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THOUGHT FOR THE DAY — "There is no power but of God." Romans 13:1.

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Cambridge Glass plant building is coming down

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The sprawling 80-year-old Cambridge Glass Co. buildings in East Cambridge are being razed.

Barnett Friedman, the Brooklyn, N.Y., businessman who owns the 22-acre glass plant site, has hired a company from West Virginia to raze the building and salvage what it can from the site.

Ron Parsons, Weston, W.Va., said Tuesday he expects it will take at least one year for his workers to have the large buildings razed completely.

"When we get done, it's supposed to be an empty field," said Parsons, who moved equipment to the site last week.

All buildings on the site will be razed, Parsons said, including the two-story front office building which faces Park Circle.

Five salvage workers were at the site Tuesday. Parsons said he expected the number of workers to vary, depending on weather and what needs to be done.

The site will remain secure during the project because the interiors of some of the buildings are in

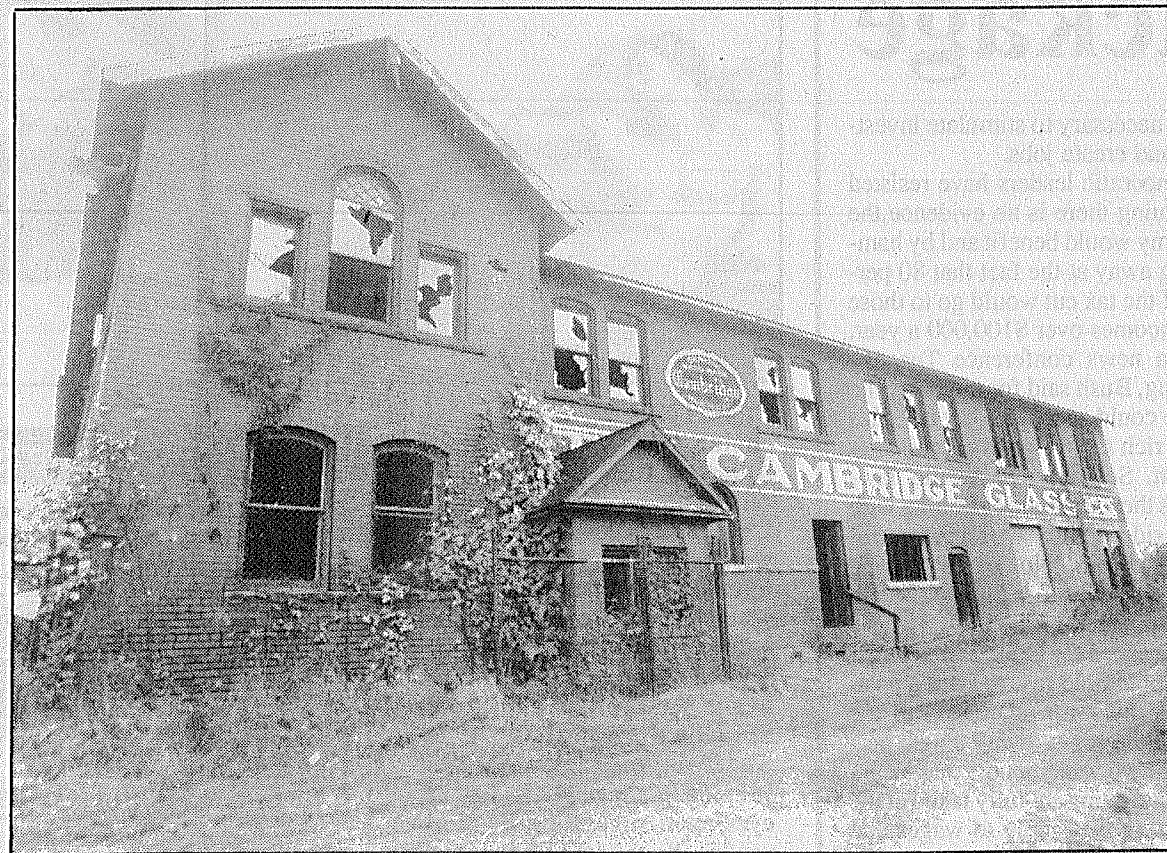
poor and even dangerous condition, Parsons said. The general public won't be allowed to browse through the buildings while the demolition is going on, he said.

Parsons said he may attempt to sell some of the old bricks to local residents who want them as mementos.

There are more than a half-dozen buildings and old foundations on the 22-acre site in East Cambridge. The buildings contain over 100,000 square feet of floor space; some of the buildings have two or more floors and there are countless nooks, crannies and holes in the floor.

The buildings are local landmarks, but have never been formally designated as historic structures. Parsons said he knows the plant has some sentimental value for local residents, but he said the buildings by themselves are in poor condition.

Public tax records at the Guernsey County Courthouse describe at least five different buildings on the site, with conditions ranging from "fair" to "very poor." The main buildings were constructed in 1900, tax records said, and were in "poor" condition.



Cambridge Glass Co. buildings, including the front office building, will be razed. (Mike Neilson photo)

Some of the building additions, made in the 1950s, were said to be in "very poor" condition.

The Cambridge Glass Co. began production in May 1902 and ceased operations June 17, 1954. It later reopened for several years under a worker-owned stock program until 1958.

Except for occasional storage and warehouse use, the buildings have generally been unused for the last 20 years.

In the mid-1980s, a group of

local residents and public officials attempted to raise funds to buy the glass house and convert it into a tourist attraction or retail outlet. Guernsey County commissioners even took out an option to buy the property from Friedman, who was reportedly asking \$375,000 for the plant.

Some officials were hoping to turn the old plant into a civic center-type of structure, with convention center, auditorium and shops inside.

In 1986, to raise money for development of the glass plant plans, a group calling itself "Cambridge Glass Center Inc." was organized with the purpose of purchasing the site. The organization planned to develop the site as a regional/multi-state tourist attraction." To raise funds, the group packaged and sold old bricks from the plant's kilns.

Cost estimates for renovating the hulking buildings exceeded \$1 million.