

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Overman & Schrader Cordage Company

Other names/site number: KE-1091- Eagle Cordage Mills; Hooven & Allison Cordage Company

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & number: 1564 Banklick Street,

City or town: Covington State: Kentucky County: Kenton

Not For Publication: NA

Vicinity: NA

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following

level(s) of significance: national

statewide

local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A

B

C

D

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Craig Potts/SHPO** Date

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title : State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

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Category of Property

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

Industry/Processing/Extraction: manufacturing facility

Current Functions

Vacant/Not in Use

Description

Architectural Classification

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements: Vernacular Industrial

Materials:

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick; stone

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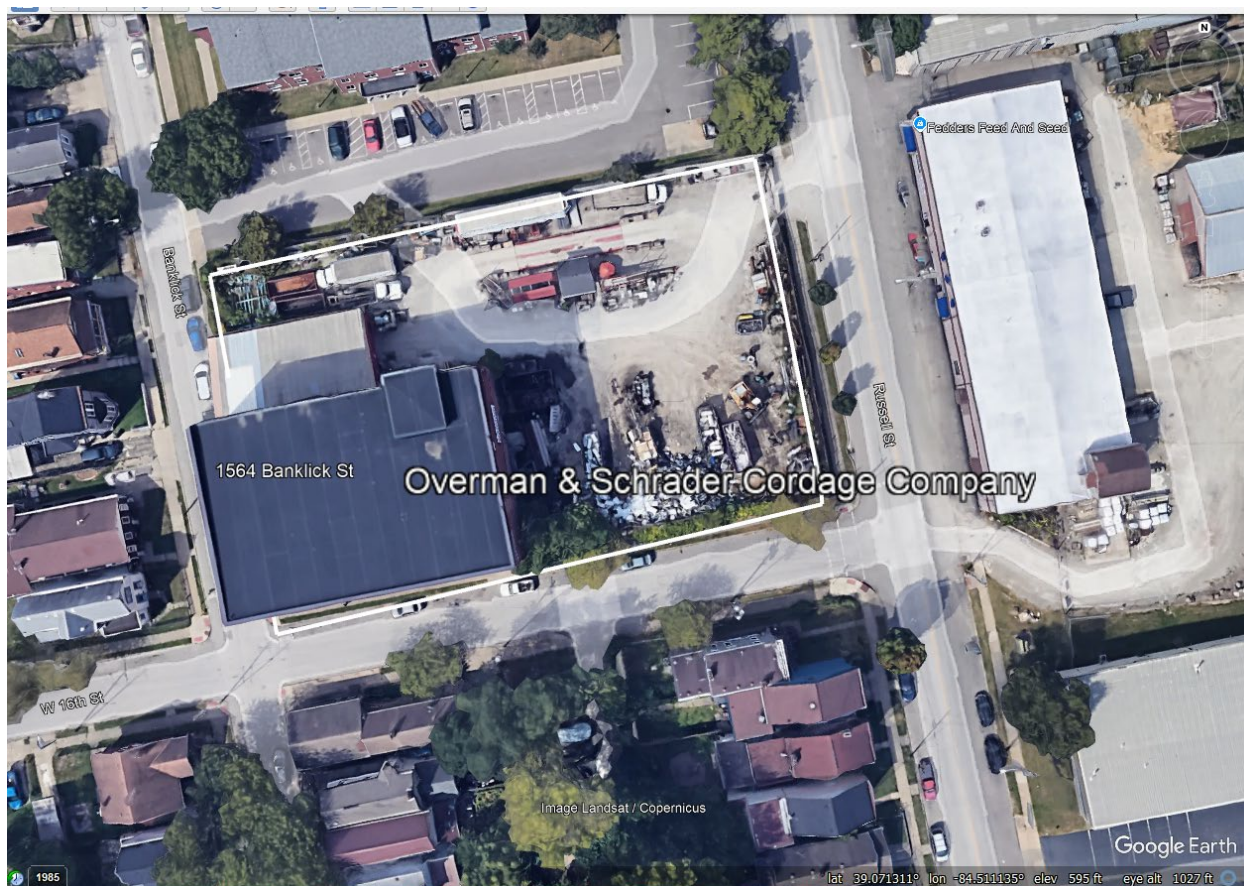
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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Overman & Schrader Cordage Company hard fiber manufacturing building is a four-story red brick facility, built circa 1899. The brick portion of the building appears to be one period of construction with later bay alterations on each elevation. A metal-clad lean-to addition extends from the north elevation of the building, covering the first and second stories of the north elevation. There is one contributing building, and one non-contributing building. There are no non-contributing, structures, or objects situated within the area proposed for listing. The area proposed for National Register listing is the entire parcel, which is comprised of .91 acres. The remaining resources associated with soft fiber production are no longer extant, as discussed below.



Overman & Schrader Cordage Company, Kenton Co., KY

lat 39.071311° long: -84.511135°

Property Setting and Site Characteristics

The Overman & Schrader Cordage Company (later Eagle Mills; Hooven & Allison Cordage Company; Klaene Foundry Co., Inc.; B&B Heating & Air Conditioning Company) is situated directly adjacent to the NRHP listed Peaselsburg Neighborhood Historic District in Covington

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(NRIS 16000501), Kenton County, Kentucky.¹ Although Overman & Schrader Cordage Company was referenced in the NRHP nomination as a large employer in the area of Peaselburg, the building was excluded from the district boundary. This exclusion may have been the result of the scope of the project that prompted the initial survey. The northern boundary of the district follows West 16th Street directly south of the Overman & Schrader Cordage Company.

Kenton County is in the northernmost portion of the Bluegrass region (**Figure 1**). Some historians refer to this region's cultural landscape as Ohio River Towns, at least for the northern portion of the county, where the primary population centers are located.

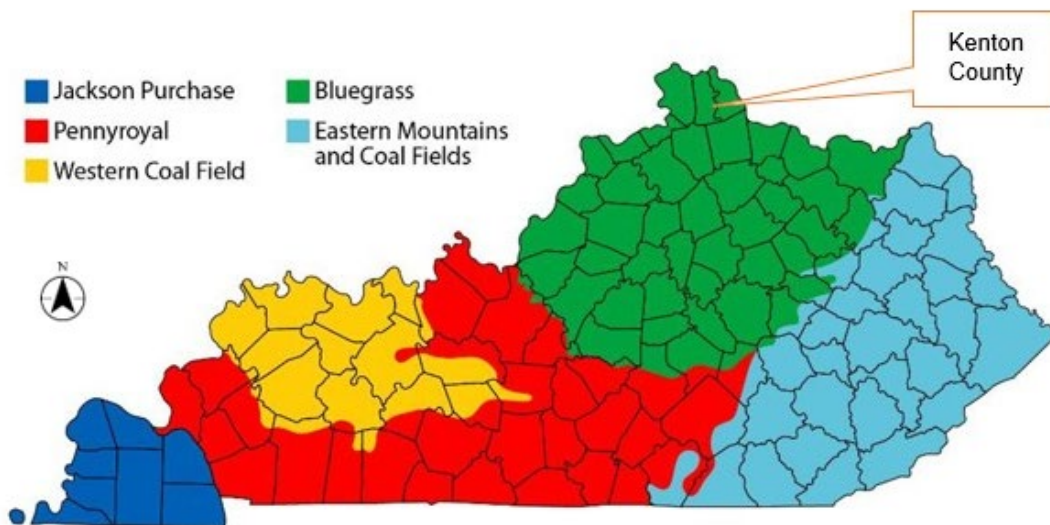


Figure 1 Kentucky Cultural Landscape Regions Map.

Kenton County is bounded by the Ohio River on the north, Boone County on the west, Campbell County on the east, and Grant County and Pendleton County to the south. Sinking springs and caves are common within this region. European settlers were drawn to the land for its fertile soil, game, and rolling topography.² As of 2022, Kenton County had 169,066 residents across approximately 160 square miles. Today, it has the third largest population in the state.³ Major roadways in Kenton County include I-75/71, KY-42, I-275, and KY-17. Major waterways in the county include the Ohio River and the Licking River. Health care and social assistance is the most common employment sector, which employs 13.8 percent of the workforce.⁴ Covington is

¹ Janie-Rice Brother, "Peaselburg Neighborhood Historic District," *Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places*, 16000501. Listed March 2017.

² David C. Elbon, Kentucky Atlas and Gazetteer website, accessed online November 2024 at: <https://www.kyatlas.com/phys-bluegrass.html>; Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, Wildlife Action Plan, Commonwealth of Kentucky, no date, accessed online November 2024 at: <https://fw.ky.gov/WAP/documents/1.7%20Physiography%20of%20Kentucky.pdf>.

³ United States Census Bureau, Kenton County, Kentucky, QuickFacts accessed June 2022 online at <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/kentoncountykentucky/PST045221>.

⁴ DataUSA, Kenton County, KY, accessed November 2024 online at <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/kenton-county-ky>.

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one of two county seats in Kenton County; the other being Independence, which is situated in the central portion of the county (for background on the two county seats, see Independence Historic District, NR # RS16000500). Covington was founded on the west bank of the Licking River, opposite the industrial largess of Cincinnati, Ohio in the early nineteenth century. Covington became the second county seat of Kenton County, years after its incorporation in 1834. By 1850, Covington was the second largest city in the state. As of 2022, 40,923 people called Covington home.⁵

The Overman & Schrader Cordage Company building sits on the southwest corner of a block bound by Banklick Street to the west, West 16th Street to the south, Russell Street to the east, and West 15th Street to the north (**Figure 2** and **Figure 3**). An unnamed alley connects Banklick Street to Russell Street, approximately halfway between West 16th Street and West 15th Street. The building is adjacent to residential properties on the south and west dating from the mid nineteenth to the early twentieth century.

Directly north and east of the building is a steelyard, where salvaged steel is dropped off for recycling. The metal clad lean-to attached to the north elevation of the Overman & Schrader Cordage Company building is used by the steelyard as a covered storage area. The steelyard area is encircled by chain link fencing that extends from the southeast corner of the Overman & Schrader building on West 16th Street, east to the corner of West 16th Street and Russell Street, then north approximately 155 feet where it turns west, traveling to Banklick Street. At Banklick Street, the chain link fencing turns south to follow the east side of Banklick Street until it joins the northwest corner of the metal clad lean-to attached to the north elevation of the Overman & Schrader building.

The area farther north, beyond the steelyard, also is residential. This area includes a modern apartment building (constructed between 1985 and 1993, known as Goodwill Village Apartments) between Russell Street and Banklick Street, south of the unnamed alley.⁶ Other residences north of the alley are similar in character to the residential areas south and west of the Overman & Schrader building and appear to date from the mid nineteenth to the early twentieth century.

East of the Overman & Schrader building and the steelyard on the east side of Russell Street is a commercial area. Buildings include a commercial feed and seed store, a commercial heating and plumbing facility, and an additional recycling facility. These buildings are all located between Russell Street and an active CSX railroad line that travels north-south through Covington. The railroad line is approximately 600 feet east of the Overman & Schrader building.

⁵ John E. Burns, "Covington," *The Kentucky Encyclopedia* (Lexington: 1992 University Press of Kentucky), 236; DataUSA, Covington, KY, accessed November 2024 online at <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/covington-ky/>.

⁶ Nationwide Environmental Tital Research, LLC, Historic Aerials, Accessed online December 2024 at: <https://historicaerials.com/viewer>.

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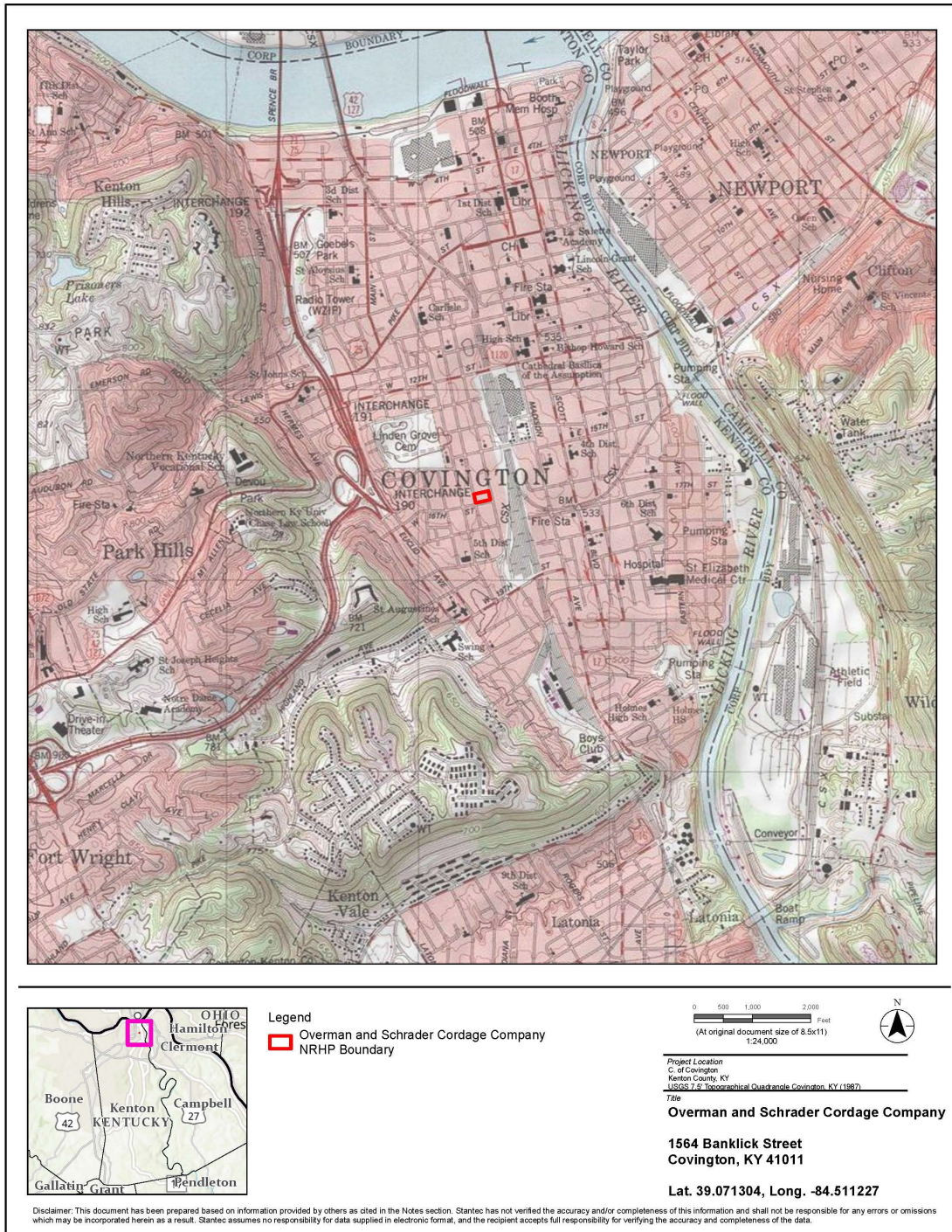


Figure 2. Overman & Schrader Cordage Company, Location.⁷

⁷ USGS, Topographical Quadrangle Covington, KY (1987).

