

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

CLINTON

Report Date: 1983

Associated Regional Report: Central 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: 1983

COMMUNITY: Clinton

I. TOPOGRAPHY

The town of Clinton straddles the valley of the Nashua River, South Branch, which curves around the eastern edge of the urban and industrial core of the town. As it flows north through Lancaster and eventually into the Merrimack River, the river's course roughly marks the boundary between the gneiss and granite bedrock formations to the southeast and the younger, softer slate and schist Worcester Formation to the northwest.

In the southeastern end of town, the river cuts a deep gorge through bedrock with hills to the west and southeast rising more than 300 feet above the river. In 1905, this narrow valley was closed at its south edge by a granite dam several hundred feet tall, constructed to hold back the Wachusett Reservoir. Approximately 700 acres in Clinton were flooded as well as thousands of acres in Boylston, West Boylston, and Sterling as a source of drinking water for the Boston area.

North of the downtown area, the surface gradually slopes down to an elevation of 300 feet at the boundary with Lancaster. Once the bottom of glacial Lake Nashua and its terraced shoreline, the town's soils range from fine sandy loam to gravels over a mantle of lake and left in deposits of sand and gravel up to 100 feet deep. Two major streams, South Meadow Brook and Goodrich Brook flow northeast into the Nashua River while North Brook, rising in the high ground in the southeast corner of town, flows eastward as part of the Assabet River drainage. Both Sweet Meadow and Goodrich Brooks provided excellent sites for water power, the former falling 29 feet before joining the Nashua River. The several natural ponds in the town were formed by buried ice blocks left behind by the retreating glaciers.

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Established 1850, from the "Clintonville" part of Lancaster. Bounds with Berlin established 1905.

III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

An urban-industrial town in a steep and barrow section of the Nashua River Valley corridor with native sites on the east side of Clamshell Pond and possibly Mossy Pond, Sand Pond, and riverine falls sites. Early European recognition of the area's water-power potential leads to gristmill construction on South Meadow Brook, 1654. Some late 17th century agricultural settlement in north part of present town but most kinds are perceived as undesirable. Late 17th century native-European warfare leads to abandonment and destruction of initial settlement followed by eventual reoccupation. Some 18th century agricultural settlement in uplands east of Nashua River.

Early 19th century use of water-power for manufacturing, particularly in cotton and horncomb industries. Major industrial development after 1838, largely due to inventive and managerial efforts of Bigelow brothers in developing powerloom related textile manufacturing. Rapid 19th century growth and diversification of population. Initial provision of factory-owned worker housing (both brick tenement & wood frame duplexes) near major factory complexes soon gives way to generalized housing provision with a variety of single and multi-family ethnic worker neighborhoods as well as middle and high income districts. Civic center developed after incorporation in 1850. Commercial district multi-story brick blocks constructed by 1890s. Diverse ethnic community dominated in 19th century by Irish, Germans, Scots, and English with 20th century influx of Italians and Poles. Industrial collapse and widespread local hardship in Great Depression with little post-war recovery.

Factory complexes today mostly appear occupied by active manufacturing concerns. 19th century housing stock, including original factory owned districts, worker neighborhoods, and high income residences remain largely intact, although often with exterior alteration or deteriorations. Significant deterioration threatens remaining commercial district.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500-1620)

A. Transportation Routes

Most important routes skirt this small area: in the east a portion of a north-south route follows Wilson/Chase Roads; on the west, unnamed route, extension of Meadow in Lancaster; both to river's edge now under the Wachusett Reservoir.

B. Settlement Pattern

To north, wading place over Nashua in Lancaster, and to west by the Waushacum Ponds in Sterling, important of Nashaway group of Nipmucks.

C. Subsistence Patterns

This area exploited from those base camps primarily for fishing along Nashua and Mossy, Clamshell, and South Meadow Ponds; possible horticulture of adjacent knolls.

V. PLANTATION PERIOD (1620-1675)

A. Transportation Routes

Continuation of native trails with the addition of roads to grist and saw mills for residents on the Nashua in Lancaster, probably following North Main Street to the north.

B. Settlement Patterns

Location of Prescott grist mill at South Meadow Brook in 1654 followed by a grist mill in 1659 brought settlers away from nucleated village sited to the north in Lancaster parent town.

C. Population

No evidence for any residents other than the Prescott family; one garrison in 1675.

D. Economic Base

Mills served a large region on the western frontier of colonial settlement.

