

# MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

## DEERFIELD

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.



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## MHC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY REPORT

DATE: November, 1982

COMMUNITY: Deerfield

### I. Topography

Deerfield is situated in the Connecticut River Valley. Local terrain consists of a combination of moderate uplands, river floodplain and prehistoric lake bottom. Fertile lowlands extend the length of the central and easternmost portions of town. Originally, these lowlands and a portion of the adjacent uplands were inundated by glacial Lake Hitchcock which covered the Connecticut River Valley from central Connecticut to southern Vermont, where it joined Lake Upham. Since then, the Deerfield and Connecticut rivers have cut into a considerable portion of the lake bottom and deposited rich alluvial soils. The central lowlands are flanked by two rugged ranges of uplands. Elevations generally range between 400 feet and 700 feet. The highest point is Arthur's Seat (965 feet) situated in northwestern Deerfield. Additional prominent elevations include the well known peaks of South Sugarloaf Mountain (652 feet) and North Sugarloaf Mountain (791 feet), demarcating the southern extent of the Pocumtuck Range and Pocumtuck Rock (852 feet) and Woolman Hill located in the northern half of the range. The Connecticut River delineates Deerfield's eastern boundary. Northern Deerfield is drained by the Deerfield River which flows into the Connecticut northwest of East Deerfield. Southern Deerfield is drained by the Mill River and several streams and brooks, all of which also flow into the Connecticut River. The town's only freshwater bodies are a single mill pond situated in southeastern Deerfield and three meander scars (earlier course of the Deerfield River) in North Meadows slightly south of the Deerfield.

### II. Political Boundaries

Originally granted in 1663 as part of Dedham lands from Natick praying town to John Eliot with site at Pocumtuck in Connecticut Valley confirmed by native deed in 1667 and purchased by John Pynchon. Division of Pocumtuck grant surveyed in 1670 with settlement by 1671. Southern boundary established with Hatfield (Whately) in 1672 and eastern boundary along Connecticut River with Swampfield (Sunderland-Montague) defined in 1673. Name changed from Pocumtuck to Deerfield in 1674 and settlement abandoned during King Philip's War in 1675. Grant of 1712 extended boundary into Western Woods (Conway-Shelburne) with Greenfield established as a district north of Cheapside (Deerfield River) in 1754. Western boundary defined in 1767-68 with formation of Conway and Shelburne as independent districts including later adjustments to 1791. Southern section annexed to Whately in 1810 (South Deerfield) and northern district at Cheapside annexed to Greenfield in 1896 along Deerfield River.

### III. Historic Overview

Historic rural suburban center on primary corridor between Northampton and Greenfield. Located in Connecticut River valley with important native sites reported around Deerfield valley meadows at Pine Island, the Bars and Stillwater including suspected areas at Sugarloaf Mountain. Early English settlement at Pocumtuck in Deerfield valley by mid-17th century with surviving town Plan as Old Deerfield Village Street. Settlement abandoned by King Philip's War and subjected to repeated native attacks through early 18th century marked by famous 1704 massacre. Some early Colonial houses remain as restored examples in Old Deerfield village including Albany Road burying ground with late 17th century stones. Considerable agricultural prosperity after French and

Indian Wars in Deerfield Meadows with well preserved mid-18th century houses at the Bars and along Old Deerfield village street, including notable examples of Connecticut Valley doorways and early brick dwelling. Civic center remained at Old Deerfield through Federal period with landmark brick church and original academy building of architect design.

Economic focus developed at South Deerfield during early 19th century with local manufacturing and railroad connections. Town center included examples of Greek Revival and Gothic houses with railroad cottages on Elm Street and Bloody Brook monument on Main Street lined with period churches. Introduction of tobacco farming by mid-19th century expanded agricultural production in Deerfield Meadows and along Connecticut River Road with surviving barns and Federal period farmhouses. South Deerfield remained as commercial center through late 19th century with suburban bungalows. Expansion of Greenfield industrial activity to East Deerfield including surviving elements of original railroad yards and bridges across Deerfield River. Considerable restoration of Old Deerfield village during early 20th century including relocation of several Colonial houses from surrounding hill towns and expansion of Deerfield with surviving roadside lighthouse and monumental Art Deco bridges at Sunderland and Greenfield crossings. Present expansion most notable around Interstate 91 junction with Route 116 at South Deerfield threatening remaining farmland in Deerfield Meadows. Old Deerfield Village retains remarkable historic character despite overwhelming tourist traffic and parking problems with potential preservation of surrounding tobacco farms and Pine Island native site as increased protection of original town landscape.

#### IV. Contact Period (1500-1620)

##### Transportation

Important regional junction between Connecticut valley and Hoosac Highlands. Primary north-south trail from Nonatuck (Northampton) to Pocumtuck (Greenfield) reportedly followed Main Street (Route 5) through South Deerfield across Bloody Brook and northwest to The Bars as Mill Village Road and north over Old Deerfield Village site to Pine Island and fordway over Pocumtuck (Deerfield River) to Greenfield (Sheldon, 1895 I. p.77, II, p.914). Alternate route from The Bars reported as Mohawk Trail with fordway at Stillwater over Deerfield River following axis of Albany Road north to Greenfield with important regional branch northwest along Deerfield River gorge to Hawks Road as Mohawk Tail (Costello, 1975, map). Other trail routes to Pocumtuck possibly included River Road from Wequamps (Mt. Sugarloaf) along Connecticut to East Deerfield with cross trails likely over Pocumtuck Range as North Hillside Road and Rice's Ferry Road. Alternate route west to South River (Conway) followed from The Bars as Lee-Mathews Road along Mill River gorge.