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Figure 3. Overman & Schrader Cordage Company, building parcel.⁸

⁸ USGS, Topographical Quadrangle Covington, KY (1987).

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Historic Background: Character of the Property and History of Ownership

A discussion of the property's history is essential to understanding of the Overman & Schrader Cordage Company.

Table 1 History of Occupancy at 1564 Banklick Street.

Approximate Year	Occupant
1899	Constructed by Overman & Schrader Cordage Company
1910	Eagle Cordage Mill
1919	Hooven & Allison Company
1931	Address listed as vacant in city directory
1947	Klaene Foundry Company
1951	B&B Heating & Air Conditioning Company

The earliest recorded business located within the block bound by 16th Street, Russell Street, Banklick Street and the unnamed alley, that runs between 16th and Russell streets, appears to have been the Universal Radial Drill Company. The company is listed on the 1894 Sanborn Map as being the former occupant of a vacant frame building that ran the length of Russell Street between 16th and the alley (**Figure 4**). This building is no longer extant. A railroad track is shown on the map traveling east-west through the southern end of the building. The corner of Banklick and 16th Street, where the Overman & Schrader building now sits (the building being nominated), is shown as vacant; however, the railroad tracks that travel through the frame building extend within the area of the current footprint of the current Overman & Schrader building being nominated.⁹ Little information was located during archival research regarding the operations of the Universal Radial Drill Company.

⁹ Sanborn Map Co., Insurance Maps for Covington, Kentucky, 1894, 43.

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Figure 4 1894 Sanborn Map showing vacant building of former Universal Radial Drill Company, note train tracks traveling through corner currently occupied by Overman & Schrader Cordage.¹⁰

By 1896, Walton Architectural Iron Works occupied a building within the block. The business operated at the location was referred to as a “plant” at 16th Street and Russell streets in an 1896 *Kentucky Post* article.¹¹ Offices for Walton Architectural Iron Works are listed in Cincinnati as early as 1892.¹² In 1898 the Walton plant was purchased by Davis & Egan Machine Tool Company. Davis & Egan constructed a new factory on the site the same year (building no longer extant). According to a writeup in the *Electrical Review* journal,

¹⁰ Sanborn Map Co., Insurance Maps for Covington, Kentucky, 1894, 43.

¹¹ “Covington Inklings,” *Kentucky Post*, August 24, 1895, 8, Accessed December 2024 online at: [www.newspapers.com/image/760938779/?match=1&terms="Walton%20iron"](http://www.newspapers.com/image/760938779/?match=1&terms=).

¹² “Cincinnati Illustrated Business Directory,” Eleventh Annual Edition, Spencer & Craig Printing Works, 1892, 345, Accessed online December 2024 at: <https://digital.cincinnati.library.org/digital/collection/p16998coll13/id/5164>.

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The rapidly increasing business of the Davis & Egan Machine Tool Company, Cincinnati, Ohio, has forced them gradually to extend their plant to almost double its original size, besides occupying nearly two blocks on Sixth and Egglestone, Cincinnati. They are now building a factory in Covington, Ky. The new shop is a handsome structure, 300 feet long by 100 wide, building half of brick and half frame and equipped with the latest improvements....located on the C&O Railroad, a special track has been run through the building, thereby enabling the packing and shipping of heavy machinery to be done within the shop. A force of 300 men will be employed, and the company will use the building for the manufacture of the heavier pieces of machinery, such as borings and turning mills, large planes and lathes.¹³

The journal also announced that Davis & Egan were installing a new planer at the Covington plant with a 40-foot long table, announcing that “this will be one of the longest planers running in this country.”¹⁴ The dimensions of the building roughly match that of the building parallel to Russell Street that was illustrated on the 1894 Sanborn map (no longer extant). Sometime during the 1890s, Overman & Schrader Cordage Company purchased the plant on 16th Street and Russell from Davis & Egan Machine Tool Company. The building offered ample room to house around 400 employees that worked for the company at the time.¹⁵ The building at 16th and Russell Streets (no longer extant) likely fronted Russell Street.

Overman & Schrader appear to have utilized the building constructed by Davis & Egan (no longer extant). In 1899, the city auditor issued a building permit to Overman & Schrader Company “for the erection of a brick warehouse at Sixteenth and Banklick Streets, to cost \$8000.”¹⁶ This appears to be the building permit issued for the construction of the current brick warehouse at 1564 Banklick Street (the building being nominated). In 1907, the city auditor once again issued a permit to the company “...to make an addition to its plant. Sixteenth and Russell-sts., to cost \$1200.”¹⁷ The following year another building permit was issued for “a corrugated iron shed on Russell-av., between Fifteenth and Sixteenth-sts., \$500.”¹⁸ The company petitioned for tax exemption on the new addition.¹⁹ The current-day 1564 Banklick Street building is depicted on the 1909 Sanborn Map in the southwest corner of the block (**Figure 5**).

¹³ “Electrical Review,” March 16, 1898, Vol 32, No. 11, 178, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.google.com/books/edition/Industrial_Engineering/Gwc0AQAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Davis+and+Egan+Covington&pg=PA178&printsec=frontcover.

¹⁴ “Electrical Review,” March 16, 1898, Vol 32, No. 11, 160, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.google.com/books/edition/Industrial_Engineering/Gwc0AQAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Davis+and+Egan+Covington&pg=PA178&printsec=frontcover.

¹⁵ John Boh, “A Main Strasse Apartment/Parking Garage Complex and its Predecessors,” Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society, September/October 2019, 3.

¹⁶ “Covington Briefs,” *Kentucky Post*, October 31, 1899, 5, Accessed online December 2024 at: <https://www.newspapers.com/image/760511299>.

¹⁷ “Building Permit Issued,” *Kentucky Post*, June 10, 1907, 2, Accessed online at: www.newspapers.com/image/760484119/?match=1&terms=overman.

¹⁸ “Building Permit Issued,” *Kentucky Post*, February 25, 1908, 3, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760407591/?match=1&terms=overman.

¹⁹ No title, *Kentucky Post* April 28, 1908, 2, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760408924/?match=1&terms=overman.

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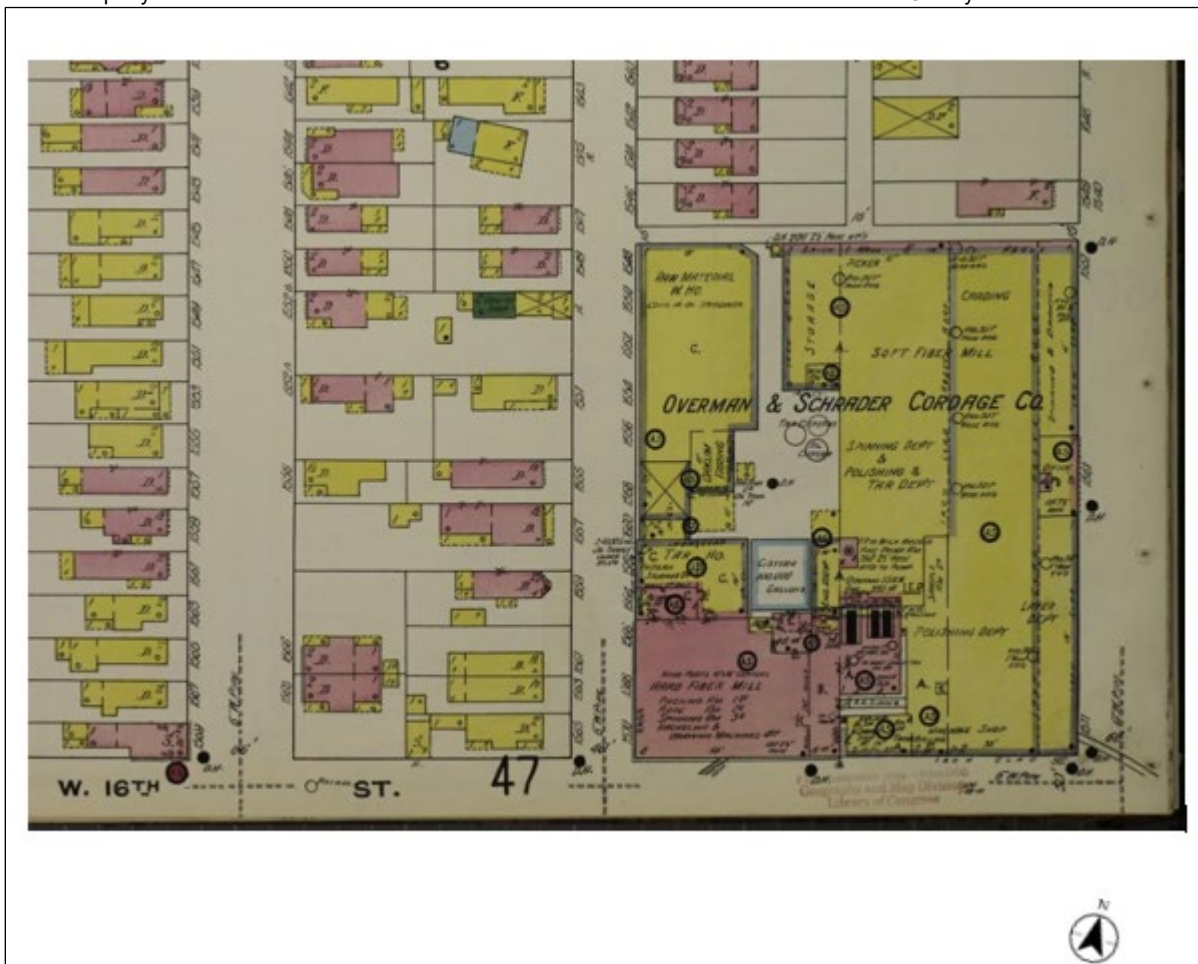


Figure 5 1909 Sanborn Map showing Overman & Schrader Cordage Company, note current day 1564 Banklick Street brick hard fiber manufacturing building in southwest corner of block.²⁰

In 1910, a representative of Eagle Cordage Mills took over as receiver of the Overman & Schrader facility in Covington. In 1919, Hooven & Allison, a cordage company out of Xenia, Ohio took over the entire facility.²¹ The 1920-1921 business directory for Covington lists them as “Hooven & Allison Co (The) of Xenia Ohio.”²² In 1932, the city purchased a portion of the block from Hooven & Allison “to convert the structure into a combination city garage, repair

²⁰ Sanborn Map Co., Insurance Maps for Covington, Kentucky, 1909, 43.

²¹ John Boh, “A Main Strasse Apartment/Parking Garage Complex and its Predecessors,” Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society, September/October 2019, 3; “Breakdown at Big Plant: 400 Toilers are Out,” *Kentucky Post*, March 23, 1909, 2, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760478661/; “Praise is Given Firemen,” *Kentucky Post*, June 4, 1919, 1, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760559397/?match=1&terms=hooven.

²² *Williams’ Covington and Newport Directory: Including Bellevue, Bromley, Clifton, Dayton, Fort Mitchell, Fort Thomas, Ingalls Park, Ludlow, Southgate and Woodlawn Kentucky, 1920-1921.*

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shop and warehouse.”²³ This purchase did not include the building being nominated. The section purchased by the city began at the northwest corner of 16th Street and Russell Street and ran along Russell Street north 300 feet to the unnamed alley, then west along the alley 141 feet, then south 300 feet, then east to rejoin Russell Street.²⁴ This section included the land directly east of the brick building at 1564 Banklick, including the soft fiber mill building that fronted Russell Street (today this area is the current steelyard as well as a portion of land currently occupied by the Goodwill Village Apartments). According to the General Manager-Treasurer of Hooven & Allison at the time, “the thought of dividing the property and selling it piecemeal had never occurred to us until such a proposition was made.”²⁵ Hooven & Allison retained ownership of the remainder of the lot, including the brick warehouse being nominated.

According to the city directories for Covington, the northeast corner of Banklick Street and 16th Street was vacant between 1931 and 1932.²⁶ In 1939, the Hooven & Allison Company alerted the city commissioners that “since the outbreak of the war it had had several offers for its plant, located in the rear of the city garage.” The company continued that they “planned to sell, but in keeping with a promise was first notifying the city.”²⁷ The following month, the city notified Hooven & Allison to let them know that “the city could not afford to purchase its properties located in the rear of the city garage. The company reported recently it was receiving offers of between \$30,000 and \$40,000.”²⁸

In 1947, following a fire at their original foundry in Covington, the Klaene Foundry Company, Inc. purchased the block from the City of Covington. They took over the previous Overman & Schrader soft fiber mill building (no longer extant), used as a city garage, as part of their foundry. The 1949, Sanborn Map depicts the Klaene Foundry Company, Inc. operating out of buildings located within the block bounded by 16th Street, Banklick Street, Russell Street, and the unnamed alley (**Figure 6**).²⁹ Although the brick warehouse at 1564 Banklick Street (building being nominated) does have doors that appear to connect it to the foundry, it is unclear what the foundry was using the brick warehouse for at this time.

²³ “To Buy Building,” *Kentucky Post*, March 12, 1931, 6, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760911767/?match=1&terms=hooven%20allison.

²⁴ “Ordinance No. 2552,” *Kentucky Post*, March 13, 1931, 13, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760911864/.

²⁵ “Figures Show City’s Garage to be Bargain, Foes of Administration Disgruntled at Finding,” *Kentucky Post*, October 24, 1931, 1, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760807842/?match=1&terms=hooven%20allison.

²⁶ Williams Directory Company, *Williams’ Covington and Newport Directory: Including Bellevue, Bromley, Clifton, Dayton, Fort Mitchell, Fort Thomas, Ingalls Park, Ludlow, Southgate and Woodlawn Kentucky*.

²⁷ “Covington Must Build \$9000 Sewer in Latonia,” *Kentucky Post*, November 24, 1939, 1, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760591092/?match=1&terms=hooven%20allison.

²⁸ “U.S. Delay May Cost City \$1120,” *Kentucky Post*, December 1, 1939, 1, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760592050/?match=1&terms=hooven%20allison.

²⁹ “Commissioners’ Ordinance No. 0-1-47,” *Kentucky Post*, January 28, 1947, 2, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760677589/; Sanborn Map Co., Insurance Maps for Covington, Kentucky, 1909 w/1949 Update, 43.

