

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

ABINGTON

Report Date: 1981

Associated Regional Report: Southeast Massachusetts

Reconnaissance Survey Town Reports, produced for MHC's Statewide Reconnaissance Survey between 1979 and 1987, introduce the historical development of each of the Commonwealth's municipalities. Each report begins with an historic overview, a description of topography, and political boundaries. For the purposes of the survey, the historic period has been subdivided into seven periods: Contact (1500–1620), Plantation (1620–1675), Colonial (1675–1775), Federal (1775–1830), Early Industrial (1830–1870), Late Industrial (1870–1915), and Early Modern (1915–1940/55). Each report concludes with survey observations that evaluate the town's existing historic properties inventory and highlight significant historic buildings, settlement patterns, and present threats to these resources. A bibliography lists key secondary resources.

Town reports are designed for use together with a series of town maps that demarcate settlement patterns, transportation corridors and industrial sites for each historic period. These maps are in the form of color-coded, polyester overlays to the USGS topographic base map for each town on file and available for consultation at MHC. For further information on the organization and preparation of town reports, readers should contact MHC.

Users should keep in mind that these reports are now two decades or more old. The information they contain, including assessments of existing knowledge, planning recommendations, understanding of local development, and bibliographic references all date to the time they were written. In some cases, information on certain topics was not completed. No attempt has been made to update this information.

Electronic text was not available for digital capture, and as a result most of the reports have been scanned as PDF files. While all have been processed with optical character recognition, there will inevitably be some character recognition errors.

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MHC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY REPORT

DATE: August, 1981 COMMUNITY: Abington

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Abington is located in the northeastern portion of the Narraganset Basin. Drainage in the eastern portion of town is via the Shumatuscacant River and by Beaver Brook in the west. While the center portion of town is moderately level there are broken hills in the west. Areas of swamp and bog in the north, along Beaver Brook and the Shumatuscacant River. Soils are generally sandy to gravelly.

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Established as a town from part of Bridgewater June 10, 1712 (o.s.). Ceded part to the new town of Hanover, 1712. Part established as Rockland March 9, 1874. Part included in South Abington March 4, 1875.

III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Abington is an historic former industrial town in Plymouth County. Dispersed native settlement during the Contact period probable. Little European settlement prior to King Philip's War. Small industrial base developed during the Colonial period. Considerable outward migration in late 18th and early 19th century to Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine, within Massachusetts primarily to Cummington and Plainfield, Hampshire County. Economic base primarily agricultural with some industrial activity at South Abington (Whitman). Farming settlements at North Abington, East Abington, Abington Center and western part of town. Agricultural base wanes between 1810 and 1830. Increased industrialization by mid 19th century at South Abington, and Abington Center. East Abington results in return migration from Hampshire County as well as growth of Irish community, growth of cattle raising as town begins to supply Plymouth and New Bedford with beef. Incorporation of Rockland and South Abington results in loss of two important industrial nodes in 1874-5. Industrial activity primarily boot and shoe manufacture, remains chief economic base during latter half of 19th century. North Abington exhibits considerable growth during this period; residential development primarily working class with upper class areas remaining at Abington Center. Boot and shoe manufacture remains important to mid-20th century, although industry collapsed shortly after World War II. Early 20th century small auto industry in Abington Center for a few years. Ethnic community develops at North Abington during latter half of 19th early 20th century.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500 - 1620)

A. Transportation Routes:

Regional corridor between Massachusetts Bay (Weymouth) and Pembroke Ponds along Shumatuscacant River. Primary north/south trail documented as Adams-Plymouth Street (Route 58) with alternate route on west side of Shumatuscacant as Adams-Washington Streets and reported ford at North Abington (Hobart, 1866, p. 7; Campbell, 1975, Abington map). Secondary north/south trail along

Beaver Brook conjectured as Linwood Street with original portions apparently intact near Cleveland Pond. Cross routes from Shumatuscacant possibly include Randolph and North Streets from North Abington with Rockland and West Water Streets from Abington Center. Reported trail connection across Naval Air Station to Accord Pond appears unlikely from surviving evidence (Campbell, 1975, map).