##### B. Settlement Patterns:

There were no native sites clearly identified as Contact period. However, there was considerable archaeological and documentary data suggesting extensive native occupation during this period. Written sources state that the Pocumtucks, prior to their annihilation at the hands of the Mohawks in c.1663 had congregated in the fertile Deerfield River Valley and the adjacent hills in Deerfield (Everts 1879: I, 21; Sheldon 1972: I). A number of undated native sites have been reported throughout the Deerfield River floodplain. One possible Contact period burial was exposed on Petty's Plain in 1886 (Sheldon 1972: I, 79) while native sites with traditional period components have been discovered on Pine Hill, in South

Meadows, north of Fuller Swamp and in the village of South Deerfield. Evidence of possible additional period lowland occupation was present on the lower portion of the Connecticut River floodplain, the site of a number of undated native sites. Upland period settlement is suggested by the presence of several Woodland and possible Contact period burials on a bluff southwest of Pocumtuck Rock and overlooking Wapping. Originally, upland period sites were probably established throughout the eastern bluffs (estimated between southern end of Trap Rock Ledge and south of Pocumtuck Rock) and those west of the Deerfield River (between Stillwater Bridge and Deerfield/Greenfield line.) Smaller scattered encampments were likely situated in the more rugged, higher elevations of Deerfield's western and eastern uplands.

#### C. Subsistence Patterns:

Deerfield had a diverse resource base. The Deerfield River floodplain has traditionally been a source of highly productive agricultural land. The Connecticut River floodplain is also the site of high quality agricultural land. Both the Deerfield and Connecticut rivers have long been utilized by natives and colonial settlers as an important fishing area. The presence of the undated native shell middens in North Meadows near the Deerfield suggests natives harvested freshwater mollusks from the Deerfield and probably the Connecticut. Native hunting most likely concentrated on the town's central lowlands and to a lesser degree the local uplands.

#### D. Observations:

Deerfield was situated within the heavily populated Middle Connecticut River valley. During this period this area (Pocumtuck) was one of several native population and political centers within this region. The Deerfield area is generally considered to be the central location of the Pocumtucks. One source claims their immediate territory encompassed the Deerfield River valley from Sugarloaf Mountain north to Bennett's Meadow in Northfield (Everts 1879, I, 21). The Pocumtuck's western bounds may have followed the Deerfield as far as present Charlemont. By the early 17th century, this native group was the dominant political entity in the Middle Connecticut River Valley. Deerfield continues to have excellent potential for surviving period sites. Prime locations for extant sites are the town's central lowlands (Deerfield River floodplain, glacial lake bottom south of floodplain) and the Connecticut River floodplain. The banks of the Deerfield and Connecticut rivers should be inspected periodically for eroding sites. In addition, concerted efforts should be made to closely examine Pine Hill since impending development threatens its archaeological potential. Evidence of upland period sites would most likely survive in the earlier mentioned western and eastern bluffs overlooking the Deerfield.

### V. Plantation Period (1620-1675)

#### A. Transportation Routes:

Native trails improved as regional highways with primary north-south route from Hatfield as Main Street (Route 5) across Bloody Brook and north as Mill Village Road through the Bars to Old Deerfield Village Street (1671). Northern link from Deerfield Street reported as Pine Island fordway across the Deerfield River (Sheldon, 1895, II, p.914). Connecting route to Hoosac highlands and Salmon Falls (Shelburne) remained as Mohawk Trail from Stillwater fordway.

Division highways from Deerfield Street appear likely as Albany Road west with crossing of Deerfield River to Wisdom now altered by river meanders.

B. Population:

Pocumtuck continued to have a large native population until the village's destruction by the Mohawks in c.1663. From this date on, Deerfield lacked a sizable permanent native population.

The town's colonial community was small. By the end of the period (1675) Deerfield consisted of only 125 permanent residents and a garrison of 25-30 soldiers. The largest number of the town's settlers were former Dedham, Hatfield and Medfield residents. Others moved from Hadley, Northampton, Dorchester, Charlestown and Windsor, Connecticut.

C. Settlement Patterns:

Native settlement patterns probably remained essentially the same as those suggested for the Contact period up until the early 1660s. Period sites included the "pallisaded" native fort probably situated on a portion of the eastern bluffs east of Bement School. It is possible this fortification was constructed in response to the periodic warfare occurring between the Pocumtucks and Mohawks during this period. Several probable period burials were exposed in the late 19th century on the Deerfield River floodplain west of the Old Albany cemetery and near the northern end of "the street" in Deerfield Village.

Colonial settlement was limited and confined to "the Street". Establishment of a colonial community was initiated when an 8000 acre tract of land encompassing a portion of present Deerfield was selected in c.1665 by a number of Dedham residents to replace a 2000 acre section of Dedham granted by the General Court to John Eliot for his praying Indians. The first settler, Samuel Hinsdale, did not follow until c.1671. As mentioned above, period homes were built along the whole length of the present street in the village of Deerfield. Three homes were fortified in c.1675 in response to the growing Anglo-Indian tensions. These garrison houses were situated near the north and south ends of "The Street". The community lacked a meeting house until later in the 17th century. The settlement was abandoned shortly after the outbreak of King Philip's War in 1675. Local residents fled to the towns of Hadley and Hatfield.

