

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

GEORGETOWN

Report Date: 1985

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: September 1985

Community: Georgetown

I. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

An area rising from coastal lowlands in the east to rolling hills in the west, Georgetown contained possible native sites along the Parker River and at Wheeler and Penn Brooks. A Rowley parish until 1838, area used only for grazing until 1667, when permanent European settlement began. Earliest land grants to Rowley residents in area from Penn Brook to Pentucket Pond (an effort to establish a planned community), but by 1700, most settlement attracted, instead, to Byfield area. Meetinghouse center established there in 1702 (A combination of Newbury, Rowley, and Georgetown residents). Meetinghouse site established in western Georgetown (near present center) by 1729. Dispersed agricultural settlement pervasive through eighteenth century. Parker River increased in importance in eighteenth century, attracting mill sites at Byfield and south of Georgetown Center.

By the Federal period, Georgetown and parent Rowely had followed widely divergent paths of development. While Rowely, an agricultural town, was coastally oriented and its closest ties to Ipswich, Georgetown's emphasis was manufacturing and its associations, to the interior and the towns of Bradford, Boxford, Danvers, and Haverhill. With the Revolutionary War era began the prosperity of small industry (and particularly shoemaking) in Georgetown and its transformation into a thriving manufacturing village. In nineteenth century, civic core shifted from Old South Green and meetinghouse site at Elm and Main to Andover and Main and new focus of commercial activities. Shoe shops and small manufacturies formed nascent industrial fringe to the south along Elm and Central Streets. Prosperity and growth at its highest between 1827 and 1840. Products of residential building boom during these years still in evidence in streetscapes of Gable front Greek Revival and Italianate dwellings near village center and particularly on Main between Andover and Elm Streets. Between 1840 and 1860, railroad constructed through central Georgetown and industrial production escalated. Shoe manufacturing peaked in 1855, declined with Civil War and soon became rivalled by clothing manufactory. Although several institutional buildings and commerical business blocks added to fabric of village center during Early Industrial period, residential construction had slowed considerably, expansion focusing in areas west and north of civic center in vicinity of railroad depot and street railway.

With late nineteenth century Georgetown's manufacturies declined, population stabilized and building starts plummeted. The town began to assume the character of primarily a residential community, many of its residents now turning to proximate metropolitan communities of North Andover and Haverhill for employment. With construction of Interstate 95 through western

town in mid-twentieth century, construction recommences on rural roads, the tourist industry attracted to Georgetown and degradation of village center begins. The town's historic fabric continues to be threatened, and gradually overcome, by pressures for additional commercial development.

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

In 1702, western Rowley and Newbury residents joined to form the Byfield parish; the parish meetinghouse was located on the border of Georgetown and Newbury; some of the adjacent area was included in the parish but the bulk of settlement was in Newbury. In 1731, most of the territory now known as Georgetown was incorporated as the west parish of Rowley. In 1838, after a century of growth, Georgetown was incorporated as an independent town. Since that time, the town's political boundaries have remained virtually unchanged.

III. TOPOGRAPHY

The town of Georgetown is located in central Essex County, Massachusetts. Physiographically, the town lies within the New England Seaboard Lowland, a relatively smooth coastal strip of land with hills usually below the 400 and 500 foot contours. In Georgetown, land surfaces are irregular, particularly in the western portion of town. The surface generally slopes easterly. While in the eastern half of town, elevations average around 100 feet in the west elevations around 200 feet are common. Maximum elevations approach 350 feet.

Bedrock deposits in the Georgetown area are mainly comprised of Salem gabbro diorites (diorite and gabbro diorite) in the west and Newburyport quartz diorites in the east. Some small areas containing rocks belonging to the Marlboro formation are also present. Soils in Georgetown are generally well drained or moderately well drained deposits belonging to the general associations. The largest soil group is the Hinckley-Windsor-Merrimac association which occurs around Georgetown center and in the eastern portion of town. These soils occur in deep, level to steep areas formed in outwash deposits. In the western portion of town, soils belonging to the Pacton-Woodbridge-Montauk association are present. These soils also occur in deep, level to steep areas, in this instance formed in compact glacial till. In the southeastern portion of town soils belonging to the Canton-Charlton-Sutton association are also present. These soils occur in deep, nearly level to steep deposits formed in friable glacial till. Drainage in the Georgetown area consists of the Parker River in the northern portion of town and Penn Brook in the south. Several ponds (Pentucket Pond, Rock Pond) and wetlands are also present.

The original forest growth in Georgetown and in Essex County in general consisted of a mixed growth of white pine, oak, chestnut, poplar, maple, birch and some other hardwoods and conifers. Second growth patterns, however, characterize most of the town today. These patterns are represented by second growth oak and chestnut in upland areas. Some birch, cedar, juniper and white pine are also present.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500-1620)

A. Transportation Routes

Native American transportation routes in the Georgetown area likely emphasized combined water and land routes along the Parker River east/west in the northern portion of town and in the Penn Brook area in the south. Other conjectured trails may also have been present in the Andover Street/North Street area and in the vicinity of East Main Street.

B. Population

Georgetown was probably inhabited by members of the Pawtucket Indian group which extended from the Saugus/Salem area north to the York area of Maine. Locally this group is commonly referred to as the Agawam Indians. Gookin (1972) lists ca. 3,000 men as belonging to this group prior to the 1617-19 epidemics, as many as 12,000 natives in the region. These figures are probably exaggerated; Native Americans in the Georgetown area probably never numbered more than 100 to 200 individuals. Following the epidemics, fewer than 50 to 100 natives likely remained in the Georgetown area.

