

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

CONWAY

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.

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MHC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY REPORT

DATE: 1982

COMMUNITY: Conway

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Conway is the fourth largest town in Franklin County measuring 37.8 square miles. The town is situated in the western uplands of the Connecticut River Valley study unit. These uplands are part of the foothills of the Green Mountains. Generally, elevations range from 1000 feet to 1350 feet in western Conway while dropping to between 700 feet to 900 feet in eastern Conway. The town's greatest elevations occur in its western uplands. They include Flag Mountain (1395 feet) in northwestern Conway, the twin hills of Walters Hill (1247 feet) and Pine Hill (1184 feet) northwest of the village of Conway, Smith Hill (1406 feet) east of the southern portion of Poland Brook and the opposing peaks of Abbott Hill (1507 feet) and Sikes Hill (1508 feet) in southwestern Conway. These hills are broken by several intervals and the South River Valley. The Deerfield River delineates Conway's northeastern boundary, separating it from the towns of Shelburne and Deerfield. The Deerfield and South rivers drain the northern portion of Conway while the southern portion of town is drained but the Mill River which eventually flows into the Connecticut River in Hatfield. The town's only bodies of freshwater are several small mill ponds. A number of small to moderate-sized tracts of marshland are scattered about Conway.

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Originally included as part of Deerfield Western addition in 1712 with southern boundary along Hatfield line (Whately-Williamsburg) and western line with Huntstown (Ashfield). Settled as Southwestern Deerfield and established as Conway district in 1767 with northern boundary along Deerfield River with Shelburne. Incorporated as town of Conway in 1775 with northeast section annexed from Shelburne in 1781, southwest section annexed to Goshen in 1785 and southeast section annexed from Deerfield in 1791. Northwest district annexed to Buckland in 1838.

III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Rural recreational hill town on secondary corridor between Greenfield and Northampton. Located on eastern range of Hoosac highlands with access to Connecticut valley along Deerfield River gorge including native site potential in South River Valley. Settled for Deerfield before Revolution with original meetinghouse site at Pumpkin Hollow south of town center and well preserved mid-18th century houses of early Colonial plan north and west of town center. Limited agricultural potential on highlands above South River during early 19th century with several surviving Federal farmsteads on Cricket Hill, Poplar Hill, Pine Hill, and along Mathews and Roaring Brook Road to Deerfield. Important development of local manufacturing on South River at Burkeville with gradual expansion of street village to Conway Center during mid-19th century, including Greek Revival cottages and elaborate suburban housing along River Street axis. Industrial potential reached by late 19th century with location of civic and commercial activities at Conway Center, including Beaux Arts library and formation of residential district on hills above South River to Burkeville with Queen Anne church on Maple Street. Location of Boston and Maine Railroad along Deerfield gorge had little impact upon settlement, save for original truss bridge at Bardwell Ferry. Increasing development of recreational activities from Deerfield by early 20th century including notable concrete block Colonial Revival estate on Poplar Hill. Present preservation

of historic period farmsteads, while local highway activities threaten erosion of residential fabric at Burkeville.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500-1620)

A. Transportation Routes:

Intermediate corridor between Connecticut Valley and Deerfield River. Secondary east-west trail to South River valley (Conway Center) from Mill River (Deerfield) apparently followed line of Mathews Road and loop of Parson Road along axis of Route 116, extending west possibly as Pine Hill Road to Shelburne Falls and Bear River (Ashfield). Alternate branch may have followed South River valley west (Route 116) with southwest branch through Poland Gate to Keyes Swamp and Chapel Falls (Ashland). North-south routes along axis of South River valley from Deerfield gorge remain unclear with connecting link to Roaring Brook (Whately) possibly over Fisher and Poplar Hill Road.

B. Settlement Patterns:

There were no reported native period sites. The town's upland terrain suggests native occupation was limited to small to moderate-sized fishing and hunting camps. Period sites most likely were concentrated in the South River Valley, particularly between the village of Conway and the South River's confluence with the Deerfield, and the bluff immediately north of these two rivers. Additional camps may have been established adjacent to the southern third of Bear River and Schneck Brook.

