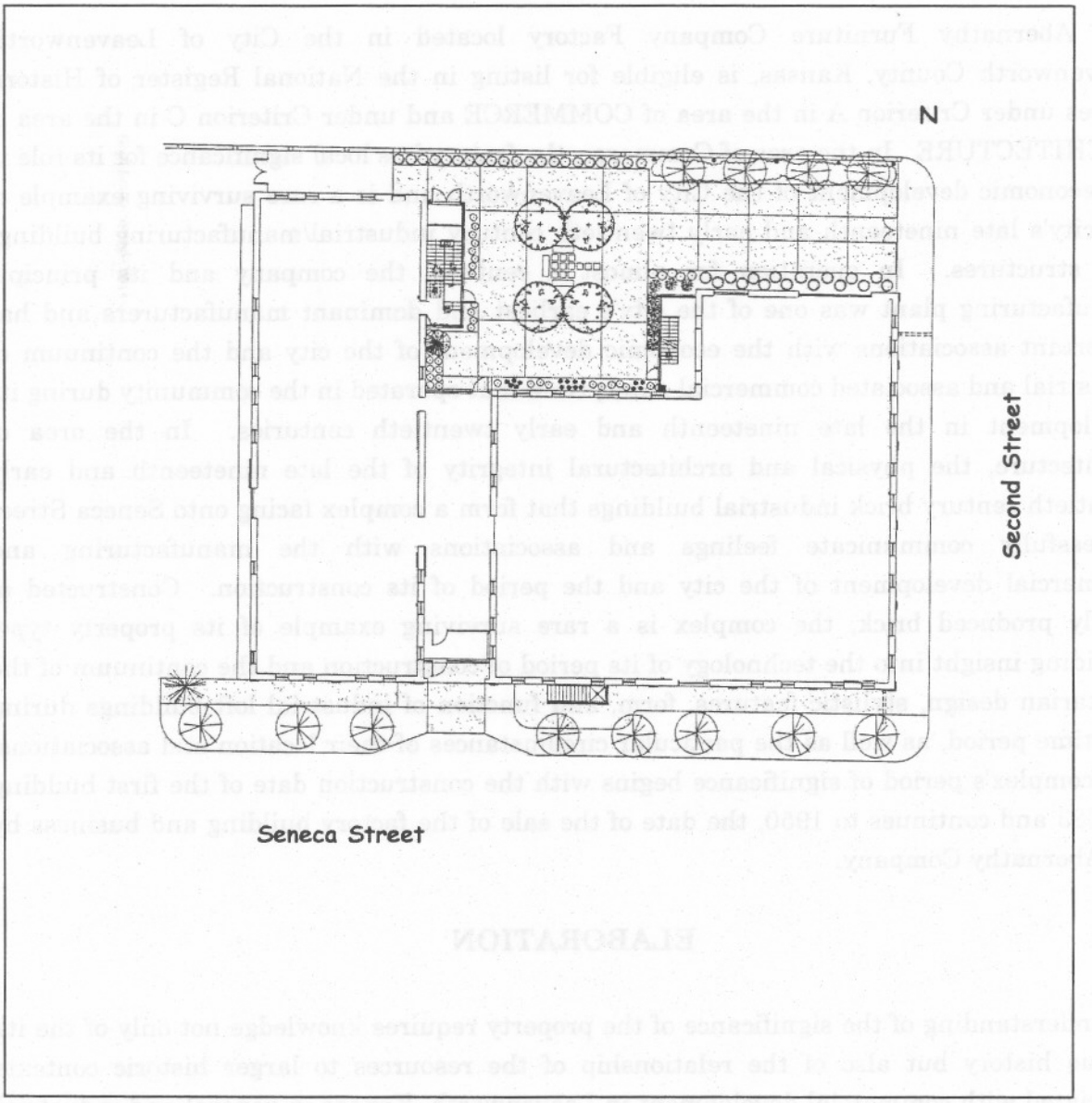


FIGURE 3:
SITE PLAN



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Abernathy Furniture Company Factory located in the City of Leavenworth, Leavenworth County, Kansas, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of COMMERCE and under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE. In the area of Commerce, the factory has local significance for its role in the economic development of the City of Leavenworth and is a rare surviving example of the city's late nineteenth and early twentieth century industrial/manufacturing buildings and structures. In operation for almost a century, the company and its principle manufacturing plant was one of the city's earliest and dominant manufacturers and has important associations with the economic development of the city and the continuum of industrial and associated commercial enterprises that operated in the community during its development in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the area of architecture, the physical and architectural integrity of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century brick industrial buildings that form a complex facing onto Seneca Street successfully communicate feelings and associations with the manufacturing and commercial development of the city and the period of its construction. Constructed of locally produced brick, the complex is a rare surviving example of its property type, providing insight into the technology of its period of construction and the continuum of the utilitarian design, stylistic features, form, and function of industrial loft buildings during this time period, as well as the particular circumstances of their location and associations. The complex's period of significance begins with the construction date of the first building in 1883 and continues to 1950, the date of the sale of the factory building and business by the Abernathy Company.

ELABORATION

An understanding of the significance of the property requires knowledge not only of the its unique history but also of the relationship of the resources to larger historic contexts associated with commercial development in Leavenworth, Kansas in general and industrial design in particular. Thus, in addition to information relating to the resource itself, several general thematic contexts relate to the commercial and industrial development of

Leavenworth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the architectural styles utilized for industrial buildings and structures that evolved during this period.

OVERVIEW OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS

Period of Exploration and Settlement (1820-1880)

Leavenworth's commerce and industrial activities developed close to the Missouri River, its tributaries, and to the city's railroad facilities. Located on the west bank of the Missouri River, the City of Leavenworth spreads over high bluffs, hills, and river bottomland. The original town site, enclosed by a crescent of hills, features a commercial manufacturing and retail business district covering a level area in the narrow valley of Three Mile Creek at its confluence with the Missouri River. The shallow stream flows between steep banks and forms a natural southern boundary to Leavenworth's industrial, wholesale, and retail business districts.

The earliest activity concentrated in the area north of the confluence of Three Mile Creek and the Missouri River where industries of importance to the City's economy had occupied the site since the establishment of Leavenworth in 1854. The area continued to function as the City's primary industrial site well into the twentieth century.

Early Settlement Period

When the Kansas Territory opened for settlement after the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, there was an immediate influx of Missourians into the territory. One such group of settlers and land speculators formed a town association on June 10, 1854, staked out a town site, and sold shares in the association. They chose a 32-acre area bounded by the Missouri River on the east, the military reservation of Fort Leavenworth on the north, Three Mile Creek on the south, and Seventh Street on the west. The association set aside 15 acres for public use and employed Major F. Hawn to survey the area and plat the town. After much discussion, they named their town Leavenworth City.[3]

[3] William G. Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago, IL: A. T. Andreas, 1883) [book online]; available from http://www.ukans.edu/carrie/kancoll/books/cutler/leavenworth/leavenworth-co-p7.html; Internet; accessed 3 February 2001. Note: The Delaware tribe responded to the sale of lots for Leavenworth City by petitioning the federal government for relief. In response, the government ordered the commandant at Fort Leavenworth to drive off all trespassers on the Delaware lands. The town association successfully petitioned the government to halt the

On October 9, 1845, the association held a sale of lots. Major Hawn's plat for Leavenworth City extended west to Seventh Street and included numbered streets parallel to the Missouri River that extended west to Seventh Street. Cross streets bore the names of Native American nations, beginning on the south with Choctaw and continuing northward with Cherokee, Delaware, Shawnee, Seneca, Miami, Osage, Pottawatomie, Ottawa, Kickapoo, Kiowa, Dacotah [sic], Pawnee, and Cheyenne. The streets parallel to the river were 60 feet wide and the cross streets were 61 feet wide, with the exception of Delaware, which was 70 feet wide. Each block contained 32 lots, each of which measured 24 feet in the front and was 125 feet deep. A 15-foot-wide alley ran through the center of each block. Seven lots laid out next to the river were warehouse lots, the fronts of which were about 150 feet from the water's edge. Except for these several blocks, all the space between Main (First) Street and the river formed what were called the Levee and the Esplanade.

The association sold 54 lots and building activity began immediately. By winter, a number of stores and houses clustered on the bank of the river. In addition to a mill, two blacksmith fabricating shops joined the residences and retail business houses that faced the Levee and Main and Cherokee streets.

In 1855, the completion of a wagon road to Fort Riley and a road leading northwest to connect with the Oregon and Saint Joseph emigrant trails stimulated further development of Leavenworth. That year, the city's population jumped from two hundred in April to two thousand by the first of November. On July second of that year, the Kansas Territorial Legislature held a special meeting and named Leavenworth the first incorporated town in the Kansas Territory. A rapid growth in manufacturing and other commercial businesses followed. In 1856, the firm of Majors, Russell and Waddell, which had lucrative government contracts to transport goods on the western trails, chose Leavenworth as the headquarters for their vast transport system. [4] Employing hundreds of men, oxen, and wagons, the firm had a tremendous effect on the development of the town. Leavenworth soon became a regional financial center.

action and a period of uncertainty followed. Relief came two years later through the Government's sale of the lands and restitution to the Delaware tribe.

[4] The majority of the pasturage and work areas were on the military reservation.

Among the early manufacturing businesses was a cooperage business founded in 1854. In 1856, James L. Abernathy and Smith Woods established a furniture business near the levee.[5] The following year a laundry soap factory opened in the 400 block of Cherokee Street and the Buckeye Carriage Works began operations at 417-423 Cherokee Street. In 1858, Malson, Willson & Co., a manufacturing business, began producing fabricated metal equipment. Also typical of the small manufacturing concerns locating in the city at this time was the firm of William G. Hesse, a carriage and wagon manufacturer, who set up business working as a blacksmith and providing wagon repair in the 400 block of Cherokee Street. The same year, Brandon and Kirmeyer Brewing Company, a soda-water factory, opened for business.[6] In 1859, J. H. Rothenberger, the first cooper engaged in general manufacturing, opened a small shop on Main Street.

By 1860, Leavenworth was the largest city between St. Louis, Missouri and San Francisco, California. The political strife between pro-slavery and abolitionist factions during the territorial elections in 1854, which escalated into the Border and Civil wars, played a major role the city's development. In the eastern portion of the State, continuous guerrilla warfare involving Kansas volunteer units and Missouri militia units plagued the Kansas-Missouri border areas. As a result, little overall growth occurred in the state except around Fort Leavenworth, where the presence of federal troops guaranteed some stability.[7] In 1861, Kansas became the thirty-fourth state to enter the Union. That same year, the Civil War began.

At this time, the town's brick buildings, many of which replaced the wooden structures destroyed by fires in 1855 and 1858, gave the town a settled appearance. Freighting activity centered on river transportation. Factories, mills, and breweries sat on the banks of the Missouri River and Three Mile Creek.