C. Settlement Pattern

Contact Period site location are currently unknown for the Georgetown area. In fact, few sites dating to this period have been identified for eastern Massachusetts in general. However, regional ethnohistoric sources and known Contact Period site locations indicated a possibility that sites belonging to this period may be present in the Georgetown vicinity. Preferred site locations appear to emphasize coastal/estuarine zones and major drainages; a pattern similar to Woodland Period site distributions. In Georgetown, Contact Period sites may be present along the banks of the Parker River or Wheeler Brook in the northern area of town or along Penn Brook in the south. Contact Period sites may also be located around ponds such as rock and Pentucket Ponds or other major wetlands. Smaller, special purpose sites such as fishing, hunting and burial sites may be more common in this area.

D. Subsistence Pattern

Native Americans in the Georgetown area subsisted in a variety of seasonally determined activities including hunting, fishing, the collecting of wild plants and shellfish, and horticulture. In the Georgetown locale, these activities were probably similar to subsistence patterns practiced by Native Americans in other eastern Massachusetts areas. Hunting focused on larger mammals such as deer, smaller fur bearers, and also on upland game birds and ducks. Freshwater ponds and streams in the area offered a variety of fish for consumption. In addition, the Parker River presently contains alewives and may also have contained shad, smelt and possibly salmon in the past. Several species of terrestrial and aquatic plants available provided a valuable food

resource. Gathering may also have included fresh water clams, available in most of Georgetown's ponds. Domestic plants such as corn, beans, pumpkins, squash and tobacco were important. The locations of native fields are currently unknown, they were likely located along rivers, streams or other wetland areas.

V. PLANTATION PERIOD (1620-1675)

A. Transportation Routes

Indian Trails likely continued in use in the Georgetown area throughout most of the Plantation Period. Crude European transportation routes were also developed, in some areas prior to settlement. Early trails were used mainly to transport cattle to grazing areas. Water travel may have also been important in the Georgetown area the Parker River providing a convenient east/west travel corridor through the northern portion of town. Other water travel may also have been available along Wheeler and Penn Brooks.

Most settlement did not come until after ca. 1667 with only cattle paths present before that date. Early roadways into the Georgetown area likely developed from Andover and Rowley. A path or cartway was probably present in the vicinity of Andover Street/North Street or Rt. 113, linking the Georgetown settlements with those in Andover. Early roads from Rowley also probably joined with this route, as well as along the East Main Street/Georgetown Road corridor and in the Jewett Street/Wethersfield Street corridor. These roads were not greatly improved.

B. Population

European Colonists were not permanently settled in the Georgetown area until after 1667. Prior to that date some Rowley residents had grants in the town area but were not residing there. Temporary visits to the area for cattle grazing characterized the Early Colonial population in the area.

After 1667, permanent Colonial settlement in the Georgetown area proceeded at a slow rate. During the first settlement only two or three families probably lived in the area. By 1675 that population probably increased to 10 or possibly 15 families, or 50 to 75 individuals residing in the town.

C. Settlement Pattern

Land grants in the town were given to Rowley residents as early as 1652, and were used mainly for grazing cattle. During the 1680's several large land grants were made in the area around Pentucket Pond and land west of Penn Brook. These grants culminated in 1666 or 1667 when a tract of land called the "three thousand acres" was laid out as village land. This tract covered nearly all of Georgetown west of Penn Brook, including several earlier grants. In 1667 a small farm totaling less than 100 acres was laid out in this area, the rental of which was to be used in support of the town's ministry, and supported Georgetown's first settler.

Initial land grants and earliest settlements make it clear the area west of Penn Brook north to Pentucket Pond was the designated area for settlement. Smaller land grants of less than 100 acres were present but larger grants of several hundred acres were the norm rather than the exception. Land grants were made to Rowley residents purely on the basis of what they could afford to buy or rent with little regard towards an equal distribution of the land. Some settlement was also probably made in the eastern area of Georgetown in what is often called the Rowley area of Byfield. However, by 1675 only a few dispersed farmsteads were present in this area.

D. Economic Base

Georgetown's economic significance to Rowley's residents was important long before actual settlement. Cattle raising was important in the Penn Brook area where animal pens were constructed for young cattle, perhaps for protection from wolves. The presence of pasture lands in various areas can be documented before settlement possibly indicating old Indian fields.

As colonists settled the Georgetown area some hunting and fishing was pursued but the combined use of agriculture and husbandry was clearly the most important economic interest. Indian corn, wheat and barley were the most important food crops grown as well as rye when possible; fruit and vegetables were also grown. Hemp and flax were also for textiles and rope. Salt marshes are not present in Georgetown but farmers may have held marshlands to the east of Rowley for the harvest of salt marsh hay. Husbandry continued as an important activity after settlement. However, cattle were now supplemented by horses, sheep and swine as important animals on farms. Oxen and fowl were also present as well as cows and dairying activities.

Lumbering was important at an early date. In 1669-70, Jonathan Harriman built a combined saw and grist mill. Tanneries were important after 1670 as well as itinerant shoe and clothing manufacturers. Georgetown's first grocery store was established in 1670 (Arlington 1922:250). Fulling mills were not present in Georgetown during the Plantation Period.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

A. Transportation Routes

As Colonial Period settlement increased during the late 17th century, paths and cartways established during the late Plantation Period were improved as roadways. Early roads were said to have little regard for public travel. Instead, a "proprietors way" was laid out at the head of each farm grant. As a result, the early road matrix was a combination of right and acute angles depending on the orientation of farm lots and location of hills, rivers and swamps. The first official Georgetown road laid out for public travel was Elm Street in 1686, followed by North Street and Long Hill Road in 1713, West Main Street or Haverhill Street in 1714 and Nelson Street in 1770. As late as 1770 and 1797 West and

Nelson Street still had gates across certain sections of the roads which had to be open and shut for public travel.