B. Settlement Patterns:

No reported Contact period sites. Native fording site (part of Satucket Path) situated immediately north of the Shumatuscacant River and Adams Street junction. Native claypits were reputedly present in the vicinity of John Henry Benner's pottery kiln located at the end of Nash Memorial Road. The banks of the Schumatuscacant River and the western shore of Accord Pond are additional areas possibly utilized by the native Contact period population.

C. Subsistence Patterns:

Seasonal fishing, hunting, collecting and horticulture. Fishing would have occurred in the area's several streams. There was a high likelihood of beaver trapping in the vicinity of Beaver Brook. Natives probably travelled to the coast (e.g., Scituate, Marshfield, Duxbury) during the late spring and summer months in pursuit of the extensive marine resources and possibly European-Indian trade.

D. Observations:

The Abington area was probably inhabited by a small, dispersed native population due to the limited resource base, particularly freshwater sources. Locally, native settlement was concentrated around the Pembroke Ponds and the inland ponds, river estuaries and coast of Weymouth. Determination of the natives' political/cultural affiliation is difficult since Abington was situated on the northern and southern fringes of Massachusetts and Pokanoket (Wampanoags) territory, respectively.

V. FIRST SETTLEMENT PERIOD (1620 - 1675)

A. Transportation Routes:

Native trails improved as regional highways with primary north/south road between Weymouth and Plymouth as Adams-Plymouth Streets (Route 58) and Bridgewater Path as Washington Street with ford over Shumatuscacant at North Abington (Hobart, 1866, p. 7).

B. Population:

No record of native or native population figures. White population amounted to no more than a handful of families.

C. Settlement Patterns:

It is doubtful there were major changes in the native settlement patterns largely as a result of the lack of white settlement. The only reported pre-

1675 white settler was Andrew Ford who settled on a knoll east of the junction of Washington Street and the Shumatuscancant River probably in the early 1670s. The nearest civic and defensive facilities were located in present West Bridgewater.

D. Economic Base:

Native population probably retained their traditional seasonal rounds. However, Anglo-Indian trade assumed an increasingly larger part of the native economy with the establishment of permanent white settlements throughout southeastern Massachusetts during this period.

The economic pursuits of the white populace were probably restricted to subsistence agriculture, hunting and fishing. The area's vulnerability to native attack most likely discouraged development of commercial and industrial operations.

E. Observations:

Abington was a fringe area of white settlement and remained so until the early 18th century.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675 - 1775)

A. Transportation Routes:

Formation of Abington town center during early 18th century created radial roads to meeting house with Center, High, Ashland, Green and Hancock Streets. Cross connectors of the period include Chestnut and Groveland Streets over Beaver Brook and Summer Street to French Stream (Rockland).

B. Population:

No figures on native population. Old Abington (Abington, Rockland, Whitman) at about the time of incorporation (1712) had approximately 300 residents. The town's population had only increased to 371 residents by 1726. Sixty inhabitants died in 1751 of throat distemper. A pronounced increase in the community's population occurred between 1726 and 1764 when the number of residents jumped almost 400% to 1263. This figure had increased only slightly more (1263) at the time of the Revolution. The majority of Old Abington's settlers moved from Duxbury, Hingham, Newbury, Scituate and Weymouth.

C. Settlement Patterns:

Limited data concerning native settlement. There was an influx of a small number of Pembroke Pond natives in the late 1750s (Bryant 1912: N.P.). No data as to settlement location was provided. It is doubtful there was much damage done to the white community during King Philip's War since there was little pre-war white settlement. White settlement stimulated by termination of Anglo-Indian hostilities and agricultural potential of the Abington area. Establishment of a primary settlement node centered at the junction of Bedford and Washington Streets by the first decade of the 18th century. First meetinghouse built at this junction c.1710. Abandoned c.1751 when a new

meetinghouse was erected adjacent to first structure. Early mid-18th century settlement occurred in the vicinity of Plymouth, Washington, Bedford and Ashland Streets. Additional homes erected near the Cemetery, Cushing and Hunt ponds and High Street in the early mid-18th century. Site selections provided excellent access to potential mill streams. The town's first school was constructed in c.1732 on Washington Street between Summer Street and "the Academy" (N.A. 1912: 15). Community growth resulted in the division of Abington into five school districts in 1755 (five district schools).

