

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

BERNARDSTON

Report Date: 1982

Associated Regional Report: Connecticut Valley

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.

The activity that is the subject of the MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior. This program receives Federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability or age in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility as described above, or if you desire further information please write to: Office of Equal Opportunity, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20240.



MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chair, Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc
mhc@sec.state.ma.us / 617-727-8470

MHC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY REPORT

Date: Dec. 1982

Community: Bernardston

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Bernardston is one of the northernmost towns in Franklin County, its northern boundary abutting southern Vermont. The town is covered by moderate to rugged uplands that dominate western Massachusetts. Elevations vary considerably; heights usually range between 650 feet to over 1100 feet. The highest peak is Bald Mountain (1246 feet) situated in northeastern Bernardston. Additional prominent points include Pond Mountain (1245 feet) northeast of Bald Mountain, East Mountain (1100 feet) east of the village of North Bernardston, Wildcat Mountain (1128 feet) located in western central Bernardston, and West Mountain (1230 feet) south of the previous peak. The last point was the site of an early 19th century black slate quarry that provided material for local gravestone carvers.

These uplands are bisected by the Fall River Valley, which runs the length of Bernardston on a north/south axis. A smaller area of intervalles is situated in southeastern Bernardston. Fall River, the town's primary waterway, flows through the Fall River Valley and eventually drains into the Connecticut River slightly below Turners Falls in Gill. Fall River is fed by a large number of minor tributaries that drain from the uplands into the river. Bernardston has no freshwater bodies. Local soil consists basically of a gravelly loam.

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Bernardston originally was granted as Fall Town in 1736 for veterans of the Turners Falls Fight (1675), with its eastern boundary at Northfield line (1714) and southern boundary at the Deerfield (Greenfield) line of 1673. Fall Town was surveyed for lot divisions in 1739 and its northern boundary established as Province Line (Vermont) in 1741. It was incorporated as the town of Bernardston in 1762 with its western district established as Leyden in 1784, including a later adjustment of boundary line in 1889 along the Eden Road section.

III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Bernardston, a rural commercial center on a primary corridor between Greenfield and Vermont, is located in the Fall River Valley surrounded by uplands of the Green Mountains, with native site potential suspected in the lowland meadows near the town center. It was settled during the mid 18th century with French and Indian fort locations marked along the Fall River Valley and at the original civic focus on Huckle Hill. A Colonial meetinghouse and other period houses survive as remodelled examples around the town center. Expansion of agriculture occurred during the Federal period in the Fall River Valley with several farmsteads and a notable tavern in North Bernardston, and upland cottages along Couch Brook to Leyden. Significant expansion of Bernardston town center during the mid 19th century, with regional railroad connections, including a landmark stone viaduct over Fall River. Town center retains early Victorian civic buildings along the Main Street axis with surrounding suburban houses including Italianate, Greek Revival, and Gothic examples. Limited industrial development along Fall River

mill sites, with a secondary village at Shaw Road and Hales Crossing. Dairy farming continued as the primary activity in the Fall River Valley through the early 20th century with elaborate period barns to North Bernardston and the development of tourist activities along Route 5, including a period hotel and gas stations near the town center.

Present development is most evident at Interstate 91's junction with Route 10 to Northfield and along Route 5 to Greenfield. Bernardston Center retains original historic fabric despite the traffic volume, and North Bernardston tavern preserves landscape character of the Fall River Valley, with recreational housing from Vermont in surrounding highlands.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500-1620)

A. Transportation Routes:

Bernardston was in an important north-south corridor from Pocumtuck (Deerfield) Valley to the Connecticut River. A primary north-south trail apparently followed the west bank of the Fall River Valley as Route 5 with east-west connection to Squakeag (Northfield) likely following along Parmenter-Gill Road, with Fall River fordways possible at Mountain and River-Shaw Road. A secondary north-south highland trail reported from Picomegan (Greenfield) along the south flank of Ball Hill (Leyden) to Couch Brook and across Fall River to East Mountain (Costello, map, 1975), with a likely trail over Huckle Hill from West Road.

B. Settlement Patterns:

There were no reported native Contact period sites. Local natives probably congregated in the fertile Fall River Valley and to a lesser degree, the lowlands of southeastern Bernardston. Smaller camps may have been established in the town's uplands. Prime locations for such sites are the bluffs located on the eastern side of Fall River and overlooking the junction of Route 91 and Bald Mountain Road, and the relatively level peaks of Bald and east mountains.