C. Subsistence Patterns:

Several small tracts of horticultural land may have been laid out in the broadest portion of the South River valley and the level ground immediately south of Schneck Brook. The primary fishing sites were probably situated at the Deerfield River's confluence with Schneck Brook, Bear River and South River. Hunting was likely undertaken in scattered upland locations particularly in the vicinity of local marshlands and intervalles.

D. Observations:

Conway probably gained increased importance to the Pocumtucks as a resource and a settlement area because of colonial encroachment on their traditional settlement center in Deerfield. At this time, the study unit's western uplands were of limited interest to the colonial settlers.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

A. Transportation Routes:

Improvement of east-west axis with Huntstown Road (1754) as Mathews Road along Mill River from Deerfield to South River and west as Pine Hill Road to Ashfield (Conway, 1961, p.52). North-south axis improved from Deerfield River with crossing at Bardwell Ferry (Shelburne) and south as Reed's Bridge Road (1767) to Pumpkin Hollow (Conway Center) and southwest to Roaring Brook as former Fischer Hill-Poplar Hill Road to Whately (Ibid, p.54). Establishment of meetinghouse in Pumpkin Hollow (1769) created radial highway system of town center including Cricket Hill Road, River Street and Shelburne Road along South River valley. Survey of division highways (1762) formed north/south axis of Shirkshire Road and East Guinea Road. Other period roads included network through Conway State Forest now abandoned.

B. Population:

It is unclear if Conway had a post-1675 native population. As of ca. 1769, the colonial settlement consisted of 50 families and 400 individuals. The latter figure had more than doubled to 905 residents in 1776. Period settlers were former residents of Deerfield, and the Worcester County towns of Leicester, Grafton, Barre and Rutland.

C. Settlement Patterns:

The first colonial settlement did not take place until ca. 1763 (termination date of the last of the French and Indian wars). For several years, most residents lived in crude shelters (Lee 1967: 15). The first years witnessed the construction of scattered homes in the general vicinity of the village of Conway. By the late 1760's settlement had begun to cluster further south in Pumpkin Hollow, an area immediately east of Academy Hill Road. The town's first meetinghouse (Congregational) and schoolhouse were constructed in the "Hollow" in ca. 1767 and 1772, respectively. Scattered contemporary settlement took place outside of this node in northern Conway on Sapiens Road and off of Reed's Bridge Road and in the southern portion of town on North Poland Road near the Conway/Ashfield line, in the vicinity of Cricket Hill, east of Popular Hill and on Roaring Brook Road.

D. Economic Base:

Agriculture was the predominant economic pursuit. Local residents focused on livestock grazing because of the town's excellent grazing land and limited cropland. Colonial utilization of Conway as grazing land most likely dated to the early 18th century when this area along with Shelburne were granted to Deerfield as common land. The area's period industrial development was limited. Available secondary sources made references to only two period mills. One source claims the town's first mill (grist) was built in ca. 1767 by an Afro-Indian resident named Caleb Sharp on the South River at its junction with Bridge Street. Prior to this date, grain was reportedly carried to Hatfield to be ground (Lee 1967:15). However, it is more likely local residents utilized the two pre-1775 grist mills of Ashfield or those of Deerfield because of their closer proximity to Ashfield. A second grist mill was operating by ca. 1770 on the South River in northern Ashfield.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Approximately a half-dozen houses of the Federal period survive in Conway. Of these, the earliest is the John Boyden House, date 1763. This is a two-and-a-half story center chimney structure of five bays' width. Other houses of the Colonial period included the Reverend John Emerson House (1770), the Andoniram Bartlett cottage (1767), the Joel Emerson House (1770), the Andoniram Bartlett cottage (1767), the Joel Parsons cottage (1766) and the Daniel Newhall tavern (1767), the Joel Parsons cottage (1766) and the Daniel Newhall Tavern (1767). All exhibit center chimney plans. Of note are the Bartlett cottage, with an integral leanto, and the Parsons cottage, whose chimney placement and roof profile suggest it was originally a half cottage. Also of note is a reference to the Joel Baker House (1766-1916) as the first framed house in the town (Lee 1967:13). The center chimney Baker House was typical of early Connecticut Valley houses in that it exhibited only three facade bays rather than the customary five. If it was the first framed house in Conway (and the Boyden House construction date confuses this issue), then it was a typical of its contemporaries. Reference to houses frames may