D. Economic Base:

Surviving native population probably pursued limited seasonal subsistence patterns due to the white encroachment on native lands. Increased dependence on the white population for employment and financial assistance.

White community had a strong agricultural base. Local timber shipped primarily to North River shipbuilding communities (i.e. Hanover, Scituate) where it was used for ships keels, planking and masts. Timber was also shipped to Boston, Hingham, Weymouth, Duxbury and Plymouth (Hobart 1866: 3). Establishment of mill industry occurred in c.1716 with the construction of a sawmill at the southern end of Hunts Pond. A fulling mill was built in this area in the 1740s. Two c.1720 sawmills were built on the Stream's River near Ashland Street and Beaver Brook. The second mill was converted to a grist mill in the second half of the 18th century because of a decline in the local timber market. John Henry Benner established a pottery kiln at the end of Nash Memorial Road in c.1760 (operated until c.1775). A tannery was built by Col. David Gloyd in c.1770 (until 1820s) near the junction of the Shumatuscacant River and Adams Street. The only reported inn was constructed in c.1727 by Thomas Tirrell a short distance north of the intersection of Bedford and Washington Streets.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Although the earliest settlements in Abington are dated to the late 1660s, the earliest houses standing in Abington are dated to the 1720s. No 17th century houses are recorded, but it is likely that they were simple, story-and-a-half central or end chimney cottages similar to the extant cottage of c.1723 at 287 High Street, which survives as an ell on a center-chimney cottage of the Federal period. By 1735, two-story houses were being built in Abington with the central chimney Ford House on Washington Street (with a hipped portico probably of the Federal period) being the earliest known two-story house in town. While central-chimney, five-bay facade, center-entered, gable-roofed cottages clearly remained the dominant house form of the period (with some half dozen examples known from the Colonial period); more substantial two-story houses were built in some numbers but variety of plan is rare with only one hip-roofed central-chimney house (c.1760) known, on Linwood Street. Another very unusual house depicted in a 19th century engraving was the Ford House, a story-and-a-half cottage built of brick and possibly roughcast. While the house is undated, its double linked-parapet end-wall chimneys, segmental-arched windows and string courses at the first floor and attic levels, suggest construction in the 18th century. A brick yard is said to have operated in Abington during the 18th century.

Institutional: The first meetinghouse in Abington was built c.1714; little is known about the building except that it was small and had no steeple. In 1751, it was replaced with a comparatively large structure (70' X 50' X 26').

The earliest school in Abington was established in 1732 with a school built in that year near the meetinghouse; in 1755, a second school was constructed and five districts established. Neither of these early schools survives; the construction of school houses in the Colonial period was rare and those built in Abington should be noted as exceptional.

F. Observations:

Present Abington was the civic and commercial center of Old Abington, providing the larger community with the only meetinghouse and the majority of the mill operations. The settlement developed strong commercial and social ties with the North River communities and Massachusetts Bay.

VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775 - 1830)

A. Transportation Routes:

Improvement of north/south corridor with New Bedford turnpike from Weymouth (1807) as New Bedford Street (Route 18) along Shumatuscacant Valley through North Abington and Abington Center.

B. Population:

Population doubled during this period from 1293 to 2423.

C. Settlement:

Continuation of residential settlement along Washington Street at Abington Center and south along Bedford Street (turnpike) and at North Abington, most residential clustering in eastern portion of present town. Western portion primarily agricultural with scattered settlement along existing roads.

