

# MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

## HOLDEN

Report Date: 1984

Associated Regional Report: Central Massachusetts

**Reconnaissance Survey Town Reports**, produced for MHC's Statewide Reconnaissance Survey between 1979 and 1987, introduce the historical development of each of the Commonwealth's municipalities. Each report begins with an historic overview, a description of topography, and political boundaries. For the purposes of the survey, the historic period has been subdivided into seven periods: Contact (1500–1620), Plantation (1620–1675), Colonial (1675–1775), Federal (1775–1830), Early Industrial (1830–1870), Late Industrial (1870–1915), and Early Modern (1915–1940/55). Each report concludes with survey observations that evaluate the town's existing historic properties inventory and highlight significant historic buildings, settlement patterns, and present threats to these resources. A bibliography lists key secondary resources.

Town reports are designed for use together with a series of town maps that demarcate settlement patterns, transportation corridors and industrial sites for each historic period. These maps are in the form of color-coded, polyester overlays to the USGS topographic base map for each town on file and available for consultation at MHC. For further information on the organization and preparation of town reports, readers should contact MHC.

Users should keep in mind that these reports are now two decades or more old. The information they contain, including assessments of existing knowledge, planning recommendations, understanding of local development, and bibliographic references all date to the time they were written. In some cases, information on certain topics was not completed. No attempt has been made to update this information.

Electronic text was not available for digital capture, and as a result most of the reports have been scanned as PDF files. While all have been processed with optical character recognition, there will inevitably be some character recognition errors.

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: 1984

COMMUNITY: Holden

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## I. TOPOGRAPHY

The town of Holden is situated in the east-central portion of the Worcester County uplands region. Elevations rise from about 500 feet above sea level along the Quinapoxet River valley in the east to 1,400 feet above sea level in the west, with most hills in the north and south portions of the town above 900 feet above sea level. Rough, rocky ground and stony outcrops are found, mostly in the western and southern portions of the town.

Holden's streams empty into drainage basins. Those in the southwest corner drain into Tatnuck Brook, which flows south into Worcester and eventually joins Middle Brook and the Blackstone River. The rest of the town's streams flow into the Quinapoxet River, a tributary of the Nashua River, which winds in an easterly direction through the northern portion of the town. From the village of Quinapoxet, the river falls 381 feet before it crosses the West Boylston border. Its major tributaries in Holden include Chaffin's Brook, Trout Brook, and Asnebumskit Brook. These streams provided many waterpower sites within the town's limits.

The soils of Holden are composed largely of Gloucester series loams on the hillsides and terraces, some Paxton and Charlton loams on the drumlins, and Hinkley loams on the outwash plains of the streams and river valley. The Gloucester soils range from fine sandy loam on some of the terraces to stony loams on hillsides. These soils, where cultivable, are well suited to cultivation of grains, pastures, and mowing. The Paxton and Charlton loams are among the richest agricultural soils in the county, though they occur only in small patches in Holden. Hinkley soils are less well suited to agriculture, though can yield some fruit and light garden crops.

## II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Included in original 1668 Quinsigamond Plantation grant, and in territory established as town of Worcester in 1684. Made a town from part of Worcester called "North Worcester" in 1741. Boundary with Paxton established 1793. Parts annexed to Paxton in 1804 and 1838. Part included in new town of West Boylston in 1808. Part of Paxton annexed, 1831.

## III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Suburban, upland community on upper Quinapoxet River corridor, with first European settlement at lime quarry in southeast ca. 1723, and meetinghouse site established by 1737. Federal period growth of central village stimulated by improvement of east-west

highway as turnpike after 1800. Available water power of Nashua River and many tributary streams allows widespread 19th century development of small-scale textile manufacturing. Railroad connections come relatively late (1872, 1886). Construction of Wachusett Reservoir (1905) to the east leads to removal of most industrial settlement by Metropolitan Water Board as part of watershed protection.

Post-1920s residential development as main northern suburb of Worcester continues to present. Many examples of vernacular and high-style Colonial and Federal period architecture survive, and functioning agricultural landscapes persist in the north. Although altered and under continued pressure because of their location on the Route 122A corridor, the center village and Jefferson/Eagleville industrial village retain many of their significant 19th century components.

#### IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500-1620)

##### A. Transportation Routes

Upper Quinapoxet River corridor, with upland tributaries of the Worcester basin. Main trail probably northwest branch of route north of Lake Quinsigamond (Shrewsbury Street-Main Street-High Street-Main Street). Branches conjectured south to Worcester (Salisbury Street) and west to Paxton (Avery Street-South Road-Paxton Road). Conjectured trail to northern highlands: Princeton Street, Elmwood Avenue, Mason Road.

##### B. Settlement Pattern

No sites of this cultural period are known within the town. Unknown period sites are reported, however, for predictable areas, adjacent to Chaffin Pond, Eagle Lake, Quinapoxet Reservoir, and Holden Reservoir. To these might be added the remaining drainage areas of the Asnebumskit Brook and Quinapoxet River. Primarily, sites should be small and short-term, although some agriculture may have meant longer stays.

##### C. Subsistence Pattern

Both the uplands and waterways provided resources for seasonal visitation for hunting and fishing by small family or task groups.

#### V. PLANTATION PERIOD (1620-1675)

##### A. Transportation Routes

Contact period routes continue in use.

##### B. Settlement Pattern

A continuation of the patterns established during the Contact period, but reduced by an increased colonial presence and the formation of praying towns to the south. The area may have been

included in the small grants made in the vicinity of Lake Quinsigamond during the 1650s and 1660s. In 1668 it was included in the large eight-mile square deed from two Nipmucks to the future proprietors of the town of Worcester. No colonial settlement took place at this time within the Holden portion of the grant.

### C. Subsistence Pattern

A continuation of the pattern established during the Contact period by the native population. May have been included in the outlying field areas of the first settlement of the town of Worcester.

## VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

### A. Transportation Routes

Native trails are improved as roads and highways. The main east-west route is the straightened road through the meetinghouse center (Doyle Street-Shrewsbury Street-Main Street-High Street-Main Street). Salisbury Street leads from the center to Worcester. A north-south route is established from Worcester to Princeton (Holden Street-Chapel Street-Wachusett Street). Local roads lead from the meetinghouse to outlying farms.

### B. Population

Seventeen men petitioned for church formation in 1736. About 15 years later the number of families equalled 55, growing to ca. 65 ten years later. In 1765 there were 75 families with a total of 495 individuals. By 1776 the total had grown substantially to 749. Church members ca. 1760 equalled 75 men and women who were admitted without a relation of conversion, and with the option to simply own the covenant. In 1745 distemper took 45 town citizens, and four years later another unnamed sickness swept the town.

### C. Settlement Pattern

During the second settlement of the town of Worcester, this area was divided into 200 lots of 10-25 acres. After the third and permanent settlement to the south, the owners of these lots organized North Worcester in 1722. The area was resurveyed, and land owners in the south received 60 acres in the first division and 100 in the second division, for each unit of 40 acres owned there. These lots were to be laid "square or long square" (Estes 1894:12). The first settlement was prompted by the discovery of limestone in 1736 and town status was achieved in 1741. The meetinghouse was located on Main-Shrewsbury Street near the town center. Later, an acre 10 rods (1758) and 120 rods (1759) were added for a burying ground nearby.

### D. Economic Base

Settlement was prompted by the discovery of a lime deposit in the southeast, an important raw material for the building trades.

Shortly thereafter, in 1726, a sawmill was built on the Quinapoxet River at Chaffinville. Primary economic activity was agriculture.

### E. Architecture

Residential: Oldest documented house is 1722 one-story, three-bay, center chimney plan (see NR form for Rogers House). Recorded examples of center, double, and end chimney plans include three brick end chimney houses dated to the third quarter of the 18th century. One is a single-pile plan dated 1772; the other two are double-pile plans dating from ca. 1763 (?) to 1772. If these dates are correct, these structures are the earliest examples of the Georgian plan coupled with the use of brick as a construction material to be found thus far in the study unit.

Institutional: first meetinghouse constructed in 1742. First schoolhouse built ca. 1754.