suggest that the earliest houses, constructed in the town in the early 1760s, were of plank construction. Use of plank framing would be consistent with patterns of frontier architecture elsewhere in New England (i.e., New Hampshire) and could also explain references to the construction of "log" houses by first settlers.

Institutional: The town's first meetinghouse was begun in 1769 and not completed until sometime later. Its original dimensions were 30 square with 10' posts. Also built in the period was a 25' x 22' school (1773).

Commercial: The only commercial building to survive is the Daniel Newhall Tavern (1767), a center chimney structure with a simple Connecticut Valley entrance surround consisting of a straight entablature enclosing double-leaved doors.

F. Observations:

Conway's limited industrial base, agricultural land and livestock population suggest the town was one of the poorest in the Connecticut River Valley study unit during the Colonial period. As a result, the community was heavily dependent on river towns such as Deerfield and Hatfield for economic support. Research would be devoted to better clarifying the extent to which Conway was tied to these two communities. Considerable archaeological evidence of the Conway period settlement node and outlying homes may still survive because of the area's limited development.

VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

A. Transportation Routes:

Primary east-west axis remained from Pumpkin Hollow along Mathews Road (Route 116) with improvement of River Street to Burkeville mill site (1785) and west to Ashfield as Riley Road above South River valley. Deerfield River crossing to Shelburne maintained at Bardwell Ferry with local crossings across South River at Reed's Bridge and Howland Bridge.

B. Population:

Conway's population grew by 133.2% between 1776 and 1790 the second highest growth rate (after Colerain) of any town in the county for these early years. This rate ceased and the population abruptly peaked in 1790 at 2,092, making Conway in that year the largest town in the three-county Connecticut Valley but for West Springfield and Westfield. Between 1790 and 1830 the town lost a quarter of its newly-gained population, finishing the period at 1,563.

C. Settlement Pattern:

Civic focus remained at Pumpkin Hollow with secondary center formed around Baptist Meetinghouse in Conway village (1790). Economic focus established on South River at Burkeville with textile mill (1810) creating extended settlement along axis of River Street (Route 116). Upland farming expanded to limits of highland agriculture in Shirkshire (NW), Broomshire (NE) Poland Brook (SW), and Crickett and Popular Hill (SE). Hill land remained as undeveloped timber resource with saw mills along South River valley.

D. Economic Base:

A predominantly agricultural economy with small saw and grist mills established along South River. Many of the town's inhabitants raised cattle and sheep for Boston markets, while the quantities of wool and a dairy products were also considerable. As a result of the trade restraints imposed by the War of 1812, a small broadcloth mill was built on a former fulling-mill privilege, though it appears to have failed not long after the return of British goods to American markets. The largest industry in this period, as of 1832, was the comb shop of John Ware, who employed 18 men and 10 women in producing \$13,900 worth of horn combs. (Much of Ware's horn stock, as well as his finished product, was collected or sold in Albany.) Ware's factory was the only instance of comb making recorded in the Valley, though the business flourished in Worcester County.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Approximately a dozen houses of the Federal period are known to survive in Conway. These include several well-detailed brick houses and a number of simpler frame farmhouses. Center chimney and center hall plans were used with almost equal frequency. Two story houses seem to be somewhat more prevalent than cottages and indicate the town's relative prosperity in the period. Period houses are concentrated at the town center but were also observed in scattered, isolated locations along Shelburne Falls, Ashfield, North Poland, Conway and Reed's Bridge Roads. Of note are a double pile plan, end chimney brick houses at the town center, the Franklin Arms House (ca. 1790; rebuilt 1826), with triple interior chimneys., the Austin Rice House (1784), the double interior chimney Samuel Newhall House (1790) and a center chimney house on Shelburne Falls Road, which incorporates an end gable overhang. The overhang feature, common in the valley towns of the region, was infrequently used in the highlands.