B. Population

In 1675, Georgetown's population numbered no more than 10 to 15 families. This number increased slowly such that by 1700 there were only approximately 20 families residing in the town, about 80% in the Byfield area. By 1730 Georgetown's population more than doubled from the 1700 figures as 44 residents, petitioned the General Court to be set off as a separate parish. In the 1730's, an epidemic of throat distemper was present in the Rowley settlements. In the New Rowley or Georgetown area 46 children were reported to die between 1735-36, about one-eighth of the town's total population. Georgetown was not incorporated as a township in 1775 so separate statistics are not available for the town in the 1765 or 1775 census reports. However, up to 250 to 300 people may have been present by that date.

The first Congregational Church was organized in this parish in 1732. In 1754 several church members withdrew from the church. By 1757 the dissident church members became known as separatists and began holding services in a church at Hale's corner, then in Bradford now in Groveland. This group began to be called Anabaptists and represented the core of the First Baptist church in 1781 in Georgetown.

C. Settlement Pattern

Colonial Period settlement of Georgetown continued to focus in the western portion of town from the Penn Brook north to Pentucket Pond and to the east in the Byfield area. During the 17th century, most Georgetown residents made the long journey to Rowley to attend meetings on the Sabbath. Some residents also chose to worship and meet in Bradford or Newbury. By 1700 at least 80% of Georgetown's settlement was in the east and in 1702 the Rowley residents of Byfield voluntarily joined with their Newbury neighbors forming Byfield Parish. In 1702 a meetinghouse was built near the junction of Jackman and Warren Street on the town line between Georgetown and Newbury. Settlement remained dispersed throughout this period.

While Settlement in the western portion of Georgetown was the planned area by Rowley residents, actual habitation in this locale was slow prior to 1700. Between 1700 and 1730 settlement increased at a rapid rate. In 1729 a meetinghouse was erected on a lot below Penn Brook in Main Street. This area, also known as New Rowley was incorporated as the Second Parish in Rowley in 1731. In 1768 the First Congregational church building was sold to the Baptist church and rebuilt at Hale's corner. A second Congregational meetinghouse or the Old South Meetinghouse (1769) was built on the corner of Main and Elm Streets. This area around the church and its green was the geographical center of town. However, the settlement pattern in both New Rowley and Byfield was still dispersed.

At least four schools were built in Georgetown during the Colonial Period. The first was built in 1739 on a hill near "The Searl place". The second was built in 1745 between "Mr. Chandler's and Mr. Buckelbunks brook". In 1753 a third school house was built near Mill Street. School was held one-third of the time in each schoolhouse. Sometime before 1776, a fourth schoolhouse was built on Central Street at Brook Street.

D. Economic Base

Agriculture and husbandry continued to be important in Georgetown throughout the Colonial Period. In general, Indian corn became increasingly important while the importance of cattle probably diminished from the previous period.

Industry and manufacturing increased in importance during this period. From 1715-18 the Plumer Clothing manufacturing business was operated. In 1722 an iron works was built by S. Barnett at the upper end of Rock Pond. Iron ore mining was also important in the several bogs and ponds throughout Georgetown. In 1732 the Spofford saw mill was built on a stream which has an outlet on the Parker River above Scraggs Pond. The Parker River area was rapidly growing in importance. In 1770 a canal was dug below Pentucket Pond followed later by a dam below Mill Street where a grist mill was built. Also in 1770, the town's second grocery store was opened. The Revolutionary War was clearly a boost to Georgetown's economy. In 1775 Eleazer Spofford established a wire pulling mill near his father's saw mill. The year 1775 also saw the start of the Chaplin rope walk, the Burpee flax mill and the Spofford snuff mill. Several smithies were also present as well as malt houses. Molasses was also being produced from corn stalks and watermelons. No evidence of shipbuilding is presently available for this period.

E. Architecture

Residential: The town's period architecture is dominated by the large, center chimney house. These houses (about 10) are all 2 & 1/2 stories in height, and all but one (an exceptional saltbox) have symmetrical side elevations; most have symmetrical five-bay facades though one three-bay and two four-bay examples are known. Later in the period, with the increased popularity of the Georgian, large houses were constructed with pairs of interior chimneys behind the symmetrical five bay facade, about 5 date from this period.

Institutional: The first meetinghouse in the area now Georgetown was constructed for Byfield parish in 1702, its appearance is unknown. The second was constructed with the formation of Second or West Parish Rowley, in 1729; little is known of its appearance but in 1731 galleries were added and in 1744 it was painted red; the house was repaired in 1760 and pediments were added over the doors. A second house for Second or West Parish was constructed in 1769 with an 11' square stair tower as well as an 8' square tower and spire whose topping weathervane was said to reach 202'; the first house was sold to the Separatists who rebuilt it in

Bradford. The town voted to construct a school in 1737, and measurements were to be 20 x 16 feet with 8 foot studs; a second was voted in 1745 and a third in 1753.

VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

A. Transportation Routes

Many Georgetown roads were only partially opened (free of gates) by the period's opening, among them North, Mill and Jacobs Streets, West Street to Old Salem Road, East and Central Streets. Since roads bounded land divisions rather than defined paths of travel, several right angle roads emerged in Georgetown in the eighteenth century. In the early nineteenth century, however, "throughways" between the villages were established, and transportation improved significantly.