Commercial: The Abbott Tavern (1763) is a much altered two-story, center chimney plan with an asymmetrical facade. The building has also been moved from its original site.

## VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

### A. Transportation Routes

Colonial roads continue in use, with the main east-west highway through the meetinghouse center improved as part of the Sixth Massachusetts Turnpike (chartered 1799) on Doyle Street-Main Street-High Street-Main Street. The other main routes remain the north-south road from Princeton to Worcester (Wachusett Street-Chapel Street-Holden Street), and the connector from Holden Center to Worcester (Salisbury Street).

### B. Population

The overall figures for the period show rapid growth, more than doubling from 749 in 1776 to 1,719 in 1830. A small dip in the figures between 1800 and 1810 when the total fell by 70 can be accounted for by the annexation of a strip five miles wide for the formation of the new town of West Boylston.

The town was the residence of several Tories and their property was confiscated. About ten families from Harwich came in search of employment when maritime occupations suffered as the result of the war.

Within the Congregational church there were several periods of revival, particularly in 1809-10 when 90 new members came to the church. As a result of this awakened enthusiasm, the society gave up the use of the Half-Way Covenant, and in their new emphasis on trinity and sin illustrated the emergence of evangelical Congregationalism. There had been some Baptists in the town as early as 1784, and a separate society was formed in 1807.

The town contained select schools in the 1820s and 1830s, and formed a school committee in 1825. Other examples of popular gentile voluntary associations include the formation of the Thief Detecting Society in 1818, and the Knights Templar in 1824. Although attempts were made to establish a house for the poor, they were still "auctioned" at a public vendue in 1797.

### C. Settlement Pattern

Dispersed agricultural settlement continues to dominate. The meetinghouse center remains the institutional focus, with construction of the Second Meetinghouse (1789, remodelled 1827-28). Center village linear residential development intensifies along Main Street after the 1790s, primarily east of the meetinghouse, with a number of high-style structures. Textile manufacturing complexes are initiated on the Quinapoxet River corridor at Unionville in 1809, and at North Woods in 1827. On Asnebumskit Brook, textile manufacturing is started at Drydenville (later Jefferson) in 1825.

### D. Economic Base

As Holden entered the 19th century, most of its population of 1,100 were employed in agriculture or related trades. Tanneries were located in Jeffersonville and in the southern portion of the town, and seven saw and grist mills operated on the town's streams. Cattle and sheep raising predominated; by the 1790s the number of sheep on Holden's farms exceeded 1,200. As a result, much of the town's improved acreage was in mowing or permanent pasturage.

The processing of home-manufactured woolen cloth was handled by a clothier and fulling mill through the 18th and early 19th centuries. During the first and second decades of the 19th century custom carding mills using machine cards appeared. At Eagleville a machine card factory was built in the 1820s. In 1809 the first spinning mill in town was erected in Unionville. A second mill followed in 1817 at Chaffinville. Until the introduction of power loom weaving of cloth in 1822, Holden's mills produced only yarn which was sold or put out on contract to area hand loom weavers. By 1832, nine mills located in Holden Center, Chaffinville, Eagleville, Unionville, Quinapoxet, Ruralville (North Woods), Jeffersonville, and Lovellville were manufacturing candle wicking, cotton batting, coarse sheeting, shirting, yarn, and woolen satinets worth more than \$100,000 and employed more than 120 men, women, and children. Several machine shops produced cotton and textile machinery for the town's expanding textile industry.

During the 1820s, boot and shoe making were begun; by 1832 two shops produced 3,000 pairs of boots. A wagon and blacksmith shop employed five in the manufacture of 35 wagons and 240 plows in 1832. Home employment was provided to some of Holden's women in the manufacture of palm-leaf and straw hats. In 1832, 25 women produced 10,000 hats worth \$2,700.

## E. Architecture

Residential: The predominant form, based on survivals, seems to be the one-story, center chimney plan which was built throughout the period. Center and double chimney two-story houses were also popular, with some brick examples. Two, two-story, five-bay, double-pile end chimney dwellings (Georgian plan), were recorded with one being of brick. One brick rear wall chimney plan was observed in the Center.