D. Economic Base:

Native subsistence patterns were similar to those of the preceding period until the native village's destruction. Anglo-Indian trade became an important aspect of Pocumtucks economy during the Plantation period. Trade contacts most likely focused on the English trading posts situated in Northampton, Westfield and Springfield. In at least one instance (1638) a large quantity of native corn was sold to southern Connecticut River towns (Connecticut). The Mohawk retaliatory raid of 1663 not only resulted in the destruction of the native village but also their planting fields.

E. Observations:

Deerfield was the earliest community settled in Franklin County. Aside from Northfield it was the northernmost English settlement situated in the Connecticut River Valley study unit during the Plantation period. The settlement's location on the study unit's northern frontier probably was an important factor in inhibiting its development into a period political and commercial center on par with lower river towns such as Northampton and Springfield. Archaeological and documentary research should focus on determining the location, extent and makeup of the native fortified village. This information combined with that gained from the examination of other native period sites located in the study unit would be valuable in understanding changes in native settlement patterns during the 17th century in response to Anglo-Indian contact and increasing conflict among native groups. Archaeological evidence of native period sites should survive throughout Deerfield's central and eastern lowlands in addition to the bluffs overlooking the village of Deerfield. Archaeological vestiges of the colonial settlement should still remain within Deerfield Village despite considerable 20th century renovation/restoration in this area. Deerfield is notable for its surviving original street plan and place names such as "North Meadow", "South Meadow" and "Sugarloaf Mountain".

VI. Colonial Period (1675-1775)

A. Transportation Routes:

Primary north-south highway remained as Main Street Mill Village through the Bars to Deerfield Street with Pine Island fordway across Deerfield River to Cheapside(Greenfield). Reestablishment of Deerfield after King Philip's War created radial highway system from town center to Connecticut River crossings including Greenfield-North Hillside Road to Swampfield(Sunderland) ferry at Mt. Sugarloaf (Route 116 bridge ) and Rice's Ferry Road to River Road. Improved regional routes to western highlands included Old Albany Road (1762) from Wisdom(West Deerfield) and Mathews Road (1754) to Huntstown (Ashfield) along Mill River gorge. Several crossings from Deerfield Street to Wisdom followed from Albany Road across Deerfield meadows.

B. Population:

Deerfield lacked a permanent native population, during this period. However, the area was periodically occupied by various native groups throughout the late 17th and 18th centuries.

population consisted gradual growth. By 1704 the community consisted of between 250 and 268 permanent residents and a garrison of 15-20 soldiers (Lockwood 1926: II, 715; Sheldon 1972: I, 310). The 1704 French and Indian attack on the town decimated its colonial population. Forty-seven of Deerfield's inhabitants were killed while 112 were captured and carried to Canada. The second half of the 18th century witnessed substantial growth in Deerfield's population. In c.1765 the town had 737 residents. This figure had increased to 836 occupants in 1776.

### C. Settlement Patterns:

A number of short-term native encampments were established throughout Deerfield. Between 1675 and 1676, Deerfield and Northfield served as the primary location of hostile natives (probably Narragansetts, Nipmucs, Pocumtucks and others) attacking colonial settlements in the Middle Connecticut River Valley. The natives were forced out of this area in the spring of 1676 by an English force. Pine Hill was utilized by hostile native bands as a campsite and a lookout throughout the late 17th century and first half of the 18th century. Bloody Brook in the vicinity of its junction of Route 116, was the site of the 1675 native ambush of a large colonial supply train sent to Deerfield from Hadley to recover 3000 bushels of wheat left when the colonial settlement was abandoned. A memorial marks the general location of mass graves for colonial and native combatants. An area a short distance south of Sugarloaf Mountain was the site of a native ambush of a colonial military contingent in 1675. A large band of Hudson River natives established a campsite on "Carter's Lane" for several months in 1692 and 1693.

Colonial settlement continued to concentrate on "the Street" during this period. Resettlement of Deerfield began in 1677. However, community growth was sluggish until the mid-1680s. By the 1690s, substantial infill had taken place on the street, particularly on Meetinghouse Hill. The town's first meetinghouse was erected in c.1684 probably near the intersection of "the Street" and Albany Street. A second meetinghouse completed in c.1698 was located slightly west of the Brick Church while the third structure (c.1729) was situated on the site of the present Civil War Soldiers Monument. This general area was also the site of Deerfield's first schoolhouse built in c.1698. A wooden stockade encompassing the Meetinghouse Hill settlement node was constructed in 1690 when word reached of the French and Indian attack on Schenectady, New York. This structure remained in use until the early 18th century. Some pre-1704 settlement occurred south of Deerfield Village in the general vicinity of Wapping and The Bars and north into Greenfield. The 1704 French and Indian attack on Deerfield left the settlement devastated. Approximately 17 of the community's 41 dwellings were destroyed along with a number of outbuildings and large quantities of livestock, crops and personal belongings.