The establishment of many manufacturing businesses occurred during the war. In 1863, S. L. North & Co. began producing carriages and buggies. In 1864, two large factories began operations. Munson & Burrows, manufacturers and dealers in wooden building parts and hardwood lumber, established a factory and lumberyard at 409 Choctaw Street. The

[5] "Photo Book IV" (n. d), 74. Kansas Room. Leavenworth, Kansas: Leavenworth Public Library.
[6] Cutler, 13.
[7] David Sachs, *Guide to Kansas Architecture* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1996), 9.

Leavenworth Steam Boiler Works opened their plant on the south side of Choctaw Street, between Second and Third streets. During this time, many existing businesses expanded their operations. In 1862, Brandon and Kirmeyer's soda-water factory at Second and Kiowa streets began manufacturing ale and porter. By 1869, Malson, Willson & Co.'s machine shop and factory had grown and, as a result of new capital investors, changed its name to the Great Western Manufacturing Company.

Leavenworth's prosperity continued throughout the war. In 1864, the Kansas Legislature approved the construction of a penitentiary on land south of Leavenworth, near the community of Lansing. Leavenworth's economy benefited not only from the construction jobs and contracts generated by the project, but also from the permanent jobs and services generated by the prison. At the close of the war in 1865, the City had twenty thousand inhabitants, an increase of five thousand in five years.[8]

Economic Recovery and Depression (1865-1880)

Leavenworth emerged as an important regional manufacturing center during the post-Civil War period. After the war ended, Kansas again became a destination point for settlers and investors from the East. Between 1865 and 1870, the state's population grew from 150,000 to 365,000.[9] The 1862 Homestead Law and the rapid growth of railroads immediately after the Civil War encouraged speculators to construct towns.[10] Most of the settlers established farmsteads in rural areas and, consequently, the state's population began to spread out into the central and western portions of the state.

Immediately after the end of the war, Kansas' leaders again focused on rail construction. By the early 1880s, six rail lines operated from or serviced Leavenworth. The discovery of coal deposits in the 1860s and its successful extraction by 1870, further stimulated industrial growth. The availability of cheap fuel, inexpensive river transport of raw material, and an abundant labor supply contributed to post-war industrialization.

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[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid., 10.
[10] "Kansas Preservation Plan, Study Unit on the Period of Exploration and Settlement (1820s-1880s)" (Topeka, KS: Kansas State Historical Society, Historic Preservation Department, 1987), 55.

Adding to Leavenworth's traditional role as a center for manufacturing of furniture, due in large part to the growth of the Abernathy Furniture Company in the 1870s, manufacturers of flour, stoves, mining and milling machinery, and meat packing products located their operations within the City. The Leavenworth Coal Company, organized in 1863, became an important component in the county's commercial development in 1870 when its first coal production hit the market. Pronounced by experts to be the best steam-producing coal mined in the West, by the 1880s, the company employed up to 350 men and produced 75,000 bushels of coal per day.[11] The discovery of coal gave rise to the industrialization of Leavenworth. Two- and three-story brick factory buildings, warehouses, wholesale houses, and retail businesses became increasingly prominent fixtures in the City's landscape through the 1880s. Bounded by the river on the east and by the military reservation on the north, the city's retail and industrial district grew to the south and west. Three Mile Creek became the border between the town's commercial, retail, wholesale, and industrial areas and the city's newest residential area to the south and west.

By the beginning of the 1880s, Leavenworth City claimed the largest wholesale hardware and cutlery business west of St. Louis; the oldest and one of the most extensive wholesale and retail jewelry houses; the oldest clothing house in Kansas; one of the oldest and most extensive dry goods establishments in the West; one of the largest wholesale grocery houses in the State; and the oldest wholesale boot and shoe house in Kansas.[12]

Prominent manufacturing and fabrication plants established during this period included the Keystone Mills, erected in 1870 in the 200 block of Cherokee Street; the Missouri Valley Bridge and Iron Works, manufacturers of bridges, turn-tables, wrought-iron piers, columns and trestle work, roof trusses, heavy forgings, and general iron work; the Leavenworth Mills (flour); the Leavenworth Woolen Mills, erected in 1872 as part of the Leavenworth Carpet Company; the Kansas Manufacturing Company, which formed in 1874 and manufactured all classes of wagons; Brown Medicine and Manufacturing Company, pharmaceutical chemists and perfumers, established in 1876 at 113 Delaware Street; and the Union Stove and Machine Works, founded in 1879 at 112-119 Cherokee Street and 112-118 Choctaw Street.[13]

[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.

Despite this growth, by the mid-1870s, the City began to realize the effects of the dwindling river trade. At the same time, grasshopper plagues in the surrounding farming communities depressed the local market and the national economy absorbed the effects of two large bank failures. In addition to these conditions, Kansas City, Missouri's growth as a rail center displaced some of the town's earliest industries. Although some continued to operate in Leavenworth, the productivity of local manufacturing concerns producing goods from iron declined. Other industries created some economic stability. Wagon making and manufacturing of furniture continued at the same pace and flour milling became more important to the City's economy.

Boom Years (1880-1900)

By 1880, economic conditions improved in Leavenworth and the City's industries produced a variety of goods. The total volume of manufacturing in 1882 was slightly over $10 million and within a year rose to $20 million. In response to the City's economic climate, Leavenworth grew by five thousand residents between 1880 and 1883.[14] Railroad companies took an increased interest in the City's development during this decade and shipped the majority of the manufactured goods produced in Leavenworth to states in the Midwest and West.

In this respect, Leavenworth reflected national trends. With the expansion of rail transportation after the war, industrialization rapidly intensified throughout the country. As early as the 1870s, urban populations were large-scale consumers of relatively inexpensive manufactured goods. Factory-made furniture, for example, was so cheap that even families of modest means could afford its purchase. Western farmers, growing in number and prosperity, created a demand for eastern goods, while mechanized western farms supplied the grain and meat to feed the swelling populations of the East. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s, the proliferation of three-, four-, and five-story red brick factories measured the nation's progress.[15]

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[14] Mary Jo Winder, "Leavenworth Historic Industrial District," 3. Report prepared for the City of Leavenworth, Kansas, 1986.

[15] Carole Rifkind, *A Field Guide to American Architecture* (New York, NY: Times Mirror New American Library, 1980), 273.

The presence of state and federal institutions, the military installation at Fort Leavenworth, and local industries, as well as Leavenworth's proximity to Kansas City, Missouri, stabilized the economy through the 1880s and 1890s. Beginning in the 1880s, Fort Leavenworth ceased to be a major outfitting post for the U.S. Army and redefined itself as a preeminent army education center. In 1885, the federal government established the Western Branch of the National Home for Disabled Soldiers in Leavenworth.

Most of the manufacturing businesses prospered in the 1880s. The Abernathy Furniture Company and their retail outlet in Leavenworth – Abernathy, Doughty & Hall – employed 125 men and had annual revenues of $225,000. The Leavenworth Coal Company employed from 300 to 350 men and produced 75,000 bushels of coal per day. The brick trade now consisted of six yards; the largest turned out nearly 4 million bricks a year. The Kansas Manufacturing Company manufactured over 8,000 wagons annually. The Missouri Valley Bridge and Iron Works grew to employ 75 men. The Union Stove and Machine Works smelted over 10,000 pounds of iron daily and employed over 100 men. The Leavenworth Mills produced 300 barrels of flour daily. The Keystone Mills, which had a 125-bushels-a-day capacity, also had a furniture factory that employed 35 men. William G. Hesse's carriage and wagon business grew to employ 35 men. Vogel Brothers, a cigar and packing boxes business, expanded in the 1880s to include the manufacture of broom and ax handles. The Stevens & Garrigues Iron Company, the largest such business in the Missouri Valley west of St. Louis, made specialty wagon and carriage materials, produced iron and steel parts, blacksmith tools, and wagon woodwork and also had a large hardwood lumberyard. Over 40 men worked at the Munson & Burrows factory and lumberyard. A. Simmons, a Sultana cigar manufacturer, employed 35 men. The Brandon and Kirmeyer Brewing Company employed 23 men. J. H. Rothenberger, who started out as a lone cooper in the City's formative years, now employed 23 men. The Leavenworth Steam Boiler Works, established to supply all the boilers used by the Great Western Manufacturing Company, grew to produce a full line of iron cells for jails, vats for lard rendering, and water tanks. The Leavenworth Woolen Mills employed 40 men. The Leavenworth Bag Manufacturing Company employed 30 factory hands and two salesmen. The Great Western Stove Company, a spin-off of the Great Western Manufacturing Company, and the Ackenhausen Saddlery Company both had large new complexes.[16]

[16] J. H. Johnston III, *Looking Back in Post Cards* (Leavenworth, KS: J. H. Johnston III, 1991), 36; Cutler, 13.

New companies also added to the economic boom. The Leavenworth Sugar Company, organized in 1880 and located about one mile south of the city's industrial center, employed 250 men. The Leavenworth Novelty Works manufactured brass and sheet iron work; gold, silver, and nickel plating; and provided model making, engraving, and electroplating services. The Western Tower Clock Company, founded in 1881, manufactured a portable galvanized iron reel bake oven and clocks for courthouses, depots, and churches. George Kauffmann & Company's railing shops, brass foundry, and locksmith operation at 304 Shawnee Street employed six men. The Continental Steam Marble Works at 404-406 Cherokee Street provided general marble and stone work, iron fencing, and furniture for lawns and cemeteries throughout the region. The Kansas Canning Company, organized in 1881 on the east side of Main Street, employed approximately 100 workers. Fifteen employees worked at the Leavenworth Candy Manufacturing Company, founded in 1882. Another company established that year, the Leavenworth Cracker Factory, opened a factory on the corner of Shawnee and Third streets. G. M. Hurley & Co. operated a small soap factory on Short Street beginning in 1882.[17]

The city's commercial center reflected the changes that occurred during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Two new depots – the Santa Fe and the Union, constructed in 1887 and 1888, respectively – provided both passenger and freight services. The business district continued to expand and a 25 percent increase in railroad freighting from 1887 to 1888 reflected the increased volume of trade.[18]

Despite a depression of the market in 1893, the 1890s were a period of modest improvements in Leavenworth. In particular, the construction of a federal prison in 1898 and growth in the coal mining industry, which employed over one thousand men, contributed to economic stability in the community.[19] In 1894, railroad accessibility improved when the new Missouri River Railroad Bridge completed the connection to the north/south lines along the Missouri River and the east/west lines on Choctaw Street.

[17] Ibid.
[18] Winder, 4.
[19] Ibid. 6.