E. Architecture

First and only recorded settlement for period is that of John Prescott in 1654. In that year, Prescott built a grist mill along present day Water Street between High and Main Streets followed in 1659 by a saw mill.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

A. Transportation Routes

Continuation of earlier routes with the addition of High Street, Water Street to the east to accommodate Lancaster residents east of the Nashua (road laid 1686 but changed 1717 so exact route unclear). To the west, Rigby Street.

B. Settlement Patterns

Mill site renewed with resettlement of Lancaster in 1679; by 1750 focus on knolls around Clamshell Pond; dispersed millers and farmers. Complete integration with Lancaster to the north; small section to the south that was once also Lancaster annexed to Boylston in 1738; no attempts for parish formation.

C. Population

Slow growth after resettlement, in 1704 only 4 families, mostly Prescott's; by 1750 estimated 50 individuals.

D. Economic Base

A low density section of Lancaster with only a dozen farms and 2 grist and sawmills in 1750.

E. Architecture

Residential: Very little development apparent. Clinton was then the southern portion of Lancaster and most of the town's growth

was occurring to the north. A one-story five-bay center chimney house is recorded and a two-story, five-bay double pile which probably dates from late in the period.

Industrial: Prescott's mills are only recorded industry.

VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

A. Transportation Routes

The Colonial period highways through the area remain in use, particularly the road from Boylston center to Bolton along the ridge to the east of the Nashua River (Wilson Street, Chace Street) and the road from Sawyer's Mills (Boylston) to South Lancaster. By 1800, Water Street is the main East/west river crossing. In 1811, the direct road from South Lancaster (Main Street) is reestablished extending south to Sandy Pond. Oak Street established as alternate route to Wilson Street by 1830.

B. Population

Census data included in totals for Lancaster. Relatively sparse 18th century population increases during period. Fifty families in "Factory Village", 1830.

C. Settlement Patterns

Generally dispersed with farmsteads on the highlands east of the Nashua River along the Bolton Road. Small nucleation around cotton mill (ca. 1810) at site of Bigelow Carpet.

D. Economic Base

At the opening of the 19th century that portion of Lancaster which now comprises Clinton was a thinly settled area of woodlands and pasture. The high uneven ground in the south was largely uncultivable; only the bottom lands of the Nashua River Valley and land in the northeast end of town on the flat former lake bottom could easily be plowed and farmed. Of the several potential water power sites in this area only one was utilized, the saw and grist mill at the site of John Prescott's 1653 mill on South Meadow Brook (where Water Street now crossed the brook).

A number of farmers had begun to supplement their incomes with combmaking introduced from Leominster in the late 18th century. In small shops, horns purchased from neighboring farmers or from the Brighton slaughter houses were soaked, split open, sawn, and polished by hand. By 1826 there were 16 establishments in all of Lancaster making combs, employing more than 50 people and producing goods with \$15,000 to \$20,000 per year; nearly half of these were located in Clinton centered on Rigby Brook in the southwest end of town and at Harris Bridge on the Nashua River. The 1826 invention by Farnham Plummer of Lancaster of a machine to speed the cutting of combs allowed one man to cut 120 dozen side combs per day and greatly increased the output of area combmakers.

The introduction of textile manufacturing which was to dominate Clinton's economy for the next 130 years occurred in 1809 when David Poignand, a Frenchman, and Samuel Plant purchased from Thomas Lyon the saw and grist mill at the site of the original Prescott mills on South Meadow Brook. A mill was built of bricks from clay dug and fired at a brickyard on nearby Mine Swamp Brook in Clinton and the spinning of cotton yarn was begun in 1812 with machinery built by Thomas Lyon. At first, yarn was put out to weavers in the area, especially to the Shaker weavers in the Shirley and Harvard communities considered "the best acquainted with weaving of anybody in this part of the country." These weavers produced high-quality ginghams and heavy sheetings allowing competition with the power loom fabrics of the Boston Manufacturing Company in Waltham. By 1817 powerlooms were finally introduced and in 1819 a second mill, located upstream at the site of the late Clinton Company and Bigelow Carpet Co. spinning mill, was erected. The company was incorporated in 1821 as the Lancaster Cotton Manufacturing Company.

The area around the mills came to be known as Factory Village and by 1829 the company had erected 10 houses, a machine shop, two mills, two boarding houses, and a large brick swelling (1823) occupied by Samuel Plant, still standing on Main Street. At first, entire families and skilled English and Scottish spinners were employed; when power looms were introduced young single women were sought to tend these machines. By 1821 David Poignand was gathering girls in New Hampshire and Vermont to work in his mills.