D. Economic Base:

Pottery kiln established by John Henry Benner continued through about 1796. Before coming to Abington about 1760, the German-born potter had been involved in the establishment of the glassworks at Germantown (Quincy). At least five grist and/or sawmills in operation in 1790s. The sawmills, like others in Whitman and Rockland up to about 1830, supplied large quantities of oak timber to North River shipyards and other ports from Boston to Plymouth, though the storms of 1804 and 1815 virtually brought much of these harvests to an end. Timber also supplied an active wooden box industry.

The shoe business in Abington was also begun in this period, though at this date it is impossible to distinguish Abington's production from that of the rest of Old Abington. The business is thought to have been introduced in Rockland about 1793. In the early 1820s, David Gloyd, an Abington tanner, enlisted the help of Thomas Hunt of Rockland in initiating shoemaking in Abington. By 1832, there were six "manufactories" of boots and shoes in Old Abington, producing \$243,750 worth annually (more than twice the comparable figure for Brockton).

E. Architecture:

Residential: Residential construction probably clustered at either end of the period with bursts of construction activity in the early years of the period, when industries established at the end of the Colonial period matured, and at the end of the period as the shoe industry was introduced. This pattern seems to be borne out in the types of cottages built in the Federal period with a great many central-chimney, five-bay facade cottages constructed and a lesser number of interior end-chimney cottages known for the period. While center-chimney cottages were constructed into the Early Industrial period, it seems probable that most center-chimney cottages date from the early years of the Federal period. The presence of brick yards in South Abington (Whitman) encouraged the construction of brick-end dwellings with brick-end wall cottages (a rare form as brick construction was normally confined to houses of a full two stories) dated as early as 1806 known in the town. At least one end-chimney brick Federal cottage is known, on Hancock Street. More common are brick-endwall end-chimney, hip roofed houses, of which several are known across the town. Also built were a fair number of end interior chimney, hip roofed houses. Most of these incorporate decorative frontispieces with segmental arched door surrounds with leaded fan and sidelights; a few houses have gable or hip roofed porches. Several well-preserved Federal houses stand on Linwood, Ashland and High Streets.

Institutional: A new meetinghouse was built in 1819 at the fork of Bedford and Washington Streets; a two-and-a-half story, gable-roofed structure with a shallow projecting pedimented porch surmounted by a square tower, the building is now a Masonic lodge and has undergone several alterations as a result (a mansard cap was added in the late 19th century and the porch enlarged). Three school districts were added in 1794 and in 1822, 11 school districts had been established in the town. None of these early schools are known to survive.

VIII.

EARLY INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1830 - 1870)

A. Transportation Routes:

Continued improvement of north/south axis with Old Colony Railroad to Plymouth from Weymouth (1845) with secondary branch to Hanover from North Abington (1870). Period highways include east/west connectors as Lincoln and Spruce Streets to North Abington and Brockton, Walnut and Summer Streets to Abington Center.

B. Population:

Population continues rapid growth from 2423 in 1830 to 9308 in 1870, most dramatic increase between 1840 and 1870. Foreign born population 1190 in 1855 (1061 Irish). First Society of New Jerusalem organized 1830, built church at Church Hill 1833. St. Bridget's Roman Catholic Church at Abington Center 1862.

C. Settlement:

Residential development at Abington Center in area bounded by Orange Street on the north, Rockland and Bedford Streets on west, Thaxter

Street on South and Walnut Street on the east by the end of the period. In North Abington residential and industrial focus shifts from intersection of Randolph and Bedford Streets to triangle formed by Adams, Birch and North Avenue due to influence of railroad. Railroad also pulls some industry from Abington Center to area along Plymouth Street. Scattered development along Hancock Street in western portion of town during latter portion of period.

D. Economic Base:

In 1837 Old Abington, the third largest in the county, was manufacturing as many shoes as all other towns in the county put together. Several shoe factories were begun in the 1850s and '60s. Much of the business in the latter decade was spurred by Civil War demands and by the McKay stitching machine (invented by Lyman Blake of Whitman), to which the success of the men's boot and shoe industry in the area generally has been attributed. Old Abington is said "to have shod half the Union army" (Thompson p. 480 -- though we note that the other "half of the Union army was shod by North Bridgewater" (WPA Guide) with machine-sewn shoes, and its success in wartime is thought to have guaranteed the popularity of the machine. Joshua Nash's factory, established 1864, is said to have been the first in town to use shoe-pegging machines to attach soles of heavy work shoes.