Institutional: In 1796, the meetinghouse was enlarged and porches and a steeple with a clock added. One source claims that the structure was enlarged room 30' x 30' x 10' square buildings to a structure with dimensions of 60 x 100' (Lee 1967:21). If so, it surely would have been one of the largest meetinghouse in the entire Connecticut Valley region. After 1783, a number of schoolhouses were built and by 1830, there were 12 schoolhouses standing in the town. Other institutional activity included the organization of a Baptist church in 1788 and the commencement of Methodist classes in 1825. The Baptists built a 30' x 40' meetinghouse beginning in 1790 but it was probably never completed and was moved in 1810. Also organized in the period was a Library Association (1821). This came about largely through the effort of the Reverend Edward Hitchcock of Amherst.

VIII. EARLY INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1830-1870)

A. Transportation Routes:

Continued development of local road system from Burkeville around South River Valley to Conway Center with School and Maple Street. Primary east-west axis remained along Route 116 corridor from Deerfield to Ashfield with secondary north-south axis along Shelburne Road to Shirkshire. Significant improvement of east-west regional corridor with Troy and Greenfield Railroad along Deerfield River gorge (1867) and bridge replacement at Bardwell Ferry from Shelburne. Local improvement of South River crossing at Burkeville with covered bridge (1869 now restored).

B. Population:

Conway's population experienced some fluctuation during this period. With the new mills going into operation in the Village and in Burkeville, Conway's population rose by 30% in the single decade 1840-50. Between 1850 and 1870, however, the town lost almost the same amount, finishing the period with a net loss of 103 persons, 6% of the count in 1830.

In 1855, 15% of the population were foreign-born. Only Greenfield with 18%, could claim a higher percentage of immigrants among the county's towns. The majority of the immigrants were Irish (60.9%), though a substantial number were from Germany and Holland (23.7%) and England (12.2%).

C. Settlement Pattern:

Burkeville developed as primary economic center with establishment of Conway Manufacturing Company (1838). Civic activities relocated from Pumpkin Hollow to Conway Center (1842) extending continuous settlement along River Street (Route 116) from Howland Bridge to Burkeville. Upland agriculture remained as primary activity with dairy farms in Shirkshire, Broomshire, South River, Roaring Brook Valley and Crickett Hill. Location of Troy and Greenfield Railroad along Deerfield River gorge (Bardwell Ferry) had little impact upon settlement.

D. Economic Base:

Conway's economy suddenly blossomed with woolen and cotton mills beginning in the Panic Year of 1837. In that year two incorporated textile concerns built mills. Edmund Burke, whose Conway Manufacturing Co. established Burkeville at this time, built a small woolen mill upstream of the village; Asa Howland's Conway Mills built a cotton mill downstream of the village. By 1846 two seamless cotton-bag mills had joined the group, and ten years later, after the expansion of the Burkeville woolen mill, the four mills together produced nearly \$300,000 worth of cloth, according to Holland. The Burkeville mill alone produced nearly 86% of the county's woolen cloth that year. In the late 1850s, the business depression and a series of fires caused a reorganization of the mills and two separate concerns eventually emerged by the late 1860s: Tucker & Cook, operating two cotton mills; and E. Delabarre operating the former Burkeville woolen mill. The latter by 1865 employed over 80 operatives and was producing cassimeres worth \$350,000.

During the 1840s and 50s, two attempts were made to introduce precision metal products into Conway. Alonzo Parker's success with the Conway Tool Co., 1842-51, however, induced him to relocate to Greenfield in 1851. The South River Cutlery Company, formed in 1851, floundered in 1856, though at its peak a year before it was the largest business in town after the textile mills, employing 50 men and producing cutlery valued at \$40,000.