Reoccupation of Deerfield took place soon after this attack. Post 1704 settlement continued to slowly spread south and north of the town's settlement center. Additional homes were built in Greenfield, Wapping, The Bars and Bloody Brook. By 1767, settlement was substantial enough in the Bloody Brook area that a schoolhouse was built for local residents. Several "fortifications" were established in Deerfield Village and Wapping in the 1740s and 1750s.

#### D. Economic Base:

Agriculture remained the economic mainstay of Deerfield residents. 1694 witnessed the first documentation of local tobacco production. By the 1740s, the lower portion of the Connecticut River Floodplain in the vicinity of North Sugarloaf Mountain and South Sugarloaf Mountain was being utilized for wheat and rye production. Deerfield grazing land was expanded in 1712 when present Conway and Shelbourne were granted to the town. Local Anglo-Indian trade continued at least through the 1690s. During the 1690s, Hudson River natives travelled to Deerfield to trade and hunt (Sheldon 1972: I, 247).

Deerfield underwent modest industrial development during the Colonial period. The town's first mill (saw) was built in c.1689 on the Mill River. A grist mill located on the Mill River slightly east of Deerfield/Conway line was put into operation by Joseph Parsons in ca. 1693. Joseph Stebbins and Zadock Hawks both ran tanneries adjacent to Bloody Brook from ca. 1745 until 1794. Deerfield was an important regional supply depot for English military forces active during the French and Indian Wars of the 1740s and 1750s.

#### E. Architecture:

Residential: Deerfield retains an outstanding collection of Colonial period houses dating from the early 18th century to the 1770s. Most of these are located along Old Deerfield Street. This is probably the Connecticut Valley's premier district of 18th century architecture, but other 18th century houses were observed on Mill Village Road at The Bars and at South Deerfield with other period houses possible on River Road. A variety of plan types, house sizes and quality were constructed so that the town retains a broad range of 18th century housing. Among the earliest houses surviving are the Wells Thorn House (1717), the Allen House (1705) and the Abercrombie House (1712). All of these are center chimney plan structures; the Abercrombie House incorporates an end gable overhang, while the Allen House incorporates an integral lean-to and Connecticut Valley entrance surround. While five bay wide facades were most common for the period, three bay wide facades with center entrances were also employed as were three bay wide, side entered half-house plans. In addition to these plans, center hall plans were in use as early as 1707 (Reverend John Williams House); the Williams House is notable as an early example of the use of twin rearwall chimneys. By the mid-century, double interior chimney, center hall plan houses probably predominated, at least at the town center. The sophistication of the Deerfield community can be noted in the high quality of detail on many houses, of which the most renowned feature



must surely be the Connecticut Valley entrance surround, typified by a broken scroll pediment supported on carved pilaster and crowning a double leaved door. Among the houses exhibiting a full complement of Connecticut Valley Georgian details are the Saxton (1760), Sheldon Hawks (1743), Hitchcock (1760) and Williams Billings (1748) Houses. The most outstanding house of the period is the Old Manse (1768), built by Jonas Locke, a Concord, Massachusetts builder. The Manse incorporates double five bay facades, a double hip roof and a double interior chimney, center hall plan. Georgian details include hip roofed dormers, corner quoins, crown molded window lintels, and a segmental arched entrance surround. Use of the double hip roof, common in Middlesex County, especially for parsonages, has not been noted elsewhere in the Connecticut Valley and undoubtedly reflects Jonas Locke's Middlesex County origin. While the gable roof was most common, a few gambrel roofed houses were built in Deerfield.

Institutional: The town's second meetinghouse (30' x 30') was constructed in 1694; that withstood the 1703 siege of the town and was replaced in 1728. The 1728 meetinghouse, which had dimensions of 40' x 50' with a central cupola, was a very substantial and stylish structure for its date and location; it featured a broken scroll entrance surround, triangular pediments at the first floor windows, galleries with carved posts, panelled box pews and an elaborate pulpit and sounding board (Sheldon 1896: 422). In 1768, the cupola was removed and a square steeple tower with belfry added at the north end. The steeple featured an open octagonal belfry with spire. Also of note was the addition of a 20' wide half-cylindrical two-story domed porch on the south end. This is the only known instance of the use of such a geometrical form in Georgian ecclesiastical architecture in the region. Work on the meetinghouse was completed by Jonas Locke, who was also at that time engaged in the construction of the Parsonage. Schools of the Colonial period included a 21' x 18' x 7' structure built in 1698 as well as schools built in 1737 (or 39), 1760 and 1767. The 1737/39 school had dimensions of 16' x 25' and a three bay by one bay end chimney plan. The 1760 school was square in plan and stood 22' x 22' with 7' studs.

#### F. Observations:

Deerfield's growth as an agricultural and commercial center continued to be hampered throughout the late 17th and first third of the 18th centuries by the settlement's exposure to French and Indian attacks. However, there community was the most well-developed of the English settlements situated on the Connecticut River Valley study unit's northern frontier. Future research should better define the details of Deerfield's economic and political relationship with upland and river towns located on the northern periphery of the Middle Connecticut River Valley. Additional research should be devoted to clarifying trade contacts between Hudson River natives and Deerfield during this period. As with the preceding period, the central lowlands and bluffs overlooking Deerfield Village should have excellent potential for native and Colonial period sites.