Early Twentieth Century Economic Development

By the early twentieth century, Leavenworth was the most important manufacturing city in Kansas. It had sixty-seven prosperous and growing industries and ranked third in United States furniture production. The City had the second largest mill-machinery plant in the country, ranked second in the nation in the manufacturing of stoves, boasted a large washing machine manufacturing company, and was a major manufacturer of amusement rides.

At this time, however, it was apparent that as more economical means of distribution of goods increased, the demand for certain manufactured items produced in Leavenworth decreased. Moreover, the city's industrial base began to decline as Kansas City, Missouri's industrial freighting districts grew, particularly after the opening of its large Union Station freight and passenger terminal in 1914. At the same time, the development of coal mining in other parts of the State caused the demise of the City's coal industry. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, many of Leavenworth's factory and warehouse buildings gradually deteriorated and, as the need for manufacturing facilities continued to decline, owners demolished a sizable number of these buildings. By 1941, Leavenworth's population was 21,876, almost the same as the city's population at the end of the Civil War.[20]

Some industries survived. Because production of manufactured iron goods continued to be economically feasible due to the accessibility of cheap raw materials and a demand in the surrounding area, the city's metals industry continued to be viable up to and through World War II. The Abernathy family's decision to retain the furniture factory's location in Leavenworth and to maintain their wholesale distribution center in Kansas City, Missouri proved to be fortuitous for Leavenworth. In the mid-1920s, the Abernathy furniture factory expanded to include the erection of an additional factory that resulted in a 200 percent increase in employment over the next decade.

Post-World War II Leavenworth

By the end of World War II, the nineteenth century commercial, industrial, and residential neighborhoods clustered around Leavenworth's industrial and retail center reflected the effects of the Great Depression and the rationed resources of the World War II period. As

[20] *Polk's Leavenworth (Kansas) Directory* (Kansas City, MO: Gate City Directory Company, 1940), 2.

in many American cities in the 1950s, poorly maintained older buildings in the historic core of Leavenworth created pockets of blight. During the 1950s and 1960s, federally funded "Urban Renewal" programs led to the demolition of a large number of late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings. These programs also redesigned the traditional grid system of commercial centers and altered long-established traffic patterns. One-way streets and closed streets that created pedestrian malls changed established traffic patterns. In Leavenworth, federally funded programs demolished most of the buildings and structures relating to the city's original settlement period as well as a significant portion of the commercial buildings erected in the late nineteenth century. On the eastern side of the downtown area, the city's 1880s Union Depot building remained, as well as a few peripheral commercial and industrial buildings to the east and south surrounded by large sections of open ground and paved parking lots.

While government programs attempted to renew older commercial centers, federal housing programs aimed at the ten million returning soldiers and new federally funded freeway systems drew families away from both large and small urban commercial centers and neighborhoods. As the central city area of Leavenworth continued to decline, demolition continued throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Even as late as the early 1990s, large-scale demolition continued in the historic industrial section of the town along Three Mile Creek west to Broadway. New buildings erected in the second half of the twentieth century reflect designs that differed radically in size, scale, massing, and materials from existing commercial buildings on adjacent blocks.

THE HISTORY OF THE ABERNATHY FURNITURE COMPANY

The factory complex at 200-204 Seneca Street, erected between 1883 and circa 1905 as a furniture manufacturing facility, has its roots in the retail furniture business founded in 1856 by James Abernathy. Born on March 20, 1833 in Warren County, Ohio, James L. Abernathy moved with his parents to Rushville, Indiana where his father established a mercantile business. Abernathy left home to travel west and arrived in Leavenworth in 1856 with $600 in his possession. That year he entered into a partnership with Smith D. Woods[21] and started a small furniture business near the levee known as Woods and

[21] Smith D. Woods, who was also an Indiana native, established a Kansas City, Missouri branch of Abernathy and Company around 1870. In 1884, Woods became Kansas City's sixteenth mayor.

Abernathy.[22] It appears that he purchased stock and shipped it from St. Louis for resale and that he also manufactured furniture from the native wood in the surrounding area.

The site of the original factory is unclear. One account notes it was near the levee with a subsequent move to the brick flour mill erected in 1857 on the northwest corner of Main and Short streets by the firm of Earle and Bunbing.[23] Another account places the company's original frame building in the immediate vicinity of the saw mill near the levee.[24]

During this period, James' brother, William Abernathy, joined the firm. *Sutherland and McEvoy's Leavenworth Directory for 1859-60* lists James L. Abernathy as associated with the firm of Woods, Cox & Company. It also contains an advertisement on page 176 that features the firm of Woods and Abernathy and specifically lists S. D. Woods and J. L. Abernathy as manufactures and dealers in all kinds of parlor, office, and kitchen furniture as well as dealers in carpeting, oil cloths, rugs, and mattings. This advertisement lists the location of the firm's retail store between Third and Fourth streets (another source lists the address as 65 [later 306] Delaware Street[25]) and states that it was one of the town's prominent business houses.[26] The firm advertised furniture "for cottage or palace," offering a parlor set upholstered in "silk, velvet or plush" for the affluent residence and "damask or haircloth" for more modest abodes.[27]

When James Abernathy joined the Kansas Volunteer army in 1862, his brother William maintained the business in his absence. In November of 1863, James resigned from the army and returned to the furniture company. The *Leavenworth City Directory and Business Mirror for 1865-66* lists the location of the Woods and Abernathy furniture

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[22] H. Miles Moore, *Early History of Leavenworth City and County* (Leavenworth, KS: Samuel Dodsworth Book Company, 1909), 219; Carrie Westlake Whitney, *Kansas City, Missouri: Its History and Its People, 1800-1908* (Chicago, IL: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1908), 147.

[23] Ibid., 193.

[24] H. H. Seckler, "Few Here Recall Those Early Days Along the River Levee" *Leavenworth (KS) Times*, n. d. Kansas Room. Clippings File. Leavenworth, Kansas: Leavenworth Public Library

[25] "Photo Book IV," 74.

[26] Secondary source material indicates a date as early as 1858.

[27] *Leavenworth Long Ago* (Leavenworth, KS: Leavenworth National Bank, 1954), n. p. Kansas Room. Leavenworth, Kansas: Leavenworth Public Library.

business as 68 Delaware Street.[28] They were one of nine listings for furniture businesses operating in the City at this time.

Merwins' Leavenworth City Directory for 1870-71 shows the changing nature of the Abernathy brothers' business efforts. William and James opened "Abernathy Brothers Wholesale and Retail Furniture Ware-rooms" at 68 Delaware Street and, by 1870, their retail business included the neighboring building at 66 Delaware Street. The same directory also lists Abernathy, Woods & Company at the corner of Main and Choctaw streets. This business appears to be a continuation of the earlier furniture manufacturing company founded by Smith Woods and James Abernathy in 1856. Sometime between 1867 and 1869, another brother, John Newton Abernathy, joined the family business.[29] When William died in 1869, James Abernathy took over his interest in the business.

At this time, because of Kansas City, Missouri's growing role as a national rail center, James Abernathy expanded his business to Kansas City to take advantage of the growing rail connections. Earlier in 1866, Kansas City secured approval for construction of the first rail bridge across the Missouri River, connecting the city not only to eastern markets via St. Louis and Chicago, but also to the lucrative markets in the Southwest. The completion of the Hannibal Bridge in 1869 secured Kansas City's role as a regional and national rail hub. Shortly thereafter, the Abernathy brothers established warehousing and distribution operations in Kansas City, Missouri's West Bottoms to facilitate the movement by rail of furniture purchased wholesale or manufactured by the Abernathy's factory in Leavenworth.

After 1869, the firm's growth had a significant influence on the furniture industries in Leavenworth and Kansas City, Missouri. James and John Abernathy entered into a complex system of partnerships with other investors to expand the retail and wholesale distribution operations throughout the region, with Leavenworth and Kansas City, Missouri serving as company headquarters. Among these ventures was the retail furniture firm of Abernathy, North and Orrison, which operated in Kansas City, Missouri during the 1870s. During the same period, the Abernathy Furniture Company advertised its extensive line of furniture in a special section of the Leavenworth city directory. The company's

[28] The street addresses were later renumbered. This address corresponds with 308 in today's numbering system.
[29] "Photo Book IV," 74.

inventory included chairs, bedsteads, chamber sets, bureaus, mirrors, and mattresses.[30] By 1870, James Abernathy maintained a dual-residency, commuting between Kansas City, Missouri where he oversaw the wholesale distribution end of the business and Leavenworth where he directed his family's expanding furniture manufacturing business. In 1873, the citizens of Leavenworth elected him mayor.[31]

In addition to the showrooms on Delaware Street in Leavenworth, the Abernathy's erected a new factory on the northwest corner of Second and Seneca streets. In 1874, James Abernathy acquired lots 1 and 2 facing onto Seneca, for which he obtained a mortgage of $3,750.[32] At this time, Ballenger and Hoye's 1875 city directory lists James L. and John N. Abernathy as the owners of Abernathy Brothers (306 and 308 Delaware Street),[33] one of five furniture dealers and manufactures in the City. A full-page advertisement shows the cover of the *Abernathy Brothers' Illustrated Catalogue and Wholesale Price List* that includes cane and wood seat chairs, bedsteads, bureaus, wash stands, tables, parlor and chamber suits, curtains, window fixtures, children's carriages, carpets, oil cloths, matting, and "everything connected with the furniture and carpet trade." This business appears to be the wholesale showrooms and retail outlet of the Abernathy Furniture Company. This city directory also lists James L. Abernathy, John N. Abernathy, and John Sorenson as the owners of Abernathy Brothers and Company, a furniture factory at the northwest corner of Second and Seneca streets (This listing is not included under the Furniture Manufactures and Dealers section of the directory.).

In 1879, the firm of Abernathy Brothers and Company acquired lots 3 and 4 on Seneca Street. It is presumed that the company erected the first factory building at this time. That same year, the firm also erected its own warehouse and general wholesale distribution offices in the West Bottoms of Kansas City, Missouri.[34] At this time, the wholesale

[30] J. W. Johnston, III, *Leavenworth: Beginning to Bicentennial* (Leavenworth, KS: J. W. Johnston, III, c.1976), n. p.
[31] Whitney, 147. James Abernathy and his family also established a retail furniture partnership with Robert Keith, a firm that evolved into the Duff & Repp Furniture Company in Kansas City, Missouri.
[32] Winder.
[33] By this time, the building address numbering changed from double digit designations to triple digit designations, reflecting the number of blocks from the river levee. Hence, 308 Delaware was three blocks from the river.
[34] By 1926, the Kansas City complex grew to include a total of ten additions.

distribution operations dominated the company's business. The factory in Leavenworth manufactured only 10 percent of the goods sold and shipped by the company.[35]

The growth of the company and its importance regionally is underscored by the fact that during the 1870s, there was considerable growth in the manufacturing of furniture in Kansas. The 1870 census lists fifty-two furniture factories, or an average of more than one for every organized county in the State. The furniture factories continued to grow as a result of the local and regional demand for moderately priced furniture. Nevertheless, most of these companies were small in force and capacity, and some may have been shops that were too small to be rated as factories.[36] Leading these companies in number of employees and sales was the Abernathy furniture factory.