B. Population

The Baptists continued to meet as a branch of Haverhill's church in Byfield with neighbors from Rowley, Bradford, and Newbury until a separate church was formed in 1785. Many preachers of emerging denominations visited the town including Freewill Baptists, Christians, Unitarians, and with particular success, Universalists. A social Library was formed in 1806, followed later in the period by a Lyceum. The temperance movement found followers after 1815, and a society was formed in 1829. The town was reportedly Federalist with the exception of the Baptists. The North Essex Brigade mustered on Pillsbury Plain during the 1820s.

C. Settlement Pattern

By 1795 there were 60 houses in the parish of New Rowley (now Georgetown). Although the southwestern quadrant claimed perhaps the town's highest population density, dispersed agricultural settlement remained common. The meetinghouses in Byfield Parish (1746) and in Georgetown Center (1770) still had failed, by 1795, to attract residential clustering in their immediate vicinities.

By 1800-1830 the town had entered a phase of rapid growth. Despite the location of the meetinghouse at Elm and East Main, it was at the junction of Andover, Main and North Streets that an early focus of civic and commercial activity developed. Several stores were rebuilt at this intersection in the early decades of the century; a second school opened nearby on Andover Street (now Soldier's Monument); a school (by 1795) a Universalist church (1829) and a Baptist church (1829). All were built along a north/south axis extending from Andover and Central Streets up to North and Pond Streets. Several small industrial sites operated immediately west and north of this emergent linear focus. A residential building boom commenced. Although the peak years of construction did not occur until 1827 to 1840, by period's end two conflicting residential foci were apparent, one at the meetinghouse (Elm and Main at the traditional town center) and the

other, on Main and Andover Streets at the new center of commercial activities. When Georgetown received its first Post Office in 1824, it too, was built at the town's commercial hub at Andover and Main.

D. Economic Base

Residents of Georgetown engaged in farming, probably producing dairy goods, grains, etc. There was also extensive animal slaughtering for meat and for the hides.

The period during and after the Revolution, when manufactured goods were not easily attained from abroad, was one in which many small manufacturers established water-powered mills in Georgetown. The largest saw and grist mill in Georgetown was operated by Colonel Daniel Spofford after 1778 on the site of an early 18th century sawmill on a Parker River outlet and run by Deacon Abner Spofford, ground 3000 bushels of grain (grown by local farmers) in one year. There was also a malt mill, run by Deacon Stephen Mighill, for production of ale, a flax mill, where the Burpee family broke flax by water power for area residents, and a snuff and molasses (made from corn-stalks and watermelons) mill operated by Jeremiah Spofford. A fourth Spofford, Eleazer, established a wire pulling business in 1775. Other industrial activities in Federal Georgetown included "clothing manufacturing", begun by Samuel Norris in 1780 and commercial charcoal burning which was an important business in Georgetown early in the 19th century.

The largest, though by no means the only, early manufacturing activity in Georgetown centered around shoemaking and the integrally-related process of tanning and currying leather. As early as 1780, the Hardy brothers, Westen and Phineas, were operating a tanyard near the site of the Harriman mill on Rock Brook, a tributary of the Parker River, off of Mill Street. During the same year Captain Benjamin Adams opened a tanyard on Salem Rd. (currently Central Street.) This tanyard was owned later in the period by Colonel John Kimball who in 1825 tanned curried over 4000 South American horse hides. By 1782, there were seven other tanneries (a total of nine), which were probably involved in shoe manufacturing as well. Bark for tanning was ground at Captain William Perley's barkmill by 1782. He sold bark to the eight other tanneries operating at that time; his tan-yard being the ninth. Other tanners working in the first quarter of the 19th century included Deacon Soloman Nelson whose tannery was on Nelson Street, Major Jeremiah Nelson, who operated a very large tannery on Elm Street from 1825-1845, Daniel Clark, whose tannery on North Street was one of the largest in Georgetown, and Henry Hilliard and Sons, who purchased the Clark property in 1803 and maintained the tanyard until 1903.

Some of the earliest shoemakers in Georgetown were tanners who gave out the leather to area farmers who then "worked up" the upper and under stock into boots and shoes. However the first shoes made for sale were manufactured by Deacon Thomas Merrill who with his two sons also manufactured nails in a blacksmith shop

next to his house, shortly after the Revolution. The Little Brothers began making boots and shoes in a building near the old South Green, on Elm Street in 1810. By the end of the period, the Little's were shipping shoes as far away as Pittsburg. Amos Tenney began manufacturing the Georgetown heavy boot and brogan in 1811. Their products, having a national reputation as the "standard" heavy boot, was made continuously for more than 50 years. Another shoe maker, Benjamin Winter, began manufacturing boys brogans in 1818. By the end of the period, in 1830, it is said that "there was scarcely a farmhouse or any other house but that which had in its backyard a 12 x 12 foot shoe shop." (Arrington, ed., 122:251). The shoe peg was invented by Paul Pillsbury in 1815 "by some kind of a crude mechanical device." Eventually Pillsbury devised a machine for commercial purposes, the first of which was used to make pegged shoes at George Tenney's factory (date unknown). Other uses of tanned hides during the Federal Period included the manufacture of horse-collars, harnesses and saddlebag by Benjamin Wallingford Jr. Ben Wallingford, and his father had previously been engaged in a successful chaise making business. Also Mr. Burbank was making Chaises at "the Corner" before 1800.

