

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

UXBRIDGE

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.



MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth

Chair, Massachusetts Historical Commission

220 Morrissey Blvd.

Boston, MA 02125

www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

mhc@sec.state.ma.us / 617-727-8470

MHC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY REPORT

DATE: 1984

COMMUNITY: Uxbridge

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Uxbridge lies in the southeastern portion of the county, its southern boundary formed by the state of Rhode Island. Its major feature is the Blackstone River and its valley, with two major tributaries, the Mumford and West rivers, joining the Blackstone less than one mile apart in the central portion of the town. Several large brooks, among them Ironstone, Emerson, Rivulet, Drabble Tail, Rock Meadow, and Meadow Brook, also drain into the Blackstone and its tributaries. These rivers and streams provided many water power sites which were extensively utilized by the town's manufacturers during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Blackstone and its tributaries form a valley ranging from 1 to 3.5 miles wide, the widest point being between Uxbridge Center and North Uxbridge, where the three rivers flow one mile apart. The valley floor is composed of rich, agriculturally-significant soils of the Merrimac, Ondawa, and Hinkley series. These bottom lands and adjacent terrace deposits were laid down by shallow, rapidly-flowing water, outwash from the retreating glacier. The Blackstone Valley was an important drainage route for the meltwaters from the glacier during its retreat approximately 10,000 years ago. Several terraces rise from the valley floor as higher, earlier deposits were eroded by the rapidly moving waters and lower terraces were deposited. These lower terraces and the bottom lands are largely sandy loams with varying degrees of gravel. They are well suited to mowing, pasture, cultivated crops, and market gardens.

The hills that rise to more than 500 feet above sea level to the west and east of the valley are composed of Gloucester series soils, ranging from fine sandy loam to stony loam. Consisting largely of glacial till, some of these hills and upper terraces were mined extensively for sand and gravel in the early and mid 20th century. Several granite outcrops provided valuable quarries for building stone through the 19th and early 20th centuries.

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Established as a town, 1727, from part of Mendon (1667). Part included in new town of Upton, 1735. Certain lands granted 1736, annexed 1742. Part of district of New Sherborn (Douglas) annexed 1746. Bounds with Mendon established, 1754. Bounds with Sutton established, 1769. Part annexed to Mendon, 1770. Part established as district of Northbridge, 1772. Bounds with Northbridge established and parts of each town annexed to the other, 1856. Bounds with Douglas established, 1864. Bounds with Northbridge established, 1908.

III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

An industrial/residential/agricultural community on the Blackstone River corridor, with Christian Indian settlement at the Mumford/Blackstone/West River confluence, and other native sites likely, as at Chockalog Pond. Early 18th century settlement, probably first in eastern upland meadows and central valley lowlands. Meetinghouse site established west of Mumford River, 1728. Early 18th century Quaker settlement from Rhode Island in south, with surviving 1770 meetinghouse. Prosperous dispersed 18th and 19th century agricultural occupance. Widespread early 19th century textile manufacturing, further stimulated by town's location on Blackstone Canal/Providence-Worcester Railroad corridor. Development of many small industrial villages, most notably the 1820s Rogerson Village complex on the Mumford River. Growth of Uxbridge Center as institutional/commercial focus in the 19th century. Textile industry remains active to present, with several partially intact 19th century mill complexes, and a number of intact worker housing clusters. Some deterioration of Uxbridge Center commercial district. Many 18th and 19th century vernacular and high style farmhouses remain, with most notable agricultural landscapes in the Castle Hill area.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500-1620)

A. Transportation Routes

Blackstone River corridor, with tributary trails into eastern and western highlands. Conjectured north-south route east of river: Upton Road, West River Street, Blackstone Street, Albee Street. North-south route west of river: Rivulet Street, Main Street, Ironstone Road, Quaker Street. Northeast route to Nipmuck Pond (Mendon): Hollis Street, Henry Street. Possible east-west trail Henry Street, Mendon Street, Hazel Street, Hartford Avenue. Branch to Mumford Falls inferred on Lackey Dam Road. Alternate east-west route possibly Williams Street, Sutton Street. Alternate upland north-south route: West Street, Forest Street past Chockalog Pond.

B. Settlement Pattern

The Nipmuck village known as Waentuck was located within the present bounds of Uxbridge, probably to the east of the town center near the confluence of the Blackstone and Mumford rivers. Surrounding areas exploited from this base camp where settlement was more long-term, more dense, and more populous. These other areas utilized seasonally by smaller groups, so smaller sites expected. Several of this latter type located during survey work on terraces and knolls near water sources throughout the Route 146 corridor. A burial, unknown specific location, but generally from the southwest portion of the town, dates from this or the Plantation period.

Other areas of expected sites include the shores of Lackey Pond, those north of Cedar Swamp, and to the east, south of the Blackstone. It is not clear how proximity to the Narragansett "borders" may have affected density and use.

C. Subsistence Pattern

Village here served as focus for seasonal rounds of hunting and gathering in the surrounding area, and as residential base. Location near the confluence suggests predominance of fishing at this location. Smaller groups left this camp, either as nuclear families or as task groups, for exploitation of resources based on seasonal availability, hunting in the fall, corn planting in spring and summer, or to utilize specific areas, such as quarries, on a regular basis.