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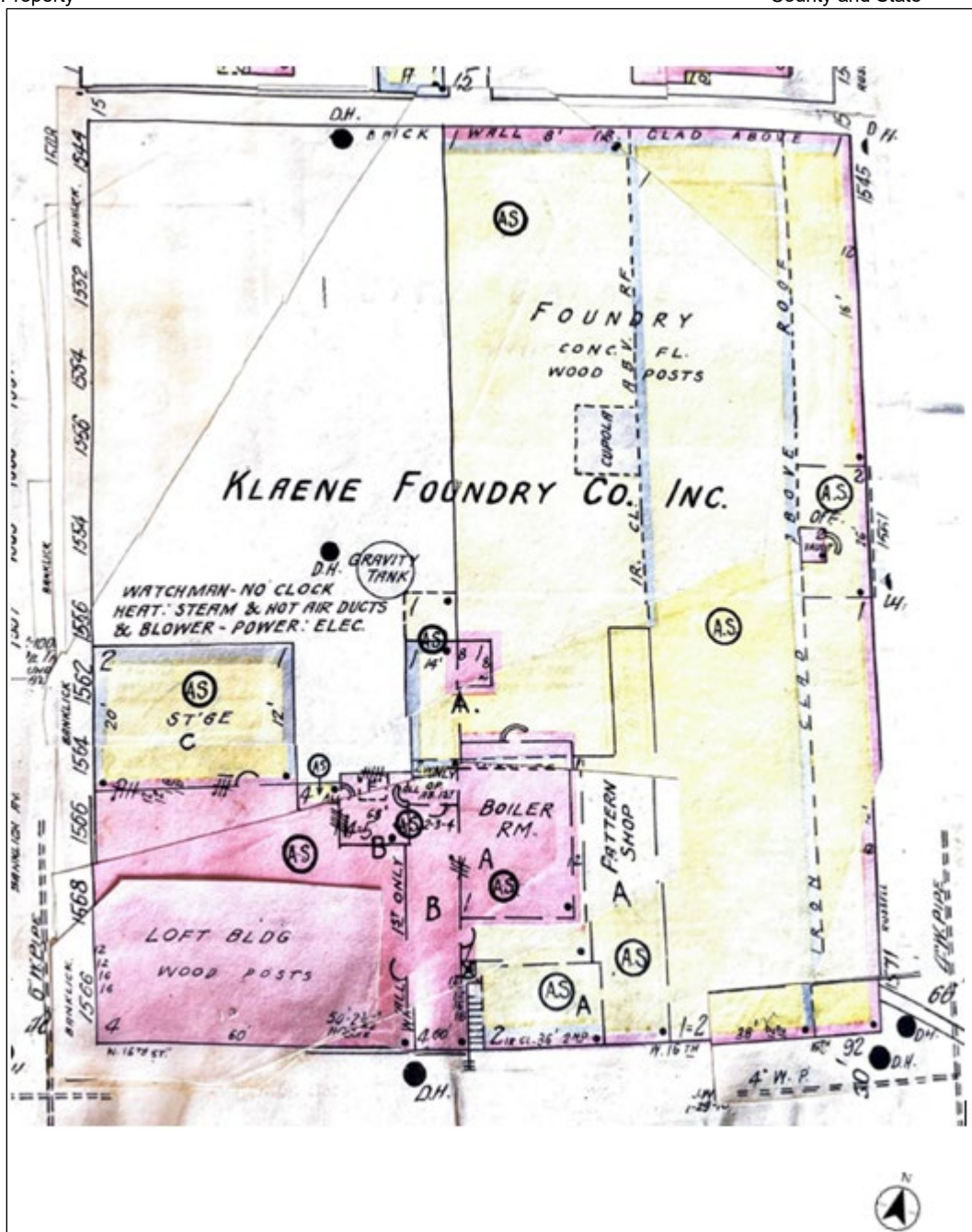


Figure 6 1949 Update to 1909 Sanborn Map, brick “loft bldg.” in southwest corner of block is current brick warehouse.³⁰

B&B Heating & Air Conditioning Co. operated out of 1564 Banklick Street as early as 1951.³¹ In the spring of 1975, a fire destroyed the Klaene Foundry. The brick warehouse at 1564

³⁰ Sanborn Map Co., Insurance Maps for Covington, Kentucky, 1909 w/1949 Update, 43.

³¹ Advertisement, *Kentucky Post*, September 26, 1951, 6, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760873952/?match=1&terms=1564%20banklick.

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Banklick was barely spared from the blazes, “flames were shooting above the three-story B&B Heating Co. building attached to the foundry on 16th Street, when the first firemen arrived.”³² The brick warehouse being nominated appears to have been the only building spared from the fire within the complex.

Property Description Exterior

The Overman & Schrader Cordage Company (later Klaene Foundry) building stands four stories tall (**Figure 7**). The building’s nearly rectangular footprint is approximately 80 feet wide, along Banklick Street to the west, by 120 feet long, along West 16th Street to the south. The narrower front elevation, facing west, is divided into four bays, while the wider side elevation, facing south, is divided into seven bays. The northern and eastern elevations lack clear visual divisions into bays; however, a small lean-to addition on the northern elevation extends across a length roughly corresponding to the western four bays and a height of approximately two stories. The building’s membrane roof is nearly flat, sloping downwards to the north, with parapets on the east, west, and south sides. The exterior is characterized by its red brick arranged in a common bond pattern and its stone block foundation visible at the western and southern elevations.



Figure 7 West elevation/Primary façade and south elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking NE. (0001)

Facade (Western Elevation)

The front of the Overman & Schrader Cordage Company (later Klaene Foundry) building is divided into four bays. The wall surfaces of each bay are recessed slightly, with brick pilasters

³² Roger Auge, “Fire destroys Klaene Foundry, Owner says damage \$1 million,” *Kentucky Post*, April 12, 1975, 1, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/1033727981/.

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and the building's corners projecting slightly from the wall plane of each bay. A brick parapet extends across the top of, and flush with, the pilasters to the corners of the building. The presence of a cornice at the base of the parapet on this front elevation is implied by every other stretcher brick projecting slightly from the plane of the parapet and pilasters.

Each of the four bays has a pair of arch-top window openings in the second, third, and fourth stories (eight window openings per floor). These window openings are arranged symmetrically within each bay, and each window opening has a segmental brick arch lintel consisting of three courses of rowlock bricks as well as a stone sill. Most of the window openings have been covered over with paneling. Paneling is not present in the three southernmost openings of the third story and the four southernmost openings of the fourth story. Where paneling is absent, the ruins of 6/6 wood windows remain in place, each with one or more muntins and glass panes missing. A square-shaped foundation frame outlining the two third-story windows in the southernmost bay, presumably intended for a now-absent sign, is mounted to the wall surface.

In the first story, the first (southern) bay and the third bay each have a pair of arch-top window openings matching those in the upper stories. Sills are absent, and the brick directly below each window opening suggests that each opening once extended further down towards ground level compared to their present height. Of these four window openings, all are covered over with paneling except for the second from the building's southwestern corner. This window opening is filled with glass blocks of various sizes and a portion of corrugated paneling at the top.

Within the second bay of the first story, a recessed entryway shelters a pair of metal doors (Figure 8). The exterior walls within this recessed entryway are covered with corrugated metal panels which wrap around to the west-facing wall surfaces. Above this, metal ductwork panels cover a small pent roof that extends the full length of the bay, from one brick pilaster to the other. Above the pent roof is a large opening with a segmental brick arch lintel comprised of four courses of rowlock bricks. This opening is covered over with corrugated metal panels that match those that flank the front doors.



Figure 8 West elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking east, recessed entryway second bay of the first story. (0002)

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The fourth bay of the first story, nearest the building's northwestern corner, has an arch-top opening with segmental brick arch lintel matching that above the recessed entryway in the second bay (**Figure 9**). This opening is fitted with a sectional garage door for vehicles, with corrugated metal paneling filling the area above the door and below the arched lintel. The wooden garage door has seven rows (or sections), each row having six recessed panels. The bottom two rows have been completely covered with metal paneling.



Figure 9 West elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking SE, fourth bay of the first story and metal-clad lean-to addition on north elevation. (0003)

A foundation of rectangular, undressed blocks extends across the front elevation of the oldest portion of the building, interrupted only by the recessed entryway and the garage door. The western wall of a metal-clad, lean-to addition is roughly flush with the plane of the brick corners and pilasters of the older portion of the building. The exterior walls of this addition are clad with purlin bearing rib panels. The addition's foundation consists of concrete blocks set atop a short, poured concrete wall. A narrow louvered vent is the only opening present in the western elevation of this addition.

Southern Elevation

Unlike the facade, the building's southern elevation lacks pilasters and recessed bays (**Figure 10**). The plane of the wall on the southern elevation is continuous, interrupted only by a brick corbeled and dented cornice; the stone window sills; and the stone block foundation. Each of the seven bays in the upper stories is defined by a solitary window opening. These window openings match those on the front, western elevation in all respects, except those in the first story

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extend lower towards the foundation, lacking replacement and infill brick present below the first story window openings facing Banklick Street.

The cornice extends the full height of the parapet wall. A stepped, corbeled effect is achieved at the base of this cornice with each row projecting slightly further from the plane of the wall than the previous row. Within the bottom row, sections of projecting bricks alternate with sections of brick that remain flush with the plane of the wall. In the row above this, and in subsequent, higher rows, all bricks project from the plane of the wall—where bricks projected in the bottom row of the cornice, bricks in the row above now project further than do bricks in the adjacent sections. This alternating, stepped arrangement continues up a total of six rows, at which point all bricks are once again flush horizontally. Above this, a row of projecting rowlock bricks create a dentiled effect with a few additional rows of brick above these that are then topped with metal coping.



Figure 10 South elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking NW. (0004)

Most of the window openings present in the southern elevation have been covered with paneling. Three windows in the fourth story, four in the third story, and one in the second story retain their 6/6 windows, each in a state of disrepair. Metal truss fire escape platforms and stairs connect the openings at the third and fourth bays, as counted from the building's western end. No fire escape platform is located at the first story, which instead has a counter-balanced section of stairs that remains elevated when not in use. The counterbalance mechanism consists of a weight and pulleys mounted to the wall, extending from the center of the second story down to the center of the first story, in-line with the end of the section of fire escape stairs to which it is attached.

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An arch-top opening with segmental garage door, matching that in the front elevation, is located in the first story near the building's southeastern corner. The bottom three rows of this paneled garage door have been covered with metal paneling. This garage door is present in-lieu of a window opening, leaving only six window openings in the first story rather than seven. A pedestrian door is recessed within the wall between the window openings in the adjacent two bays to the west, as is a knee-brace foundation for an air-conditioning unit. An identical foundation, with air-conditioning unit in place, is located between the first and second bays nearest the building's southwestern corner.

Northern Elevation

The northern elevation lacks the symmetrical arrangement present on the southern elevation (**Figure 11**). A stair and freight elevator tower projects a short distance from the plane of the wall, interrupting an otherwise rectangular building plan (**Figure 12**). This tower, located roughly one bay width to the west of the building's northeastern corner, extends a short distance above the roofline of the rest of the building. The second, third, and fourth stories of this tower each have a pair of window openings matching those present on the building's western and southern elevations. The westernmost window openings in this tower retain visible 6/6 windows; paneling covers the other window openings in the tower.



Figure 11 North elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking SW. (0005)

A vertical ribbon of metal paneling covers the second, third, and fourth stories of the wall adjacent to and west of the tower. Below this, a sealed doorway is located in a shallow concrete block addition at the first story. Matching paneling covers the entirety of the third and fourth

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stories to the east of the stair tower. Below the paneling, near the building's northeastern corner, a shallow brick addition has been constructed and fitted with a large door and fire escape platform at the second story. Concrete blocks fill an opening at the first story of this brick addition. This brick addition, which extends up to the top of the second story, is flush with the plane of the northern stair tower wall.



Figure 12 North elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking south, tower, metal panels west and east, concrete block addition and brick addition. (0006)

Three window openings are evenly spaced across the remainder of the fourth story, west of the paneling that is located west of the stair tower. These three window openings appear to have flat-top lintels, the result of being directly below the lowest part of the roof where no parapet is present. An arch-top window opening is present in the third story, below and in-line with the fourth story window opening that is near the center of the elevation and nearest the paneling at the western side of the stair tower. No other openings are present in the western half of this elevation.

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The metal-clad, lean-to addition covers the first and second stories of the northern elevation to the west of the paneling adjacent to the stair tower. This addition is attached to the north elevation of the brick warehouse but does not accommodate any entry into the brick building.

Rear (Eastern) Elevation

The rear of the building is relatively plain, with a stepped parapet at the top, two arch-top window openings in the fourth story (one to either side of the center of the wall), a garage door centered in the northern half of the wall, and a painted ghost sign in the fourth story along the building's southeastern corner (**Figure 13**). Both fourth story window openings match those present elsewhere, with segmental brick arch lintels, stone sills, and paneling covering the opening. The paneled garage door matches those on the western and southern elevations, with segmental brick arch lintel at the top of the door opening. A similar, albeit slightly taller, lintel is roughly centered in the southern half of the wall, but this opening has been sealed with brick (**Figure 14**). Black stains on the brick above the first story and also at the third story suggest that adjoining rooflines may have once abutted this wall.



Figure 13 North elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking SW, steelyard in foreground, note non-contributing modern shed. (0007)

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Figure 14 East elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking NW, note brick filled bay and roofline ghosts from previous appendages. (0008)

A painted “ghost” sign covering the fourth story near the building’s southeastern corner is still somewhat legible, with the words ‘EAGLE CORDAGE MILLS.’

Three pipe penetrations are visible in the rear elevation. The highest is near the top of the third story, below the southern window opening in the fourth story. The other two are near the top of the first story, south of the sealed garage opening. The purpose of these penetrations is not clear, but they appear to be consistent with exhaust vents.

Property Interior Description

As visible on the exterior of the building’s front (western) elevation, the Overman & Schrader Cordage Company building is divided into four bays. Inside the building, three rows of wooden posts divide the building’s interior into four bays. Each of the three rows are 18 feet apart, and within each row the vertical posts are centered ten feet from each adjacent post. These posts support the centers and ends of wooden beams that butt end-to-end and, in so doing, extend the full 120-foot length of the building. Throughout the building’s interior, the brick of the building’s exterior walls is exposed, with no evidence of ever having had plaster or other interior finished surface; however, in many places that interior brick has been painted.

The Overman & Schrader Cordage Company building was designed around the production of cordage. The 1909 Sanborn Map identifies the primary purpose of each of the building’s four floors. The first floor, which currently includes a lofted area, was used as a packaging room, the second floor was used as a rope room, the third floor was used as a spinning room, and the fourth floor was used for hackeling (also spelled “hackling,” “heckling,” and “hockling”) and drawing machines. This arrangement indicates that raw materials would enter the first floor, proceed to

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machines on the fourth floor for processing, descend to the third floor to be spun into rope or cordage, descend again to the second floor for any finishing needs and storage, and then return to the first floor where the final product was packaged and shipped to customers.