One other cotton manufacturing enterprise was begun during this period. In 1816 James Pitt, a mill wright who had constructed cotton machinery for a mill in West Bridgewater, purchased a water privilege on the Nashua River (later the site of the Lancaster Mills) and erected a saw and grist mill. In 1820 spinning machinery for cotton yarn was set up in these mills. A tannery, single mill, and combshop were also erected at the site and in 1831 these too were converted to the manufacture of cotton yarn. After a fire in 1836 a new mill was erected and satinnet warp manufacture was carried on.

E. Architecture

Residential: No significant development until the end of the period. Two double-pile, two-story brick dwellings, one double chimney and two center chimney dwellings are the only recorded structures.

Institutional: Area is part of Lancaster school system and growth is sufficient enough by 1824 to warrant erecting a brick schoolhouse.

Commercial: No significant development during majority of period. Stores and tavern/inn by end of period.

Industrial: Prescott Mills are bought by Poignand and Plant (1809), and by 1812 the first cotton mill in the future town of Clinton is in operation followed by a second mill ca. 1815.

Lancaster Cotton Company is established in 1821. Harris Comb factory on east side of town develops during 1790s: two-story, six-bay gabled factory survives from this period. By end of period, area is known as Factory Village of Lancaster.

VIII. EARLY INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1830-1870)

A. Transportation Routes

New local streets laid out after establishment of the Clinton Company in 1838. Mechanic Street laid out, 1838. Grid street pattern established at time of incorporation (1850), in area east of Main Street and south of Water Street. Worcester-Nashua Railroad opens through town 1846, with full regional service in 1848. Boston Clinton, and Fitchburg Railroad operational 1866. The two lines cross near Main Street/Water Street intersection.

B. Population

Population at time of incorporation in 1850, 3113. Continued growth to 1870 (5429). Greatest growth, 1865-1870 (+1408). Foreign-born population 34% in 1865. Evangelical Congregational Society formed 1844, church built 1846. Catholic mission formed 1845, small church built 1849, second church built 1868. First Baptist Church formed 1847, church built 1849, enlarged and renovated 1868. Methodist Episcopal Society formed 1851, church built 1852. Unitarian Society formed 1852. Bigelow Mechanics Institute, with reading room and library, formed 1846. Bigelow Library Association formed, 1853. Odd Fellows Lodge organized, 1840. Trinity Lodge of Masons, Lancaster, inactive since 1832, revived in Clinton in 1858. Royal Arch Chapter, Masons, formed 1869.

C. Settlement Patterns

Major transformations of valley into urban-industrial complex during the period. Small 1830s nucleation around Harris Comb Factory (Water Street at Nashua River) and Lancaster Quilt Company (Water/Main Streets). Significant growth occurs with establishment of Lancaster Mills (1843), Bigelow Carpet Company (1854), and Bigelow Wire Cloth Company (1857). Brick and wood frame worker housing built by Lancaster Mills (Green Street, Mechanic Street, Grove Street) and Bigelow Carpet (Main Street, Nelson Street) Grid street plan laid out at time of incorporation (1850), with central park civic focus. In the 1840s several churches located on Main Street, including Evangelical Congregational, (1840), First Baptist (1847), Catholic (1849), but they soon move. Congregational (1846) and Baptist (1849) churches move to common, and the Catholic church (1868) moves to Pleasant Street, closer to Lancaster Mills. Unitarian Church (1868) moves to Pleasant Street, closer to Lancaster Mills. Unitarian Church built on common, 1853. Methodist church on High Street, 1852. By 1870, the High Street/Church Street intersection is the commercial focus with most stores along High Street. Residential development

is mainly south of Water Street, east of Main Street. The area north and west of the common (Walnut, Prescott, Chestnut Streets) is established as the high income residential district. Although streets are laid out for a middle-class neighborhood on Burdett Hill, construction by 1870 is spotty and progresses little beyond Franklin Square. By 1870, however, a number of Irish working-class neighborhoods are established: the Acre, on Oak Street south of Nashua River and Lancaster Mills; "California," south of Grove Street; and "Duck Harbor," north of Coachlace Pond.

D. Economic Base

It was during this period that Clinton grew from a small manufacturing village surrounded by woodlands and farms to an incorporated town (1850) and the fourth leading manufacturing center in Worcester County. Its population grew from 200-300 in the 1830s to nearly 7000 in 1875; during the same period capital invested in manufacturing grew from about \$100,000 to more than \$2.4 million.