In 1879, immediately after graduating from DePauw University, Frank L. Hall, James L. Abernathy's nephew, joined the new wholesale distribution office of the Abernathy Furniture Company.[37] During the next decade, Abernathy Brothers and Company, run by James L. and John N. Abernathy, became a leading furniture manufacturer in the western United States and was well known for its fine solid walnut furniture.

In April 1880, E. L. Doughty and J. C. Hall entered into a partnership with James L. Abernathy, forming the firm of Abernathy, Doughty & Hall, wholesale and retail furniture manufacturers and dealers in carpets. This subsidiary company maintained its headquarters and showrooms at 306 and 308 Delaware Street. In 1881, James Abernathy's son, William M. Abernathy, became active in the company. At this time, John N. Abernathy, who owned two-thirds of the factory operation and one-quarter interest in the wholesale business in Kansas City, by virtue of his share of Abernathy Brothers & Co., devoted his attention to the furniture factory. This manufacturing plant, at the corner of Second and Seneca streets, supplied Abernathy, Doughty & Hall with distinct styles of "substantial, rich and elegant furniture, displayed and stored in the attractive three-story brick structure on Delaware Street."[38] The firm of Abernathy, Doughty & Hall also distributed the goods manufactured by the Abernathy furniture factory throughout the

[35] Samuel C. Dashiell, "Urban and Industrial Geography of Leavenworth, Kansas" (University of Oregon: Bachelor of Arts Degree Dissertation, June 1940), 84-85.
[36] Connelley, 988.
[37] W. R. Snodgrass, *The Fidelity Spirit*, March 1915, 1.

West. By 1880, the two firms employed 125 men, and transacted an annual business amounting to $225,000.[39] In 1883, the business produced approximately $400,000 per year and employed 230 men.[40] The listing for "Furniture Manufactures and Dealers" in *Edwin Green's Leavenworth City Directory 1880-81* includes the Abernathy Brothers and Company factory at the corner of Second and Seneca streets and Abernathy, Doughty & Hall at 306 and 308 Delaware Street. In addition to these two listings, the directory shows eleven other furniture businesses. John Sorenson, who was once a partner of the Abernathy brothers, now operated a factory at the Kansas State Penitentiary.

In 1883, Frank Hall became a partner in the firm of Abernathy Brothers and Company, the firm then being a co-partnership.[41] In April of that year, a fire swept through the factory, generating a loss of $40,000. A new factory building quickly replaced the original. The 1883 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map shows a building that is of the same configuration as the one on the 1889 Sanborn map. The Sanborn map dated September 1883 shows a building covering lots 1 through 4, lot 5 remaining vacant, and lumberyards on lots 6 and 7 to the west. Notations on the 1883 Sanborn map show no floor usage and that shutters are yet to be placed, indicating a new structure. The 1889 Sanborn map notes that planing and sawing occurred on the first floor, bench work on the second floor, and lumber storage on the third floor. The city directory for 1885 lists the Abernathy Brothers and Company at Second and Seneca streets and Abernathy, Doughty & Hall at 227, 229, and 231 Delaware Street. Fourteen other furniture businesses are listed in the city directory for this year. From the city directory listings, James L. and John N. Abernathy are both associated with Abernathy Brothers and Company factory. Only James L. is listed as associated with Abernathy, Doughty & Hall. He was also the treasurer of the Missouri Valley Life Insurance Company at this time.

In 1887, James' son, Harry T. Abernathy, joined the firm's wholesale division. During his college years, Harry T. worked in the Leavenworth factory and became an accomplished upholster and finisher. Other changes occurred at this time. The 1889 city directory now lists the factory at the northwest corner of Seneca and Second streets as the "Abernathy

[38] Cutler, 13.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid., 16.
[41] Snodgrass, 1.

Manufacturing Company" and denotes J. L. Abernathy, F. Hall, and Benjamin Jones as owners. John N. Abernathy is now listed as an owner with E. L. Doughty of Abernathy and Doughty, "a wholesale and retail manufactures and dealers in carpets at 227, 229 and 231 Delaware." The 1890 city directory lists only the Abernathy Manufacturing Company, factory, and office at Second and Seneca streets. There is no listing for Abernathy and Doughty. A. B. Havens Furniture Company occupies the former Abernathy Doughty space at 227 and 229 Delaware. The same directory lists John N. [Abernathy] as associated with the Abernathy Manufacturing Company. The directory shows fifteen furniture businesses operating in the city that year. In 1892, Harry T. Abernathy became treasurer of the Abernathy Furniture Company and maintained his offices in the wholesale warehouses in Kansas City. He kept this position until 1895 when he went to his father's bank, First National Bank of Kansas City. He remained on the Board of Directors of the Abernathy Furniture Company.[42]

By 1890, the "Abernathy Manufacturing Company" was engaging in extensive trade. Its large factory, touted as the largest in the West, occupied two buildings on Seneca Street – one a three-story structure and the other five stories – covering half a block. The factory employed 125 workers.[43] The 1894 city directory distinguishes between manufacturers and retail sales operations in Leavenworth. The directory lists four furniture manufactures, including what was now referred to as the Abernathy Furniture Company at Second and Seneca streets. The directory shows John N. Abernathy as associated with the factory and lists James L. Abernathy as the manager of the factory. James also maintained offices for the company at the Leavenworth National Bank building at the northwest corner of Broadway and Walnut streets. The directory lists Omar Abernathy, James' son, working for the furniture company as a clerk. The company incorporated that year, with James L. Abernathy serving as President and Frank Hall serving as vice president.[44] Serving as the company's secretary was Major William Martin Abernathy, James' son, who had recently

[42] George Cree and John Slaves, *Men Who Are Making Kansas City: A Biographical Directory* (Kansas City, MO: Hudson-Kimberly Publishing Company, 1902), 6; *Kansas City (MO) Star*, 14 September 1948. Special Collections. Mounted Clippings, Kansas City, Missouri: Kansas City, Missouri Public Library.

[43] *Historical and Descriptive Review of Kansas, Vol. I.* (Topeka, KS: John Lethem, 1890), 51-52.

[44] Snodgrass, 1.

returned from the War with Spain.[45] The following year, after several months of ill health, John N. Abernathy died.[46]

Sometime during the late 1880s, the company erected a second factory building on Seneca Street. [47] While the September 1889 Sanborn map does not show the building, the 1890 publication *Historical and Descriptive Review of Kansas* describes the building. Rectangular in shape and of similar construction and materials as the 1883 East Building, the new building appears in the 1897 Sanborn map on lots 6 and 7 as part of the "Abernathy Furniture Company" complex. This building provided an office and finishing space on the first story and room for varnishing and sandpapering on the upper floors. At this time, a recessed passage on lot 5 connected the new building to the 1883 building. The spatial functions of the 1883 East Building remained the same. The 1905 Sanborn map shows alterations and new construction that included erecting a five-story addition that enclosed the space between the two buildings. According to the drawing and notations on this map, the new infill construction created one interconnected complex and provided additional space on the upper floors for a "composition room" and "paint dipping." Newspaper accounts on the history of the company state that in 1903 and 1908 the company also purchased lots across the alley to the north and erected a lumber shed and a storage building, respectively, further expanding the complex.[48] The 1905 and 1913 Sanborn maps verify this sequence of building. A second-story covered walkway connected the 1908 storage building to the earlier buildings facing onto Seneca Street.

The 1900-1901 city directory lists the facility on Seneca Street as the Abernathy Manufacturing Company, one of four furniture manufacturing companies in the City. The directory lists James L. as president and Omar M., his son, as assistant manager of the facility. In 1902, James Abernathy died and the various operations of the business continued to be run by family members, with Frank L. Hall now serving as president of the

[45] He served until his death in 1908. "In Memoriam, Major William Martin Abernathy," *Register of the Sons of the Revolution in the State of Missouri 1907-09* (St. Louis, MO: Press of the Woodward and Tiernan Printing Company, 1909), 210-211.
[46] Irwin C. Baker, *Leavenworth County Cemeteries Vol 1* (Leavenworth, KS: Irwin C. Baker, 1983), 1.
[47] *Historical and Descriptive Review of Kansas*, 52.
[48] This building is extant, is no longer physically connected to the earlier complex, and is under different ownership.

Abernathy Furniture Company and Harry T. Abernathy serving as chairman of the board of directors.[49]

The 1905-1906 city directory lists the Abernathy Manufacturing Company's new address at 201-205 Miami Street, reflecting the new construction directly to the north of the original factory buildings facing onto Seneca Street. One of two furniture manufacturers in Leavenworth at this time, the 1909 city directory lists the factory at the Miami Street address and Omar Abernathy as its manager, with offices at the Broadway and Walnut offices. The 1915-1916 city directory lists the factory as the "Abernathy Furniture Company," with Frank L. Hall as president, Omar M. Abernathy as vice president, Clarence R. Hills as factory manager, Frank C. King as treasurer, and J. Chalmer Hall as secretary. This information coincides with the officer listing for the wholesale distribution plant in Kansas City, which is also referenced as the Abernathy Furniture Company. At this time, Omar is also listed as the vice president of the Leavenworth National Bank. The 1920 city directory lists B. G. Culver as the general manager and J. A. Simmons as the superintendent of the factory in Leavenworth. Although Omar retired and moved to Florida at this time, he remained on the company's Board of Directors until his death in 1941.[50]

In the mid-1920s, the firm expanded its manufacturing operations to a site previously owned by the Leavenworth Coal Company on Second Street and Metropolitan Avenue, approximately ten blocks north of Seneca and Second streets. The large new factory, which opened in 1926, was known as "Plant K" because it was in Kickapoo Township.[51] The company's Kansas City operations continued to focus on distribution at this time. The only manufacturing operations on the firm's Kansas City property consisted of an upholstering division and a mattress factory. Leavenworth continued to be the company's primary location for the manufacturing component of its business. In addition to the men who worked at the Seneca and Second streets factory, which continued to operate as a furniture manufacturing facility, the new factory eventually employed about two hundred men. In

[49] It appears that at this time, the manufacturing facility in Leavenworth was referred to as the Abernathy Manufacturing Company and the larger company, which included the wholesale distribution component located in Kansas City, was referred to as the Abernathy Furniture Company.

[50] Abernathy, Omar Death" *Kansas City (MO) Star*, 25 June 1941. Special Collections. Mounted Clippings. Kansas City, Missouri: Kansas City, Missouri Public Library.