First floor

The first story of the Overman & Schrader Cordage Company building was primarily dedicated to receiving raw materials and shipping finished products. To that end, a railroad siding entrance, now bricked over, was present in the building's eastern elevation (**Figure 15**). This entrance allowed rail cars to be brought at ground level into the building's second bay, as counted from the southern side of the building. Only a portion of the indoor steel railroad rails remain visible near the eastern end of the building, with concrete now covering the space between the rails and all areas outside of the rails. Additionally, two road vehicle entrances are present—one at the building's southeastern corner, facing West 16th Street, and one at the northwestern corner, facing Banklick Street (**Figure 16**).



Figure 15 First Floor, railroad siding entrance (infilled with brick) on east elevation of building, note tracks infilled with concrete. (0009)

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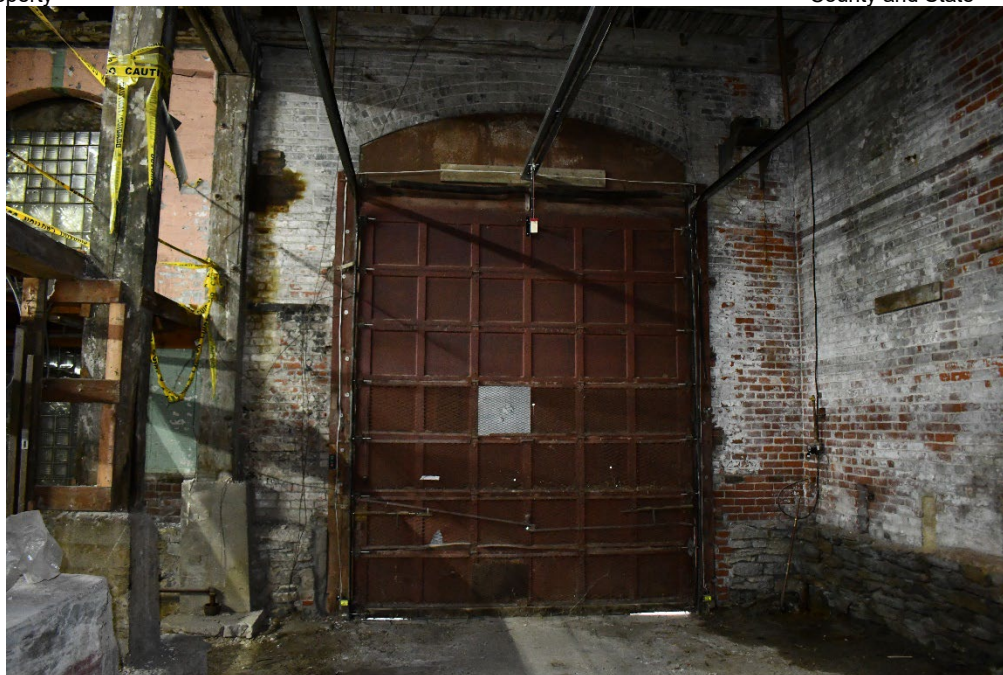


Figure 16 First Floor, vehicle entrance off Banklick Street. (0010)

An elevated loading dock, largely consisting of a stone base with a concrete top, is located on the first floor and alongside the railroad track remnant (**Figure 17** and **Figure 18**). The easternmost end of the loading dock, located east of an interior brick wall that largely separates the westernmost bay from the rest of the building's interior, is a timber frame deck with storage space beneath. The loading dock facilitated level transfer of goods to and from both rail cars and road vehicles within the building. This loading dock is immediately adjacent to the northern edge of the railroad siding and fills most of the third and fourth bays, as counted from the southern side of the building. In the third bay, this loading dock extends from the interior of the building's eastern exterior wall to an interior wall located a short distance inside of the building's front (western) exterior wall. In the fourth bay, this loading dock is notched and in-line with the vehicular garage door in the fourth, northernmost bay of the front (western) exterior elevation. Road vehicles entering the southeastern garage, facing West 16th Street, could also access the loading dock if railcars were not present. This arrangement allowed materials and products to be received and shipped via wagons and trucks from these areas within the building.

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Figure 17 First Floor, elevated loading dock, note railroad track remnants. (0011)

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Figure 18 First Floor, elevated loading dock. (0012)

A wooden loft floor is present above the loading platform in the third bay, adjacent to the building's front (western) wall (**Figure 19**). This loft is accessed via wooden stairs on the loading dock near the eastern end of the third bay. The loft footprint includes: 1) a small area at this eastern end of the third bay, above the loading dock, 2) roughly the western two-thirds of the second bay, and 3) the entirety of the first bay, excluding the vehicular garage area at the southeastern corner of the building. The height of this loft platform roughly coincides with the height of the elevated window sills on the building's front/western elevation. Several of the wooden posts at this loft level have been replaced with steel wide flange beams, particularly in the western portion of the loft (**Figure 20**). Additionally, many of the posts in this western portion of the building have a metal cap that act as saddles beneath the butt ends of the horizontal beams above. The loft deck consists of wooden floorboards, with sections oriented perpendicularly to the three rows of vertical posts and a large section at the western end oriented diagonally. The ceiling joists above are exposed.

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Figure 19 First floor, elevated wooden loft above the loading platform. (0013)

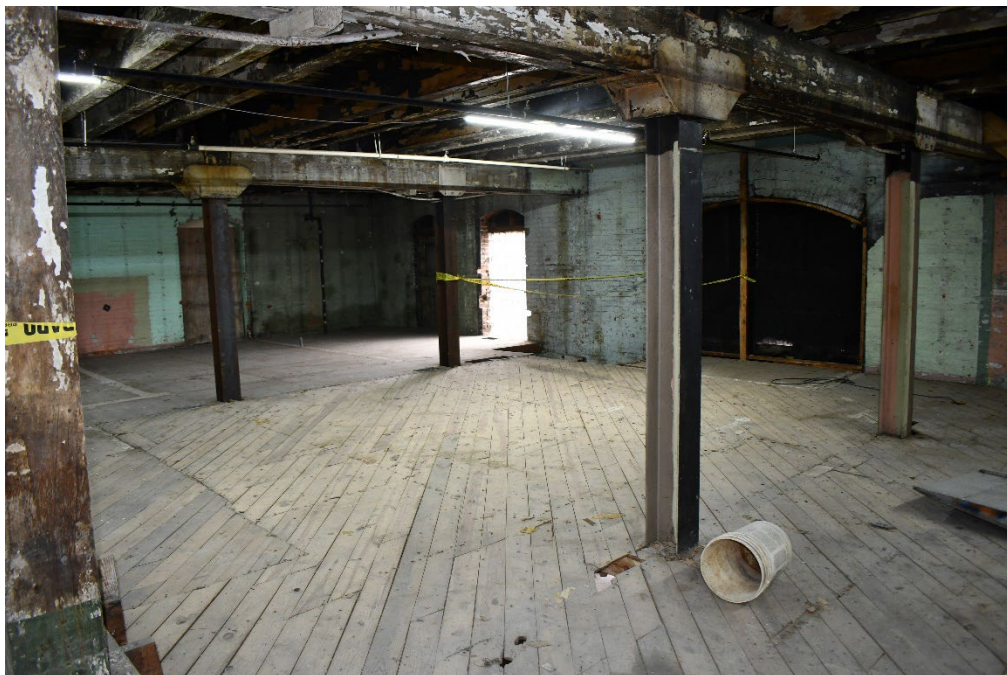


Figure 20 First floor, elevated loft area, note wooden posts replaced with steel wide flange beams. (0014)

The combined elevator and stair tower, located in the eastern portion of the fourth bay, is accessed from the loading dock via a small brick vestibule adjacent to the west side of the combined elevator and stair tower (**Figure 21**). The freight elevator, the motor for which has a

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Warner Elevator Mfg. Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio, label plate, is centered on the northern wall of the combined elevator and stair tower. Wooden stairs are just to the southeast of the elevator. This arrangement of elevator and stairs accessed via a brick vestibule is repeated on the upper floors.



Figure 21 First floor, entrance to combined elevator and stair tower. (0015)

Second floor

The second floor, or former rope room, is an open space characterized by the three rows of wooden posts and wooden floors (**Figure 22**). Alternating posts support tapered timber caps (a short length of a heavy horizontal wooden beam) that, in turn, support the butt ends of the primary wooden beams above. The floorboards are primarily arranged perpendicularly to the western and eastern elevations of the building; however, a portion adjacent to the eastern wall is oriented parallel to that eastern wall. The ceiling joists above are exposed, and round metal ductwork is present in the overhead area of the second bay from the building's southern wall. In nearly all cases, the interior side of the windows have been covered with paneling or oriented strand board cut to fit within the window openings. One metal-framed 2/2 window with pivoting sashes remains exposed, as does one wooden 6/6 window with a metal grate covering.

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Figure 22 Second floor, open space characterized by the three rows of wooden posts and wooden floors. (0016)

Third floor

The third floor is the former spinning room. Like the second floor, this is an open space characterized by three rows of wooden posts, wooden floors, and exposed ceiling joists (**Figure 23** and **Figure 24**). Most windows have been covered, but a metal-framed 2/2 window and a wooden 6/6 window are visible.



Figure 23 Third floor, former spinning room. (0017)

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Figure 24 Third floor, combined elevator and stair tower. (0018)

Fourth Floor

The fourth floor was originally occupied by hackeling and drawing machines. This floor is much the same as the two floors below, but the overhead ceiling area has been covered with insulating panels (**Figure 25**). The vertical wooden posts are noticeably less robust than those present at lower floors. All windows have been concealed behind plywood or paneling cut to fit within the window openings. The stair and elevator tower extend to the fourth floor (**Figure 26**).



Figure 25 Fourth floor, note wooden posts more narrow than lower floors. (0019)

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Figure 26 Fourth floor, stairs to third floor. (0020)

Contributing and Non-contributing Resources

In addition to the brick warehouse, there is a modern prefabricated shed located within the steelyard (**Figure 27**). This circa 2012 shed serves as an office and check-in area for the steelyard. The one-story shed is frame and clad in wood paneling. The shed does not date to the Period of Significance. It is a non-contributing building on the parcel.



Figure 27 Non-contributing shed/office in steelyard, looking southwest.

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Current Rehabilitation Plans

Orleans Development of Covington is intending to rehabilitation into 39 market-rate flat style apartments, to be known as The Steelyard apartments. The apartments will range in size from studio spaces to one-bedroom units with study units (550-975 square feet). The developer will utilize both the state and federal historic preservation tax credits in order to successfully rehabilitate this under-utilized former industrial space.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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.
- 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.

Criteria Considerations

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

Industry

Period of Significance

circa 1899-circa 1930

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Period of Significance

The selected Period of Significance circa 1899 – circa 1930, corresponds to the date of construction and the significant use of the building for cordage manufacturing.

Significant Dates

circa 1899
circa 1930

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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Summary Paragraph

The Overman & Schrader Cordage Company (KE 1091) meets Criterion A of the National Register of Historic Places. The property is locally significant in the area of Industry, specifically the textile industry in Northern Kentucky. During the Period of Significance the company also was known by successor company names: Eagle Cordage and Hooven & Allison Company. These companies' significance is interpreted within the historic context "Textile Manufacturing in Northern Kentucky, 1800s-1930s." The companies were important to the local economy for the role they played in the growth and development of textile manufacturing in Covington, Kenton County. The building being nominated (1564 Banklick) was constructed in 1899 by the Overman Schrader Cordage Company and used for hard cordage textile manufacturing until the early 1930s, when a portion of the property (not extant) was purchased by the city of Covington for use as municipal facilities. Three successful textile manufacturers operated in the building during the Period of Significance. These were Overman & Schrader, who constructed the building, Eagle Cordage, and Hooven & Allison. This building is the sole remaining resource on the property from the textile industry's heyday of production, prior to the industry's switch to synthetic fibers beginning in the 1930s.

Historic Context: Textile Manufacturing in Northern Kentucky, 1800s-1930s.

Background: Manufacturing in Northern Kentucky, 1880s – 1900s

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century saw a steady growth in manufacturing in Northern Kenton County and Kentucky as a whole. The series of Northern Kentucky towns situated on the banks of the Ohio and Licking Rivers, which included Covington, Newport, Bellevue, and Dayton, provided an easily accessible location from which to manufacture and ship finished products by rail or by barge. While the golden age of river transport of the mid-to-late nineteenth century was eclipsed by the railroad and eventually the interstate highway system, the towns established during the Ohio River's dominance thrived as a result of their key location. Cities and towns across Kentucky, such as Paducah, Ashland, Louisville, Covington, and Newport, remained the main industrial economic engines in the state. Historian Klotter notes that, "The manufacturing wealth of the state, such as it was, was clearly concentrated on the Ohio River. In 1929, some 86 percent of the total value added by manufacturers in the state was along that waterway...All along the river, manufacturing had sprung up- at Covington and Newport, at Owensboro (which had the second largest wagon factory in the South in 1904), at Paducah (which had the state's tallest office building in 1910), and elsewhere."³³

Covington and neighbors further down river in Louisville maintained a diversified economy; the latter of which remained the state's most important economic locale. Still, the Northern Kentucky communities along the Ohio River retained their fair share of economic influence in the state; a synergy which was created no doubt because of the proximity of Cincinnati just

³³ Klotter, Kentucky: A Portrait in Paradox, 1900-1950," (Frankfort: Kentucky Historical Society, 1996), 133.

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across this important waterway. According to Kenton County historian John Boh, “during the manufacturing era, Covington and Newport ranked second and third to Louisville in production of iron and steel in the state.” Many factors contributed to Covington’s economic success not the least of which was its strategic location.³⁴ The Chesapeake and Ohio Railway bridge opened in 1888, connecting Covington with Cincinnati by rail. By the following decade Covington had a streetcar system, an electric power plant, and a city waterworks.³⁵

The NRHP nomination for the Peaselburg Neighborhood Historic District in Covington (NRIS #16000501) provides an overview of the industry and manufacturing in the immediate vicinity of the Overman & Schrader Cordage Company building, as quoted below.³⁶

Peaselburg’s location on the southern edge of Covington, and proximity to Willow Run Creek, meant that its later development offered up larger, cheaper parcels for businesses and industries. One of the most important forces in Peaselburg’s development, as neighborhood anchor and major employer, was the Cambridge Tile Company.

The Cambridge Tile Company, started in 1887 by Cincinnati businessman August Koch, was a major force in the development of Peaselburg. But German craftsmen began their own tile-making business in the neighborhood prior to the huge plant locating on Woodburn Avenue. In 1888-89, the Monte Casino Art Tile and Enamel Brick Company was located at the northwest corner of Sixteenth Street and Holman.³⁷ Run by J.J. Busse and Henry Binz, the business was located at the J.J. Busse and Sons brickyards.