Institutional: Second meetinghouse built in 1789. Moved, extensively remodeled, and belfry added in 1827-28. Baptist church erected in 1819, a two-story, six-bay, double chimney, double entry structure.

Commercial: 1812 Maynard Hotel in Jefferson burned in 1939 and was rebuilt as Eagleville Hotel.

## VIII. EARLY INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1830-1870)

### A. Transportation Routes

The early 19th century road system continues in use. Construction is begun on the north-south Boston, Barre, and Gardner Railroad.

### B. Population

The population of the town fluctuated during this period, growing during the first half from 1,719 in 1830 to 2,114 in 1855. Thereafter, the figure dropped to 1,846 in 1865, and grew quickly to 2,062 in the next five years. This early expansion is reflected in the expansion of agriculture employment, more than tripling to an all-time high in 1840 of 572. Smaller numbers within the town were employed in manufacturing, 102 the same year. During this period, immigration into the town was not large, so that the foreign-born segment of the population equalled 17.3% in 1855, and dropped to 13.2% in 1865. As in most towns at this time, the Irish dominated, followed by British Americans and smaller numbers of Englishmen.

Several Protestant denominations met briefly in the town, including Universalists in the late 1830s, and Adventist groups in the 1840s and late 1850s. Methodist Episcopal worship was held in Rutland. Roman Catholic masses were held from 1850 in a church built in the center attended from Worcester.

In 1830, the town purchased a poor farm, but it seldom had more than 20 inmates.

### C. Settlement Pattern

Growth in the center village continues, and the number of small, dispersed, manufacturing centers continues to grow. The Center remains the institutional focus, with the addition of the Baptist Church (1835), town hall (1837), and Catholic Church (1868) on

Main Street. Residential development extends west on Main and north on Highland Street. New textile manufacturing complexes develop in the 1830s at Eagleville (Brick City), Lovellville, and Quinapoxet, and at Chaffinville later in the period.

#### D. Economic Base

Textile manufacturing remained the leading industry through the period. Three cotton and four woolen mills employed 138 men and women in 1865 in the production of 1.2 million yards of cotton and woolen cloth worth \$358,000, nearly 85% of the value of all manufactured goods in Holden. Samuel Damon was a leading figure in the town's early textile industry; by the 1840s he built or owned four of the mills in Holden.

Boot and shoe making continued in the town until the Civil War; the loss of Southern markets for the cheap boots and shoes intended for slave wear ended the industry in Holden. At its peak in the 1840s, more than 80 persons were employed in the production of nearly 50,000 pairs of boots and shoes worth more than \$50,000. By 1855, only bottoming of boots and shoes for manufacturers in other towns was carried on, valued at \$16,500. Two local tanneries provided leather to the shoemakers and to the card manufacturers in neighboring Leicester. By 1865, 1,000 hides were tanned and curried annually.

Lumbering and woodworking became important activities by the 1840s. In 1845, more than 60 men cut and processed 2.5 million feet of boards and over 9,000 cords of firewood, much of it probably for the Boston and Albany Railroad, which passed south of Holden. Large quantities of wood were also burned for charcoal; in 1845, 31,400 bushels of charcoal were sold. The same year, four woodworking shops employed seven men in the manufacture of railroad cars and other vehicles worth \$8,000. Although the quantity of lumber and firewood cut decreased after this date, they remained important. Wood products ranked behind only textile manufacturing and agriculture in importance.

Holden's agriculture during this period was based largely on the raising of cattle, hay, grains, and potatoes. Major products through the period included cheese and butter, hay, corn, oats, potatoes, and meat. More than 60,000 lbs. of beef, pork, and veal were sold in 1865. Despite an increase in the value of agricultural goods produced between 1845 and 1865, the acreage cultivated and quantity of goods produced decreased markedly during this period, particularly among the grains and potatoes. Hay production fell by one third between 1845 and 1865, while butter and cheese production fell by 75%. Only whole milk sales increased; in 1865, 22,000 gallons were sold, as milk was diverted from butter and cheese production for sale to the manufacturing villages in Holden, to Worcester, and to Boston. By 1865, 320 persons were employed in agriculture on Holden's 145 farms. This was approximately the same number employed in manufacturing that year.