C. Subsistence Patterns:

The Fall River Valley and the lowlands of southeastern Bernardston would have provided natives with good horticultural land. Local native fishing probably focused on the Fall River. However, it is just as likely that local occupants journeyed the relatively short distance to fish at the major fishing site at Rutners Falls (Gill/Montague), particularly during the spring spawning runs. The Fall River Valley and Bernardston's moderate uplands would have been good sites for native hunting.

D. Observations:

Bernardston's fertile lowlands and good water sources were capable of supporting a small to moderate sized native horticultural village. The Bernardston native settlement was most likely an offshoot of the larger village established at Turners Falls or possibly that in present Northfield. Local native were probably affiliated with the Quakheags, a native group centered in Northfield in the early 18th century. Regionally, traditionally dominated the Middle Connecticut River Valley. The greatest likelihood for

extant archaeological evidence of native occupation should be in the Fall River Valley, the previously mentioned bluff overlooking the eastern portion of the valley, and the lowlands of southeastern Bernardston.

V. PLANTATION PERIOD

A. Transportation Routes:

There was improvement of north-south trails from Deerfield to Northfield along Fall River as Route 10 axis following Parmenter Road, with a primary north-south trail along Fall River Valley as Route 5.

B. Population:

It is unclear how large the period native population was in Bernardston. The town lacked a Colonial population until the late 1730s.

C. Settlement Patterns:

Native settlement patterns were probably basically the same as those suggested for the Contact period.

D. Economic Base:

Native subsistence patterns likely were similar to those described for the Contact period. The development of Anglo-Indian fur trade in the Middle Connecticut River Valley by the Pynchon family during the Plantation period most likely encouraged increased native hunting and trapping of fur-bearing animals.

Colonial utilization of local resources was probably limited to occasional hunting and timbering by Northfield, Gill, and Deerfield settlers.

E. Observations:

The Bernardston area appears to have continued primarily as the site of native settlement. Serious Colonial interest in establishing a settlement in Bernardston and/or utilizing local resources on a large scale basis was undoubtedly discouraged by the presence of large tracts of higher quality agricultural land in lower portions of the Connecticut River Valley and the area's exposure to native attack.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

A. Transportation Routes:

Settlement of Fall Town (1736) and the location of the meetinghouse on Huckle Hill (1739) created radial highways, including Huckle Hill and Purple Meadow Roads to Parmenter Road (Route 10). The primary north-south highways remained as Route 5 along Fall River Valley with an east-west connector along across the Fall River fordway (1760) was reported at Mountain Road (Holland 1855: II, p.321).

B. Population:

There were no references to a local native population in available sources. By the 18th century, the native population was probably restricted to small bands that established short-term hunting, fishing or "war" camps in the area.

The Colonial population fluctuated considerable, particularly during the war years of ca. 1744-1760. In ca. 1744, the settlement of "Fall Town" (encompassed present Bernardston, Leyden and part of Colrain) had a population of 17 families. This figure had dropped to only two families in 1747 as local fears of native attacks reached epidemic proportions (Kellogg 1902:29). However, the population began to increase noticeably as the last of the Indian wars neared its end. By ca. 1760, the colonial community consisted of approximately 230 individuals. The population had more than doubled in ca. 1775 when it stood at approximately 500 residents (Holland 1855: II, 321).

C. Settlement Patterns:

Native encampments probably continued to be established in the Fall River Valley until Colonial settlement in the late 1730s and 1740s. From that point, native occupation was most likely restricted to more secluded upland locations.

Colonial settlement was scattered and confined primarily to the Fall River Valley, roughly between the junction of Route 10 and Route 91, and slightly south of the junction of the Route 91 and Keets Brook, the general vicinity of the intersection of Route 10 and Purple Meadow Road and Huckle Hill. Between the town's first settlement in ca. 1738/1739 and ca. 1760, most of Bernardston's colonial homes were periodically abandoned for safety of the settlement's four fortified garrison houses or colonial Valley communities further south. The local garrison houses consisted of Samuel Connable's "Fort" ca. 1739 on Route 5 slightly north of its junction with Couch Brook, Major John Burke's pallisaded hamlet (ca. 1739) slightly above the junction of Route 5 and Burke Flat Road, Deacon Sheldon's "fort" (ca. 1740-41) on Huckle Hill, a half mile north of intersection of Huckle Hill and Purple Meadow Roads. Burke's fortified complex was the most extensive. The pallisade measured 96 x 96 feet and contained up to eight houses, several of were only lean-tos. Bernardston's first meetinghouse (congregational) was erected in ca. 1739 on Huckle Hill Road to its junction with Chapin Road. By the 1760s, two small settlement nodes had developed in the general vicinity of Burke's pallisaded fort and on Huckle Hill, probably near Deacon Sheldon's garrison house. At this time, settlement had also begun to expand in to present Leyden.