Demand for decorative tiles for hearths and fireplaces in houses in the late-19th century was high. Samples from the Monte Casino Company apparently inspired Koch. Cambridge Tile was located in Cincinnati for at least two years, but by 1891 the Covington city directory listed the “Cambridge Tile Manufacturing Company, manufacturer of enameled and Majolica tile, at the northwest corner of Sixteen and Woodburn.”³⁸

The company encompassed nearly the whole block, with a number of structures and 20 large kilns. The same site that seemed so enticing in the 19th century proved too small by the end of the 1920s – Peaselburg had grown up around the company. In a series of threats, backdowns, and maneuverings by Covington, the Cambridge

³⁴ Paul A. Tenkotte and James C. Claypool, eds. *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky* (Lexington: 2009 University Press of Kentucky), 480; Rachel M. Kennedy, “Grote Manufacturing Co. Building,” *Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places*, 2019. NRIS 100003473.

³⁵ John E. Burns, “Covington,” *The Kentucky Encyclopedia* (Lexington: 1992 University Press of Kentucky), 236

³⁶ Janie-Rice Brother, “Peaselburg Neighborhood Historic District,” *Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places*, 16000501. Listed March 2017.

³⁷ John Boh. “The Cambridge Tile Manufacturing Company,” in *the Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society*. (Covington, KY: The Kenton County Historical Society, November/December 2009), 2.

³⁸ John Boh. “The Cambridge Tile Manufacturing Company,” in *the Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society*. (Covington, KY: The Kenton County Historical Society, November/December 2009), 2.

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Tile Company closed, and moved operations to Ohio in 1929. Five hundred men, many of them living in Peaselburg, lost their jobs.

But other opportunities, including work at nearby foundries, and the railroad, beckoned. The Cambridge Tile Company was torn down in 1930, and new construction quickly followed. A May 1931 article in the Kentucky Post remarked that "11 new homes have been built in the past few months on the site of the old Cambridge Tile Company property."³⁹

In addition to the Cambridge Tile Company, the area around Peaselburg was home to a number of brickyards, including Benhoof & Sampling, Bernar Heving, Clemon Schweinfuss, Joseph Wieghaus, and T. W. Spinks. Other large employers included the Overman and Schrader Cordage Company. Their factory was located between Russell and Banklick Streets, on West 15th Street, outside of the district boundaries.

Residential areas such as Peaselburg provided a large and affordable labor source. A 1903 editorial in the *Kentucky Post* also provides a glimpse into many of the industries that operated in this area of Covington during the early twentieth century. The editorial refers to the area as the "west side." These businesses included Hellman's Planing Mill (NRIS #15000084), Republic Iron and Steel Company, Houston, Stanwood & Co. (boiler and steam engine manufacturers), Western Foundry Company, Sebastian Lathe Company, and Star Foundry.⁴⁰ A newspaper article later that year claimed that Covington was one of the few cities in the country, "where the large mills are not either closed tighter than a clam or else running with a greatly reduced force of employees and paying them starvation rates." Covington reportedly was not forced to close any of its mills, including its rolling mills. The article continues to boast that Republic Iron and Steel as well as Houston, Stanwood & Company and the Sebastian Lathe Company were all operating at "full force." This was claimed to be unlike other areas where rolling mills cut wages because of the "dullness of the season." In other areas, such as Boston, a shortage of cotton resulted in lowering employee wages and reducing staff. Overman & Schrader was also mentioned in the article, alongside Cambridge Tileworks as "running full blast" with employees having "suffered no cut in wages."⁴¹

Textile Manufacturing in Northern Kentucky, 1828-1930s

Covington became an important locale for textile manufacturing in Northern Kentucky as early as 1828, when the Covington Cotton factory opened. The factory operated out of a four-story building and employed 60 workers, "producing 4,000 pounds of cotton yarn and 2,000 yards of cloth daily."⁴² During the 1830s, the factory expanded to include the manufacture of jeans and linseys (coarse fabric typically made of cotton, wool, or linen). By the 1840s, the Covington

³⁹ "Homes Replace Old Industrial Property." *The Kentucky Post*, May 17, 1931, page 12.

⁴⁰ L. R. Chalfant, "Letter from the People," *Kentucky Post*, February 17, 1903, 8, Accessed December 2024 online at: <https://www.newspapers.com/image/760407202>.

⁴¹ "Prosperity Plays Santa Claus Here," *Kentucky Post*, December 25, 1903, 3, Accessed December 2024 online at: www.newspapers.com/image/760487690/?match=1&terms=sebastian%20lathe%20company

⁴² John Boh, "Textiles." *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky* (Lexington: 2009 University Press of Kentucky), 873.

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factory had 100 employees.⁴³ The Covington Bagging Factory also was in operation by the 1830s, producing finished hemp goods.⁴⁴

Newport was not far behind Covington with the 1831 establishment of the Newport Manufacturing Company along the Ohio River. The company acquired 27 acres of land along the river and “built 36 workers’ dwellings, a cotton and a woolen factory, a ropewalk, and a hemp-bagging mill in town.” By 1835, the company employed 329 people. During the 1840s, the Newport Silk Manufacturing Company, the Licking Valley Steam Cordage, and the Oakum Manufacturing Company were all important industries established in Newport.⁴⁵

Covington and Newport alone manufactured almost one-half million yards of hemp bagging for cotton bale wrapping in 1836. Globe Mills and Bagging Factory was in operation in Covington by the 1840s. This factory was considered one of the largest processors of hemp in the state. In 1860, the Union blockade severely impacted the south’s cotton trade. In addition, from the end of the Civil War until 1912, virtually all hemp produced in the United States was grown in Kentucky.⁴⁶

In 1864, the Covington Cotton Factory was converted by a new deed into a woolen factory. In 1866, Covington had “1 rope manufacturer, 2 carpet weavers, and 20 tailors and clothiers” listed in the city directory. Following the Civil War, commerce picked up in neighboring Cincinnati as well, so much so that by 1869, the city hosted an Exposition of Textile Fabrics, “inviting manufacturers of cotton, flax, hemp, silk, and wool, and also growers, to attend.” This event sparked additional similar expositions.⁴⁷

By 1876, the Covington city directory included, “4 carpet weavers, 22 dressmakers, 26 tailors, and 8 sewing machine companies.”⁴⁸ By 1888, Covington had three “rope and cordage firms.” Newport had none, Bellevue had one, and Dayton, Kentucky had eight.⁴⁹

⁴³ John Boh, “Empire of Cotton: A Global History, Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society, January/February 2017, Accessed online December 2024 at:

<https://kentoncountyhistoricalsociety.org/data/documents/Jan-Feb-2017.pdf>.

⁴⁴ John Boh, “Textiles.” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky* (Lexington: 2009 University Press of Kentucky), 873.

⁴⁵ John Boh, “Textiles.” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky* (Lexington: 2009 University Press of Kentucky), 873.

⁴⁶ John Boh, “Textiles.” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky* (Lexington: 2009 University Press of Kentucky), 873; “Thomas Woodhouse Bakewell, 1778-1874,” Kenton County Historical Society Bulletin, May 1998, 2, Accessed online December 2024 at: <https://kentoncountyhistoricalsociety.org/data/documents/May-1998.pdf>; Daryl T. Ehrensing, “Feasibility of Industrial Hemp Production in the United States Pacific Northwest,” Oregon State University, May 1998, accessed December 2024 online at <https://www.votehemp.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/sb681.pdf>.

⁴⁷ John Boh, “Textiles.” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky* (Lexington: 2009 University Press of Kentucky), 873.

⁴⁸ John Boh, “Textiles.” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky* (Lexington: 2009 University Press of Kentucky), 873.

⁴⁹ John Boh, “Textiles.” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky* (Lexington: 2009 University Press of Kentucky), 874.

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During the 1890s, the Overman & Schrader operation was listed as “manufacturers of rope, twine, sash and belt cord, hemp packing and tarred cordage of all descriptions.” The directory also lists a rope walk on Riddle Street in Covington during this time (operated by Overman & Schrader Co. during the 1880s). The Victoria Cordage Company also was listed in the directory with offices in Cincinnati, Ohio and mills in Dayton, Kentucky. The Victoria Cordage Company was listed as producing sisal, manila, and hemp rope.⁵⁰

Northern Kentucky continued to be a key player in textile manufacturing into the twentieth century. As late as 1900, 21 percent of Newport’s industrial workers worked in textile manufacturing.⁵¹ In 1910, Covington had “the Argonaut Cotton Mill, a carpet weaver, 87 dressmakers, and more than 40 tailor shops.”⁵² By 1910, production of hemp had nearly vanished.⁵³ By the 1920s and 1930s, large manufacturing operations for cordage, as well as carpets and other products were no longer in operation. Despite this, in 1926, Covington maintained 36 dressmakers and 15 tailors and Newport was home to 14 dressmaker shops and 16 tailors.⁵⁴ Textile manufacturing continued locally on a much smaller scale, as synthetic fibers were quickly being developed. By 1933, the production of hemp in the United States had dropped to 500 tons with only 1,300 acres of hemp produced commercially. By 1936, E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company created a Rayon Department as part of their textile fibers operations. In February 1937, du Pont was granted a patent for “monocomponent artificial filaments or the like of synthetic polymers.” Nylon became commercially produced as early as 1939.⁵⁵

Evolution of Cordage from the Late-Nineteenth through the Mid-Twentieth Century

A universally accepted definition for the term “cordage” may not yet exist; however, the term is generally understood to include all manner of threads, yarns, twines, cords, ropes, and cables. Prior to the advent of fully synthetic fibers in the 1930s, cordage had historically been produced

⁵⁰ “Covington, Kentucky, U.S., Directories, including Dayton, Bellevue, Ludlow, Milldale and Bromley, Kentucky,” 1890, 1892, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.ancestry.com/search/collections/5126/; “The Victoria Cordage Co.,” Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library, Accessed online December 2024 at: <https://digital.cincinnati.org/digital/api/collection/p16998coll5/id/48221/download>.

⁵¹ John Boh, “Textiles.” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky* (Lexington: 2009 University Press of Kentucky), 873.

⁵² John Boh, “Textiles.” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky* (Lexington: 2009 University Press of Kentucky), 874.

⁵³ Danae Peckler, “A History of Hemp and Flax Production in the Bluegrass State,” *Magnolia*, Vol. XXIX, No. 4, Fall-Winter 2016-2017, Southern Garden History Society, accessed December 2024 online at https://southerngardenhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Magnolia_FallWinter2016-17.pdf.

⁵⁴ John Boh, “Textiles.” *The Encyclopedia of Northern Kentucky* (Lexington: 2009 University Press of Kentucky), 874.

⁵⁵ David P. West, “Fiber Wars: The Extinction of Kentucky Hemp,” 1995, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newheadnews.com/hemp/fiberwars/index.html; Hagley Museum and Library, Smithsonian Affiliate, “On This Date, February 16, in 1937, E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co. Was Granted U.S Patent...” Accessed online December 2024 at: www.hagley.org/research/news/hagley-vault/date-february-16-1937-ei-du-pont-de-nemours-co-was-granted-us-patent.

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from plant fibers. Nearly all plant fibers are classified by their structure and their origin within different parts of the plant. Three major classification groups exist; they are as follows.⁵⁶

1. Long, or multiple-celled fibers, which are further subdivided into two subgroups.
 - a. Hard or leaf fibers, such as abaca, sisal, henequen, piteira, fique, yucca, pita floja, and palm fibers. These fibers are hard and stiff in texture and extend lengthwise through leaves or leaf stems. Hard-fiber plants are primarily grown in tropical regions outside of the United States.
 - b. Soft or bast fibers, such as flax, hemp, cadillo, jute, and ramie. These fibers are soft and flexible in texture and extend through the inner bark of plant stems or stalks. Many soft-fiber plants are grown throughout the United States.
2. Short, or single-celled fibers, which include seed hairs and hairs produced inside of seed pods, such as kapok, pochote, and samohu.
3. Miscellaneous fibers, from roots and stems, including broomroot and treebeard.⁵⁷

In general, hard fibers are used chiefly for coarse twines and cordage while soft fibers are preferred for finer twine, thread, and for yarn to be woven into textiles.⁵⁸

Soft Fiber Cordage

Early settlers in Kentucky were quick to plant flax and hemp, both of which are well suited to the production of soft fiber cordage. Flax was first produced in Kentucky in the late eighteenth century and used to make textile thread for linens as well as linseed oil. A linseed oil industry took root around 1815, boosting production of flax; however, cottonseed oil produced in southern states soon became an attractive alternative for consumers. Flax suffered from being labor intensive and could not be efficiently manufactured on a large scale.⁵⁹ These considerations resulted in flax cultivation mostly vanishing by the early years of the twentieth century.⁶⁰

The production of hemp in Kentucky began around 1775. Hemp, as compared to flax, would yield three or four times more fiber per acre and require less work.⁶¹ Demand for hemp sailcloth and cordage encouraged Kentucky's hemp industry to flourish, particularly between 1840 and 1860. From the end of the Civil War until 1912, virtually all hemp produced in the United States

⁵⁶ Brittain B. Robinson and Falba L. Johnson, "Abaca – A Cordage Fiber," Agriculture Monograph No. 21, United States Department of Agriculture, 1953, 3.

⁵⁷ Lyster H. Dewey, "Fiber Production in the Western Hemisphere", Miscellaneous Publication No. 518, United States Department of Agriculture, 1943, 1.

⁵⁸ Lyster H. Dewey, "Fiber Production in the Western Hemisphere", Miscellaneous Publication No. 518, United States Department of Agriculture, 1943, 2.

⁵⁹ Danae Peckler, "A History of Hemp and Flax Production in the Bluegrass State," Magnolia, Vol. XXIX, No. 4, Fall-Winter 2016-2017, Southern Garden History Society, accessed December 2024 online at https://southerngardenhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Magnolia_FallWinter2016-17.pdf.

⁶⁰ M. Kat Anderson, "Weaving Cloth and Culture from Flax: Connecting Continents and Generations," Fibershed, July 16, 2024, accessed December 2024 online at <https://fibershed.org/2024/07/16/cloth-flax/>.

⁶¹ Danae Peckler, "A History of Hemp and Flax Production in the Bluegrass State," Magnolia, Vol. XXIX, No. 4, Fall-Winter 2016-2017, Southern Garden History Society, accessed December 2024 online at https://southerngardenhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Magnolia_FallWinter2016-17.pdf.