This tremendous growth and expansion was based on the inventions, investments, and management of Erastus Brigham Bigelow who in his lifetime was granted more than 50 patent on power looms - and his brother, Horatio Nelson Bigelow, natives of neighboring West Boylston. The four major manufacturing concerns established in Clinton during this period utilized the inventions of Erastus Bigelow and the management abilities of his brother, both of whom grew up in their father's mills and were themselves managers of textile mills while still in their late teens.

Bigelow's first major invention was an automatic loom for weaving knotted counterpanes, developed when he was only 20 years of age in 1834. Several years later in 1838 he invented a complex loom to weave coachlace, and ornamental pile fabric for coaches and chaises. In company with his brother they leased the uppermill of the defunct Lancaster Cotton Manufacturing Company, dissolved in 1835, and incorporated the Clinton Company for the manufacture of cotton, woolen, and silk goods (coach lace) and machinery. At the lower brick mill built in 1810 by Poignand and Plant, Bigelow's counterpane loom had been put into operation by 1841.

The Clinton Company, financed and managed largely by Horatio Nelson Bigelow, prospered through the next decade. In 1842, he bought the mill they had been leasing. In 1845, capital stock was increased to \$300,000 and in 1846 Sawyer's Mills in Boylston were purchased and operated as spinning mills, the weaving done at the Clinton Mill. Production in 1851 was 1,200,000 yards of coachlace and 800,000 yards of tweed, cassimeres, and pantaloons cloth by 200 employees.

Renamed Clintonville, the village prospered as additional manufacturers took advantage of the water power sites and technical expertise developing in the area. Ephraim Fuller established a fulling mill in 1839 further downstream on South

Meadow Brook and soon expanded to include the manufacture of knitting yarns, satinets, and cassimeres, employing 30 hands and producing 60,000 yards of cloth per year.

The decades of the 1840s and 50s were extremely prolific for Erastus Bigelow and significant to Clinton's development. In the early 1840s, he developed a power loom for the production of fine, cotton checked cloth, until this time woven only by hand. In 1844, he was contracted to plan, advise on construction, and equip with suitable machinery, principally his new looms, a large mill for the production of checked cottons. Among the investors in the Lancaster Mills Company were a number of the Boston Associates: members of Appleton, Lawrence, and Lyman families, who capitalized the enterprise at \$500,000. Bigelow chose and purchased the Nashua River site of Pitts' Mills, and erected a one-story mill 614 feet long by 46 feet wide, one of the first mills to be built on the principle of a linear flow of goods and processes. Almost immediately additional buildings were constructed, including a one-story, single-room mill 356 feet by 174 feet in which carding, spinning, and weaving, with over 20,000 spindles and 500 looms took place, powered by a combination of steam and waterpower from the start. Boarding houses and tenements, including an impressive brick block on Green Street were soon erected, and by 1850, 5,000,000 yards of cloth were woven annually by 488 female and 200 male operatives.

An improved counterpane loom was developed by Bigelow in the mid-1840s, leading to the incorporation of the Lancaster Quilt Company in 1848, capitalized at \$200,000. With Horatio N. Bigelow as agent, the company employed 100 persons at the water Street mill and annually produced quilts and counterpanes valued at \$150,000.

Between 1842 and 1849 Erastus Bigelow was granted patents for the invention of power looms to weave ingram, Brussels, and Wilson Carpets, until this time only handwoven. Joining with H.N. Bigelow and Stephen Fairbanks, partners also in the Clinton Company and Lancaster Mills, they began weaving of Brussels carpets in 1849, producing by 1851, 500 yards of carpet per day on 28 looms. The firm incorporated in 1854 as the Bigelow Carpet Company and within the next few years a number of tenements and brick mill buildings, still standing, were erected at the Union Street Site. When the Clinton Company suspended operation in 1862, it was purchased by the Bigelow Carpet Company which in 1864 erected a new brick spinning mill and other buildings on the site. This became the spinning mill while weaving took place at the Union Street mills. At this time the Boylston Sawyer's Mills, formerly operated as a spinning mill by the Clinton Company, was sold to the Lancaster Mills Company, increasing their already large manufacturing capacity.

Bigelow's invention of a power loom for weaving wire cloth led to the establishment of the Clinton Wire Cloth Company in 1856 by Erastus and Horatio Bigelow and J.C. Hoadley. The company produced windows screens, corn poppers, siere bottoms, spark arrestors, coal and sand riddles, etc. Though the company grew

slowly - only 21 employees by 1865 - it eventually became the third largest industry in Clinton, occupying several blocks in the area north of the Bigelow Carpet Company spinning mills.