By 1867 the year of the town's centennial, prosperity and a new railroad through the center of the town were expected momentarily. Wrote a Greenfield paper that year:

There is no town in Franklin County that offers more encouraging inducements for investment of limited capital than Conway...It appears that nothing is wanted but outside capital to make Conway a flourishing place with probably a population of ten to twelve thousand. (Quoted in Pease.)

Agricultural production also advanced in the period. Conway, in 1845, ranked second in butter production in the county, and fourth in cheese. Tobacco, introduced in South Part in 1860, expanded dramatically in the early 1860s. By 1866, 200 acres were reported planted.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Some two dozen houses of the period have survived across the town. The majority of these are located at the town with relatively few period structures in outlying areas. Of revival structures, with two-story houses predominating. Of special note is a group of some half-dozen house clustered along Conway Road. Although most houses exhibit Greek Revival styling (entrance surrounds with transom and sidelights, gable end pediments with flushboarding), a few houses incorporate such Italianate details as wide cornices, overhanging eaves and shallow gable roofs. In addition to sidehall plans structures, several Greek Revival and Italianate houses with traditional double interior chimney, center hall plans were also observed along with a few cottages with double facade gables. Outside the town center, cottages, most of five bays width and double or center chimneys, predominate.

Institutional: In 1841, the second Congregational meetinghouse, an 80' x 52' structure costing \$7,000, was built. This was a one and a half story Greek Revival buildings with a Doric portico in antis and two-stage square belfry with spire. The only other church built in the period was the second meetinghouse of the Baptist Society, built in 1840. That church, which had dimensions of 55' x 38', was very similar in appearance to the East Village (Second) Congregational Church (1839); a Greek Revival style building, the Baptist church featured a stepped parapet on the front gable, like the East Village example. Neither of Conway's Early Industrial period churches survives. Also of note architecturally, was the Conway Academy (1863, demolished ca. 1927). The Adacemy was established in 1853 and in 1865 became the town's first high school. The original 1853 Academy building burned in 1863; a 1 & 1/2 story Greek Revival building, it featured projecting one story end bay wings which formed a recessed entrance in the center. In plan, the U-shaped Conway Academy closely resembled the Sanderson Academy (1853) in Ashfield. Other institutional activity included the establishment of a fire department (1852), the celebration of the first Catholic services (1845), the organization of the Methodist Church (1852) and the construction of some nine district schoolhouses, of which six are thought to survive in residential use. Almost all of these exhibited the typical schoolhouses form of one story height and two bay by three bay, side entered plan.

Commercial: One of the most important commercial ventures of the period was the founding of the Conway Bank in 1854. Conway was one of the few communities in the region to have a bank in the Early Industrial period. Other commercial building of the period were the double interior chimney, gable front Greek Revival Conway House (ca. 1840), the temple front Stearns Store (ca. 1850) and Darby's Store (ca. 1860), a one-story center entrance building. None of these are known to survive.

Industrial: Industrial construction of the period included the building of the Burkeville Mill (1837), a four story brick building with a clerestory monitor roof and center cupola and stairtower. Also established in the period were the Whitton Cotton Mill (1842) and South River Cutlery Company (1851). No industrial buildings of the period are known extant.

IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870-1915)

A. Transportation Routes:

Continued improvement of Deerfield River railroad corridor with Northampton-Shelburne Falls Branch along south gorge to Deerfield (1881) with tressle over South River (now abandoned roadbed). Local proposal of railroad connection from Williamsburg to Shelburne Falls attempted through Conway Center (1873 map) in part realized with north/south electric trolley line from Burkeville along South River valley to Conway Station at Deerfield River (1895: Shaw, Transportation Bulletin, 1949). Improvement of Bardwell Ferry bridge (ca. 1890) with Truss span still intact across Deerfield River gorge.