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was grown in Kentucky. World War I created an increased demand for hemp, and production expanded to several other states.⁶²

Between 1870 and 1930, the average commercial farming operation had decreased crop diversity in favor of focusing on relatively few crops that could provide ever greater yields through use of new machinery, fertilizer, and pesticides. In Kentucky, tobacco, corn, and livestock feeds became the principal crops. By 1910, production of hemp had nearly vanished.⁶³ In 1937, the Marijuana Tax Act, partially tied to the Prohibition movement, was in place. This cost-prohibitive tax required “all growers, importers and processors of hemp to register and be licensed.” The United States Department of Agriculture quickly began researching ways to create a “hemp variety with little or no active drug.”⁶⁴

Hard Fiber Cordage

Regarding hard fiber cordage, fibers such as abaca (also known as Manila hemp) and sisal are commonly used. Abaca is native to the Philippine Islands. Sisal and henequen, two closely related agave fibers, are indigenous to the tropical regions of North and South America but have also been produced in parts of Africa and Indonesia. Jute, for its part, is primarily sourced from Pakistan and India.⁶⁵

Lack of large-scale domestic production of hard fiber material required American cordage manufacturers to secure their raw material from international suppliers. Market forces compelled competing manufacturers to unite to form a large industrial consolidation, leading to one of the first instances of an American industrial monopoly. The National Cordage Company (often referred to as the Cordage Trust) was that monopoly; it traces its genesis to trade agreements that were first put in place in 1861 that ultimately led to that Company’s incorporation in 1887. Four large cordage companies in New York and New Jersey formed the nucleus of the National Cordage Company, but by 1890 an additional ten smaller mills were controlled through leases and options. Control of these 14 mills effectively put the National Cordage Company in control of 40 percent of rope and twine production in the United States.⁶⁶

When the National Cordage Company was formed, it acquired control of supplies of sisal and abaca. Competitors had difficulty in securing raw materials; the smaller ones were forced into selling their businesses to the larger trust. The National Cordage Company manipulated the raw materials market, including inducing the firms in Manila to agree not to sell to any American

⁶² Daryl T. Ehrensing, “Feasibility of Industrial Hemp Production in the United States Pacific Northwest,” Oregon State University, May 1998, accessed December 2024 online at <https://www.votehemp.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/sb681.pdf>.

⁶³ Danae Peckler, “A History of Hemp and Flax Production in the Bluegrass State,” *Magnolia*, Vol. XXIX, No. 4, Fall-Winter 2016-2017, Southern Garden History Society, accessed December 2024 online at https://southerngardenhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Magnolia_FallWinter2016-17.pdf.

⁶⁴ David P. West, “Fiber Wars: The Extinction of Kentucky Hemp,” 1995, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newheadnews.com/hemp/fiberwars/index.html.

⁶⁵ Brittain B. Robinson and Falba L. Johnson, “Abaca – A Cordage Fiber,” *Agriculture Monograph No. 21*, United States Department of Agriculture, 1953, 6-8.

⁶⁶ Arthur S. Dewing, *A History of the National Cordage Company*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1913), 3-11.

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manufacturer except for the National Cordage Company. The Company also entered into contracts and agreements with the manufacturers of various cordage machinery in both the United States and England to not sell their products to competitors of the Company.⁶⁷

By the spring of 1892, the National Cordage Company dominated the market for both raw hard-fiber materials and manufactured cordage. Later that year, the Company's contracts with machinery suppliers unraveled following a legal challenge that resulted in the invalidation of a crucial patent. Additionally, new mills were being created at a rate that equaled or outpaced the rate at which the Company could purchase competing mills. The National Cordage Company continued to acquire competing mills, often at inflated prices. The Company issued a large stock dividend in January of 1893 to bolster investor confidence despite fictitious earnings, and by May, the National Cordage Company effectively collapsed.⁶⁸

Although companies like Overman & Schrader were able to take advantage of the collapse of the National Cordage Company beginning in the 1890s, their success was quickly affected by advancements in technology. By the 1930s, synthetic fibers took the place of natural fibers.⁶⁹

The Hard and Soft Fiber Textile Industry at 1564 Banklick Street

Three successive and successful hard and soft fiber cordage manufacturing companies operated at the large complex located roughly at 16th, Russell, and Banklick Streets from the late nineteenth century through circa 1930. These companies include Overman and Schrader Company, Eagle Cordage Mills, and Hooven & Allison Company. All three companies were important in Covington's thriving textile industry in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Hard fiber cordage was produced in the brick factory building at 1564 Banklick Street. Soft fiber was produced in the associated (non-extant) soft cordage mill complex.

The first manufacturer of cordage on the property was the Overman & Schrader Company. The company was established in 1880 and incorporated in 1895 by John Overman and Charles Schrader.⁷⁰ The company manufactured as well as bought and sold twine and cordage, primarily for the shipping industry, which included hard and soft fibers.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Arthur S. Dewing, *A History of the National Cordage Company*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1913), 16-19.

⁶⁸ Arthur S. Dewing, *A History of the National Cordage Company*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1913), 23-29.

⁶⁹ Brittain B. Robinson and Falba L. Johnson, "Abaca – A Cordage Fiber," Agriculture Monograph No. 21, United States Department of Agriculture, 1953, 3; Ropewalk: A Cordage Engineer's Journey Through History, Documentary Interview with Bill Hagenbuch of Hooven Allison, 2008, Accessed online December 2024 at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssU-t5BZAYk>.

⁷⁰ John Overman (1846-1909) was no stranger to textiles. His father Anthony was listed as a tailor in the 1850 Census.⁷⁰ By 1870, at the age of 23, John also listed tailor as his occupation; Ancestry.com, 1850 United States Federal Census [database on-line], Lehi, UT, 2009, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.ancestry.com; Ancestry.com, 1870 United States Federal Census [database on-line], Lehi, UT, 2009, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.ancestry.com.

⁷¹ John Boh, "A Main Strasse Apartment/Parking Garage Complex and its Predecessors," Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society, September/October 2019, 3.

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The collapse of the National Cordage Company in 1893 proved beneficial to Overman & Schrader in both the near term and the long term. This collapse had the almost immediate effect of redistributing market share to the remaining cordage companies throughout the country. As noted in an 1896 newspaper article, Overman & Schrader was one of those growing companies.

*We are running overtime in our works and to full capacity of machinery and shops. Through a combination of circumstances, mainly due to the breaking of the great Cordage Trust, our trade has improved in many of our special lines, and notably so in twines. We also make a specialty of a high grade of marine goods, in which line we have a very large trade throughout the states at present. Collections are fair.*⁷²

In the long term, the collapse of the National Cordage Company broke the monopoly that controlled hard fiber raw materials from the Philippines, allowing companies like Overman & Schrader to better compete in the hard fiber cordage market. Factors such as this helped pave the way for success in the hard fiber business and thus, construction of the building at 1564 Banklick Street in 1899.

As a result, by the early twentieth century, the Overman & Schrader Cordage Company's plant thrived in Covington, near the heart of the hemp production in central Kentucky, employing over 400 people.⁷³ In 1903, the *Kentucky Post* newspaper boasted,

*Kentucky is a hemp state, it is fitting, therefore, that it should make lots of rope and twine. Accordingly, it is not surprising to learn that Covington has the biggest cordage factory in Kentucky, and one of the largest in America – the Overman-Schrader Cordage Works.*⁷⁴

The survival of the business was especially impressive through the Financial Panic of 1907; however, John Overman died April 10, 1908. He had recently retired as Vice-President of the company but had retained ownership of his stock. His obituary states, "he was a lifelong resident of this city, where he had been in business for many years. He began when a young boy at the bottom of the ladder in the rope business, and by constant attention, energy and ambition, gradually rose and succeeded until, with Schrader, he built up one of the largest cordage concerns in the country."⁷⁵

In 1908, the Overman & Schrader Company petitioned the Covington Council for tax exemption for a period of five years, "...on \$10,000 worth of machinery and \$8000 worth of raw material." The company claimed they were going to "branch out in its plant by manufacturing a new hard-fiber rope; that they would employ about 150 persons, who would come to Covington with their

⁷² "The Overman & Schrader Cordage Company," *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, May 31, 1896, 20.

⁷³ John Boh, "A Main Strasse Apartment/Parking Garage Complex and its Predecessors," *Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society*, September/October 2019, 3.

⁷⁴ No Title, *Kentucky Post*, March 11, 1903, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760452031/?match=1&terms=victoria%20cordage.

⁷⁵ "John Overman Dead," *Kentucky Post*, April 11, 1908, 2, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760408530/.

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families from Xenia, O., Dayton, O., and other cities.”⁷⁶ Three months later, the company was granted tax exemption from taxation of raw materials for five years.⁷⁷

The 1909 Sanborn Map illustrates the enormity of the company’s Covington plant that included a soft fiber as well as hard fiber mill area (**Figure 28**). The oldest portion of the complex (destroyed by the 1975 fire), running parallel to and oriented toward Russell Street was primarily the soft fiber mill. An office is noted at the center of the building along Russell Street within a two-story section of the building. The railroad is depicted roughly in the same location as it was on the 1894 Sanborn Map. This area of the facility included a carding mill, picker area, spinning department, polishing department, a layer department, tar department, a twine balling area, and a machine shop. The long building (no longer extant) appears to have had a central section that was two stories tall with flanking one story areas running the length of the building north-south. The map notes that the area of the two-story section above the one-story sections’ roofs was clad in iron. Additional fire suppression features included automatic sprinklers, multiple interior hydrant hoses, exterior double hydrants, and iron clad fire doors.⁷⁸

The 1909 Sanborn Map notes that the brick warehouse building (the building being nominated) is the hard fiber mill (See **Figure 28**, next page). It is depicted as brick masonry with four floors and wood posts with centered 18 feet and 10 feet apart. The first level of the building was designated as the packing room; the second level was the rope room; the third level was the spinning room; and the fourth level housed the hackeling and drawing machines. Hackeling was a process that cleaned the hemp fibers before they were used for making rope. Hackles generally included a wood base with upright iron spikes used to “comb” the fibers.⁷⁹ The wall thickness for the building is noted as 12 inches thick at the first floor and 16 inches thick at the fourth floor. An open elevator is noted in the northeast corner of the building. The brick building appears to have been attached to the soft fiber mill building on its east elevation. The railroad siding is depicted traveling between the two buildings at the southern end where the two buildings join. The use of the first level of the brick building as a packing room would make this a logical location for a railroad siding.⁸⁰

A two-story, frame tar house is depicted north of the brick building. This building had an area designated for pattern storage. Also, north of the brick building and east of the tar house was a 100,000 gallon cistern. Further north was a frame one-story raw material warehouse. The warehouse is noted as having corrugated iron on “studdings.” An area at the south end of the raw material warehouse was an area for oakum tarring. Oakum is a twisted fiber that was created from older ropes or fiber pieces that were often coated in tar. Oakum was used as a sealant to fill in gaps in ships as well as buildings. The area east of the raw material warehouse and west of the

⁷⁶ “Ask Council to Exempt Cordage Co.,” *Kentucky Post*, August 29, 1908, 2, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760507677/?match=1&terms=overman.

⁷⁷ “Overman & Schrader Co. Exempt from Taxation on Raw Material,” *Kentucky Post*, November 13, 1908, 7, Accessed December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760555520/?match=1&terms=overman.

⁷⁸ Sanborn Map Co., *Insurance Maps for Covington, Kentucky*, 1909, 43.

⁷⁹ Sanborn Map Co., *Insurance Maps for Covington, Kentucky*, 1909, 43; “Rope Making: Dressing or Hackling,” *Revolutionary Players, History West Midlands*, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.revolutionaryplayers.org.uk/rope-making-dressing-or-hackling/.

⁸⁰ Sanborn Map Co., *Insurance Maps for Covington, Kentucky*, 1909, 43.

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soft fiber mill appears to have been open space. Two tar cisterns and one oil cistern are noted within the space.⁸¹

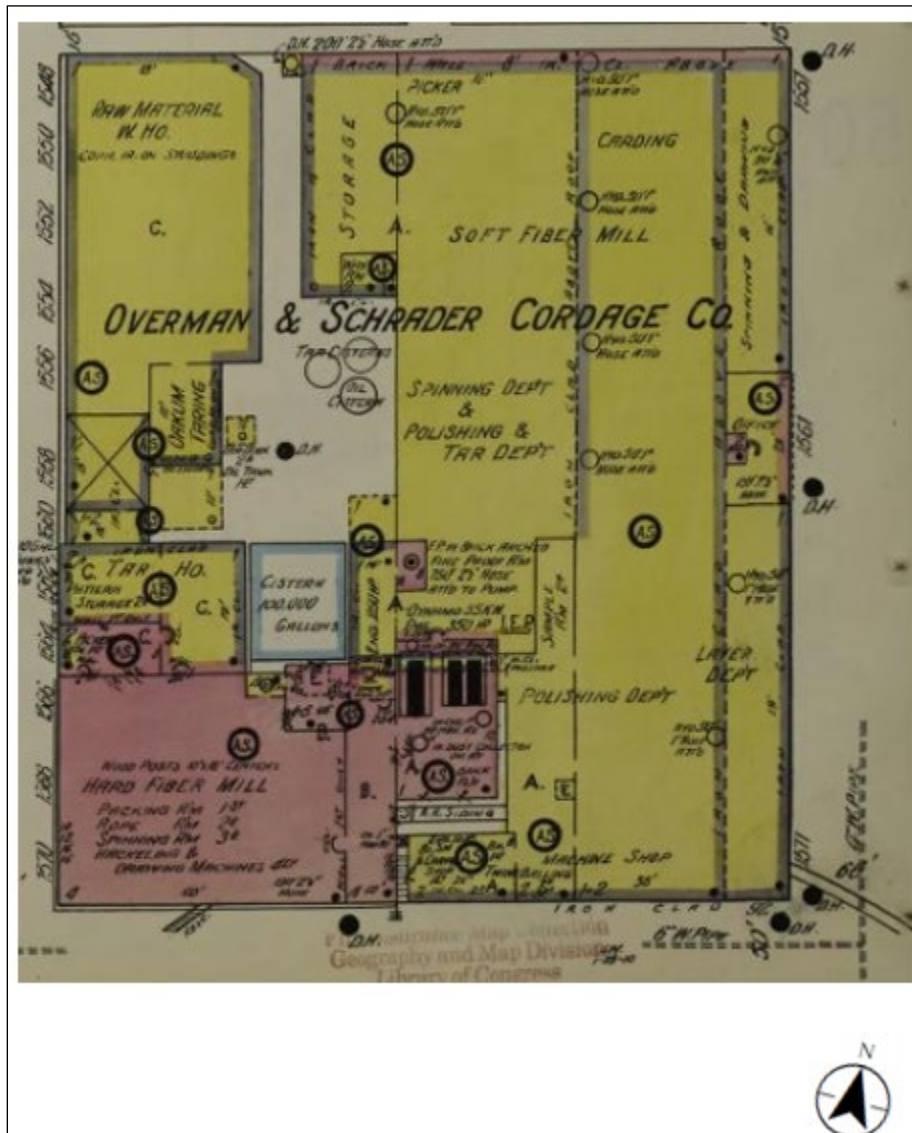


Figure 28 1909 Sanborn Map showing Overman & Schrader Cordage Company, note current day 1564 Banklick Street building in southwest corner of block.⁸²

Although perhaps somewhat stylized, an advertisement for the Overman Schrader Cordage Company's Eagle Twine Mills illustrates the likely layout of the block following construction of the building at Banklick and 16th Street. The advertisement is undated, but the Eagle Twine added to the name would indicate that it is post 1900. The configuration of the building fronting Russell Street, with the central two-story office area appears to represent the arrangement

⁸¹ Sanborn Map Co., Insurance Maps for Covington, Kentucky, 1909, 43.