[51] *Leavenworth (KS) Times,* 6 May 1926.

all, the two Leavenworth factories employed about three hundred more workers than the Kansas City distribution plant.[52] At this time, the company catalog featured armchairs and rockers, porch and lawn furniture, tables, china cabinets, buffets and serving tables, bassinettes, beds, dressers, vanity tables, stools, benches, desks, wardrobes, cedar chests, and refrigerators. The only family member taking an active roll in the manufacturing plant was James Logan Abernathy, the twenty-four-year-old grandson of James L. Abernathy and the son of Omar Abernathy.[53]

Over the years, the percentage of goods that were both manufactured and shipped by the company changed. By the late 1920s, the company manufactured 75 percent of the furniture it sold.[54] Although the company maintained its wholesale distribution operations and retail trade in Kansas City, its manufacturing operations remained in Leavenworth.[55] At this time, the city directories show three companies manufacturing furniture in Leavenworth.

By the 1930s, the Abernathy furniture factories were among the few remaining industries in Leavenworth, part of a dwindling number of manufacturers of structural steel and stoves, meatpacking houses, and coal mines.[56] In 1931, the company's Leavenworth operations ("Old Plant" on Seneca Street and the 1926 "K Plant" at Second and Metropolitan streets) employed up to three hundred people (depending on seasonal demand), ranking it among the City's largest industries by number of employees and as one of the largest such concerns in the Midwest. At this time, the company employed approximately twenty salesmen and its management included F. C. King, president; H. A. Parker, vice-president; J. C. Hall, treasurer; J. B. Fulgate, secretary; and B. G. Culver, manager.[57] In 1939, the Abernathy Furniture Company was the largest remaining industry in Leavenworth, occupying two plants, employing four hundred people year-round

[52] "First Abernathy Site in City is Not Known Here," *Leavenworth (KS) Times,* 5 May 1925, 2.
[53] "Young Abernathy Now in Plant," *Leavenworth (KS) Times,* 5 May 1925
[54] Dashiell.
[55] The Second and Seneca streets factory served as the primary manufacturing facility until 1926 when the company built a new manufacturing complex to the north of the original building. It continued as part of the company's manufacturing sites until the 1940s.
[56] *WPA Guide to Kansas* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1984), 233.
[57] "$600 Bankroll Launches Huge Industry Here," *Leavenworth (KS) Times,* 6 March 1932. Kansas Room. Leavenworth, Kansas: Leavenworth Public Library.

in the manufacture of a general line of household, school and office furniture; mattresses, and other household supplies.[58]

The Abernathy Furniture Company Factory's operations during World War II are unclear. While there are no extant city directories for the World War II period of 1941-1945, various secondary sources note that the company (or the factory at Second and Seneca streets) closed in the 1940s. The city directories list the factory at the Miami Street address prior to and immediately following the war. Literature and archival research yielded no information as to what was manufactured during this time period. It is highly probable that the company received government contracts to convert to war-time production

In March 1950, United Industrial Syndicate, Inc. of New York purchased the Abernathy Furniture Company and its Kansas and Missouri properties, including the factory property on Seneca Street. At this time, the factory operations in Leavenworth employed 250 people and the general offices and warehouse in Kansas City had an additional 100 employees. The officers of the company at the time of the sale were George A. Crawford, president and treasurer; Taylor Abernathy,[59] vice president; and James L. Abernathy III, secretary. The new owners announced that the company would retain the Abernathy name, would continue to operate under the current management, and would retain the existing personnel. They did not disclose the price paid for the company. The company's fifty stockholders included several members of the Abernathy family and officers of the firm. United Industrial Syndicate owned an office furniture factory in Indiana, a toy factory in Massachusetts, and other furniture firms in the East and Midwest.[60] In January 1953, United Industrial Syndicate sold the complex on the northwest corner of Second and Seneca streets to Kenneth Myers, operator of the Leavenworth Moving and Storage Company. Myers reportedly paid $13,000 for the property, which extended his holdings; he previously purchased an adjoining piece of property to the west from the same company.[61] The 1952 city directory lists Myers' earlier purchase with an entry for the moving and storage company at 210 Seneca Street. The building's current owner recently purchased the complex and rehabilitated it for housing in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's*

[58] *WPA Guide to Kansas*, 238.
[59] Son of Harry T. Abernathy
[60] *Kansas City (MO) Star*, 26 March 1950. Special Collections. Mounted Clippings. Kansas City, Missouri: Kansas City, Missouri Public Library.

Standards for Rehabilitation to comply with guidelines for Kansas and federal rehabilitation tax credits.

Analysis of Commercial Significance

The Abernathy Furniture Company factory complex at Second and Seneca streets was one of the city's oldest and largest industries. For over a century, the company's fortunes were inseparably interwoven with the material prosperity of Leavenworth and the manufacturing facility was one of the city's greatest industries. At a time in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Leavenworth was the most important manufacturing city in the State, the Abernathy Furniture Company factory ranked third in furniture production in the United States. What began as a small retail furniture partnership in 1856 grew into one of Leavenworth's largest industries before operations discontinued nearly a century later. Employing over four hundred workers at the height of its production, the company began manufacturing furniture made of local walnut timber. The company's commercial success as a manufacturer, wholesale distributor, and retail store was based on a high level of quality control in the manufacturing and wholesaling of simple, beautifully designed goods on a large scale. By selecting a conservative, stable design of furniture lines, the company was able to wholesale good medium-class furniture at a competitive price. Moreover, the commercial success of the company had ties to its many subsidiary ventures related to the manufacture, wholesale, and distribution of furniture.

One measure of the commercial importance and success of the Abernathy Furniture Company is the wealth it generated and the other commercial enterprises it spawned. The firm made a number of men wealthy. When James L. Abernathy died in 1902, his personal wealth had grown from $600 in 1856 to an estimated fortune of $1.2 million — the equivalent of approximately $22 million today.[62] With the furniture company serving as the foundation of his growing empire, James L. Abernathy parlayed his wealth to become a stockholder in the Carr coal mine in Leavenworth, the First National Bank of Kansas City, and the Leavenworth National Bank.[63] In addition, beginning in 1870, he served as the mayor of Leavenworth for three years.

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[61] *Leavenworth (KS) Times*, 11 January 1953.

[62] Based on an analysis of the consumer price index from 1902 to 1999.

[63] *Kansas City (MO) Star*, 11 December 1902. Special Collections. Mounted Clippings. Kansas City, Missouri: Kansas City Public Library.

Frank L. Hall came to Leavenworth immediately after graduating college and, at the time of his uncle's death in 1902, became president of the company. He also served as a director of the Duff and Repp Furniture Company of Kansas City, Missouri. Based upon the yield from his investment in the Abernathy Furniture Company, Hall later increased his financial holdings to found and serve on the Board of Directors of the Fidelity National Bank and Trust Company in Kansas City, Missouri.

James' son, Harry T. Abernathy, served as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Abernathy Furniture Company and served as vice president of the First National Bank of Kansas City. Another son, Omar Abernathy, managed the Leavenworth Factory, served as an officer of the Leavenworth National Bank, and was a vice president of the Gate City National Bank of Kansas City, Missouri. Omar also followed in his father's footsteps, serving two terms as the mayor of Leavenworth. Walter L. Abernathy, another of James' sons, was also an associate in the family furniture and banking businesses in Leavenworth.

J. H. North, originally with the firm Abernathy, North and Orrision, later established his own company in Kansas City, the J. H. North Furniture and Carpet Company, which continued to be involved in the Abernathy wholesale and distribution network.[64] North later became involved with W. A. Repp, a former director of the Abernathy Furniture Company, and their endeavor evolved into the well-known Kansas City furniture company Duff and Repp, which also had ties to the Abernathy distribution business.[65]

Alfred Benjamin, who rose from the position of clerk in the Leavenworth factory to become vice-president of the Abernathy Furniture Company, began working for the company in 1876 and moved to Kansas City in 1879 to assist with the wholesale distribution end of the company. Through his associations with the Abernathy Furniture Company, Benjamin amassed a considerable fortune and became one of the region's leading philanthropists.

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[64] The 1878 *U. S. Biographical Dictionary and Portrait Gallery of Eminent & Self-Made Men* lists John Henry North as a partner and former bookkeeper of Woods and Abernathy in Kansas City starting in 1868. The same publication lists David Orrison as an Ohio native who moved to Leavenworth in 1865 and to Kansas City in 1868 where he was a member of the Kansas City furniture house of Abernathy North and Orrison.

[65] *Leavenworth (KS) Times*, 5 May 1926 lists Repp as a former director of the Abernathy Furniture Company.

LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY TYPES AND ARCHITECTURE

Early Land Use Patterns

Kansas communities, like those from the nation's first settlements, followed the European tradition of providing proper spaces and choosing special sites for both public and private buildings. During the early settlement period in Kansas, the town's main street usually faced the river and contained the major retail, wholesale, warehouse, and manufacturing buildings. After the arrival of the railroad, three distinct types of town plans emerged in Kansas — those oriented to river traffic, those with a public square, and those with a central main street. Leavenworth City combined two of these patterns – a river orientation and a central main street – an arrangement that reflects the circumstances of time and technological development.

Before the Civil War, the steamboat was the dominant carrier of freight and passengers in the Kansas-Missouri border area. Towns such as Leavenworth, which developed in this region during this period, mirrored the plans of the nation's early seacoast communities. The primary focus of each town's street system was the river levees and landings. On the landing, business houses occupied locations with the most convenient arrangement for unloading and breaking cargo in bulk for distribution to retail traders, as well as for collecting, packaging, and shipping raw goods to other locations. Directly inland from the river landing were government offices, hotels, saloons, and retail establishments. Choice residential enclaves often occupied bluffs overlooking the river, upwind from the landing. At this time, sharp differences in appearance between village, town, and city also emerged. Growing commercial centers began to organize land uses and relegated administrative, retail, wholesale, industrial, recreational, and professional services to certain locations. Architects and builders designed new building types for specific functions or reinterpreted and adapted traditional designs for new uses.[66] Leavenworth's development during the 1850s reflected these national patterns of land uses.

After the arrival of the railroad, the development of Leavenworth also reflected the Main Street prototype where business houses faced onto a main street. While characteristic of

[66] Rifkind, 193.

