



Photo 9) 3-15 Main Street, U017-004

Direction: NE



Photo 10) 3-15 Main rear and side elevations from Summer Street

Direction: SE

7-15 Main Street 1872/1946/1972

Non-contributing building

The commercial property at 7 Main Street reportedly contains the lower levels of the nineteenth-century Brennan Block, a three-story, hip-roofed commercial block in the Italianate style, with a two-story front porch (see historic photo), built in 1872 by Hubert Brennan. However, the present appearance is entirely late twentieth century. Known variously as the Brennan Block, Mercer Block, and Centertown, it is a much altered building that acquired its present appearance through several major alterations and additions in the third quarter of the twentieth century. The building is located on a parcel that was until the mid-twentieth century two separately developed properties. The lower levels of the Brennan Block had been occupied by Brennan's Peterborough Marble and Granite Works for many years. In ca. 1946, likely at the time the First National Store, a national grocery chain, moved in, the upper story and front porches were removed leaving behind a two-story, five-bay block with a flat roof, augmented by a one-story rear addition (Sanborns 1924 updated to 1941, 1924 updated to 1951). Historic photographs, confirmed by Sanborn maps, show the former three-story building, reduced to two stories. An Esso Service Station, a one-story, two-bay, filling station was located to the west of the newly altered block, on the site of the former Farnsworth Block (a three-story, Mansard-roofed commercial block demolished in 1937) (Sanborns 1924, 1924 updated to 1941, 1924 updated to 1951).⁴⁴ Forrest C. Mercer acquired the property in 1950, owning it for the next twenty-two years (PHS 1996 II:393). He operated a garage and auto dealership further west on Main Street, now the site of the parking lot for 45 Main. By 1951 the filling station had been expanded or rebuilt as a one-story wing attached to the Mercer Block; it remained a gas station into the 1960s (PHS 1996 II:393). The First National Store occupied the main block until 1961 when they moved to Depot Square.

⁴⁴ A portion of the building's present building's distinctive footprint along the river matches that of the 1870s building. Peterborough Historical Society, I:393, 395.