## E. Architecture

**Residential:** The three-bay, gable end, side-passage plan appears to have been the most popular domestic building type of the period. Both one- and two-story houses survive, all built of wood. Scattered examples of single and double chimney houses continue to be built throughout the century. Most of the side-passage dwellings exhibit either Greek Revival or Italianate trim. One Second Empire side-passage plan was recorded. A ca. 1882 two-story, asymmetrical Victorian Gothic house was also noted.

**Institutional:** Second Baptist Church, a typical gable end structure with a two-staged tower and spire, was erected in the Center in 1835. A Roman Catholic church was erected in the Center in 1869 and subsequently enlarged twice. The town hall, built in 1836 by Martin Harrington, was a 60 x 38-foot gable end structure with a three-bay, center entry facade and a Doric portico.

A two-story, gable end grammar school was built in 1854 and became the high school from 1880-1888. Springdale School, now a Colonial Revival style dwelling, was erected in 1835 at Manning and North Streets.

**Industrial:** A gable end boot factory built in 1840, subsequently converted into use in the late 19th century as a store, survives.

## IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870-1915)

### A. Transportation Routes

Service opens out of Worcester in 1872 on the north-south Boston, Barre and Gardner through Holden Center, Jefferson, and Eagleville. In 1886, after long delays, the east-west Massachusetts Central Railroad is finally opened across the northern half of town, along the Quinapoxet River corridor, and just north of Jefferson. In 1903, the Worcester-Holden electric street railway begins service. The line extends north from Worcester parallel to the Boston, Barre, and Gardner rail corridor on Holden Street to Chaffinville, then follows a new right-of-way to Main Street, which it uses through the Center to Eagleville, where it turns north on Princeton Road to Jefferson terminus.

### B. Population

Population figures fluctuated during this period with overall growth from 2,062 in 1870 to 2,514 in 1915. In the intervening years, the high figure of 2,640 was reached in 1905, while the period low was experienced just five years later. Through the greater part of the period, the proportion of foreign-born within the population grew from 20.7% in 1870 to 29.7% in 1905. The Canadian immigrants, particularly those from the French provinces, outnumbered all other groups, while the Irish, next in importance, decreased in numbers. Increasing in numbers and influence were the Swedish immigrants who outnumbered all groups by the end of the period. Both agriculture and manufacturing employment

remained remarkably stable during this period, consistently employing ca. 200 men in the former, and ca. 325 men and ca. 160 women in the latter.

As Catholic workers clustered in Jefferson, the church was relocated there in a new building from 1891. The parish also served a mission to Rutland, and summertime masses in Princeton. The Protestants in that village were served at the Union Chapel from 1884. The increasing numbers of Swedes met together for services from 1887, formed the Swedish Christian Workers Society in 1892, and the Scandinavian Congregational Society in 1903 to replace it.

Holden's small population and tax base led it to join with neighboring small communities to maintain certain services. In 1889, a number of the region's small rural communities, including Holden and its neighbors to the west and north, formed a Poor Farm Association. By 1908, this group merged with towns to the south to form the Charlton Poor Farm Association in 1908. At this time the number of permanent poor was small but large numbers of tramps came through the area. The town built its first jail in 1892.

On a smaller scale but of equal, if not greater, importance to the town's daily maintenance, Holden joined Leicester under a single school superintendent in 1890. Ten years later, Holden, Oakham, Paxton and Rutland shared a Union Superintendent. The town maintained a high school from 1880.

### C. Settlement Pattern

The Center Village remained the institutional focus, although some activities shifted to the industrial complex area at Jefferson/Eagleville. By period's end, a number of industrial sites on the Quinapoxet were removed in conjunction with the construction of Wachusett Reservoir, and streetcar suburban growth began in the Chaffinville area from Worcester.

In the Center, the town hall was remodelled in 1876 and the stone Damon Memorial Library/High School was added in 1888. However, the growing population of Jefferson/Eagleville attracted an Advent Chapel (1884) and the new St. Mary's Catholic Church (1891). Growth in this area included not only worker housing, but a possible row of railroad commuter suburbs, and a number of resort hotels.