D. Economic Base:

The primary pursuit of the town's colonial residents was agriculture. Crop production took place primarily in the fertile bottomlands of the Fall River Valley. Livestock probably grazed in the moderate uplands adjacent to the valley and Huckle Hill. Bernardston is reported to have been one of the first towns within Massachusetts to have begun commercial production of maple syrup. Local production was initiated in ca. 1765 (Kellogg 1902:7). Industrial operations were limited. The town's first mill (sawmill) was put into operation on the Fall River prior to ca. 1740 (Ibid: 52). Samuel Connable established a gristmill on the "northwest branch of Fall River" (probably Keets Brook) in ca. 1775. In ca. 1769, Major John Burke quarried 20 town of limestone from the site of the "Chapin Quarry" (Ibid: 63). The town's

first tavern was opened by Elisha (or Elija) Sheldon in the vicinity of Huckle Hill. A second tavern was established by the ever active Major John Burke on Route 5 slightly south of his pallisaded fortification.

E. Architecture:

Only two houses of the Colonial period are known to survive. These are the Connable House (or Fort) of 1739, a two-story center chimney plan structure remodelled in the Federal period, and the Samuel Hale cottage (1760), a three-quarter plan structure with an end chimney. Bernardston is particularly fortunate to retain its original 1739 meetinghouse, remodelled and moved several time but extant nonetheless. As originally constructed, the meetinghouse had dimensions of 50 x 40 x 23 feet. It was repaired ca. 1767, it was voted "to nail on the boards that are come off; to nail up the windows, and of windows in the lower part to be made so as to slip up" (Sylvester 1879: 629). The reference to windows being made to "slip up" suggests that they had been fixed panes originally and that they were to be made into double-hung sash; as movable sash had been in use for some time on residential buildings, the 1779 directive appears to represent the desire, however belated, to bring the meetinghouse in line with accepted architectural taste. The meetinghouse's current appearance dates from an 1825 Greek Revival remodelling. The building features a shallow projecting double entrance porch with pediment and domed two-stage square belfry. The first tavern in Bernardston was that of Elisha Sheldon (ca. 1760) and stood at the base of Huckle Hill, on what is now Route 10.

F. Observations:

Bernardston's colonial settlement was situated on the exposed northern frontier of the Middle Connecticut River Valley. Although Bernardston suffered only light to moderate damage during the Indian wars of the 1740s and 1750s, the community's vulnerability to native attack impeded its development until late in the period. The town's continued rural nature suggests an excellent likelihood of archaeological remains of period settlement surviving in the Fall River Valley, in the vicinity of the Route 10 and Purple Meadow Road junction and Huckle Hill. Efforts should be made to pinpoint and protect the sites of the town's four defensive structures, since they were such an important part of the settlement's early development.

VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

A. Transportation Routes:

The relocation of the meetinghouse from Huckle Hill to Bernardston Center (1821) formed a secondary network along Fall River from Greenfield, including River and Meryfield-Shaw Road. Other period highways included the loop of West Mountain Road and Keets Road along Shattuck Brook to Leyden. The primary east-west highway from Bernardston Center to Northfield improved as Route 10, bisecting Old Parmenter Road, with a primary north/south highway to Brattleboro (Vermont) remaining as Route 5 along the Fall River Valley.

B. Population:

Between 1765 and 1790 the town towns of Bernardston and Leyden grew by 630%; between 1776 and 1790, 176%, a growth rate typical of the hill towns around

it, but among the highest in the Valley. After 1790, however, this rapid growth tapered off. Bernardston, 1790-1830, grew by 32.8%, about average for the county, reaching 918 in the latter year.