New England town plans, the deciding factor in the layout of these communities, more often than not, was related to physical factors — the location of the river or the presence of a railroad line. In Leavenworth, the location of the rail depot, which was accessible to the tracks that ran along the riverbanks where there was a gradual change in grade, assured the continuation of the City's commercial orientation to freighting services on its eastern end and the confinement to the north of Three Mile Creek. In the 1880s, the location of the Union Depot on Main Street at Delaware Street solidified and reinforced existing commercial and industrial use patterns. As a result, Leavenworth's primary industrial area remained in the same location throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Other transportation networks also influenced this consistency in industrial and commercial land use patterns. As concentrations of retail, commercial, and residential building continued to develop along the City's rail systems, urban and inter-urban lines transported people within the town and to neighboring communities. Leavenworth's first urban line began in 1872[67] and established Fourth Street as a major connector street. Running through the center of the downtown retail district, the industrial area to the east and south, and across Three Mile Creek, it stimulated the construction of apartment buildings, neighborhood commercial corners, and institutional buildings such as government offices, private schools, churches, and wholesale business houses along its corridor. It also provided the necessary means to transport thousands of workers to the City's manufacturing areas surrounding the retail commercial area between First and Seventh streets. The Santa Fe Depot on the original levee serviced an inter-urban electric trolley line that ran between Fort Leavenworth and Kansas City, Missouri from 1899 to the late 1930s, further entrenching the downtown retail, wholesale, and manufacturing area as a transportation hub.

Bridges also influenced the development of the City's commercial areas. Completed in 1894, the Missouri River Terminal Bridge spanned the Missouri River at the east end of Choctaw Street. Tracks from the bridge curved to connect with north/south rail lines and continued through the industrial district along Choctaw Street. Further defining

[67] While it initially used mule power, it quickly adopted electrical power.

transportation patterns to and from the commercial area of town were bridges crossing Three Mile Creek at Second and Third streets.

By the 1880s, definite patterns in commercial land uses appeared. Light and heavy manufacturing businesses occupied the general area between the railroad tracks on the east and Fourth Street on the west and between Seneca Street on the north and Three Mile Creek on the south. Large heavy manufacturing enterprises, particularly mills and metal manufacturing concerns, located south of Cherokee Street. A few manufacturing businesses, such as the Abernathy furniture factory, located to the north and west of the railroad tracks. Smaller light manufacturing companies clustered in an area north and south of Cherokee Street and east and west of Fourth Street. Display showrooms for some of the large manufacturing firms, wholesale houses, and small manufacturing businesses, such as cigar factories and saddler shops, lined Delaware Street from First Street west to Fourth Street. Wholesale houses, second tier hotels, livery stables, and small retail manufacturing services clustered along Cherokee Street, west from the railroad tracks to Broadway Street. Retail stores, first-class hotels, governmental and institutional buildings, opera houses and theaters, professional offices, banks, and other traditional "downtown" services stretched west from around Fourth Street to Broadway Street, between Cherokee and Seneca streets.

Building Materials

The availability of water and suitable building materials influenced the location, configuration, and physical appearance of communities such as Leavenworth during the State's early settlement period. A number of areas in Kansas contained limestone formations that supplied a readily accessible building material. In these locations, builders used local stone not only for building foundations, but also for trim elements on brick buildings as well as for entire buildings. In areas with clay deposits, such as Leavenworth, brick-making enterprises prospered. Large stands of hardwood trees covered the eastern portions of the Kansas territory and settlers in these areas used the native oak and hickory for framing and imported white and yellow pine for finish lumber.[68]

[68] Sachs, 2-3.

Most of the first commercial buildings in Kansas were simple temporary structures capable of housing various fabricating or sales functions. As soon as possible, owners replaced their first temporary wood frame business houses with brick or, when locally available, stone buildings. Most were two or three stories in height. Industrial buildings were located near transportation services, apart from the town's retail and service center, and their design reflected their function.

Evolution of Construction Technology

During Leavenworth's initial settlement period, timber was a favored building material for the small fabricating facilities established in the fledgling community. The development of the power-driven saw permitted the fabrication of thinner wooden elements that could be joined by machine-cut nails, which were in general use after 1830. In mills and warehouses, masonry support for timber framing enhanced strength and fire resistance. Introduced as early as the 1820s, the use of cast and wrought iron as structural elements became common in the late 1850s. During the same period, waterproof composition roof materials, with coal tar as the bonding substance, allowed roofs of lower pitch to be used, a common roofing design for industrial and warehouse buildings.[69]

In the design of industrial buildings during the mid-nineteenth century and continuing after the Civil War, construction technology employed traditional handcraft techniques for the assembly of wood, posts, beams, girders, and joists. Improved truss designs in wood and iron permitted the enclosure of larger interior spaces that were ideal for assembling and manufacturing goods. The production of high-quality brick and stone masonry, achieved through the use of machinery for brick production and stone dressing, assisted the development of masonry construction techniques, including stone vaults and domes.[70]

With the improvement of industrialized production techniques, the dense, dark brick industrial district and large factory complexes became ubiquitous features in large towns and cities. In Leavenworth, as in other river towns, a growing number of brick manufacturing complexes appeared beside the community's first timber mills and warehouses.

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[69] Rifkind, 258.
[70] Ibid.

During the late nineteenth century, hydraulic lifts, cranes, and elevators allowed commercial and institutional buildings to grow in height. Modern techniques using steam power for quarrying, finishing, and transporting stone improved both its appearance and availability. New methods for producing pressed brick and cast terra-cotta improved not only its durability as decorative elements incorporated into masonry wall surfaces, but also its affordability. Improvements in producing hydraulic mortar enhanced its permanence, allowing larger masonry wall surfaces. At the same time, structural concrete slowly gained in popularity and, by the 1880s, began to play an important role in the fabrication of foundations and footings.

One of the most significant improvements in technology during this period was in the fabrication of metal building components — industries that formed the core of Leavenworth's manufacturing businesses. The science of designing and fabricating iron and, later, steel as construction components transformed commercial architecture. Between 1850 and 1875, cast iron came into its own as an effective structural material for framing buildings and as an important design element in the form of iron building fronts, elaborate roof cresting, and ornate rails and fences. As early as 1860, foundry-made bridge and building elements included cast-iron columns, spandrels, and lintels and wrought-iron trusses, beams, and girders. During the last quarter of the century, iron gave way to steel, which by virtue of improved refining techniques was now available at a reasonable price for tools, wire rope, rails, and structural members. The improvement in strength, economy, and durability promoted the development of "skeleton" construction — a method of steel framing that eliminated timber completely and reduced masonry walls to little more than exterior cladding. While traditional building methods continued to be used in smaller urban centers like Leavenworth, the braced and riveted steel frame rapidly gained universal acceptance in the larger cities by the 1890s.[71]

Architectural Style and Design

The first permanent buildings in Kansas followed the vernacular building traditions and styles brought by settlers from their home communities. They also freely adapted the popular high styles and modified them according to the skills and materials available in the new community.[72] At the time Kansas entered the Union, thirty-five urban centers in the

[71] Ibid., 271.

[72] "Kansas Preservation Plan, Study Unit on the Period of Exploration and Settlement (1820s-1880s)," 63.

United States had populations exceeding 25,000. Thirty years later, there were almost four times that number and at least twenty-four cities claimed more than 100,000 inhabitants. During this period, architects and builders began to design buildings for specific functions such as retail commercial blocks, office buildings, public governmental buildings, schools, theaters and opera houses, hotels, department stores, and manufacturing plants.[73] The building types found in Leavenworth reflect the emergence of designs for specific institutional, commercial, and industrial functions.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, neither client nor architect regarded factory architecture as a subject worthy of serious consideration. Owners built factories that featured straightforward plans that accommodated the storage of raw materials, space for manufacturing activities, and a storage and distribution area for finished goods. Owners trying to enhance the appearance of their utilitarian buildings adapted decorative ornamentation, such as the mansard roof or corbel moldings, from the popular styles of the period. While a few owners erected factories featuring high style academic architecture, for the most part, the industrial buildings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century remained "purposefully utilitarian and incidentally ugly."[74] Located in industrial districts with rail spurs to low-lying freight yards, by the turn of the century, the factory building "grew larger and cast deeper and longer shadows on the streets they walled."[75] As late as 1909, the editor of *Architectural Record* lamented, "The American manufacturing plant is a commercial type structure which the architect has so far played an insignificant part in developing." The editor appealed to industrialists to hire architects, suggesting that a well-planned factory would not only lead to operational economies, but would also bring prestige and good workmen.[76]

During the first decades of the twentieth century, factories and warehouses of some distinction began to appear. A few employed steel columns, recessed spandrels, and large windows. Others adopted their own distinctive treatments such as the cast iron buildings found in St. Louis, Missouri. In Chicago, Henry Hobson Richardson's Marshall Field wholesale warehouse served as the impetus to other architects, including Louis Sullivan, to address industrial

[73] Rifkind, 193.
[74] John Burchard and Albert Bush-Brown, *The Architecture of America: A Social and Cultural History* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company under sponsorship of the American Institute of Architects, 1961), 241-242.
[75] Ibid.

design. In Detroit, Albert Kahn's 1903 Packard Motor Company Building's all-under-one-roof factory plan and use of reinforced concrete and steel sash windows set a new standard for industrial design. However, the majority of the owners of new factory buildings did not embrace these innovative designs and the use of new technology. Most architects and architectural critics of the period recommended a design approach to industrial buildings only as an endeavor reflecting "a wholesome architectural influence" and recommending that "designers should be restrained to square masses and sharp corners and plain windows for twenty years to come — with sculpture denied them and all the bad architectural forms tabu."[77]

Building designs of this period in Leavenworth followed these national trends. While popular architectural styles defined many commercial buildings, the majority erected in the city in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had simple plans and designs augmented by minimal architectural ornament. The design of industrial buildings, in particular, was devoid of stylistic references. Their design reflects the specialized needs for specific use spaces, light, and ventilation rather than stylistic fads. Ornament on these buildings often consisted of brickwork and vague references to a particular contemporaneous style or a vague mixture of stylistic idioms. More often than not, a raised ashlar foundation, symmetrical fenestration, brickwork cornices and pilasters, brick or limestone belt courses, limestone sills, and minimal use of molded and cast ornamental tiles and/or brick on the primary façades comprised the primary design elements. Additions and modifications for expansion were common to industrial structures. Their simple, basic forms easily lent themselves to later expansion, either through additions to the ground floor or added stories."[78]

The majority of Leavenworth's industrial buildings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were between two and four stories in height and either lined the streets of the manufacturing district or formed large complexes, often encompassing a square block or more. All were constructed of locally produced dark brick, usually incorporating brick pilasters and brickwork as the primary decorative treatment. Depending upon their

[76] Ibid., 239.
[77] Ibid., 241.
[78] Louis Bergeron and Maria Teresa Maiullari-Pontois, *Industry, Architecture, and Engineering* (New York, NY: Harry, N. Abrams, Inc., 2000), 185.

function, roof shapes were either flat, low-rise gable end, or gable front forms with a raised full-length central clerestory. Like most industrial buildings of this era, they required natural ventilation and light and they featured a large number of double-hung sash windows with multiple lights organized into symmetrical rows on each story. Many of the complexes featured a succession of dark red brick additions with subtle variations that denote a different period of construction. In particular, the use of full arch, segmental arch, and rectangular windows is one of the most apparent indicators of age. The large size, scale, and massing of these buildings, as well as the common use of materials and architectural details – brickwork and fenestration – visually link them to other manufacturing properties constructed during the same period.