E. Architecture:

Residential: A greater number of housetypes survive from this period, representing an increase in the varieties of size and configuration options. A small number of 2 & 1/2 story, five-bay, center chimney houses were built, including the exceptional, hip-roofed, Nathaniel Nelson house of 1797. Similarly small numbers of 1 & 1/2 story, five-bay, center chimney houses also date to this period. As the through passage came to dominate planning considerations, pairs of chimneys overtook the central chimney in popularity. In large houses of 2 & 1/2 stories, five-bays and double pile plan, interior chimneys persisted, though exterior wall chimneys were not unknown. Somewhat smaller houses were constructed of single pile depth, singlepile with el, or L-plan configurations tall and narrow in keeping with the period aesthetic. Here chimneys might be placed on rear or end walls, or between front rooms and rear ells. Rear wall examples were exceptionally popular, and about a dozen were noted. A large brick house with paired exterior chimneys, five-bays, 2 & 1/2 stories apparently dates to this period. Fashionable hip roofs are known in a handful of double interior chimney examples as well as L-plans.

Institutional: In 1785, the meetinghouse of the Separatist, now known as Baptists, was moved from Bradford back to the village of New Rowley. A new house was constructed in 1829, 45' by 35', gable front in form with round headed openings and an Italianate entry porch.

The Second or West Parish meetinghouse underwent extensive repairs in 1816, when a Revere bell was purchased; stoves were installed in 1822.

Industrial: Water-powered saw and grist mill buildings were constructed. Several "ten-footer" shoe shops and tanneries were established. No known survivals.

VIII. Early Industrial Period

A. Transportation Routes

Until mid-century, stage coaches to Lowell/Newburyport and Salem/Haverhill provided Georgetown its sole means of public transportation. Between 1840 and 1860 the railroad entered the town when communication was opened direct via Danvers with Newburyport, Haverhill, and Boston. The Haverhill branch joined the Danvers and Newburyport railroad at the Georgetown station (immediately south and west of the town center). Other stations were located in South Georgetown and at Byfield.

B. Population

The first population figure for Georgetown is available in 1840, a total of 1540. It expands by 35.5% by period's end to 2088, almost exclusively in the first decade. The foreign-born population in 1855 was 9.3% of the total population, almost entirely Ireland-born. The proportion fell to 6.7% in 1865, but the nativities remained predominantly Irish, among whom the decrease was largely felt, and small numbers of Canadians, English, and Scots.

Women of the Congregational Society formed a Benevolent Society in 1834. With Beechers installation in 1857 a group challenging his orthodoxy withdrew, first meeting in the chapel, forming a separate church in 1864, and constructing their own church two years later. Baptist women formed their moral reform society in 1834, particularly anti-slavery. New denominations continued to find converts, including the Mormons, Spiritualists, Christian unionists, and the purificationist Come-outers. Roman Catholic masses were said beginning in 1849. The Lafayette guards, popular during the 1830s, disband in 1843; the Citizen's guard was formed in 1858. The temperance movement remained active as Washingtonians, the Band of Hope, and Good Templars. Masons formed a lodge in 1867, Odd Fellows in 1868. The town was predominantly Whig and Republican. A highschool was formed in 1856.

C. Settlement Pattern

The early focus at Elm and Main Streets appeared to maintain its symbolic importance, the congregational Church there being enlarged in 1845. But the commercial focus at Andover and Main continued to attract the most development. In 1856 Georgetown's first town house was built on the site of the Universalist Church (at School and Andover Streets); 1867, the Wooden Masonic Business Block was built at North and Main. At mid-century, ornamental trees were planted through central Georgetown.

The heyday of residential construction occurred in 1839. Over 50 buildings were erected in that year alone, particularly on Elm Street near the meetinghouse and on Main Street at the town center.

By the period's end, and encouraged by a path of railroad lines immediately west of the town's civic axis, residential construction finally joined the civic/commercial activities at Georgetown Center. Dwellings now densely lined north, west and east Main and Andover Streets as they converged at the village center. Residential building, in addition, had begun to move outward, along Pond Street (to the north) along west and east Main and particularly following Central and Elm Streets (to the south). While Georgetown's commercial activities congregated at the village center, and the highest status residential dwellings just beyond them, it was to the south, down Central and Elm Streets, that many of Georgetown's small shoe shops and manufacturers were attracted. Unlike the smaller and more agriculturally-oriented Rowley and Boxford, a functional separation of activities had already begun in mid-19th century Georgetown.

D. Economic Base

By 1840 Georgetown was principally a manufacturing town. Shoe manufacturing was the principal source of this growth. In 1839, there were 27 shoe factories and several shoe shops producing more than 200,000 pairs of boots and shoes and probably employing around 400 people. In addition there were nine tanneries. From 1832 to 1839 "Georgetown and the largest ratio of people engaged in the shoe industry of any town in the country... (and) was the largest producer of men's and boys heavy boots and shoes in the United States." (Arrington 1922:254). The Early Industrial peak of shoe manufacturing came around 1855. In that year 595 men and women produced almost 350 thousand pairs of boots and shoes. Despite a slight decline during the Civil War (Georgetown's shoes were shipped principally to New York, Baltimore, Norfolk and Charleston) the shoe industry would rebound in the following period.

As the industry grew, baggage-wagons made the trip to Boston, returning with West India goods sold in several stores. One such store, "The West India and Dry Goods Store", was run by the Little brothers, who also manufactured shoes, and actually bartered much of their merchandise to area farmers in exchange for shoes manufactured by these farmers during the off-season. With the arrival of the Eastern Railroad in Rowley around 1841, horse-drawn wagons were used to make the short journey to the Rowley depot, and in 1849 to the local depot.