The contribution of the Bigelow brothers to Clinton's development went beyond their inventive and industrial management abilities, extending to civic improvement. H.N. Bigelow, whose permanent home was in Clinton, served on the school committee, represented the town in the General Court, donated land for the common, supervised the laying out of the streets in the business and residential center, supported the Bigelow Mechanics Institute and Bigelow Library Association, was president of the Clinton Savings Bank founded in 1851, director of the First National Bank of Clinton founded in 1864, and contributed \$25,000 towards building the Worcester and Nashua Railroad, of which he became a director, through the town.

The rapid expansion of the textile industry fostered growth in allied industries. Several foundries and machine shops were established during this period to supply the thousands of machines needed by the continually expanding industry. A loom harness, belting, and reed shop were established in 1853. Lumber and building trades also prospered. In 1846, Goodrich Brook in the north end of the town was dammed and by 1853 Eben Fuller erected a saw and planing mill and a door, sash, and blind factory. In 1854, the Clinton Gas Light Company was established to serve the Bigelow and Lancaster mills as well as the town. Manufacture of clothing also arose. By 1865 the 1839 Fuller mill was expanded and became the Bay State Skirt Company, producing \$175,000 worth of hoop skirts with 45 employees. Two firms manufactured Balmoral skirts, and eleven others employing almost 30 hands, produced hoop skirt material, woolen shirt bosoms, silk and velvet bonnets, and various clothing.

Boot and shoe manufacturing employed more than 80 persons in the production of 75,000 pairs worth \$121,000. Combmaking was carried on in dozens of shops, the largest of which was Sidney Harris' brick factory, erected in 1865 on the Nashua River below the Lancaster Mills. Here as many as 100 hands produced 12,000 combs per day.

Though of minor importance as compared to manufacturing, agriculture was practiced on 61 farms in 1865, employing 70 persons in the raising of goods valued at \$19,000. These included grains, hay, potatoes, and meat.

E. Architecture

Residential Town is incorporated in 1850 with a population of 3113, one of the largest in the county for that year. Tremendous industrial growth in the 1830s and 40s, leading to incorporation and reflected in housing stock. Multiple-family worker housing erected on Chestnut, Grove, and Green Streets. Blocks of two-story five and six-bay Greek Revival units constructed on Green Street between 1845-50 with mansard roofs added within the next two decades. Two brick tenements also erected on Green

Street during the mid 1840s. John Hoadley (Worcester) was the architect for the Lancaster Mill and the Green Street housing; Oliver Stone was the local contractor. Similar units constructed along Chestnut and Grove survive, including the duplexes for superintendents' residences on Chestnut Street which have undergone turn-of-the-century alterations in the form of enclosed porches and large dormers. Traditional two-story, five-bay double chimney and three-bay side-passage plans date from this period also, as many workers were encouraged by the mill owners to erect their own houses (Ford). The more prestigious residential area surrounds Central Park, extending north along Walnut, Chestnut and Cedar Streets to Water Street. These streets are lined with popular style frame dwellings dating from the latter portion of the period: Italianate villas, Second Empire, and some early Queen Anne and Victorian Gothic structures. Water Street, the old road from Lancaster, retains a few Federal and Greek Revival dwellings as well as the later styles.

Institutional: Evangelical Congregational society erects meetinghouse (1846); both the Baptist and Roman Catholic Congregations build churches in 1849; Methodist Episcopal church erected in 1852; Unitarians construct meetinghouse in 1853. In 1847, four school districts existed with both frame and brick buildings and a graded system of instruction was established. Grammar school building (1844) for lower grades was converted to the public high school in 1854; series of lower grade schools were constructed during the 1850s and 60s to meet the growing population. In 1846, the Clinton House hotel opened being a three-and one-half story, six-bay block with mansard roof (added in the 1860s?); another smaller hotel on Main Street pre-dated the Clinton House. A two-story, five-bay brick Mechanics Institute was erected during the period.

Commercial: Worcester and Nashua Railroad reached Clinton by 1848. During the 1840s, High Street developed as the major commercial center with groceries, dry goods stores, etc. operating from frame and a few brick structures primarily in the block between Union and Church.

Industrial: During the early portion of the period most of the textile mills were established; Bigelow Mills purchased the old Prescott site. By the end of the period the long, massive brick structures dominated the town's landscape. Most appear to have expanded throughout the remainder of the century, rendering the early complexes indistinguishable from later additions.

IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870-1915)

A. Transportation Routes

Boston, Clinton, Fitchburg branch to Lancaster Mills opens, 1875. Central Massachusetts Railroad opens, 1881 through southern section of town. Late 19th century extension of street grid south on Burdett Hill. In 1893, the Clinton Street Railway opens service north to Leominster (High, Water, Main Streets). In 1898 the Worcester (High, Union, Mechanic, Boylston Streets). The

Clinton-Hudson Street Railway opens in 1900, extending southeast along Berlin Road. Wachusett Reservoir construction destroys some roads in the southwest, as well as the Central Massachusetts Nashua Valley line. Rail service is re-routed through a tunnel east of the valley and across the valley on a large trestle. High Street is extended north along the Nashua lowland, ca. 1905.

B. Population

Population more than doubles from 1870 (5429) to period peak in 1900 (13,667). It then drops and remains stable at around 13,100 to 1915 (13,192). Period of greatest growth, 1895-1900 (+2170). 1717 Irish, 312 Germans, 310 Scots, 241 English, 131 Canadians present 1875. 2097 Irish, 465 Germans, 295 Scots, 257 English, 90 French Canadians, 1885. 2219 Irish, 593 Germans, 492 Italians, 380 Scots, 257 English, 246 Poles, 177 French Canadians, 154 New Brunswickers, 122 Nova Scotians, with many other groups present, 128 English Canadians, 1905. Many foreign laborers brought in (notably Italians) to work on Clinton Dam/Wachusett Reservoir project (ca. 1895-1905). As population increases and diversifies, religious denominations proliferate and expand. Nine organizations are active in 1889. Unitarian church raised and enlarged, (after fire of 1884) 1888-92. Second Advent Church formed 1874. Construction on stone Catholic church completed 1886. Methodist Church remodeled 1887. German Catholic parish divided, 1909, with new Our Lady of Rosary church built 1911. Polish Catholics soon separate from this predominately Italian Congregation, ca. 1910. German Lutheran church built 1915.

Secular organizations also proliferate, By 1879, the major ethnic groups are organized: Irish (Ancient Order of Hibernians, Saint Patrick's Benevolent Society). Germans (Turner-Society, Harvard, Lichtenstein Lodge), Scots (St. Andrew's Society), English (St. George Society). Relief societies present 1879: Knights of Honor, Order of Holy Cross, Fireman's Relief Association. Additional groups organized by 1889: two more Odd Fellows Lodges, six temperance societies, Improved Order of Redmen, Ancient Order of United Workmen, Royal Arcanum, United Order of Pilgrim Fathers, Royal Society of Good-Fellows, Prescott Club, Twenty Associates, Twenty-five Associates, Full Score associates, and others. Clinton Lyceum formed 1872. Clinton Hospital established 1892. Notable labor movements in the period include 1880 weavers' strike at Lancaster Mills, 1886 dyers' strike at Bigelow Carpet Mills, and a major 1912 Lancaster Mills strike, that attracted national I.W.W. organizers, and involved mass meetings, picketing, and rioting.

C. Settlement Patterns

Continued expansion and intensification of established districts during the period. Further civic construction around common, with town hall (1872, rebuilt after 1907 fire), Good Shepard Episcopal Church (1876, rebuilt after fire 1888-92), High School (1885), Holder Memorial Hall (1904), and Bigelow Free Public Library (1912), United Presbyterian Church built less than one block from

Common, 1883. Catholic Church finished on School/Union Street intersection 1886. High Methodist Episcopal Church remodelled 1887. Churches outside this central area include German (1888), Our Lady of Rosary (1911), and German Lutheran (1915).

Continued expansion of high-income district east on Prescott and Ceda Streets, with infilling on Chestnut and Walnut Streets. Infilling and expansion on Burdett Hill south to Winter Street and beyond. "German Town" settlement on Birch/Spruce Street area, east to Branch/Vale Streets, with German church, (1888), Schillerrerein Hall, Kichtenstein Lodge, and Turnverein Hall. Continued expansion of Irish Acre, California, and Duck Harbor neighborhoods, New English/Native residential development east of Main Street. Extended linear development on Main Street. Streetcar suburbs on Berlin Road. Wachusett Reservoir floods southwest of town.

D. Economic Base

The last quarter of the 19th century saw continued growth of the town's three major industries - carpets, cotton gingham, and wire cloth - into state, national, and world leaders, a doubling of the town's population, and expansion and improvement of the town's commercial and residential areas.