D.B. Gurney's tack factory, established in 1854 on Centre Avenue, was the only non-footwear manufacturer identified in the period.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Cottages continued to be the dominant house form through the end of the period. Center chimney cottages remained common but increasingly end interior chimneys were the norm. Few well-developed Greek Revival cottages were built although the gable end orientation of the Greek Revival style was accepted. Despite that, most cottages retained the traditional cottage plan of a center entrance on the long side; when combined with end interior chimneys, the gable end orientation creates an awkward design with the chimney rising directly out of the gable on the street facade. In more ambitious cottages, a recessed sidehall porch leading to the center entrance on the long side gave the illusion of the Greek Revival sidehall plan but, in general, the sidehall plan was not accepted until the mid-century when it most often appeared with transitional Greek Revival/Italianate detailing. The size of cottages increased through the period either through the adoption of an expanded story-and-a-half plan incorporating an attic story below the gable or through the extension of the cottage with substantial ells to the side and rear. Many of Abington's mid to late-19th century cottages are incorporated within extensive complexes consisting of sheds, ells and barns generally arranged as a single L-shaped connected grouping. House plans remained conservative, with end interior chimney, hip-roofed, five-bay facade houses built into the 1840s; these are distinguished from earlier Federal houses by their full-length sidelights and straight transom light in the entrance surround. A few sidehall Greek Revival houses are known along with one octagon house (on Bristol Street). A few transitional Greek Revival/Italianate double houses were built at the town center as the shoe industry expanded. Several asymmetrically-planned Italianate villas are known to have been constructed, but none have survived. A few elaborately-detailed Italianate houses with center entrances stand on Center Street.

Institutional: In 1849, the present First Congregational Church was built. This is a two-and-a-half story structure with a projecting pedimented porch and three-stage belfry tower with spire; it incorporates Romanesque round-head windows and corbelling while retaining the traditional meetinghouse plan introduced in the Federal period. Other churches established in the period include the Universalist (1836), with an 1841 meetinghouse, and the Swedenborgian (1830), with an 1856 Gothic Revival church with double square towers on the facade, one surmounted by an octagonal belfry and spire. Saint Bridget's Roman Catholic Church was founded in 1863; its original frame Gothic Revival church survives in altered condition. Abington is notable for its progressive and extensive school system: in 1866, the town had 33 schools (perhaps not all with separate individual structures) with one high school, four grammar, ten intermediate and eighteen primary schools (Rockland and Whitman had not then been separated from the original town). Of these schools comparatively few are known to survive; of those surviving, one is a two-story transitional Greek Revival/Italianate building and the other is the more typical story-and-a-half structure. Both buildings date from the mid-1850s. It seems likely that other schools of the mid-1850s (when a building campaign apparently took place) survive in altered condition as residences, given the number of schools existing in the town at the end of the period. Also built in the period and no longer standing was the first Town House (1835), a two-and-a-half story Greek Revival/Italianate building which later became a Lyceum Hall.

Commercial: The most imposing commercial structure surviving from the Early Industrial period is the King House Hotel (c. 1850), a well-detailed two-and-a-half story Greek Revival/Italianate house with a cross-gabled roofline and square lantern. Although two banks were organized in the period (Abington Bank, 1850; Abington Savings, 1853), along with several newspapers, no other commercial buildings are known to stand. No buildings of the Old Colony Railroad's Island Grove development of 1846 are still standing.

Industrial: Although none are known to survive, a distinctive shoe factory type developed in the period; this is a two-and-a-half or three-and-a-half story gable-roofed Italianate building, usually standing on a high raised basement with a center entrance, usually on the long side and often approached by a steep-stepped stoop, with double rounded-arched windows in the gable end and a deep, bracketted cornice. Some half-dozen of these mid-19th century shoe factories once stood in Abington.

IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870 - 1915)

A. Transportation Routes:

Expansion of interurban trolley service from Brockton during 1890s. Primary route followed Brockton-Washington Streets to North Abington with connectors on North Avenue to Rockland-Weymouth and Plymouth Street to Pembroke and Plymouth by early 1900s (Tucker, 1960, map).

B. Population:

Drastic decline in population in 1875 due to incorporation of Rockland and South Abington. After 1875 population growth resumes although at a much slower pace. Foreign born population in 1885, 422, dominant group Irish. In 1915, foreign born population was 875 with change in ethnic balance marked by influx of Canadians, Poles, Finns, Lithuanians and British.

C. Settlement:

By turn of century, residential node at Abington Center proceeds north along Washington Street in area between Washington and Island Grove Park. Continued expansion at North Abington between Spruce and Railroad and south of Birch Street west of Spruce. Residential development also along Plymouth Street in south and Washington Street in north.

D. Economic Base:

The peak of Old Abington's shoe production was reached in 1865 when over 2800 men and women (roughly in proportion of 7 to 1) were producing \$3,460,387 worth of boots and shoes (as compared to \$1.46 million for Brockton). If the figures from a decade later are any guide, probably about 45 percent of this figure can be attributed to Abington boot and shoe makers - or \$1,557,174 in 1865. In 1875, 16 manufacturers of boots and shoes in Abington made \$1,088,712 worth of footwear. That year Moses Arnold erected his 4-story brick shoe factory in North Abington. Merserve, writing a decade later, claimed that Arnold, with 500 employees, carried on the largest boot and shoe business in Plymouth County. ("Prominent manufacturers inform me that there is no firm in the United States manufacturing so fine a quality of goods that is doing so large a business" (p. 500).) Probably in the 1880s, The Arnold factory was followed by the turreted, 4-story wood-frame Lewis Crossett shoe factory. But as Brockton's manufacturers turned increasingly toward quality shoe production and away from cheap shoes, the industry in Abington -- which, as in Whitman and Rockland, had always been in quality production -- must have felt the competition. After the 1880s, no new shoe factories appear to have been built. With changing competition, manufacturers adopted new marketing strategies. Until 1895, Arnold sold exclusively to the wholesale trade; about 1899 the company began selling to retail outlets, adopting the "King Quality" brand.

Other manufacturers in this period included N.H. Buffum, whose machine shop on Centre Avenue turned out the Buffum automobile; Bailey & Weston, a window-shade manufacturer; and a maker of web goring.

E. Architecture:

Residential: The sidehall plan remained the dominant houseplan of the period; sidehall Queen Anne houses or story-and-a-half plus attic cottages were built in some numbers as modest workers' housing. Such housing characterizes most of the neighborhoods on the sidestreets off of Washington and Bedford Streets in Abington and between Bedford and Plymouth Streets at North Abington. More ambitious housing is confined to a section of North Abington at Adams and North Streets. There, several large, well-detailed Queen Anne houses (c. 1885) were constructed; these incorporate cross-gabled plans, turned spindle screen porches, and gables detailed with pebbledash stucco and diapered panelling. After the turn of the century, gambrel-roofed Colonial Revival houses with low-sloping roofs incorporating recessed sidehall porches were built in some numbers along with simpler sidehall plan Colonial Revival cottages distinguished by their use of gambrel, jerkin head or hip roofs. The most common modest two-story house form was the pyramidal-roofed Colonial Revival house with a four-square plan; this form typically defines the presence of a streetcar line, as does the other common housetype of the early 20th-century, the hip or pyramidal-roofed bungalow with rubble basement and recessed veranda. Less common are houses of the Brockton type (two-and-a-half story, gable-roof Queen Anne with two-story square bay, in either single or two-family types), but some of these were built in the 1890s,

particularly in the neighborhoods of Walnut, Summer and Center Streets in Abington and at North Abington between Washington and Adams Streets. Mansard-roofed buildings are uncommon although a handful of mansard cottages were built in the 1870s and '80s. Many houses of the late 19th-century are the work of a local builder, S. N. Turner.