Industrial activity continued in the Quinapoxet Valley, with the Unionville mill rebuilt after a 1884 fire and stone mills built at Springdale in 1875, but the North Woods mill burned, and the Canada Mills were removed by the Metropolitan Water Board in 1899, as were the Springdale Mills in 1905.

By 1895, the suburban Swedish population was large enough to open a Swedish Congregational Chapel at Chaffinville.

#### D. Economic Base

Following the Civil War, Holden experienced steady growth in population and in the value of goods produced by its manufacturing establishments, aided by the opening of the Boston, Barre, and Gardner Railroad in 1871. Both population and manufacturing peaked at the turn of the century before much of Holden's industry was lost to fire or the sites were taken by the Metropolitan Water Board to protect the water supply of the Wachusett Reservoir.

Holden's textile industry prospered immediately following the Civil War, as production shifted to better quality and more expensive goods. In 1865, a new mill was erected on the Quinapoxet River near West Boylston, increasing the town's manufacturing capability considerably. By 1875, two cotton mills and five woolen mills employed 327 men and women in the production of \$563,000 worth of goods (95% of the town's manufacturing production). The largest textile firm was located in Jefferson. By 1892, the Jefferson Mfg. Co. employed 275 and consisted of two mills, six storehouses, a company store and office, and 46 tenements in Jefferson. The company also owned the mill in Eagleville which employed 70. Jefferson remained the largest village in the town until the early 1900s, when increased residential development in the Center after the completion of the Worcester and Holden Street Railway in 1903 raised its population over that of Jefferson. During the 1890s and early 1900s, the textile industry lost ground as a result of fires, dull trade, a flood, and the conversion of several mills to shoddy production. In 1882, the Unionville mill burned; in 1890 the Chaffinville mill burned, was rebuilt, and was acquired by Worcester Polytechnic Institute and operated as the Alden Research Hydraulic Laboratory. A flood in 1896 damaged the North Woods Woolen Co., Cyrus Wood Woolen Mill, Eagle Lake Woolen Co., and the Jefferson Mfg. Co. mills. The construction of the Wachusett Reservoir in West Boylston between 1900 and 1905 required the removal of several mills. In 1899, the Metropolitan Water Board took the Canada Mill and in 1905 the Springdale Mill was removed.

The creation of several reservoirs in Holden for the city of Worcester between 1883 and 1901 also eliminated several industries. The formation of Holden Reservoir #2 in 1901 forced the removal of a shoddy mill and blanket factory. Eventually, Worcester controlled 3,332 acres of land in Holden as reservoir and protected watershed land. These losses in the textile industry resulted in a drop in manufacturing employment from 613 in 1895 to 392 in 1915. Few other industries were developed during this period. W. G. Warren and Sons erected a large brick tannery north of the Center in 1874 and produced card leather. The firm continued until 1917 when it burned. Box manufacturing was begun in the 1880s and continued through the 1890s. An ice industry was established in 1873; by 1892 a number of ice houses supplied ice from Holden's ponds to the Worcester and Brighton markets.

Agricultural production and land use during the period largely followed the trends set by the 1870s: dairying increased until it was the major product, totalling 280,000 gallons in 1905 and 31% of the \$180,000 value of agricultural goods; land devoted to permanent pasture and hay increased until about 1900; and more land was devoted to orchards and vegetables. After 1900, more than 3,500 acres of farmland were lost to the Metropolitan Water Board and the city of Worcester as protected watershed land.

### E. Architecture

Residential: Gable end houses, both two and three bays wide, remained popular throughout the period. These structures tend to display Queen Anne and Revival style textures and trim on a modest scale. A Tudor Revival style house of 1908 is recorded. A few Arts and Crafts influenced houses survive along with some Colonial Revival examples.

Institutional: The 1789 meetinghouse was raised to two stories in 1874. Stephen C. Earle designed St. Mary's Roman Catholic church, a gable end structure with a corner tower and belfry, built in 1891. The Chaffin Congregational Church, a one-story, gable end building, was constructed in 1894. The Swedish Union church on Shrewsbury Road dates from 1894.