⁸² Sanborn Map Co., Insurance Maps for Covington, Kentucky, 1909, 43.

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depicted in the 1909 Sanborn Map. The building at 1564 Banklick appears to be depicted on the left side of the sketch, with a pronounced brick cornice and four levels (**Figure 29**).⁸³

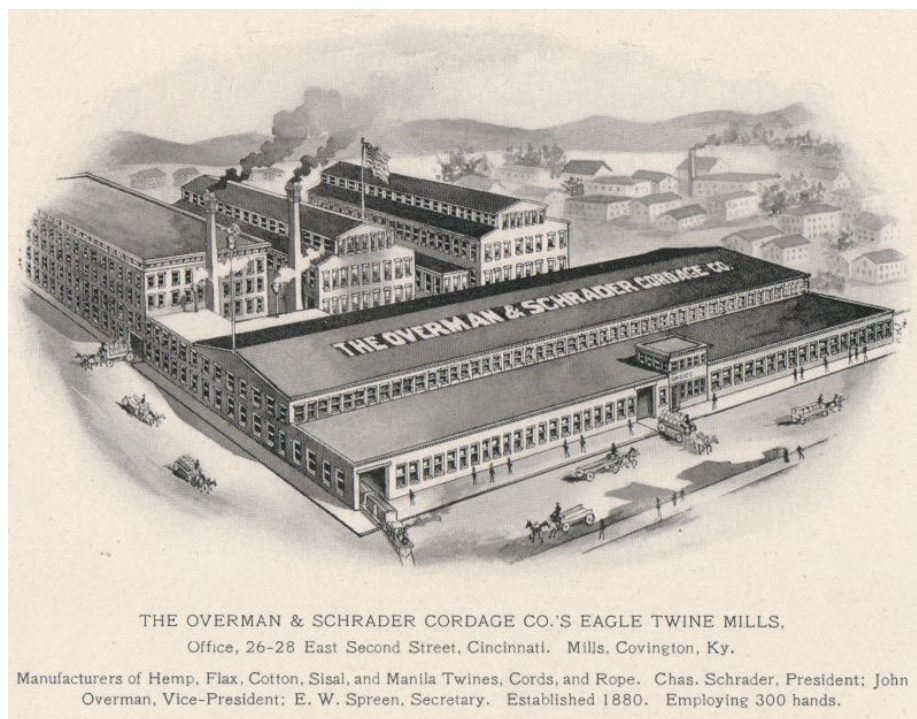


Figure 29 Undated advertisement, Overman & Schrader Cordage Co.’s Eagle Twine Mills, view looking northwest, with the long gable-roof building fronting Russell Street, note building at left with brick stepped cornice, location and characteristics make it likely that it represents the current 1564 Banklick Street building.⁸⁴

The 1908/1909 volume of Textile World Record lists the Overman & Schrader Cordage Company’s Covington location. The textile journal notes that the company’s...

*new department...manufactures all hard fiber cordage, making everything in the line of manila and sisal from the smallest cordage to the largest cable or hawser. This department is in full operation, giving employment to additional capital of \$200,000 and about 150 men. This company has been a large manufacturer of a full line of soft fiber cordage of hemp, flax and jute for many years. The present capital stock of the company, which is an Ohio corporation, is \$450,000, and it has a surplus of \$150,000.*⁸⁵

⁸³ “Overman Schrader Cordage Company,” Undated, Northern Kentucky Views, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.nkyviews.com/kenton/kenton_cov_businesses_wom.htm.

⁸⁴ “Overman Schrader Cordage Company,” Undated, Northern Kentucky Views, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.nkyviews.com/kenton/kenton_cov_businesses_wom.htm.

⁸⁵ Textile World, Comprising October 1908 – March, 1909, Volume XXXVI, 182, Accessed online December 2024 at:

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The new department at Overman & Schrader also garnered mention in the *Boston Evening Transcript*, where it was announced that “hard fiber cordage is soon to be a product of the plant of the Overman & Schrader Cordage Company.”⁸⁶

In 1909, a breakdown at the Overman & Schrader Company resulted in layoffs. Charles C. Chase, who had become president of Overman & Schrader in 1910, took over the company as receiver for \$61,000.⁸⁷

CHARLES SCHRADER, Pres't & Gen'l Mgr. JOHN OVERMAN, Vice Pres't & Treas.

Overman & Schrader Cordage Co.
MANUFACTURERS OF
Twines and Cordage

EAGLE MILLS. MILLS, COVINGTON, KY.

Order No. **3361** SEP 29 1906
Covington, Ky. Sold to *Clifton Mfg Co* Clifton, Mo.
No Agents allowed to collect Bills. No claims allowed, unless made on receipt of goods.
TERMS: DUE *Nov 9-06* OR *10%* OFF FOR CASH IF PAID *Oct 9-06* IN FUNDS PAR AT CINCINNATI.

3 Bales 4 ply 32 Sail Twine	60 85		
427' x 14 1/4			
<i>F. O. B. CINCINNATI</i>			
<i>Less 25¢ cut for</i>	1 07	59 78	

To get advantage of discount, remittances must be made in 10 days from invoice date. No claims allowed unless made on arrival of goods.

Short 1 Bale 141' Harry Hill

Figure 30. 1906 Invoice for Overman & Schrader Cordage Co.'s Eagle Mills.⁸⁸

In October 1912, Chase spoke before the Board of Aldermen in Covington as a representative of Eagle Cordage Mill. Chase revealed his plan to “take over the Overman & Schrader Cordage Co. and reorganize it [with a new name]. Claiming that the retention of the plant in Covington would benefit the city.”⁸⁹ Eagle Cordage Mills of Covington was incorporated in November 1912, “with a capital stock of \$50,000” and became the second cordage manufacturer to operate on the

www.google.com/books/edition/Textile_World_Record/2fjNAAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Overman+and+Schrader+Covington&pg=PA182&printsec=frontcover.

⁸⁶ “To Produce Hard-Fiber Cordage,” *Boston Evening Transcript*, October 27, 1908, 4.

⁸⁷ John Boh, “A Main Strasse Apartment/Parking Garage Complex and its Predecessors,” *Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society*, September/October 2019, 3; “Breakdown at Big Plant: 400 Toilers are Out,” *Kentucky Post*, March 23, 1909, 2, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760478661/.

⁸⁸ “Overman & Schrader Cordage Co.’s Eagle Mills Bill” 1906, Columbia University Libraries, Accessed online December 2024 at: <https://dlc.library.columbia.edu/catalog/ldpd:397102>.

⁸⁹ “To Reorganize Cordage Co.; Ask an Exemption,” *Kentucky Post*, October 12, 1912, 3, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760821539/?match=1.

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site.⁹⁰ In December 1912, the Board of Aldermen granted the Eagle Cordage Mills five years of tax exemption on raw materials and machinery.⁹¹ Although the company was not incorporated until 1912, archival research revealed a bill from 1906 that indicates that the name Eagle Twine Mills or Eagle Mills was associated with Overman & Schrader Company in some capacity by 1906 (**Figure 30**).⁹²

In 1912, a receiver's sale was advertised of "real and personal property in the matter of C.C. Chase vs. The Overman & Schrader Cordage Co." The public sale of property included:

1. *All of the inventoried goods and material, including raw materials, materials in process of manufacture and finished goods, both of soft and hard fiber, miscellaneous materials, fuel and supplies of all kinds, within may then be on hand and undisposed of, the same to be offered either in bulk or separately in such lots or parcels as may be desired.*
2. *All the machinery and appliances connected with and known as the hard fiber machinery and plant.*
3. *All the machinery and appliances connected with and known as the soft fiber machinery and plant.*
4. *The real estate upon which is situated and located the plant of said The Overman & Schrader Cordage Co...*⁹³

The entire block, from the northwest corner of Russell and 16th streets, north 300 feet, then west to Banklick Street, south to 16th Street and east back to Russell was included in the reorganization. "With this real estate shall be sold as part of it all the buildings thereon, and also the sprinkling apparatus connected with said building and power plant and the shafting connected with the power plant." The real estate was valued at \$46,000.⁹⁴ Only five months later, the registered trademark of Overman & Schrader Cordage Company was advertised for sale.⁹⁵ An advertisement from 1915 lists Eagle Cordage Mills as the "successor" to Overman & Schrader (**Figure 31**).⁹⁶

⁹⁰ "Eagle Cordage Mills Incorporated," *Boston Evening Transcript*, Boston, Massachusetts, November 12, 1912, 4, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/735712040/.

⁹¹ "Aldermen Meet," *Kentucky Post*, December 21, 1912, 6, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760828268/?match=1&terms=eagle%20cordage.

⁹² "Overman & Schrader Cordage Co.'s Eagle Mills Bill" 1906, Columbia University Libraries, Accessed online December 2024 at: <https://dlc.library.columbia.edu/catalog/ldpd:397102>.

⁹³ "Judicial Sale," *Kentucky Post*, May 27, 1912, 4, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760482060/?match=1&terms=cordage.

⁹⁴ "Judicial Sale," *Kentucky Post*, May 27, 1912, 4, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760482060/?match=1&terms=cordage.

⁹⁵ "Receiver's Sale," *Kentucky Post*, October 16, 1912, 6, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760821937/?match=1&terms=cordage.

⁹⁶ Cordage Trade Journal, New York, Vol. LI No. I, July 1, 1915, 3, Accessed online November 2024 at: books.google.com/books?id=IDBGvpVXZhcC&newbks=0&printsec=frontcover&pg=PA3&dq=Overman+and+Schrader+Covington&hl=en&source=newbks_fb#v=onepage&q=Overman%20and%20Schrader%20Covington&f=false.

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Eagle Cordage Mills, Covington, Kentucky
Successors to
The Overman & Schrader Cordage Company
Manufacturing a general line of
Commercial Twines, Packing and Marlines

Figure 31 1915 Advertisement for Eagle Cordage Mills.⁹⁷

In 1917, a permit was issued by a Covington building inspector to remodel the Eagle Cordage Co. plant “at the northwest corner of 16th and Russell streets” (no longer extant). A newspaper announcement notes, “the outside walls of the mill are to be replaced with brick at an expense estimated at \$5000. B.T. Wisenall of Covington is the architect and John J. Craig the contractor.”⁹⁸ Although it is not detailed within the permit, it is assumed that this additional brick was added to the older building(s) on the parcel that is no longer extant.

The incorporation for Eagle Cordage Mills was dissolved in 1923; however, it appears from newspaper accounts that Hooven & Allison were operating the facility as early as 1919, if not before.⁹⁹ Thus, Hooven & Allison became the third company to manufacture cordage on this property.¹⁰⁰ Hooven & Allison Company was founded in Xenia, Ohio in 1869. The company made “rope, binder twine, commercial twine, tarred twine, clothes lines, packing and Oakum.”¹⁰¹ They used “Manila, Sisal, Kentucky Hemp and Jute.”¹⁰² Hooven & Allison was operating mills in Xenia, Cincinnati, Covington, and North Kansas City Missouri.¹⁰³

In 1920, Hooven & Allison announced an increase in their capital stock, crediting “the rise in value of all materials that enter into the manufacture of cordage and the output provided by

⁹⁷ Cordage Trade Journal, New York, Vol. LI No. I, July 1, 1915, 3, Accessed online November 2024 at: books.google.com/books?id=IDBGvpVXZhcC&newbks=0&printsec=frontcover&pg=PA3&dq=Overman+and+Schrader+Covington&hl=en&source=newbks_fb#v=onepage&q=Overman%20and%20Schrader%20Covington&f=false

⁹⁸ “Mill Building to be Remodeled,” *Kentucky Post*, January 22, 1917, 4, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760553546/?match=1&terms=eagle%20cordage.

⁹⁹ “Statement of Dissolution,” *Kentucky Post*, April 26, 1923, 6 Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760475688.

¹⁰⁰ “Praise is Given Firemen,” *Kentucky Post*, June 4, 1919, 1, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760559397/?match=1&terms=hooven; no official announcement could be found about the takeover from Eagle Cordage to Hooven & Allison. It seems that it was business as usual, under a different name.

¹⁰¹ “Hooven & Allison Co. Not Sold,” *Cordage Trade Journal*, New York, July 15, 1926, Vol. LXXIII, No. 2., 17.

¹⁰² “Hooven & Allison Co. Not Sold,” *Cordage Trade Journal*, New York, July 15, 1926, Vol. LXXIII, No. 2., 17; “Birds-Eye View of Xenia Mills Printed,” *Gazette News-Current* (Xenia, Ohio), October 4, 1917, 7, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/90508673.

¹⁰³ “Hooven & Allison Co. Not Sold,” *Cordage Trade Journal*, New York, July 15, 1926, Vol. LXXIII, No. 2., 17; “Birds-Eye View of Xenia Mills Printed,” *Gazette News-Current* (Xenia, Ohio), October 4, 1917, 7, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/90508673.

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increased equipment.”¹⁰⁴ By this time, their North Kansas City plant and main factory in Xenia, Ohio were their largest operations with the Covington Kentucky facility referred to as a “branch factory.” Hooven & Allison continued to operate out of the Covington textile complex through the late 1920s/circa 1930 (Figure 32).¹⁰⁵

Little information was located on the departure of Hooven & Allison from Covington in the late 1920s/circa 1930. The change from natural fiber materials to synthetic fibers, as well as the effects of the Great Depression, spelled the end of an era for the cordage industry in Covington. Textile companies coped by consolidating their activities from local hubs, such as this one in Peaseburg, to larger manufacturing areas to the north. Hooven & Allison enlarged one of their mills in Ohio to respond to these economic and technical challenges.¹⁰⁶ The company transitioned to the use of synthetic fiber at their larger location in Xenia, Ohio and continued to do so until 2003.¹⁰⁷ The 1929 Covington business directory is the last directory to list a cordage, twine, or rope company in the city. Other Ohio River towns in Northern Kentucky including Ludlow, Dayton, Bellevue, Newport, and Bromley do not include any cordage, twine, or rope manufactures after 1911. By 1931, the northeast corner of Banklick and 16th Streets is listed as vacant. Hooven & Allison appear to have been the last cordage mill to have operated in the city, when they shuttered their doors circa 1930.¹⁰⁸



Figure 32 1924 Advertisement for Hooven & Allison Cordage Company.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ “Hooven & Allison Company Plans Increase of Capital Stock to \$6,000,000,” *The Kansas City Post* (Kansas City, Missouri), March 30, 1920, 2, Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/1024695806/.