The Lancaster Mills Company in 1877 operate 1520 looms, employed 1115 operatives, and produced more than 15 million yards of cloth. The next 15 years marked the greatest expansion for the company. In 1891, a new four story mill was erected; by 1893 the number of looms in operation increased to 3500 and the number of employees to 2000. This growth continued into the early 20th century. The Amory Mill, a four story, brick and steel mill, was constructed in 1912 and by the end of the decade another 1000 looms had been added. When plans for the Wachusett Reservoir called for the disruption of the company's water power, two Cooper-Corliss steam engines were installed to power electrical generators, producing 2900 kilowatts of electricity. By 1899, the entire plant was driven by electricity, the first textile plant in New England to be fully powered by electricity from generators directly connected to reciprocating engines.

Bigelow Carpet Company had by 1885 become the largest in the world for the manufacture of Jacquard, Wilson, and Brussels Carpets, employing 1200 operatives and annually producing 1.5 million yards of carpet. The weaving mills on Union Street were greatly expanded during this period. Mills erected in 1855 and 57 were rebuilt and enlarged in 1885; new building were built in 1876, 1886, 1903, and 1907. In 1899, the company merged with the Lowell Manufacturing Company, for which Erastus Bigelow first developed the ingrain carpet loom during the 1840s. A second merger in 1914 joined the Bigelow Carpet Company with the Hartford Carpet Corporation of Thompsonville, CT. and New York, forming the Bigelow-Hartford Carpet Corporation of Massachusetts, with mills located in Lowell, Clinton, Thompsonville, New York, and Patterson, NJ and a combined workforce of more than 5000. Output exceeded 12.5 million yards annually. The products of these mills

covered the floors of most large hotels and theaters in the country. Pullman cars, ocean liners, steamers, and many homes.

The third large manufacturing establishment in Clinton was the Clinton Wire Cloth Company, a world leader by 1885 with six mills operating in Clinton. Nearby 1000 employees worked the mills at the start of World War I.

A number of new manufacturing concerns appeared during the period while others were discontinued. The Harris comb factory closed in 1881 and the buildings were purchased by the Lancaster Mills for use as tenements and storehouses, leaving only one combmaking establishment in 1895. A tannery was erected on Rigby Road in 1876 but burned in 1880. Three boot and shoe manufactories existed in 1895. The textile industry continued to expand as four worsted, yarn, and translucent fabric mills were established in existing or new mills. A third bank, the Clinton Cooperative Bank, was organized in 1887. By 1895, four printing and newspaper establishments were operating in Clinton.

The greatest increase occurred in the building trades, as 22 master builders and contractors were listed in the 1895 census, more than triple the 1875 figure. During this period much of the commercial center was rebuilt with new brick commercial blocks and private and company housing expanded with the increased workforce. By 1900 the Lancaster Mills Company had erected more than 200 tenements, including several brick rowhouses on Grove Street. The Bigelow Carpet Company also built additional tenements for its employees, including an attractive, block-long brick rowhouse on Nelson Street opposite the spinning mills.

Economic slowdowns and periods of dull trade through the 1880s and 90s led to increased labor-management conflict, particularly at the Lancaster Mills. Layoffs and reductions of wages in 1895 led to two strikes by weavers and 2600 operations. Clinton Wire Cloth Co. mills were struck the same year as a result of wage reductions. In 1896, weavers at Lancaster Mills struck again, and in 1897 the Clinton Worsted Company experienced a walkout by weavers demanding increased wages.

The value of agricultural products in Clinton's 60 or so small farms peaked in the 1890s after increasing nearly four-fold since 1875 to \$54,000. The greatest advances occurred in milk production, which comprised 27% of the total value of farm goods in 1895. Also important were greenhouse and hothouse products (14%), poultry (15.6%), hay and fodder (19.3%), and vegetables (7.6%).

E. Architecture

Residential: Traditional multi-family workers housing continued into the period, including a brick tenement ca. 1900. Several pretentious Queen Anne, Victorian Gothic, and Colonial Revival dwellings north of Central Park constructed by mill owners. More modest popular styles along the northern slope of Burdett Hill to

Summit Street and around Franklin Square. Early twentieth century development from Summit to Winter Streets. One four square and one triple decker noted.

Institutional: St. John's Roman Catholic Church (begun 1875, completed 1886): brick High Victorian Gothic; Church of the Good Shepherd, Episcopal (1876-77): low shingled Craftsman - influenced building now sheathed in aluminum siding; German Church (1888): small frame Gothic with square tower; Congregational Church (1892-99): third building for Congregation, buff brick gothic structure. High school building (1885): two-story, brick Romanesque; Flagg Street School (1898): two-story brick with hipped-roof and central pavillion; grammar school (ca. 1900): two and one-half story brick Queen Anne/Colonial Revival. Public library erected (1873). Town Hall (1871-73): two-story brick with three-story central square tavern; Clinton Hospital (1892): Two-story, five-bay hipped farm Colonial Revival; Central Fire Station (1898): two-and-one-half story brick gable end Colonial Revival with side tower; Holden Memorial Building (1908): two-story five-bay hipped roof Colonial Revival by Emil Grewey; new town hall 1909: two and one-half story brick block with crenellated tower by Peabody and Stearns.