Among those establishing shoe factories in the boom years of the late 1830s was John P. Coker. The Coker shoe factory was the first in Georgetown to use a sewing machine in the manufacture of boots and shoes. He utilized a "waxed-thread machine" in the production of long-legged boots. One of Coker's employers, a mechanic named David Haskell, invented a new sewing machine, a

"post" sewer, in 1852-53, which could "side-up" the legs of the boots, something the "flate-bed" machines Coker was using could not accomplish. It is said that the Haskell invention could "side-up" the "tops" of boots thirty times quicker than the same work could be done by hand. "Post" sewing machines became the most widely used sewer in the shoe factories.

Other shoe related industries operated at this time: a shoe pattern maker, a last manufacturer (run by Cyrus Dorman) made 4000 lasts in 1855 (on Mechanics' Court); two shoe string concerns manufactured 1,400,000 pairs of shoe laces and employed six people in 1855, and a wooden shoe box business begun by Joseph P. Folsom in 1860, located on Pond Street. The first use of steam power in Georgetown came around 1835 when Major Jeremiah Nelson erected the building and machinery for tanning hides on Chestnut Street.

Moses Atwood's patent medicine company began making "Atwood's Bitters" in 1841. Two of Atwood's early accomplices, Lewis Bateman and Moses Carber, eventually manufactured "Atwood's Bitters" on their own. Carter also established a "manufacturing chemists" business in 1841-42, while Bateman was to become the largest cigar maker in Essex County by 1858. Bateman stopped making cigars in 1865.

Clothing manufacturers also established firms in Georgetown. Foremost among them were Samuel Plumer who began his business in 1838 and continued in operation until 1890, and his partner Stephen Osgood. A third clothing manufacturer, Blodgett, began production in 1842, employing around 20 people. Blodgett also invented a sewing machine, the kind and importance of which is unknown. Toward the end of the period (1862) a woolen cloth factory was built by Major Moses Tenney on the site of the 18th century Pierce grist and saw mill off of Pentucket Pond. The company lasted only a few years. Pentucket Pond was also the site of an ice-cutting business, begun around 1853 by Messrs. Little and Tenney, who also were in the shoe business. In 1866 a group of Newburyport capitalists established a peat manufacturing factory on Central Street in Georgetown, near the Boxford line. Despite heavy capital investment (for a 3-story building with steam power), the company failed after only a few months. Another steam powered industry was the carriage manufacture erected by Stephen Osgood's brother on School Street.

The number of people engaged in agricultural pursuits was quite small relative to those in manufacturing, ratio being almost 1 to 3 in 1840. In 1865 there were 103 farms totaling 3090 acres, worked by 216 people. Only slightly better than 50% of all improved average was devoted to agriculture. Moreover, only .02% (105 acres) of all land was unimproved or unimprovable, compared to 906 acres in 1840. The quantities of grains harvested declined dramatically from 1840 to 1865, from 5755 bushels of wheat, rye, barley, oats and indian corn, to a mere 435 bushels, indicating a drastic reduction in the acres under tillage.

E. Architecture

Residential: The overwhelmingly most popular house type during the period was the gable front form, three-bays in width with a side entry. Both 1 & 1/2 and 2 & 1/2 story examples are known, and the former are somewhat more common among the 25 examples in the town. Coinciding with the popularity of the temple-front image many are ornamented in Greek Revival elements, at cornice and door surround; an exceptional example has a full Doric portico. Equally common are those with bracketed cornices and door hoods popularly associated with Italianate design. A related group from later in the period are two-story, three-bay, side entry, mansard roofed houses; a single three story, five-bay, center entry, mansard example is known. Continuing in popularity during the period are 1 & 1/2 story, five-bay, gable roof houses; during this period, however, they are single pile in depth, with rear ells, and extended studd height between window head and doors; this space may be filled with small windows, or in one example round heads of the lower windows.

A small number of larger houses were constructed during the period including gable front, 2 & 1/2 story, five-bay, center entry Greek Revival houses. An equal number of 2 & 1/2 story, gable or hip block, 5 bay, center entry Italianate houses were constructed; one example is elaborated by projected mansard-roofed frontispiece which extends above the cornice line and has coining.

Double houses were constructed during this period in a variety of configurations: one example is 1 & 1/2 stories in height with entries into each of the gable ends; another is 2 & 1/2 stories, six bays, with central paired entries; another is a four-bay, gable front of 2 & 1/2 stories, with entries on each of the long sides in small porch projections.

Institutional: The Congregationalists continued to remodel their meetinghouse, reversing pews and moving the pulpit to the east end in 1832, adding 11' to each side in 1844, and replacing the pulpit in 1843. The Byfield meetinghouse was burned and rebuilt in 1833. Gable front in form, the meetinghouse facade had paired entries and pillasters, a square tower and belfry. The associated Female Benevolent Society built a chapel in 1853, appearance unknown. The Baptist meetinghouse was also moved, in 1837, lengthened by 15' and the orientation reversed from west to east on the interior in 1844. Universalists built a house in 1832, 35' by 45', sold to the town in 1855. The Peabody Memorial Church (1866-1920) was constructed of brick, with a large square tower. After 1832 town meetings were held in a public hall until the town constructed a combination hall and high school; gable front in form the hall had a center entry, square tower, and belfry, with both Greek Revival and Renaissance Revival ornament (1855-1898).

Commerical: The Masonic Block (1867-1886) was of unknown appearance. The town includes a group of structures, currently used as dwellings, gable front, 1 & 1/2 stories, three-bays with center entries which may have originally been commerical or shoe factory buildings.

Industrial: Saw and grist mills, small shoe shops and tanneries continued to dominate the landscape. No known survivals.