## VII. Federal Period (1775-1830)

Improvement of north-south corridor from Northampton to Greenfield with bridge at Cheapside(1792) replacing Pine Island fordway across Deerfield River and Greenfield Road to Main Street in South Deerfield (Route 5). Sunderland ferry from South Deerfield replaced by toll bridge (1812) with Connecticut River crossings maintained at East Deerfield and Pine Nook. Development of South Deerfield including local connecting highways as Elm Street to South Mill River Road. Stillwater fordway apparently replaced by bridge (c.1790) connecting with Albany Road to West Deerfield.

### B. Population:

Much of Deerfield's population growth in the Federal period probably reflects the important mercantile development of Cheapside in this period, a district now part of Greenfield (see Greenfield town report). Between 1790 and 1830, Deerfield's population grew by 50.6 percent -- about average for the valley towns (e.g., Whately, 50.9 percent; Sunderland 44.1 percent). By the time the period opened, Deerfield already had the largest population (but for New Salem) of any town in the county. By 1790, though the population rose another 59 percent, its rank had fallen to sixth. By 1830, however, with a population of 2,003, Deerfield was again the most populous town in Franklin County.

### C. Settlement Pattern:

Civic focus remained at Deerfield Center with establishment of academy(1797) and rebuilding of meeting house (1828). Economic focus developed at South Deerfield with local manufacturing and meetinghouse (1821), including monument green at Bloody Brook(1838). Agriculture remained as primary activity in Deerfield Valley with local civic focus at Wisdom (West Deerfield) around Baptist meeting house (1792) and secondary farming district along Connecticut Valley (River Road).

### D. Economic Base:

Predominantly agricultural economy. Surplus agricultural products shipped downriver from Cheapside to Hartford, Boston, and West Indies. Butter production was also considerable. Tobacco was grown as a cash crop as early as 1797. But Deerfield's major farm product was beef cattle. Wrote George Sheldon in the 1890s:

Among all the industries of our town, none has been more productive or made her more famous than stall-feeding oxen for the Boston and New York markets. In this business Deerfield had rivals in a few downriver towns, but no beef brought higher prices on the

foot than that driven from the barnyards of old Deerfield Street ("Sixty Years Since")

The long drives to the Brighton Cattle Market were initiated probably in the 1790s and lasted until the coming of the railroad in 1846.

Deerfield shared with several other valley towns a major part of the broom corn industry. Though Hadley was by far the leading town in the valley, Deerfield, with half the Hadley value, ranked second in production value in the Valley in 1832.

Another industry which developed in Deerfield and Whately in this period was the making of pocket books, lined with goat and sheep skins. The pioneer maker in U.S. is believed to have been Dennis Armes (from whom the later Armes Manufacturing Company would take its name), who in 1809 began the manufacture of pocketbooks and purses in South Deerfield (Stone, 435). By 1832 Armes was producing pocketbooks valued at \$4750.

#### E. Architecture:

Residential: By comparison to the Colonial period, Deerfield's Federal architectural resources are a great deal less extensive and somewhat less distinguished. Nevertheless, the town retains at least a dozen and a half houses and cottages of the period, most of which exhibit quality detailing and materials and up-to-date plans. Almost all of the houses employed the central hall plan, with double interior, endwall and twin rearwall chimney configurations all noted. Five bay wide center entrance facades were the rule and hip and gable roofs were used with equal frequency. Entrance treatments continued to reflect the stylish decorativeness which had been established in the early 18th century; enframements of more than usual width were common and may indicate the strength of regional preference for wide doors, expressed in the 18th century, by the adoption of the Connecticut Valley double-leaved door. In most instances, a wide, straight entablature surmounts an entrance consisting of a single, panelled door flanked by pilasters and sidelights. In many cases, plaster swags and wreaths ornament the frieze of the entablature; leaded sidelights often feature came with decorative bosses. Notable houses of the period include the double pile plan, end chimney brick Wright House (1800), the center hall plan Benjamin-Ray House (1825) and the David Dickinson House (1783), with a round-arched false fanlight above the door. Federal houses were observed at the town center and also on Route 5/10, Route 116 at Mill Village, at South Deerfield and on River Road; period houses on River Road include one hip-roofed twin rearwall chimney house at Deerfield Road which may

have been built as a tavern as it is located near the ferry landing.

Institutional: Some expansion of the town's institutions occurred in the period, with the formation of the Baptist Society of Deerfield and Shelburne in 1787 (meetinghouse 1794-1806) and the organizations of the Second Congregational Society in South Deerfield in 1818 (meetinghouse 1821). In 1824, the 1729 meetinghouse of the First Parish was replaced by the present brick building, which was completed at a cost of \$6000 and was built to the designs of Isaac Damon's apprentice, Winthrop Clapp. Many of the characteristic features of Damon's work, which forms a prominent component in the ecclesiastical architecture of the Valley, can be noted in the Deerfield church. Among features favored by Damon were the use of recessed blind arches in the walls of the church and the use of a steeple consisting of a square belfry surmounted by blind octagonal stages and a dome (Sinnott 1963; 109). Other institutional activity of the period included the founding of the Deerfield Academy in 1797. The original building (modified since 1870 by the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, the current occupants) was constructed of brick at a cost of \$2700 and stood two stories with dimensions of 60' x 28'. The building is of further note as one of Asher Benjamin's first commissions (JSAH, XXXVIII, 3: 253); Benjamin was working in Greenfield in the late 1790s. In 1787, six school districts were established, six schoolhouses, none of which are known to survive, appear on the town's 1830 map.