B. Population:

Conway's population experienced considerable fluctuation during this period. The most obvious anomaly in the record is the 1,760 residents recorded in 1880, some 300 above the figure five years earlier. Italians numbered 126 in Conway that year, making it the largest group of Italians in the Connecticut Valley. This group undoubtedly represents laborers construction the northern extension of the New Haven & Northampton Railroad through town, completed the year following. Until 1895 the population again declined, though the new street railway and manufacturing concerns halted this decline for a few years. After 1900, however, the town steadily lost residents, as more mills closed. By 1915 the population stood at 1,2220, making a net loss of 16% for the period.

Conway's foreign-born population in 1905 was 15% of the total, of which the largest groups were French Canadians (25%), followed by Poles (19%) and Irish (12%).

C. Settlement Pattern:

Civic focus remained at Conway Center with economic activities extended along River Street axis (Route 116) to Burkeville. Suburban housing infilled on available upland above South River valley on Maple and School Street to Pumpkin Hollow and Howland Bridge. Agriculture maintained as primary activity on fertile uplands with dairy farms on Roaring Brook, Bardwell and Shirkshire Roads.

D. Economic Base:

The town's expectations of a railroad and economic prosperity did not materialize. Conway's industry was increasingly dominated by the two textile concerns. In 1875 the town reported; the value of manufactured goods as \$284,150 (the seventh highest value in the county), though of this amount \$260,000 represented cotton and woolen goods. Agricultural products remained strong, particularly in butter, cheese, and tobacco. A creamery established in 1886 by 1901 was producing 254,000 lbs. of butter. When it burned in 1905, however, local dairy farms began selling milk directly to large milk distributors for the Boston, Springfield, and Northampton markets.

In 1881 the New Haven and Northampton Railroad completed its northern extension along the Deerfield River to Conway Junction. Failing to attract a steam road to the center of town, in the early 1890s the town bent all its efforts to establishing an electric street railway to link Conway Station (on the N & NRR) with the village and Burkeville. In 1895 this was accomplished, and with side tracks to each of the state to carry freight. The line became thereby an important factor in halting the town's declining economy and in the

years following its opening several new companies were attracted from out of town: a shoe company from Marlboro, DeWolf, Bagnall & Co. (1896); a cotton duck firm from North Adams, Darby and Moore (1900). Both the shoe and duck factory buildings were constructed by the town as inducements to industry. By 1916 the DeWolf Shoe Company, with a product worth \$275,000 and an employee roster of 120 people, was Conway's most important industry.

But the street railway only postponed Conway's decline. The death or retirement of the principals in the two textile concerns brought about the closing of the Delabarre Mill in 1892 and of the Tucker and Cook mill fifteen years later. After that the street railway was increasingly hard pressed to overcome operating deficits.

In the years around 1900 hydro-electric power in the Deerfield Valley became increasingly attractive. In 1897 directors of the Conway Electric Street Railway formed a separate concern, the Conway Electric Light and Power Company, to supply the town and the electric road (hitherto using a steam plant) with electricity. The CEL&P constructed a hydro-electric plant and reservoir on the South River, probably one of the earliest such plants in the Deerfield Valley. Thirteen years later the town became part of a major development by the new England Power Company. In 1910-21 the utility constructed four hydro-electric plants along the Deerfield River: two in Buckland, one in Florida, and one, Plant # 2, the Upper Bardwell Bridge station, in Conway. The four were part of an even larger scheme of eight originally planned, together with a series of reservoirs in Vermont and transmission lines to other parts of the state.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Comparatively few houses were built in the period: probably no more than a dozen houses were constructed. Among those observed in the field were a pyramidal hip roof Colonial Revival houses and a ca. 1880 sidehall Queen Anne house on Shelburne Falls Road as well as several hip roofed Queen Anne single family and double houses at the town center. In addition to limited new construction, some remodelling of older house occurred. An example of this can be noted in a row of Greek revival houses at Burkeville to which Queen Anne verandas were added. After the turn of the century, some construction of summer houses took place in outlying locations; and example of this is a concrete block Colonial Revival house on Roaring Brook Road.