Transportation: A railroad depot was built just west of N. Main Street at the village center (c.1850), but no longer survives.

IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870-1915)

A. Transportation Routes

The Haverhill, Georgetown and Danvers Street railway opened to Georgetown in 1896. The line was extended in 1898 to Drummer Academy, (rather than to Danvers) and then joined the Ipswich and Newburyport line.

B. Population

Georgetown's population remains virtually unchanged from beginning to end of this period. From 1870 to 1915 total population declines from 2088 to 2058, a drop of 1.4%. Despite this appearance of stasis, there was considerable fluctuation. From a high of 2299 in 1885, the population drops to 1840 in 1905, then increases to 2058 in 1915. Foreign-born population also changes only slightly during the period. This population increases from 161 in 1875 to (7.3% of total population) 194 (9.4%) in 1915, but like the total population, the foreign-born numbers fluctuate, the largest absolute number (210) occurring in 1885. The major immigrant groups from 1885 to 1905 were Canadian, English and Irish, with Irish accounting for over 50% of the 1885 figure. These groups were joined in 1915 by 42 people from Poland, thus representing 22% of all foreign-born and the largest single immigrant group.

New religious societies were formed during the period. Roman Catholics purchased one of the Congregational churches in 1870 and formed a parish in 1871. Episcopalians held church services in the 1880s, first in Grand Army Hall, then in Library Hall. There was not enough interest among Methodists to establish a church, though an attempt was made in 1870. Salvationists attempted to convert Georgetownians in the 1880s. In the 1870s, Seventh Day Adventists held camp meetings in Lincoln Park. The split among Congregationalists in the previous period was healed in 1908 when the First Congregationalist Church and the Orthodox Memorial Church were reunited as the First Congregational Church.

In 1885 the Georgetown Literary and Social Club was founded by Dr. R.C. House. In 1895, a group of women formed the "Thursday Club". The following year they changed the name to the Georgetown Women's Club, but continued to present "ambitious programs and musicals". In 1910, the Georgetown Improvement Association was organized. Its 162 members were interested in all civic work. The Farmers Mutual Co. organized in the previous period, only survived until 1870. An attempt to form a grange of the Patrons of Husbandry was unsuccessful. Nonetheless, in 1882 the Knights of Labor organized the Good Will Assembly 2229 in 1882 with 13 charter members.

Bell Telephone opened its lines to Georgetown in 1898, with 11 subscribers. The Hook and Ladder Co. was organized in 1872 and the #1 Steamer Co. in 1875.

C. Settlement Pattern

Its population stabilized, its flurry of construction concluded, Georgetown's improvements now assumed a more modest pace. The period's first decade saw the meetinghouse rebuilt not at Elm and Main as before but, appropriately, at the village center on Andover Street. Nearby Peabody Memorial Church on East Main (1870), a library (1909) and Central high school (1904) at the old town house site, and St. Mary's Catholic Church (1907) all were built during the period.

Now a thriving residential and commercial village, Georgetown's business district began to intensify. Little's Block is constructed at North and West Main Street (1871); after the Wooden Masonic Block burned (1874), several brick four and five story business blocks were erected (1875), extending from Main nearly to the corner of Park and Maple. Another fire in 1885 led to the rebuilding of the Main Street Block the following year. Fires continued to plague the town, the Town Hall succumbing to flames in 1898.

Residential construction had taken several directions. At the village center the primary residential focus increased in density as several new roads were opened in the vicinity of the depot (west and north) approaching Pentucket Pond. Building activities also extended outward from the town center - along Andover Street to the southwest, along east and west Main Street, and particularly down Elm, Central and Nelson to the south. As in Rowley, the period also saw residential construction in the extreme outlying sections of town, especially northern Georgetown, (particularly North, Thurlow, Jewett and Warren Streets.)

D. Economic Base

Georgetown experienced both economic prosperity and difficulty during this period. Shoe manufacturing continued to be the mainstay of the economy. The firm of Little and Noyes (later Little and Moulton) was the largest business in town. In 1875 nine shoe factories produced goods worth \$444,920, accounting for 85% of the value of all manufactured goods. By 1895 several shoe factories, the Parker river Mills (located on the site of the unsuccessful Moses Tenney cloth factory), employing 50 people in the production of cassimeres, and two soap factories contributed to the growth the economy. In addition, an extensive commercial center developed, employing 116 people in 1895, exactly twice as many as were engaged in agriculture that year.

Both farming and manufacturing suffered a setback during the depression of the early 1890s. The number employed in agriculture declined from 185 in 1885 to 58 ten years later (a 65% drop), while the number in manufacturing occupation's fell from 549 to

363, a 34% drop. Total product value also fell considerably during the decade, manufacturing by 41% and agricultural output by 46%. Between 1895 and 1905 the value of both manufactured and agricultural goods rebounded, by 15% and 54% respectively; the number employed in agriculture grew to 96 (up 65%) while the number in manufacturing declined still further, to 284 (down 22% from 1895). The total number of manufacturing establishments fell from 31 in 1895 to 13 in 1905 as many of the shoe factories closed up.

E. Architecture

Residential: Gable front forms were constructed in the period; some examples received elaborate treatment associated with the the Queen Ann style including projecting bays and porches; in others ornament was substantially reduced. A single large shingle-style house survives near the town center.

Institutional: The Congregationalists built a new meetinghouse in 1873, gable front in form with clerestory roof, square corner tower with belfry, cross gables in imitation of transepts, triangular headed windows. The Roman Catholics purchased the chapel from the Congregationalists in 1870 for use as St. Mary's church. Five stations followed the formation of engine companies in the 1870's, the center house is a large gable front block with classical detailing. The Peabody Library of 1909 is a brick hipblock with an offset projecting bay, and center entry with classical detailing.