C. Settlement Patterns:

Civic focus shifted from Huckle Hill to Fall River Valley with the meetinghouse relocation (1791), and to Bernardston Center (1823) around Fall River mill site on Northfield Road. Secondary villages developed along Greenfield Road (Route 5) at Hales Crossing and on River Street at Fall River mill site. The local farming village expanded at North Bernardston around the tavern site at Shattuck Brook in Fall River Valley.

D. Economic Base:

Predominantly agricultural economy with large quantities of corn and rye produced. In 1828, 16,000 bushels of corn and rye reported with numerous small distilleries in addition to gristmill at the center, and perhaps a half dozen sawmills by 1830. Kellogg reports that Bernardston farmers were among the first, ca. 1765, to make maple sugar and syrup.

The discovery of iron ore in West Mountain about 1777 led to the establishment in about 1780 of an iron works on Fall River at the Greenfield line, run by Lemuel Robbins, though there is little indication of its size. By 1818 a satinet mill with eight looms had been established on the spot. One or two small tanneries, and shoemaking also noted.

E. Architecture:

Residential: at least two dozen houses and cottages of the Federal period are known to survive in Bernardston. Of these, the majority are two-story structures, among which are a number of stylish and substantial houses. The center chimney and center hall plans were employed with equal frequency. For cottages, the more traditional center chimney plan predominates. In general, both houses and cottages are clustered at the town center, while in outlying sections and along rural roads, the dominant building type is the two-story house. Buildings at the town center also tend to be somewhat less pretentious than individual farmsteads in discrete settings. What are probably the finest houses of the period stand on Route 5 near North Bernardston. These are a pair of hip roofed, double interior structures, both of which feature five-bay facade treatment on front and side walls. Both incorporate quality detailing. Other period houses included the Slate Homestead (ca. 1799), the Chapin Nelson House (remodelled ca. 1850) and the Perry House (1790). At least one Federal house with twin rearwall chimneys was observation Bald Mountain Road.

Institutional: A considerable amount of institutional activity occurred in the period. In 1791, the first meetinghouse was moved a second time (to the forks at West and Bald Mountain Road); it was moved a third time, in 1823, to its present location in Bernardston Village, and rebuilt. Baptists, present in the town from the early 1780s, organized a society in 1789, building a meetinghouse a year later; the 1790 meetinghouse was replaced in 1817 and survived in residential use as late as 1879. Although they did not formally organize, Methodists met in the town from the late 1790s on. In 1820, a Universalist Society organized and in 1823 built a meetinghouse (not extant). The Second (Ortodox-Trinitarian) Congregational Church was

organized in 1824 (meetinghouse 1833). Six district schoolhouses stood in the town inn in 1830. Of the structures mentioned above, only the 1739 meetinghouse is known extant.

Commercial: At least two taverns of the period survive. These are the 1789 Connable Tavern , and end chimney, hip roofed structure with front and side wall entrance treatment at North Bernardston, and a tavern indicated on the 1830 map on Route 5 at the town center.

VIII. EARLY INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1830-1870)

A. Transportation Routes:

There was improvement of the east-west corridor from Greenfield to Northfield as the Connecticut River Railroad (1847), with a monumental stone arch viaduct across Fall River intact south of Bernardston Center. The local highway system remained focused around Bernardston Center with axis along Main Street (Route 10) and Greenfield Road (Route 5).

B. Population:

Bernardston reached its peak population in 1840 at 992, and thereafter fluctuated downward, gaining new residents only in the late 1850 and late 1860s. The arrival of the railroad in 1846 appears, if anything, to have lost the town population. By 1870 the town population stood at 961, some 31 residents short of the peak 1840 figure, but still 4.6% above the number in 1830.

Bernardston's foreign-born population in 1855 was 1.4% of the total. Twelve of the thirteen immigrants were Irish, most of whom may have arrived with the railroad.

C. Settlement Patterns:

The primary civic and economic focus expanded at Bernardston Center with regional railroad connections (1847) creating a dispersed suburban village along the axis of Northfield Road and secondary development along Greenfield Road. The civic center was created around the town common with a library and academy (1863). Agriculture remained as the primary activity along the Fall River Valley, with a farming village at North Bernardston and a secondary commercial center at the Hales Crossing railroad depot.