Three schools were erected during the period: the one-story, frame school building at Route 122 and Doyle Street east of Chaffinville; the 1892, two-story, six-room building at Jefferson designed by Baker and Nourse; the Quinapoxet School, a frame Arts and Crafts influenced structure; and the 1910 Chaffin School, a one-story, frame Colonial Revival structure.

The Gale Fenn Library (1887), originally the high school and library, is a rock-faced ashlar, Romanesque building with a hipped roof, designed by Stephen C. Earle.

## X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915-1940)

### A. Transportation Routes

Local roads are improved as automobile highways by the 1920s, with the main entry route the northwest road from Worcester through Holden Center and Jefferson to Rutland (Route 122 A on Holden Street and Main Street). The branch north from Holden Center to Princeton Center (Wachusett Street--later part of Route 31) also becomes an important route. In the 1930s, Broad Street, branching north from Main Street to North Rutland, is improved as Route 68, and the road from Paxton Center to Holden is upgraded as part of Route 31.

### B. Population

After the fluctuation that characterized population size in the Late Industrial period, figures during this period reflect steady growth. In 1915, the town contained 2,514, but 25 years later

3,924. The proportion of foreign-born within the town began to decline during the decade prior to 1915, falling from 29.7% in 1905 to 22.6% in 1915, and further to 14.6% in 1940. In that year, 11.3% of the population was classified as rural. In 1927 the poor farm association was renamed Public Welfare. Immanuel Lutheran was formed in 1928.

### C. Settlement Pattern

The loss of industrial sites continues, with all of the Quinapoxet River settlements removed by the Metropolitan District Commission in creating the Wachusett Reservoir watershed. Suburban pressures from Worcester intensify, leading to residential growth in the Center and in the southeast/Chaffinville area. A district hospital and high school are built in the Center in the 1920s. Residential expansion in the Center extends north on Highland Street to Wachusett Street, and for two blocks east and west near the Center. Linear development extends east on Main beyond Malden Street, and on a number of side streets south of Main. Suburban development out of Worcester extends along the Holden Street/Chapel Street axis in these and on Shrewsbury Road, Parker Avenue, Doyle Road, and Brattle Street. Residential development also occurs further west, on the Salisbury Street/Baily Road axis. Chaffinville becomes a secondary institutional center, with a school, Immanuel Lutheran Church (1928), and State Police Barracks (1930).

### D. Economic Base

World War I infused a slight revival in manufacturing as several mills produced uniforms and blankets for the U. S. and Italian governments. However, the losses in the manufacturing sector continued. Fires destroyed the Lovellville mills and village in 1916, the Warren Tannery in 1917, and the Bryant Planing Mill in 1918. The MDC demolished the Dawsonville mill in 1926 and the Quinapoxet Mill in 1929. The Jefferson Mfg. Co. consolidated its operations at Eagleville, closing one of the mills in Jefferson in 1923.

The Depression further hurt the town's economy. In 1932, wages in the town were cut 15% and 89 families (520 people) received assistance. Efforts by the Economic Recovery Administration employed a number of people in the construction of sidewalks, woodcutting, and painting the town hall. In 1934, the 350 employees of the Jefferson Mfg. Co. unionized and affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. Labor/management conflict over the next five years led the stockholders of the company to liquidate the firm. In 1940 the property, machinery, and tenements were sold at auction, closing the last large manufacturing plant in Holden.

The Depression's effect on agriculture was to increase the number of part-time market gardeners. By the early 1930s, nearly 600 people were employed in agriculture. Of these, nearly 90% were

part-time farmers, composed of industrial laborers, among them many Swedes and Poles.

#### E. Architecture

Residential: Bungaloid and Four Square houses are the most popular house form.

Institutional: Immanuel Lutheran (1948): stone, brick, and "half-timber" Gothic church. New high school (1925) designed by Brainerd and Leeds, Boston, is a two-story, modest brick Georgian Revival building. Holden Hospital (1922): a two-story brick Colonial Revival structure.

Commercial: Rivers diner (1927); WTAG Art Deco radio station (1940s?).

Industrial: 1920s brick mill building at Jefferson. Also, brick square arch there as well.

#### XI. SURVEY OBSERVATIONS

A comprehensive survey exists for Holden which adequately covers surviving types.