Commercial: Little Block was constructed in 1871 and used its fourth story as a meetinghouse for Odd Fellows. The Masonic Block was replaced with a new commerical structure in 1886; a large rectangular block with a high hip roof, the cornice is ornamented with brackets; the shops each have an entry and large window in the facade; the second story is treated with smaller more residential windows and an unlit portion that suggests a meetinghall in a portion of the floor still retained by the Masons.

Industrial: Several brick shoe factories were built in this period. One known survival is a four-story brick building on Park Street, c. 1900, with a raised basement, flat roof, granite sills, a free-standing chimney and a one-story brick addition where steam or electricity was generated. A one story wooden structure was added around 1950; it is shingled and has a flat roof.

X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915-1940)

A. Transportation Routes

Major changes in the period were three. First, at the period's opening, the town's street railway was dismantled (1919) both in the area below Georgetown Square and in Byfield, only the Georgetown to Haverhill route survived. This latter railway continued until 1930, when the cars were replaced by buses. Second, between 1940 and 1955, interstate 95 was constructed through eastern Georgetown. Third, several roads were opened

during the period (for the purposes of residential expansion). Among them were several south and east of town below Rock Pond (joining Bailey Lane and Andover Street), and two clusters north of the center, both (south and west of Pawtucket Pond).

B. Population

Georgetown's population fluctuated, but remained essentially stable until the latter decade of the period. The town numbered 2058 residents in 1915, and between 1800 and 2000, until 1940. thereafter Georgetown began a period of steady increase in its population. By 1955, it claimed 2821 residents, an increase of 48% during the period. Georgetown's percentage of foreign-born population was relatively small, only 9.4% in 1915 (predominantly Canadians and Irish). By 1940, the figure had fallen to 4.9%.

C. Settlement Pattern

The town experienced little growth until the final 15 years of the period when Interstate 95 arrived (1950-1955) and Georgetown was incorporated within the Boston commuter zone. Accessibility to regional traffic and activities led to marked physical changes within the town. Early Modern low-rise dwellings began to dot Georgetown's rural roads; strip development (from fast-food restaurants to gas stations to small-scale businesses) lined east Main between the old meetinghouse vicinity and the town center. Such development now infiltrates construction at the town center as well. A Mormon Chapel, built in 1954, appears to represent the major institutional construction of the period.

D. Economic Base

Shoe manufacturing continued to dominate the economy even though the number of shoe factories never recovered to its Late Industrial Period height. From 1915-1920 at least five new shoe manufacturers began operations in Georgetown. Three of these, F.W. Baker Shoe Co., the Community Shoe Shop Co., and Thomas M. Cook and Son moved their businesses from Haverhill (Community and Cook) and Salem (Baker) to Georgetown. Both Baker and Cook purchased buildings previously occupied by Shoe business and enlarged and modernized them. The Baker Company alone is said to have done half a million dollars worth of business annually in the 1920s. At least two shoe factories were still in operation at the end of WWII. The Baker Co. operating on Central Street until 1945 and the Marston Co. on Park Street until at least 1963. Marston manufactured ice skates. During the war he leased the space to an out of town firm which manufactured canvas shoes and first aid kits for the "Lend-Lease" program.

Toward the end of the period hundreds of Georgetown residents found work in the electronics industry, either at Western Electric in Lynn or General Electric in North Andover. The other known manufacturing activity was furniture making. Everette Spaulding began making and selling colonial furniture in 1925 and continued in business to the end of the period.

E. Architecture

Residential: The most popular housetypes during the period were the 2 & 1/2 story, pyramidal roofed, four-squares, and the related bungalow; c.10 examples survive of each, and the latter survive in particularly well detailed examples. Historic revival styles are comparatively rare, two Dutch Colonials, and a large gable block, 2 & 1/2 story example with facade gable, and front porches.

Lakeside cottages were constructed for seasonal use, and similarly small cottages survive in other areas of the town; typically these are two stories in height, gable roofed, with three-bay, center entry facades, and single-pile main blocks.

Institutional: The Byfield Meetinghouse was rebuilt (1931) after being struck by lightning; the small brick structure is gable front in form with a square center entry tower with belfry, slate roof, round headed side windows.

Commercial: The Georgetown Light Company is a small modern building of concrete, a single story with flat roof and center entry. The coal company office is a small rectangle covered in carrera glass.

Industrial: Modernization and enlargement of Late-Industrial shoe factories took place. No known survivals, other than the Park Street building, which was a disassembled in Haverhill and added on to the Marston Factory in 1936.

XI. SURVEY OBSERVATIONS

The Georgetown inventory of about 30 buildings focuses almost exclusively on the town's eighteenth century houses, excluding not only later domestic architecture, but most of the institutional and economic structures.

Extremely vulnerable because of its easy accessibility to Interstate 95, Georgetown has already forfeited much of the integrity of its nineteenth century village center to commercial and tourist-oriented development. Zoning laws, if in existence, appear ineffective and more damage to the town's historic fabric, imminent.

XII. FINDING AID:

First Church, Congregational	Andover and School Streets
Baptist Church	North Main Street
Byfield Parish Church	Jackman Street
Commerical Block	South Main Street
Town Office	Andover and Central Street
Perley School	North Main Street
brick school	West Main Street
Common and encircling	Elm & Main Streets
18th & 19th century structures	
streetscape, (c. 1830-1840)	Main Street between Andover & Main

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