D. Economic Base:

There was a predominantly agricultural economy, although limited manufacturing showed increasing diversity, particularly in woodworking industries. The raising of hops had begun in 1835, probably adopting the crop which Northfield had been raising since 1818. By 1855, Bernardston reported 16 and 1/2 acres planted in hops, with an annual harvest valued at \$2, 892 -- 28% of the county production. Between them, Northfield and Bernardston accounted for 86% of the county hops acreage. Both Bernardston and Leyden reported large quantities of merino wool. In 1837 the towns ranked sixth and seventh respectively among the county towns, although the quantity declined after that. Among manufacturers, the town had six sawmills, two grist mills, and Temple and Green's scythe snathe manufactory, making 12,000-15,000 scythe snathers per annum.

The old iron works privilege continued to be utilized. In 1838 Abel Shattuck, owner of the mill there, petitioned to the legislature to have the Greenfield corner which included the mills set off to Bernardston.

The presence of the John L. Russell Cutlery in Greenfield made that town an important center for technology in machine forging. This expertise, together with a large workforce of experienced Sheffield and German employees led to the establishment of a number of iron and steel implement mills in the town around Greenfield. In 1853, E. S. Hulbert left a Waterville, New York hoe firm to start his own hoe factory at the old iron works privilege, though the period of its prominence was not until the last quarter of the century.

E. Architecture:

Residential: The number of houses built in the period equalled or surpassed the number constructed in the Federal period. The town center filled in with modest but well-detailed Greek Revival, Gothic Revival and Italianate houses, while in outlying areas, Greek Revival and Italianate farmhouses and cottages were built in fair numbers. Traditional center hall plan houses and cottages were built in numbers nearly equal to those incorporating sidehall plans. In rural settings, double interior chimney, center hall plan houses with five-bay fronts and Italianate, styling appear to predominate. Cottages, on the other hand, tend to exhibit sidehall plans. Of note is a 1861 Gothic Revival sidehall house on Bald Mountain Road, which features sawn bargeboards and paired ogee arched windows set in molded labels.

Institutional: Almost all of the town's institutional buildings date from the Early Industrial period. These include two churches, two academies and a library. The Goodale Academy, a domestic building of 1833, is the earliest. The Academy operated from 1833 until the founding of the Powers Institute in 1856. The Powers Institute building (1857), which also still stands, is one of the town's most fully developed Italianate buildings, with a cross-gabled plan, bracketted eaves, and a tall square belvedere. The other, the Cushman Library of 1862, is a two-story brick structure with bracketted eaves, pilasters and roundhead windows set in brownstone surrounds. Also built in the period was Cushman Hall (1860), a 2 & 1/2 story frame Greek Revival building. Churches of the period are the First Baptist Church (1851) and Goodale United (Second Congregational) Church (1831, Job Goodale; enlarged 1846), both small Greek Revival buildings with square belfries and spires.

Commercial: A few commercial buildings of the period have survived, including a two-story center entrance Italianate building on Route 5.

Industrial: The only industrial structure known to survive from the period is an 1846 rockfaced granite railroad bridge with a triple arch span.

IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870-1915)

A. Transportation Routes:

The primary regions corridor remained as the Connecticut River (Boston and Maine) Railroad from Greenfield to Vermont. No street railways were constructed through the area.

B. Population:

In the first five years of the period, the town's population climbed to 9912, only one person short of the 1840 peak. After 1875, however, the number of residents fell sharply, and in the period 1885-1890, the town lost over 17% of its population. Through 1920 the population remained relatively stagnant, in the 1700s. The period closed in Bernardston with a resident count of 790.

In 1880, over half of the town's immigrants were English, perhaps are reflection of a foreign population employed at the hoe works. By 1905, Canadians accounted for the bulk of the town's foreign population, risen by then to 7.1%.

C. Settlement Patterns:

Bernardston Center remained the primary civic and commercial focus with limited expansion of the residential district along Greenfield Road (Route 5), and industrial activity along the railroad at River Street. Farming was maintained as the primary development in the Fall River Valley to North Bernardston with dairy production.