The Abernathy Furniture Company Factory combines the use of native limestone and timber with locally manufactured brick and iron. Built of substantial materials to facilitate storage and various phases of fabrication and distribution of large quantities of furniture, the building was near river and rail transportation and was adjacent to the City's main retail commercial district. The building's simple, functional design is typical of manufacturing and distribution buildings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the absence of stylized ornament. The building exterior is a dark red brick produced near the site. Brick pilasters and corbelling at the parapets constitute the building's functional needs and provide ornamental references. Brick pediments placed above the center bay on the main south and east elevations provided an area for signage for the factory that can still be seen today.

The heavy timber structure is of locally available oak milled near the site and provides the required support for the heavy floor loads required in manufacturing and storage of furniture. The size and strength of the wood members allowed bay sizes up to sixteen-by-twenty-four feet, accommodating a variety of industrial functions. The wood joist and plank floors pre-date the use of poured-in-place concrete floors and structural elements. The regular spacing of tall, multi-pane, double-hung sash windows allowed daylight to penetrate deep into the loft floor space and facilitated good cross-ventilation. The narrow windows reflect the technology of their period of construction, predating the large curtain walls of industrial windows that appeared in the early twentieth century after the introduction of concrete walls, which accommodated large openings. Cast iron star-shaped through-wall anchors placed consistently and strategically at floor elevations on all sides of

the building add their own minor form of ornament to the building exterior and also reflect the building technology of the day. The exterior sills of all the windows are cast iron angles, used in lieu of the traditional wood or the more expensive stone, and are typical of other industrial buildings built in Leavenworth at the time. Cast iron hinges embedded in the masonry walls held iron fire shutters. Local factories mass-produced both of these iron building elements.

The design of the complex dates to the early nineteenth century. In 1827, the Manufacturers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company recommended erecting brick walls with piers and buttresses separated by large windows; doubling the thickness of the beams so that their excessive size would cause them to smolder rather than burn; specifying floors at least three inches thick, resting on mortar, in order to prevent oil from machines and water from pumps from moving from one floor to another; and using round support columns nine inches in diameter on the ground floor, preferably of pine or very dry oak."[79] Over three-quarters of a century later, in 1905, the Factory Insurance Association published a collection of recommended building plans that eliminated all ornament as a pointless risk. The Association recommended minimal use of paint, wall coverings, and internal partitions that could interfere with the spraying of water during a fire. The 1905 prototypical design eliminated the traditional use of the central staircase and enlarged window spaces.[80] The Abernathy Furniture Company Factory complex exhibits the use of brick piers, numerous large windows, heavy timber construction, exposed brick interior walls, and lack of ornamentation.

Analysis of Architectural Significance

The Abernathy Furniture Company Factory complex, located on the northwest corner of Second and Seneca streets, embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction. It is an important local example of late nineteenth century industrial loft construction. Due to its specialized function, the buildings' design reflects the plans, materials, and technologies used in the construction of industrial facilities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Leavenworth. The complex features traditional timber post-and-beam construction that is characteristic of manufacturing and storage warehouses of the period. The use of locally made dark brick reflects architectural

[79] Ibid., 186.
[80] Ibid., 187.

materials common to the development of the city's architecture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, underscoring a sense of time and place. The simple, multi-story brick building complex featured numerous windows to admit natural light and ventilation, heavy timber and masonry construction to aid in fireproofing of the building, and an elevator to facilitate movement of materials within the building, reflecting associations to typical industrial design and technologies in the city during its heyday as a manufacturing center.

The setting and location of the factory complex communicates important information about the city's traditional industrial areas. The largest concentration of extant manufacturing buildings that retain their historic architectural integrity and retain associations with the city's industrial past in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century are in an area roughly bounded by Three Mile Creek on the south, North Esplanade Street on the east, Cherokee Street on the north, and Third Street on the west. The area includes the buildings at the northeast and southeast corners of Second and Cherokee streets; the block between North Esplanade, Second, Short and Choctaw streets; the buildings at the northwest and southwest corners of Choctaw and Second streets; the buildings in the middle of the block on the north side of Choctaw Street, between Second and Third streets; and the complex on the east side of Third Street bounded by Three Mile Creek on the south[81] (See Figure 2).

The only other remaining late nineteenth and early twentieth century manufacturing buildings in the city's historic commercial core are part of the Abernathy Furniture Company Factory complex at Second and Seneca streets. These buildings reflect an important component in the commercial history of Leavenworth from that time period and are important as a rare and unique group of buildings and structures that represent an important era in the city's history. As such, the Abernathy Furniture Company buildings and remaining industrial buildings clustered along Three Mile Creek to the southeast continue to define unique patterns that provide tangible visual evidence of the historic industrial land use that developed in the city's commercial areas, as well as represent industrial architectural design of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In particular, the Abernathy Furniture Company Factory complex denotes the original

[81] These buildings are currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

platting, lot size, and alley space as well as the industrial/commercial areas relationship to the original levee, esplanade, and railroad lines.

Today, activity no longer centers on the river or railroad lines; most manufactured items are shipped by truck. Many of the remaining historic natural and man-made features in the larger environment surrounding the property that date to the period of significance provide a setting that references Leavenworth's general industrial and commercial areas nearest the river and railroad depot. The voids that exist within the area bounded by Three-Mile creek on the south, the Missouri River on the east, Fifth Street on the west, and Miami Street on the north and the larger surrounding area underscores the rarity of the resources within it.

SUMMARY

The Abernathy Furniture Company Factory complex is historically significant for its role in the commercial development of Leavenworth and as a surviving representative example of late nineteenth and early twentieth century industrial architecture in the City. The building reflects the period in Leavenworth history during which industrial activity was at its height. Due to its historic architectural integrity, it conveys feelings and associations with its period of construction, original industrial design, and industrial functions. As part of the original 1854 town plat, the building visually demonstrates an area originally reserved for commercial, industrial, and warehouse uses that continued to occur well into the twentieth century. Moreover, the size and visual cohesiveness of the complex reflects the important role of Leavenworth as a manufacturing center for furniture. The complex's historic integrity and importance in commerce comprises a rare, concentrated, and intact industrial resource dating from an important era in industrial growth in Kansas history.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

SITE BOUNDARY / LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Lots 1-9, Block 25, City of Leavenworth, Leavenworth County, Kansas

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This boundary includes the legally recorded boundary lines of the nineteenth century[82] Abernathy Furniture Company factory buildings erected facing Seneca Street. The boundaries include the original lots bordered by Seneca Street, Second Street, the alley dividing the block, and the western lot line that formed the historic western boundary of the nineteenth century complex. The boundary excludes two auxiliary buildings erected in 1902 and 1908 for lumber storage (portions of which were later used for office space) that face onto Miami Street. They are under separate ownership and are now visually separated from the Seneca Street complex by open space at the rear of their respective complexes and the public alley that bisects this open space. An enclosed elevated passage used to move goods between the Seneca Street buildings and the Miami Street buildings extends across the open space and the public alley. This passageway structure provided a visual, physical, and contextual connection between the two complexes and is no longer extant. The loss of the passageway structure and the outbuildings that occupied the open space make it difficult to understand the historic functional association between the original complex facing onto Seneca Street and the later, auxiliary storage buildings facing onto Miami Street. As a result, one cannot tell whether the early twentieth century buildings facing onto Miami Street were part of the earlier Abernathy Furniture Company Factory complex or whether they were an unrelated manufacturing or warehouse facility. Thus, the boundary reflects temporal contexts, legal boundaries, and integrity limitations.

[82] The factory buildings include a narrow connecting addition erected sometime between 1890 and 1905.

FORM PREPARED BY

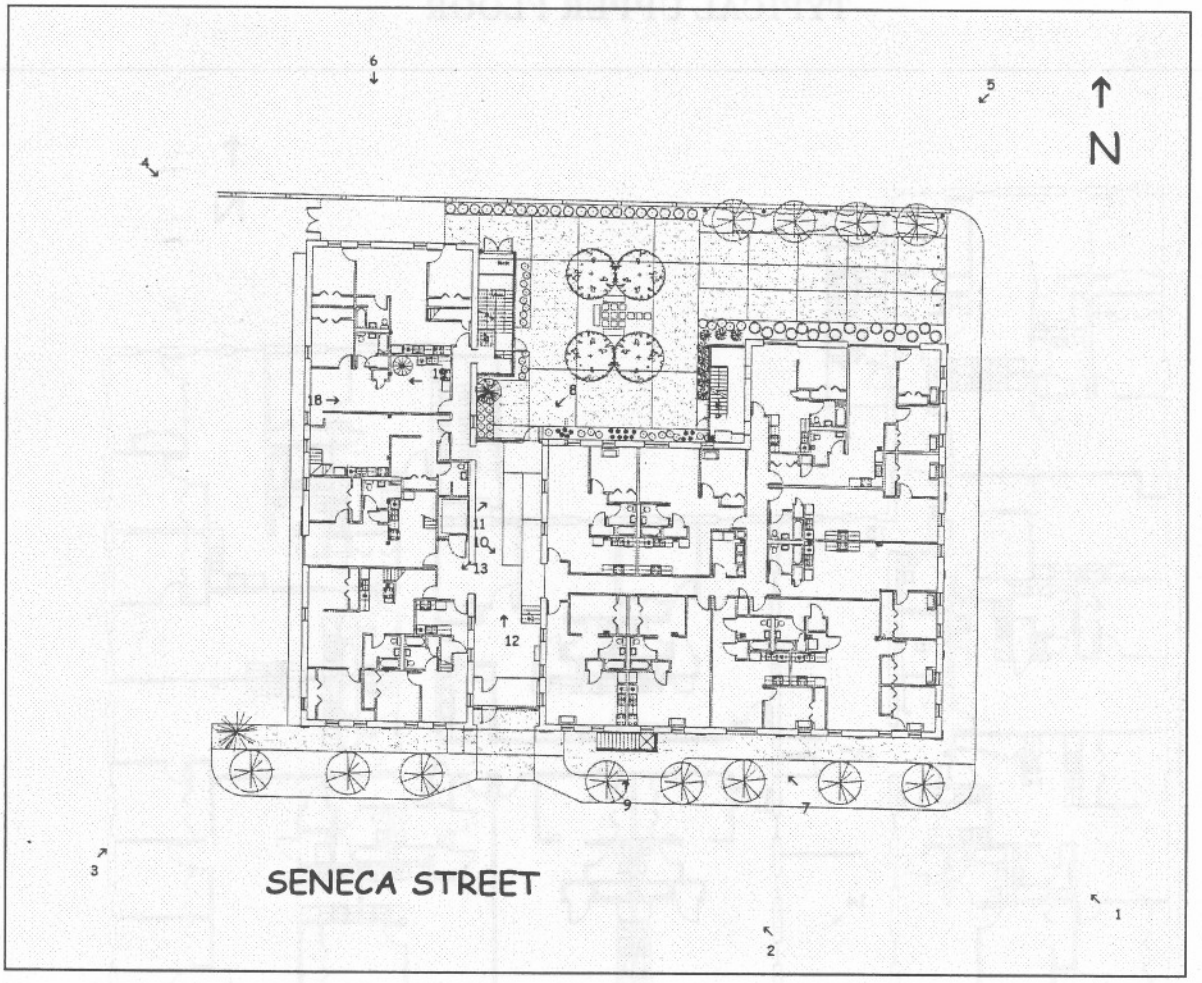
name/title Sally Fullerton Schwenk, Partner

organization Historic Preservation Services, LLC date February 6, 2004.