Institutional: The foremost institutional building of the period is the Field Memorial Library (1900, Shepley, Rutland and Coolidge), a 1 & 1/2 story, gable roofed granite Neoclassical structure at the town center donated by Conway native and Chicago entrepreneur, Marshall Field. Other buildings of the period are the present United Church, a 2 & 1/2 story frame Queen Anne church with double facade towers, built in 1885 by the Congregational church after their 1841 meetinghouse burned. Other churches of the period were the Methodist Church, a two story board and batten Gothic Revival structure built in 1871 at a cost of \$9,000 and Saint Mark's Catholic Church (1879), a 1 & 1/2 story frame chapel with Stick Style/Gothic Revival trim. The Methodist church was taken down in 1938 and the lower story salvaged for use as the post office; the Catholic church still stands. In 1914, the baptist and Methodist churches federated. Other institutional buildings built in the period were an 1885 Stick Style/Queen Anne Town Hall, which burned in 1950, and the frame hip roofed Colonial Revival Burkeville Grammar School, built ca. 1900.

Commercial: Commercial buildings of the period included two railroad depots, both ca. 1885, one a simple panel Brick gable roofed structure and the other

of frame construction. The most outstanding commercial building to survive is the 1878 Conway Bank, a two story, hip roofed brick Italianate building with roundhead windows.

X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915-1940)

A. Transportation Routes:

Abandonment of trolley line to Conway Center (1921) with roadbed intact as Conway Station Road to Deerfield River, and abandonment of Northampton railroad branch (1926) to Deerfield. Improvement of east-west corridor as auto highway Route 116 from Deerfield with original bridges across South River at Burkeville (1926).

B. Population:

Between 1915 and 1920, at least in part due to the closing of the DeWolf shoe factory, Conway lost a fifth of its population. Only in the 1930s were their marginal gains, and the period closed with the town's population at 944, representing a net loss of 22%. The population reached its nadir five years later at 867.

C. Settlement Pattern:

Conway Center remained as local civic focus with commercial highway activity extended along Route 116 to Burkeville. Suburban housing gradually expanded on hills above town center with focus around High School. Gradual development of summer estates from Deerfield along axis of Route 116 with selected sites on scenic uplands at Popular Hill and Mathews Road.

D. Economic Base:

The town's major industry in 1916, the DeWolf Shoe Co., closed two years later. The tap and die firm of Conant and Donelson became the town's chief industry, employing twenty-five in 1930. Some wood product industries also survived, mirroring a patterning Charlemont and Ashfield, in which small tool handle shops established Charlemont and Ashfield, in which small tool handle shops established in the 1890s were picked up by outside hardware firms about 1915. In 1896 H.G. Reed had built a small turning mill on a lower South River privilege to produce screwdriver and other small tool handles. In 1916 the mill was bought by the Goodell-Pratt Company of Greenfield.

The loss of freight and passenger revenues left the Conway Electric Street Railway with heavy operating deficits, and early in 1921 the cars stopped running after a particularly heavy snowstorm.

E. Architecture:

Almost no construction took place in the period. A very few, modest cottages were observed in scattered locations across the town. The construction of the community can be noted in the fact that, in 1919, the Congregational church united with the Baptist and Methodist churches (which had themselves federated five years earlier) to become the town's sole Protestant church. A few commercial buildings were built along Route 116, including Germain's Garage (1921), a one story concrete block building with a shaped parapet.

XI. SURVEY OBSERVATIONS

General: There is almost no inventory completed for Conway. Future survey efforts should concentrate on verifying construction dates for the town's comparatively large group of Colonial houses and should identify construction dates, original owners and builders of the many well-detailed Federal and Greek Revival houses built in the town between 1790 and 1850. Surviving institutional buildings (especially 19th century schools), stores and industrial buildings should also be documented. District potential exists at the town center.

XII. SOURCES

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Shaw, Donald E., "Conway Electric Street Railway," Transportation 3 (April-June 1949), 13-30. (not examined.)