Commerical: Two commercial buildings of the period are known extant. These are the Parker and Russell Silver Shop (1814), a center chimney, gambrel roofed cottage, and an L-plan tavern with triple interior chimneys and a half hip roof. Both are located at the town center.

#### VIII. Early Industrial Period (1830-1870)

##### A. Transportation Routes:

Continued improvement of north-south corridor from Northampton to Greenfield with Connecticut River Railroad (1874) through south Deerfield and along base of Pocumtuck Range east of Deerfield Street with monumental stone arch bridge intact at Depot Hill Road (1847), and north across Deerfield River to Cheapside (Greenfield). Primary railroad route west to Hoosac Tunnel located from Greenfield south through West Deerfield and along north slope of Deerfield River gorge as Troy and Greenfield (1867).

B. Population:

Between 1830 and 1870 Deerfield's population grew by 81.3 percent, giving it fifth rank among the fastest growing towns in the county. As Greenfield in the same period grew by 133 percent, much of this growth in Deerfield may be attributable to the industrial development of Cheapside, still within Deerfield's northern boundary. (Cheapside alone had a population of 114 in 1837, according to Greenfield's historian Francis Thompson.) At the end of the period, as at the beginning, Deerfield was still the largest town in the county, though it was rapidly being overtaken by Greenfield. In 1870 Deerfield's population stood at 3,632.

In 1855 Deerfield had a foreign-born population of 17.1 percent, second highest in the county after Greenfield. Much of this immigration probably settled in the area near the Russell Cutlery, now part of Greenfield. The Cutlery in 1855 employed 300 persons, a large number of whom were from Germany and Holland, thus accounting for Deerfield's high 34 percent immigration from those countries. Another 58 percent of the immigrants in 1855 were from Ireland.

C. Settlement Pattern:

South Deerfield continued to develop as local industrial center along Main Street axis with regional railroad connections and formation of depot district along Elm Street (1847). Primary civic activities remained at Deerfield Center along Old Street with introduction of tobacco farming in Deerfield valley meadowland. Local civic focus maintained at West Deerfield valley meadowland. Local civic focus maintained at West Deerfield with outlying farming district along River Road.

D. Economic Base:

Deerfield remained predominantly an agricultural town, producing large quantities of beef cattle, butter (the town led the county in 1845), Indian Corn, hay and other products. Though it was in Whately that commercial tobacco crops were introduced, by 1865 it was Deerfield which led the county in number of acres under cultivation with the crop (484 acres), displacing much of the broom corn acreage.

Some accounts credit Deerfield with important manufactures. Generally these refer to industries located north of the Deerfield River -- an area which in 1896 became part of Deerfield. Deerfield

major manufactured products were corn brooms and pocketbooks. The making of corn brooms had its recorded peak in 1832 when it led the county production. By 1837, Deerfield's production had sharply declined, while production in Sunderland, and later Whately, displaced Deerfield for top rank. The production of pocketbooks, initiated in the Federal period, by 1855 was reported to employ 226 men and women. (A good portion of this number, however, may represent labor performed by inmates of South Boston's House of Correction, with whom Armes had made arrangements.) The value of pocketbooks and Porte-Monnaies produced in Deerfield, over \$207,000 worth, was 79 percent of the entire state recorded production that year, produced by several different shops. In 1850 the largest of six makers, probably all in South Deerfield, were the Arms Brother, William J. and James G.

Other small manufacturers included Hiram Root, a maker of lead pipe at Mill Village (employed one person), small tanneries, woodenware shops, the home production of palm-leaf hats (employed 187 women in 1845), and boot and shoe shops. By 1865 there were also six makers of wooden or paper boxes.

#### E. Architecture:

Residential: Some residential construction occurred at the town center in the period, but by 1870, the focus of building activity had shifted to South Deerfield. The River Road area saw its period of greatest growth between 1840 and 1870 and, by the end of the period, had acquired much of its present character with large, prosperous farmsteads spaced widely along the road. In general, the most stylish and pretentious buildings of the period were constructed at the old town center. Architecturally significant houses observed at the town center include an asymmetrical T-plan picturesque Italianate cottage on Broughams Road, hip roofed, three bay square plan Greek Revival houses on Old Deerfield Street and a sidehall plan Gothic Revival cottage with sawn bargeboards, also on Old Deerfield Street. Housing at South Deerfield and elsewhere in the town was generally more modest in size and detailing. The sidehall plan predominated for the many Greek Revival and Italianate houses and cottages built at South Deerfield and on Sawmill Plain, Conway, Mill Village, Hillside and River Roads. The other plan used with much less frequency was the double interior chimney, center hall plan. Variations employed included use of shallow hip roofs and threebay wide facades rather than the standard five bay facades. Of special note are a sidehall plan Gothic Revival cottage with board and batten siding and bargeboards (Sugarloaf Street, South Deerfield) and a pair of Greek Revival houses on River Road near Pine Nook Cemetery. The River Road houses are very well preserved and include fully developed Greek Revival entrance surrounds with transom and sidelights, cornerblocks and broad entablatures.

Institutional: The Early Industrial period was one of considerable institutional expansion, especially at South Deerfield.