Industrial: Continued expansion of textile and related factories evidence in sprawling mill complexes, generally two-three-story brick structures with corvelled cornices. Clinton Wire Cloth Company complex included a spectacular nine and one-half story brick tower (no longer existing).

Commercial: Development reached its peak during the 1880s. High Street retains impressive collection of two-and three-story brick storefronts, many with well preserved Italianate, Gothic, and Romanesque detailing. High and Church Streets remain major downtown intersection.

X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915-1940)

A. Transportation Routes

Streetcar lines are abandoned by the early 1920s, and local roads are improved as automobile highways. By 1925, Main Street, Metropolitan Road (Route 110 north of Wachusett Reservoir) to West Boylston Street (Route 70), Berlin Road (Route 62), and High Steet (Route 110) are improved as regional highways.

B. Population

Population drops (-752), irregularly from 1915 (13, 192) to 1940 (12,440). Peak of 14, 180 in 1925. New Methodist Church built 1927, Greek Orthodox Church built 1926. Synagogue Shaarei Zedeck built 1929, Our Lady Jasna Gora (Polish) Catholic Church built ca. 1930. Rotary Club formed 1929. Significant local hardships during the Great Depression.

C. Settlement Patterns

Clinton Highlands residential area developed as early automobile suburb. Some southern extension of Burdett Hill area. Automobile corridor develops on northern High Street (Route 110). Other minor developments at edges of existing neighborhoods.

D. Economic Base

Following World War I, prosperity returned to the mills of Clinton during the 1920s. Although slowdowns and some closings occurred during the Depression of the 1930s, most of Clinton's major industries continued or were replaced by other firms, though rarely at the same level of employment.

Changes in fashion and taste forced a reduction in Lancaster Mills' production of gingham; instead of weaving rayon and cotton mixture, drapering and upholstery fabric, slip covers and sheetings were undertaken. By 1928, 1000 employees were turning out 17.5 million yards of fabric. The same year the company sold its tenements to private owners, a harbinger of the final removal of the company after the War.

The Bigelow-Hartford Carpet Company renewed production of carpets after World War I, when most of their machinery was devoted to the manufacture of cotton duck and blankets. In 1929, a merger occurred with Stephen Sanford and Sons of Amsterdam, N.Y., producers of broadloom carpets, creating the Bigelow-Sanford Carpet Company. Despite this merger which expanded Bigelow's share of the market to include the low and middle priced axminster carpets produced by the Sanford Mills, the Clinton factories were closed in 1933. Company executives felt the old machines and millbuildings were obsolete and could not be economically adapted to their objectives and to the space demands of newer machinery and processes. Eventually, the vacated mills were occupied by a variety of smaller, mixed manufacturing concerns, the largest among them the Blackstone Plush Mills, Inc., manufacturers of pile fabrics. They were able to employ a number of the former carpet mill workers. Others were employed by a small carpet manufacturing and textile processing firm set up at the Water St. Mill of the former Clinton Worsted Company. Clinton Wire Cloth Company survived the 1930s because of a merger in the late 1920s of wire firms in Worcester, Palmer, Spencer, and Clinton to form the Wickwire-Spencer Steel Corp. A payroll of 1100 employees continued at the Clinton plant through the end of the period, with new buildings and improvements in machinery put in place.

During World War I, a manufacturer of fine women's woolen and dress goods was established and by 1930 was Clinton's fourth largest employer. Roubaix Mills occupied the old Clinton Wall Trunk Manufacturing Company Factory and grew to number 300 employees. A silk yarn spinning division was added in 1927 and employed 50. The same year, E.R. Buck Chair Company occupied the vacant Sterling Worsted Mills on Rigby Road.

Successful reuse of the Bigelow Carpet Mills and introduction of new manufacturing concerns allowed Clinton's industrial economy to survive the removal of its major industry and closing of several of the smaller textile mills without too serious a depression or loss of population.

E. Architecture

Residential: Decline in growth of residential development compare to that of 19th century. Burdett Hill development continues between Summit and Winter Streets.

Institutional: No significant development during this period.
Commercial: Commercial boom on the decline; no major construction. One Colonial Revival gas station at High and Water Streets.

Industrial: Little evidence of new construction; existing mill buildings remain in operation.