¹⁰⁵ “Statement of Dissolution,” *Kentucky Post*, April 26, 1923, 6 Accessed online December 2024 at: www.newspapers.com/image/760475688.

¹⁰⁶ No author, *Dayton Daily News*, January 6, 1929, p 51.

¹⁰⁷ Ropewalk: A Cordage Engineer’s Journey Through History, Documentary Interview with Bill Hagenbuch of Hooven Allison, 2008, Accessed online December 2024 at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssU-t5BZayk>.

¹⁰⁸ *Williams’ Covington and Newport Directory: Including Bellevue, Bromley, Clifton, Dayton, Fort Mitchell, Fort Thomas, Ingalls Park, Ludlow, Southgate and Woodlawn Kentucky*, 1928-1929, 1931-1932.

¹⁰⁹ Advertisement, *The Painter & Decorator*, Official Journal of The Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America,” December 1924, Number Twelve, Volume XXXVIII.

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Evaluation of the Significance of the Overman & Schrader/Eagle Cordage Mills/Hooven & Allison Companies within the Historic Context “The Cordage Textile Industry in Covington, Kenton County, Kentucky, 1828-1930s”

The Overman & Schrader Cordage Company, along with its successors Eagle Cordage Mills and Hooven & Allison, were important cordage manufacturing companies in Covington, Kenton County, Kentucky. As discussed in the historic context section above, the cordage industry, in both its hard fiber and soft fiber iterations, was important to the growth and development of textile production and employment in Northern Kentucky from the early nineteenth through the early twentieth centuries—a period spanning approximately one hundred years. Starting in the late 1820s and lasting until the late 1920s/early 1930s, production of textiles was a significant activity in Covington and Northern Kentucky as a whole. The reasons for this success are multifaceted but are generally centered around the strategic location in which there was efficient transit, in the forms of barge or railroad transit of goods, and a semi-skilled labor force, familiar with this type of work, as discussed in the historic context above.

Upon its establishment by Overman & Schrader Company in 1899, this property served as an important manufacturer and employer in Covington for the next 31 years with successive companies manufacturing the same materials (hard and soft fiber cordage) in the same group buildings until its closure circa 1930. These companies benefited from their central location in Covington, adjacent to efficient transit provided by the Ohio River and the C&O Railroad line, as well as to a synergy of skilled textile-related labor and industries which benefitted companies like Overman & Schrader and its successors. Overman & Schrader and its successor cordage companies qualify among the small group of important textile manufacturers, as demonstrated in the property history above. Following trends discussed in the historic context for this property, the last cordage company to both operate on this property and in the city of Covington, Hooven & Allison, shuttered their doors in Covington circa 1930. They moved these operations north and west where they had larger factories in Ohio and Missouri.

The hard fiber building at 1564 Banklick is the sole remaining building from the larger complex, as seen in **Figure 28** and **Figure 29** above, as a result of a devastating fire in 1975. At this point, an HVAC company owned the property. While this loss certainly impacts the integrity of the resource, the hard fiber building at 1564 Banklick Street is among the last examples of an important once-thriving industry in Covington, Kenton County. The building represents trends illuminated in the historic context, such as the growth and expansion of the textile industry from the early nineteenth through the early twentieth century.

Evaluation of the Integrity and Significance of the Overman & Schrader/Eagle Cordage Mills/Hooven & Allison Companies

The Overman & Schrader/Eagle Cordage Mill/Hooven & Allison Company building at 1564 Banklick Street, constructed in 1899, was continuously used for production of hard fiber cordage until the last successful industry, Hooven & Allison, closed circa 1930. Therefore, the period of significance for this property is circa 1899 to circa 1930. The hard fiber production building

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maintains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association to this period of significance, in various degrees, as discussed in the integrity examination below. This integrity helps us understand the importance of this industry and these companies in Covington and the larger Northern Kentucky region.

It is important to note that only a small portion of the once-mighty factory complex is extant: the hard fiber cordage building at 1564 Banklick Street. Approximately, 70 percent of the full footprint of the circa 1930 physical plant is gone, due to a devastating fire that destroyed the (mostly frame) soft cordage production facilities on this property. While this certainly impacts integrity of setting, it does not lead to a negative assessment of overall integrity. First, the remaining building is associated solely with hard fiber production on the site. This portion of the production of cordage is intact, whereas the production of soft fiber cordage cannot be successfully represented on this property, due to no extant resources with this association. Second, this building represents, as far as can be determined from perusal of KHC/SHPO survey files and local archival sources, the sole remaining extant property with an association with a significant cordage industry in the city of Covington.¹¹⁰ Finally, the rarity of the resource type coupled with the significance of the industry in Covington combine to form a strong integrity of **association** with this important industrial activity. Thus, leading to a sound integrity of **association**.

While much has been lost here with relation to the production of soft fiber cordage, as will have been lost on any industrial plant that was deactivated nearly a century ago, this integrity analysis calls us to identify the parts of the property that remain, which help us realize the genius of the companies that brought strength to Covington as an industrial community.

The hard fiber manufacturing building retains integrity of **location**. It has not been moved and remains in the same location as it did historically, in the heart of industrial Covington's Peaselburg neighborhood. It stands within a short distance of CSX Railroad access, which united it to the former hemp-producing areas of central Kentucky.

There is an integrity of **setting** maintained by the presence of the large Peaselburg historic neighborhood west and south of the building. The areas west and south of the building primarily are twentieth century residential, as they were when this building was constructed and during its Period of Significance. East of Russell Street and the railroad tracks is an area of commercial buildings. The commercial buildings are located between Russell Street and an active CSX railroad line that travels north-south through Covington. This area alongside the railroad line has maintained a commercial and industrial use and during the 1890s was the location for the Covington Stockyards. Its continued use for commercial operations is in keeping with the historic setting of the brick warehouse.

¹¹⁰ In addition to KHC/SHPO files, archival research included: review of the *Williams' Covington and Newport Directory: Including Bellevue, Bromley, Clifton, Dayton, Fort Mitchell, Fort Thomas, Ingalls Park, Ludlow, Southgate and Woodlawn Kentucky, 1869-1960*; records of the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library, Ohio; the Kenton County Historical Society, Kentucky; Library of Congress; and Cordage Trade Journals.

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There have been obvious changes to the property's setting that do not reinforce the building's early twentieth century identity. Most of this occurs on the original site of the soft cordage production mill, destroyed by fire in 1975. East of the building on the same property is the steelyard. This location is an open area for collecting scrap metal, which was a location previously held by portions of the associated soft fiber mill. A modern brick apartment complex is located north of the building. This apartment building is three stories in height and is setback from Banklick Street and Russell Street. The apartments are situated on the site of former soft fiber cordage manufacturing facilities as well. In sum, integrity of setting on the property is compromised, especially with relation to the production of soft fiber. However, the setting within Covington's Peaselburg neighborhood and with relation to the Ohio River and the railroad remain intact. Thus, the building gains a larger sense of setting from the surrounding neighborhood, not necessarily from the subject property.

The Overman & Schrader Cordage Company building retains sufficient integrity of **design** and **materials**. The building retains its brick exterior, most of its window sash, segmental brick arch lintels, rowlock brick cornice, stone sills, stair and freight elevator tower, wood floors, wooden posts and beams, and the overall open layout that reflects its use as a manufacturing facility. Changes to the building primarily include an infilled window on the west elevation, an infilled entry on the east elevation, a small lean-to addition on the north elevation, and some alterations to the interior on the first and fourth floors. The infilled window on the west elevation has been infilled with glass block that is removeable. The infilled bay on the east elevation is on the first level and is the arched entry that historically accommodated rail access to the building. Although the entry is infilled with brick, the arch brick lintel remains. A small one-story metal-clad, lean-to addition covers a portion of the first and second stories of the northern elevation but is easily removeable, as it is abutting the building and not attached directly. This addition is attached to the north elevation brick wall but does not accommodate any entry into the brick warehouse. If this addition was removed, the Overman & Schrader Cordage Company building's footprint would be returned to its historic footprint. Alterations on the first-floor interior of the building include the replacement of wood posts with steel wide flange beams as well as the addition of concrete to the loading dock. Alterations on the fourth floor include the addition of a dropped ceiling, which can be removed. Although some of these alterations do diminish integrity of materials and design, overall the building retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance as a hard fiber mill within a larger industrial complex. The floor plan indicates the historic use of the building and has not been substantially altered.

Finally, the building has maintained its integrity of **feeling** and **association**. Integrity of **feeling** is maintained through the hard fiber building's architecturally intact presence and overall massing with four floors to accommodate the process from raw material to finished hard fiber product. The integrity of association is strong due to the continued significant connection to cordage production on this property for over 31 years (circa 1899 – circa 1930) and the remembrance of this activity on this property in local histories.¹¹¹

¹¹¹ John Boh, "A Main Strasse Apartment/Parking Garage Complex and its Predecessors," Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society, September/October 2019, 3; John Boh, "Textiles," *The Encyclopedia of Northern*

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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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): KE 1091

9. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .91 acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 39.071581 | Longitude: -84.511397 |
| 2. Latitude: 39.071719 | Longitude: -84.510508 |
| 3. Latitude: 39.071302 | Longitude: -84.510401 |
| 4. Latitude: 39.071165 | Longitude: -84.511291 |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

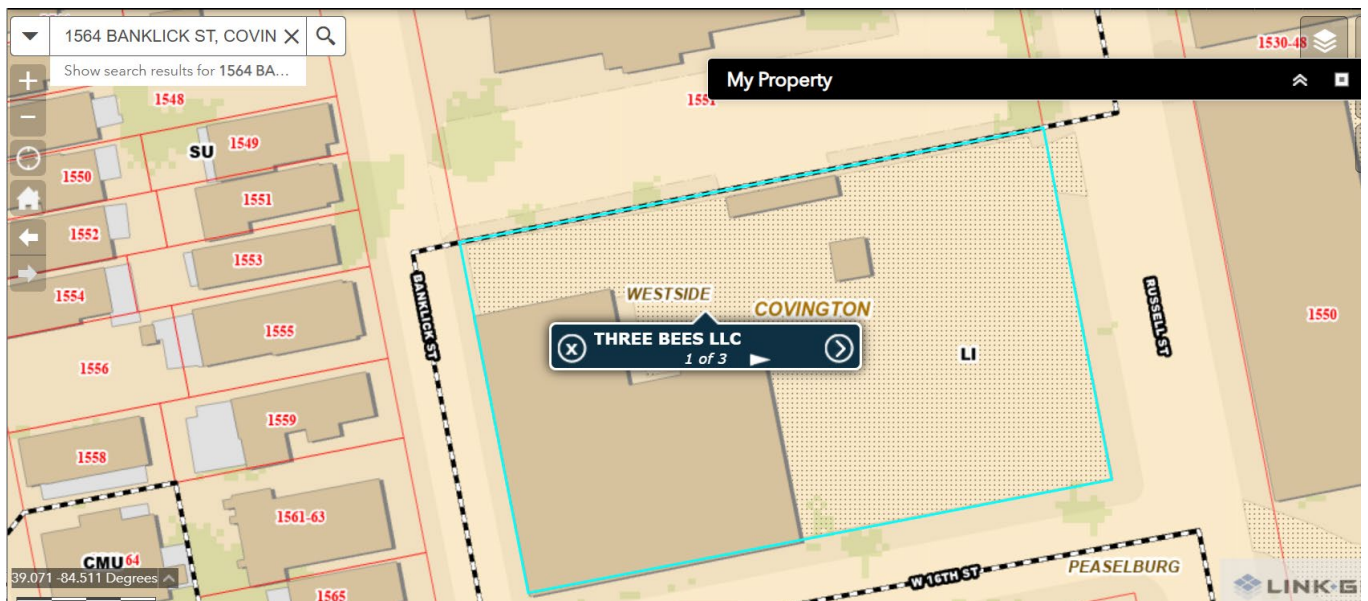
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- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary follows the current legal boundaries of the property and includes .91 acre. The property boundary includes the area bound by Banklick Street to the west, Russell Street to the east, 16th Street to the south, and a fence to the north. The boundary includes the brick warehouse and steelyard. The boundary reflects the current legal parcel boundary (DB KC 73, Pg 145).



Verbal Boundary Description depicted by Link-GIS. Boundary identified in light blue.

Boundary Justification

The proposed National Register boundary includes the .91-acre parcel historically associated with the three textile manufacturers that operated on the site during the Period of Significance, Overman & Schrader Company, Eagle Cordage, and Hooven & Allison. Within this boundary is the historically important building and land associated with the Period of Significance.

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10. Form Prepared By

name/title: Rebecca Gatewood, Jason Flatt, and Rachel Kennedy
organization: Stantec
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Photographs

Photo Log

Name of Property: Overman & Schrader Cordage Company
City or Vicinity: Covington
County: Kenton
State: Kentucky
Photographer: Chris Harris and Rebecca Gatewood
Date Photographed: September 4, 2024 and October 23, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 20: West elevation/Primary façade and south elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking NE.

2 of 20: West elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking E, recessed entryway second bay of the first story.

3 of 20: West elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking SE, fourth bay of the first story and metal-clad lean-to addition on north elevation.

4 of 20: South elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking NW.

5 of 20: North elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking SW.

6 of 20: North elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking south, tower, metal panels west and east, concrete block addition and brick addition.

Overman & Schrader Cordage Company

Kenton County, Kentucky

Name of Property

County and State

7 of 20: North elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking SW, steelyard in foreground, note non-contributing modern shed.

8 of 20: East elevation of Overman Schrader Cordage Company Building, looking NW, note brick filled bay and roofline ghosts from previous appendages.

9 of 20: First Floor, railroad siding entrance (infilled with brick) on east elevation of building, note tracks infilled with concrete.

10 of 20: First Floor, vehicle entrance off Banklick Street.

11 of 20: First Floor, elevated loading dock, not railroad track remnants.

12 of 20: First Floor, elevated loading dock.

13 of 20: First floor, elevated wooden loft above the loading platform.

14 of 20: First floor, elevated loft area, note wooden posts replaced with steel wideflange beams.

15 of 20: First floor, entrance to combined elevator and stair tower.

16 of 20: Second floor, open space characterized by the three rows of wooden posts and wooden floors.

17 of 20: Third floor, former spinning room.

18 of 20: Third floor, combined elevator and stair tower.

19 of 20: Fourth floor, note wooden posts more narrow than lower floors.

20 of 20: Fourth floor, stairs to third floor.