In 1848, the Second Congregational Society of South Deerfield was founded and a meetinghouse (extant; remodelled 1865) was built; the assembly became known as the "Monument Church". In 1832 the Shelburne and Deerfield Baptist Society separated and became the Deerfield Baptist Society; a second Baptist Society was formed in 1833 but reunited with the parent organization ca.1841. Other activity included the founding of an Orthodox Congregational Society in 1838 and the establishment of a Methodist Society at Bloody Brook in 1848. In 1859, the town's first high school was established within the structure of the Deerfield Academy; in 1860, a second high school was founded at Bloody Brook in 1860.

Commercial: Most of the period commercial buildings standing in the town are located at South Deerfield. These consist of less than a half dozen frame or brick structures, most probably built after 1860. Of these, one, a three bay wide, center entrance, two-story Italianate structure on Main Street, is the best preserved.

## IX. Late Industrial Period (1870-1915)

### A. Transportation Routes

Continued improvement of north-south railroad corridor to Greenfield with New Haven and Hartford line through South Deerfield paralleling Connecticut River route around Deerfield Center to East Deerfield (1881, now abandoned in part as Interstate 91). Connecting branch west to Shelburne Falls located from South Deerfield junction to Deerfield gorge (1881 now abandoned). Further improvement of north-south axis with interurban trolley line from Hatfield to Greenfield (1902) through South Deerfield along Main Street and throughout Deerfield Center along Old Village Street. Development of East Deerfield railroad yards included rebuilding of Deerfield River bridge (c.1910; steel truss intact) and Connecticut River bridge to Montague.

### B. Population:

Between 1870 and 1900 Deerfield lost over 45 percent of her population. The greatest loss occurred with the annexation of Cheapside to Greenfield in 1896, when over a third of Deerfield's population was added to Greenfield. After 1900 however, the population began rising, with a sharp increase (averaging 106 persons a year) in the years 1910-1915. The rise was not enough to offset the earlier decline, however, and the period closed recording a net loss of 24 percent of the town's 1870 population.

Deerfield's high 23.5 percent foreign-born population percentage in 1880 was largely due to the industrial development north of the Deerfield River, though the 114 Italians noted, as in Shelburne and Conway, was due to the labor force constructing the northern extension of the New Haven and Northampton Railroad, 1880-81. By 1905, Deerfield's foreign-born amounted to 17.3%.

Of these, the largest number, as in other farming towns in the valley, were Poles (45 percent).

C. Settlement Pattern:

South Deerfield remained as economic and commercial center with focus around central common to Elm Street depot and expansion of suburban district to Sugarloaf Mountain. Civic activities maintained at Old Deerfield Center with primary tobacco farming along Deerfield valley meadows. Location of railroad freight yards at East Deerfield (c.1890) formed industrial district from Greenfield and Montague with agriculture along Connecticut River lowlands.

D. Economic Base:

Deerfield remained a predominantly agricultural town. By 1880, the town's production of hay, butter, tobacco, potatoes, and Indian corn were greater than any other town in Franklin County. The town's tobacco production ranked third in the Valley after Hatfield and Hadley. In beef production in 1885, four Franklin County towns led the state in cattle sent to market--Greenfield, Deerfield, Conway and Shelburne, in the order named. In port, Deerfield led the state with 197,000 lbs. By 1890, a pickle factory (C.D. Everett's) had opened in South Deerfield. By 1905, Deerfield was also a major onion producing town, ranking second after Sunderland.

Among manufacturers in 1875, the three makers of pocketbooks in South Deerfield produced a product valued at \$205,400 -- more than twice the value of all other manufactured products combined. By 1890, two makers remained: Charles Armes, and Hamilton & Co.

With the completion of the Hoosac Tunnel, Deerfield and Greenfield became a major railroad junction for routes north, south, east and west. In 1880 the Fitchburg began construction of a major railroad yard in East Deerfield to handle this traffic.

E. Architecture:

Residential: The area of greatest residential construction continued to center on South Deerfield where sidestreets of modest cottages and single and multiple family houses developed off Sugarloaf and Main Streets. More substantial and stylish houses, some of them architect designed, were generally confined to the old town center at Deerfield. In addition to these developments, a small group of workers' housing was built at East Deerfield in the 1880s and 1890s. Most of the houses at South Deerfield are one-and-a-half or two-story frame. Queen Anne and Colonial Revival structures with sidehall plans; most appear to have been built after 1885. A few sidehall plan two and even three family houses were built along with a number of one-story early 20th century cottages. Of special note are several very



well-detailed Craftsman bungalows of the early 20th century; most incorporate stucco or shingled finishes and use materials such as concrete and cobblestones to decorative advantage. At Old Deerfield, approximately a half dozen large and well-detailed Queen Anne, Colonial Revival and Shingle Style houses were built in the period; most of these are located at the southern end of Old Deerfield Street. The workers' houses at East Deerfield consist primarily of Stick Style/Queen Anne sidehall cottages and modest two-story houses. Other period houses were noted in scattered locations on River Road and at Wapping.