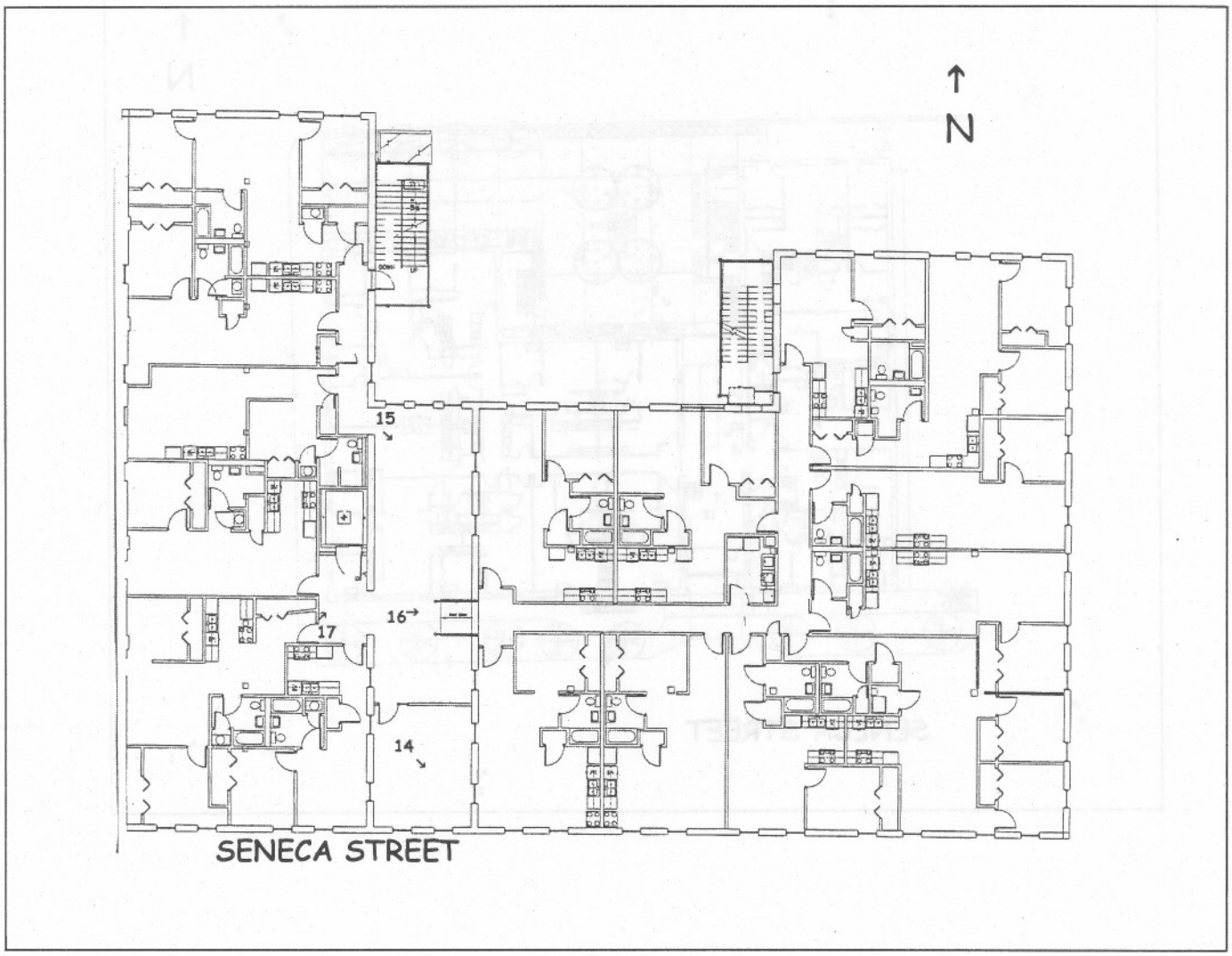
street & number 323 West Eighth Street, Suite 112 telephone 816.221.5133.

city or town Kansas City state Missouri zip code 64105 .

PHOTOGRAPH MAP:
SITE PLAN / GROUND LEVEL



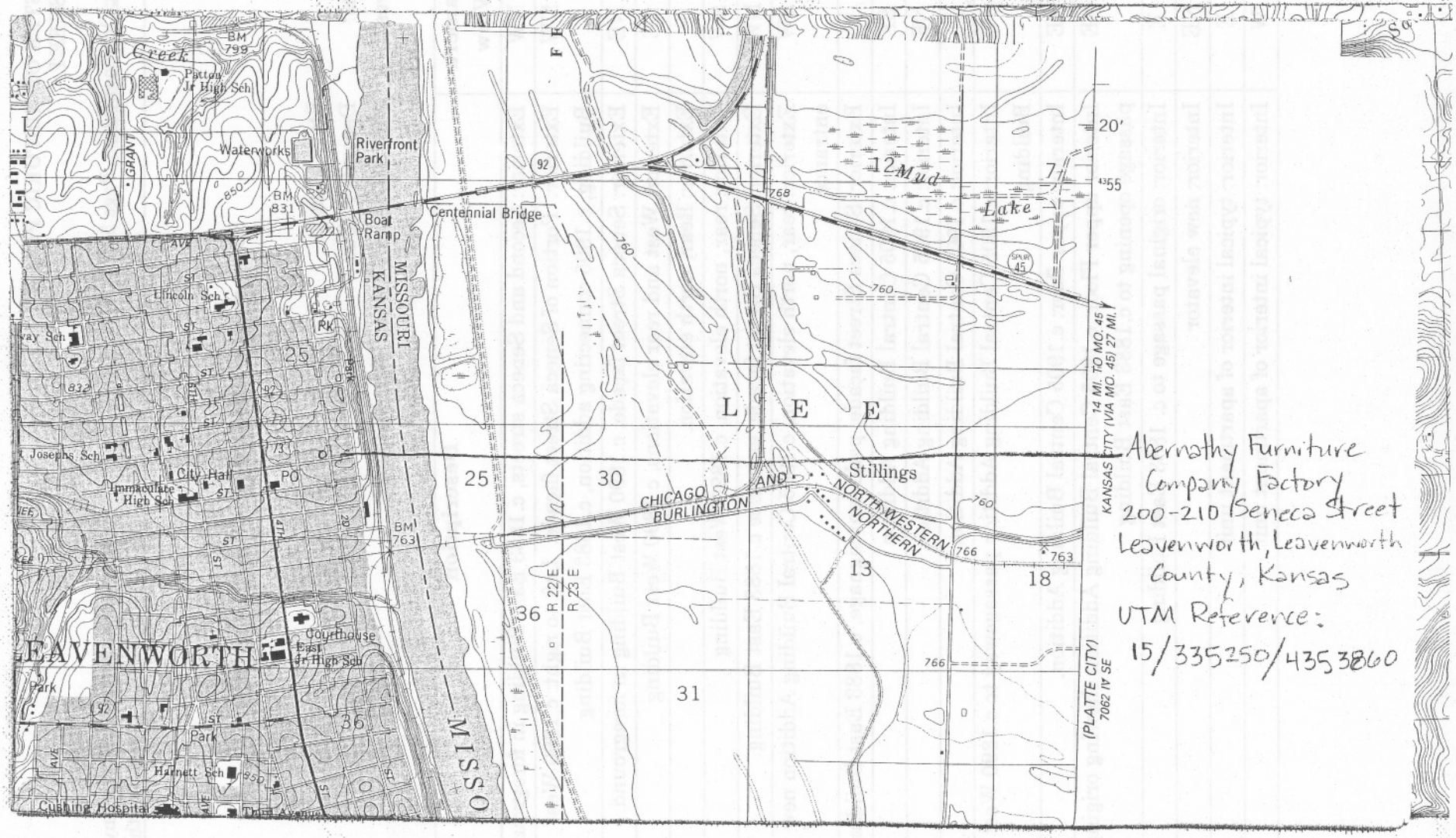
PHOTOGRAPHIC MAP:
TYPICAL UPPER FLOOR



PHOTOGRAPH LOG

Photographer: Steve Foutch
Date of photographs: December 2003
Location of negatives: 3668 Madison, Kansas City, Missouri

Photograph Number	Camera View	Description
1	NW	Exterior: Second and Seneca streets, c.1883 East Building in foreground.
2	NW	Exterior: Portion of Seneca Street façade. Left to right: c.1890 West Building, c.1905 connecting addition, c.1883 East Building
3	NE	Exterior: Seneca Street façade, c.1890 West Building in foreground.
4	SE	Exterior: West and rear elevations, c.1890 West Building
5	S	Exterior: Rear, north elevation.
6	SW	Exterior: rear, north elevation, c.1890 West Building
7	NW	Exterior: Seneca Street façade, entrance c.1883 East Building.
8	SW	Exterior: rear, north elevation, c.1905 Central Building Addition new entrance
9	N	Exterior: Seneca Street façade, pediment signage, c.1883 East Building
10	SE	Interior: c.1905 Central Building Addition
11	NE	Interior: c.1905 Central Building Addition.
12	N	Interior: c.1905 Central Building Addition
13	SW	Interior: c.1905 Central Building Addition passageway to c.1890 West Building
14	SE	Interior: upper floor: c.1905 Central Building Addition.
15	SE	Interior upper Floor: c.1905 Central Building Addition showing original passage opening to c.1883 East Building
16	E	Interior: original passage to c. 1883 East Building
17	NE	Interior: new elevator
18	E	Interior: typical interior of apartment unit
19	W	Interior: typical interior of apartment unit.



Abernathy Furniture Company Factory
200-210 Seneca Street
Leavenworth, Leavenworth County, Kansas
UTM Reference:
15/335250/4353860