Institutional: The Abington Town Hall (1872), a two-and-a-half story Italianate building with a square tower, was built on Randolph Street. Also built in the period was the G.A.R. Hall, a hip-roofed Queen Anne building with a hip-roofed cupola and the Memorial Hall (1890), a one-and-a-half story hip-roofed Queen Anne building with a cobble basement and conical turret.

Commercial: Abington's commercial buildings are among the town's most imposing buildings; these include a three-story Victorian Gothic building faced with granite and the North Abington railroad depot (1893, Bradford Lee Gilbert), a story-and-a-half Romanesque Revival building with apsidal end bays and a low polygonal bay with a conical roof.

Industrial: Abington retains several late 19th-century industrial complexes of some architectural pretention. These include a four-story panel brick factory with corbelled cornice, on Wales Street, the Crossett Shoe Factory, a four-story Shingle Style complex on North Avenue at North Abington and a brick and frame factory on Center Street.

X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915 - 1940)

A. Transportation Routes:

Abandonment of trolley service during 1920s and improvement of local highways as auto roads. Primary north/south axis as Route 18 (New Bedford Street) with alternate as Route 58 (Adams-Plymouth Streets). East/west connector to Brockton and Rockland as Route 123 (Brockton-Center Aves.) through Abington Center. Weymouth Naval Air Station located (c. 1941) on periphery of North Abington/Rockland/Weymouth town boundary.

B. Population:

Population grows at a much slower rate than previously with a dip during the Depression. Population surpasses 1870 total in 1955.

C. Settlement:

New residential settlement consists of infill at North Abington and Abington Center and along existing roads.

D. Economic Base:

Relatively little new industry. Shoe manufacturing remained dominant. By the 1920s the M.N. Arnold Shoe Company had established a national reputation with exclusive Arnold "Glove Grip" stores in cities nationwide. The company closed in 1931, victim of the Depression. The Abington Textile Machinery Works operated in the former Buffum machine shop. Other products of the town included dresses, curtains, and ice cream.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Most of the houses built in the Early Modern period are very simple cottages with hip or gable roofs, porches and raised half-story basements. A few more ambitious Dutch Colonial and Colonial Revival houses of the 1920s are known, along with one unusual International style cottage possibly dating from the period, on Bedford Street at the northern edge of town.

Institutional: The Abington High School, a two-story, brick Georgian Revival building on Bedford Street, probably dates c. 1935. Also dating from the period is St. Lawrence's Church, a modest Spanish Colonial Revival chapel presently aluminum sided.

XI.

SURVEY OBSERVATIONS

Abington's survey seems to document most 18th and 19th century resources, although the concentration falls on Colonial and Federal residential material with little information on the late 19th century commercial and industrial buildings which are the town's finest architectural assets. The survey seems to lack a clear organizational structure and in general lacks insightful assessment of historical or architectural significance. Period landscapes of well-detailed Federal farmsteads at the southwestern corner of town have been diminished by recent residential construction; other areas of architectural significance exist at North Abington (mid to late 19th-century industrial and residential) and on old Route 139 (Randolph Street).

Island Grove Park, because of its important association with the Abolition movement in the 1850s and early '60s, might be considered a candidate for NR status.

Industrial: Abington's town survey includes most of her industrial structures. Of those noted, both the Nash shoe factory (King House), fully described in B. Hobart, and the Arnold Shoe Co. factory should be considered for NR designation. Other sites which should be surveyed include the former electric generating station on Charles Street, and N.H. Buffum's machine shop (manufacturer of the Buffum automobile).

DEVELOPMENTAL PRESSURES: Commercial expansion most obvious along Route 123 axis from Brockton from Route 18 junction gradually eroding historic fabric of Abington Center. Modest development also evident along Route 18 axis in North Abington, while adjacent business district appears to be suffering from declining activity. Suburban development threatening remaining agricultural landscape along Abington highlands, especially Hancock and High Streets.

XII.

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