Institutional: The great majority of the town's extant institutional buildings date from the Late Industrial period. Most of these are located at South Deerfield but the Deerfield Academy expanded considerably after 1890; thus several notable buildings were also built at Old Deerfield. Institutional buildings at South Deerfield include three churches, a school and the town offices. The churches consist of a Romanesque Revival example (c.1875), an onion-domed structure (c.1900), both on Sugarloaf Street, and a Queen Anne/Gothic Revival structure (c.1910) on Thayer Street. All are one-and-a-half or two-story frame buildings. The school (c.1895) is a two-and-a-half-story, brick, hip roofed structure located on Conway Road, while the town offices (c.1900), on Main Street, are located in a two-story, hip-roofed brick neoclassical building with a pediment and engaged columns at the entrance. Buildings constructed at Deerfield Academy in the period include three large brick neoclassical structures, undoubtedly of architect design, probably built c.1895.

Commercial: Most of the town's period commercial buildings are located at South Deerfield. These include the three-story mansard roofed Warren Hotel (c.1880) and several well-detailed brick or frame two and three story commercial blocks in the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. These generally include storefront space on the first floor with residential space (apartments) above.

Industrial: Industrial buildings of the period include a number of frame or brick one and two-story railroad freight houses and warehouses at South Deerfield and at East Deerfield as well as a grain elevator at East Deerfield.

## X. Early Modern Period (1915-1940)

### A. Transportation Routes:

Abandonment of trolley line from Greenfield to South Deerfield (1924) and improvement of local highway as regional auto routes. Primary north-south highway designated as U.S. Route 5 and Route 10 through South Deerfield as Main Street with secondary east-west connector as Route 116 from Sunderland to Conway located across Mill River plain. Replacement of bridges after 1936 Flood included monumental Art Deco concrete spans to Sunderland (Route 116) across Connecticut and to Greenfield across Deerfield River (Route 5 and 10).

B. Population:

By 1915, Deerfield had fallen to fourth place among the towns in Franklin County with the largest populations. This place the town still retained in 1940, despite an overall loss of 2 percent of its 1915 population. The greatest loss occurred in the period 1935-1940.

C. Settlement Pattern:

Redevelopment of Deerfield Center with restoration of Old Deerfield Street and expansion of Deerfield Academy campus to Albany Road. Educational focus further expanded with location of Eaglebrook School on Pocumtuck Ridge(c1935) and development of local ski trails. South Deerfield remained as economic and commercial center with expansion of auto highway activities along Route 5 axis to Wapping. Tobacco farming maintained as primary farming in Deerfield valley meadows with outlying district along River Road. Industrial fringe district continued to expand at East Deerfield with quarrying of Trapp Rock Ledge and expansion of commercial strip activities from Greenfield.

D. Economic Base:

By the early 20th century, the writings of historian George Sheldon (founder of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association) and others had brought to Deerfield a national reputation and an accompanying tourist trade. The WPA Guide in 1937 wrote lyrically (Conrad Aiken):

If it is no exaggeration to say that Deerfield is not so much a town as the ghost of a town, its dimness almost transparent, its quiet almost a cessation, it is essential to add that it is probably quite the most beautiful ghost of its kind and with the deepest poetic and historic significance to be found in America... (p.223).

The embroidery of the Blue and White Society, begun in the 1890s, together with other handicrafts, reinforced the town's attractions, and were a popular item among eastern decorators of the Colonial Revival.

Agriculturally the town still produced tobacco and cucumbers. At South Deerfield the Armes Manufacturing Company, with a branch plant in Malden, still turned out pocketbooks. At least three pickle factories were also in Deerfield (two in South Deerfield). Deerfield's major economic force, however, was in her schools. Deerfield Academy, together with Eaglebrook and Belmont, added about 500 to the town's population.

### E. Architecture:

Comparatively little construction occurred in this period. Most activity continued to center on South Deerfield where a number of small cottages were built as infill housing on sidestreets. Of note is the existence of a one-story, hip roofed Moderne house on Sugarloaf Street, probably built c.1935. Other period houses were observed on River Road and on Route 5/10. At least two institutional buildings of note were observed. These are a Georgian Revival two-story brick school (c.1925) with a flat roof, on Main Street and the brick Georgian Revival Library (c.1915); the Library is particularly well-detailed with linked parapet end chimneys, quoins, arched windows and a five bay wide facade with pediment entrance. Notable commercial structures are automobile-related and include a gas station with lighthouse emblem and a stucco Tudor Revival roadhouse of the 1920s, both on Route 5/10.

### XI. Survey Observations:

General: With a very few exceptions, the only inventory forms recorded for Deerfield are for the houses along Old Deerfield Street. Inventory forms exist for the 18th century houses only and are often incomplete for important historic data such as dates of moving or restoration or original owner's names and subsequent associative events. Completion of a thorough survey of the entire town to professional standards is of considerable importance. Significant archaeological, industrial and architectural resources survive throughout the town. To date, documentation has focused on pre-Revolutionary Deerfield to the detriment and neglect of the town's extensive 19th and 20th century history; compounding this problem is a lack of solidly-researched documentation (at least in the M.H.C. survey files) on the town's colonial history. Of particular significance, architecturally, are the town's mid to late 19th century resources. In addition to quality residences at Old Deerfield (most of which were designed to standards of design parallel to those exhibited in the town's outstanding 18th century architecture), representative to exemplary buildings in a range of 19th and 20th century styles extend throughout South Deerfield and along River Road. Well-preserved agricultural landscapes survive along Mill Village and River Roads while railroad-related industrial buildings and worker's housing exist intact at East Deerfield. Often in areas of considerable historic significance traditional and even apochryphal information has been allowed to define the town's resources: this should not continue to be the case in Deerfield.

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