D. Economic Base:

In the early 1870s, Bernardston seems to have received a strong economic boost. In 1870 the Connecticut River Railroad constructed a pleasure grove near the railroad in Bernardston, Sylvan Grove, which became a popular tourist and travelling attraction. Emil Weissbrod, a native of Saxony who had made pocket books in New York (and possibly attracted to the area by the prominence of the business in South Deerfield), came to Bernardston the same year. In 1872, N.S. Cutler opened a shoe factory, which three years later was producing ladies' shoes worth \$50,000 annually over half the total value of the manufactured products in the town. In 1875, the town's population reached 991. This prosperity does not seem to have lasted. Weissbrod moved to Montague in 1873, Cutler to Greenfield in 1880; and after 1885 the town's population plunged precipitously, losing nearly a fifth of its population in the years 1885-1890.

In the last decades of the period, E. S. Hulbert was the town's only substantial manufacturing industry, employing 25 hands in 1800. But after Hulbert's death in 1906, the firm was sold to a Greenfield cutlery firm, Nichols Brothers, and operations were transferred there in 1911.

Agricultural products remained predominant and for a time sweet corn and cucumbers were major products. Much lumber was cut for railroad ties and telephone poles.

E. Architecture:

Residential construction slowed into the period, but some sidehall Queen Anne and Colonial Revival cottages were built at the town center and on Routes 5 and 10. In addition to cottages, a small number of larger Queen Anne and Colonial Revival houses were built at the town center, including one double chimney hip roofed Queen Anne house just off Route 10. Only one institutional building is known to have been built in the period; that is the Stick Style Town Hall of 1878, a well-detailed 2 & 1/2 story building with a mansard roofed porch and applied stick work. Also constructed in the period; that is

the Stick Style town Hall of 1878, was well-detailed 2 & 1/2 story building with a mansard roofed porch and applied stickwork. Also constructed in the period were the Bernardston Inn (1904-1913), a three-story frame building seven bays long by five bays wide with a flat roof and a three-story grist mill (ca. 1900) on River Road. One other period commercial building, a utilitarian two-story frame structure, was observed on Route 10.

X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915-1940)

A. Transportation Routes:

There was improvement of local highways as regional auto roads with a primary north-south axis from Greenfield to Vermont as U.S. Route 5 along the Fall River Valley, and an east/west connector to Northfield as Route 10 through Bernardston Center.

B. Population:

In the Early Modern period, Bernardston was one of the few towns in the county to show a net gain in population, and the rise of 20.7% was the second highest in the county, after Greenfield. Between 1920 and 1935 the town grew by over 26%, perhaps a reflection of suburban green field growth.

C. Settlement Patterns:

Civic and commercial activities remained focused at Bernardston Center with expansion of tourist development north along the Route 5 axis from Greenfield. Dairy farming was maintained as the primary activity in Fall River Valley with secondary industrial activity along the Northfield railroad corridor from the town center.

D. Economic Base:

No new industries identified, but both saw and grist mills at the town center remained in operation throughout the period. Dairy farming was reported as the chief means of livelihood.

E. Architecture:

Very little construction took place in the period. Most of the period structures observed were small Colonial Revival cottages, examples of which were noted on Routes 5 and 10 and on Gill Road.

XI. SURVEY OBSERVATIONS

General: Bernardston's inventory adequately records most pre-1850 residential structures as well as the major 18th and 19th century institutional buildings. Of note in the town are the survival of the first meetinghouse (1739) and the excellent state of preservation of the village center. A range of 18th and 19th century houses and cottages with all major institutional buildings and a few commercial buildings stand at the town center.

Of particular significance is the quality of open space at the village center; the houses, widely but evenly spaced along the roads and lanes at the center, are visible as an ensemble from most points in the center. New construction at a higher density would seriously compromise the delicate balance of

built-up to open space in the village.

Industrial: The most outstanding group of buildings and structures in Bernardston is a potential NR district, including the Connecticut River Railroad bridge over Fall River (1846) together with the adjacent sawmill and Barber first mill. A turbine in the sawmill still powers an overhead cable to the first mill, possibly the only remaining example of a cable-driven mill in New England.

XII. SOURCES

Arms, Williams tyler and Marsha E. Arms, History of Leyden, Massachusetts 1676-1959 (Orange, Massachusetts, 1959).

Bernardston, Mass., Bernardston, Massachusetts, Sesqui-Centennial; March 6, 1762 August 7, 1912 (Greenfield, 1912).

Kellogg, Lucy Jane Cutler, History of the Town of Bernardston, Franklin County, Massachusetts (2 vols., Greenfield, 1902-1962).

"Settlement of Bernardston", Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association History and Proceedings 3 (1890-1898), 94-115.