D. Observations

Recent survey work in this and nearby inland areas reveals a density of sites far greater than predicted in the literature. The identification and differentiation of small upland sites begins the process of outlining the local system, in opposition to the better known coastal and riverine systems.

V. PLANTATION PERIOD (1620-1675)

A. Transportation Routes

Contact period trails remain in use. Possible opening up of Highland Street route in Meadow Brook/Wigwam Brook area, with European settlement from Mendon.

B. Settlement Pattern

Uxbridge was the western portion of the 1659 eight-mile grant of Mendon. No known permanent colonial settlement at this time. By the end of the period, the native population had been visited, some converted to Christianity and gathered in the praying town of Waentuck. It did not survive King Philip's War.

C. Subsistence Pattern

Continued use by native population with a larger base camp located east of the town center. Exploitation of surrounding resources on a seasonal basis, particularly the anadromous fish runs in the Blackstone. Colonial use restricted to outlying fields, pasturage and meadowlands from residences in Mendon to the east.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

A. Transportation Routes

Improvement and use of native trail system by European settlers. Development of radial routes from valley corridor into western highlands, with focus toward Upton Center after 1727.

B. Population

At gathering of church in 1730, 9 signed the covenant. No figures available until 1764 when population is 1,213, about 1/3 of whom were in Northbridge. Reduced by division, so population of 1,110 in 1776. First settled minister 1731 remained until 1772, and was member of the New Light Mendon Association. Quakers initially not exempted from taxation; members of Smithfield, Rhode Island Monthly Meeting. Settled primarily from Mendon. Teaching by 1732, first schoolhouse six years later.

C. Settlement Pattern

Resettlement of Mendon lands by 1680. Specific concentrations not known. Sufficient by 1716 to engender discussion of independence in Mendon town meetings, incorporated in 1727. Meetinghouse located in north on Mumford River, but was near geographic center before Northbridge split off. Area nearby provides location for municipal functions. Quaker meetinghouse located in the south section of town in 1770, on same primary thoroughfare, with adjacent cemetery. Met in private homes and Northbridge house (1766) prior to its construction.

D. Economic Base

Primarily agricultural but Blackstone and Mumford rivers provide excellent source of water power. Expect early saw and grist mill locations, but no data available. By 1763, discussion of a workhouse system for poor relief. No information for 1771 evaluation.

E. Architecture

Residential: A significant number of period dwellings survive in Uxbridge. The traditional center chimney plan is by far the predominant house form. At least eight single-story and four two-story examples are recorded. Of note is a one-story, double-pile, brick dwelling with end chimneys. The Cornet John Farnum house, a one-story, five-bay, center chimney, gambrel roofed dwelling built between 1710 and 1727, is the earliest recorded house.

VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

A. Transportation Routes

Colonial roadways continue in use. Ninth Massachusetts Turnpike, incorporated 1800, provides improved direct east-west route (Hartford Avenue) from Boston to Hartford. Douglas, Sutton, and Oxford Turnpike incorporated 1808. Runs from Rhode Island line to Oxford through southwest corner of Uxbridge. Blackstone Canal opens service, 1828-29.

B. Population

Steady growth throughout period from 1,110 in 1776 to 2,086 in 1830. Very early establishment of subscription library in 1775 by

George Southwick as Uxbridge Social and Instructive Library, followed by Social Library Society in 1828. Grammar school established 1788. In 1783, Uxbridge-Mendon shared Monthly Meeting status, providing the focus for area Quakers. In 1819, the town approved construction on the common of a brick building to house an academy and a hall for the Masonic Lodge.

C. Settlement Pattern

Continued prosperous, dispersed agricultural settlement. Some residential/commercial/institutional concentration at the meeting-house center. Widely dispersed, small-scale industrial development on the Blackstone, Mumford, and West rivers; and a major industrial complex at Rogerson's Village. In the Center, high income residences are located near the meetinghouse, as is the Academy/Mason's Hall (1819). Textile mill development at Capron Mills (ca. 1821), east of the Center on Mumford River. Early 19th century textile manufacturing development east of the Blackstone River at Wheelockville (ca. 1810), on the West River near Mendon Street; Hecla Village (later Centerville) ca. 1825, on Hecla Road; and Squaw Hollow (later Elmdale). Textile mill at Rivulet, west of Main Street on Mumford River. All these settlements with small mills and some worker housing. Reputed largest of these small Federal period industrial settlements is at Ironstone in the south-east, with 1814 textile mill near an earlier foundry location, and worker housing. The most significant development of the period, however, is the construction of the textile manufacturing complex at Rogerson's Village (1820s) where the Blackstone River intersects the Hartford Turnpike. The complex includes the massive, granite Crown and Eagle Mills (1823, 1827), a large-scale water power system, and a cluster of brick worker duplexes.

D. Economic Base

Prior to the introduction of textile manufacturing in 1819, the economy of Uxbridge was primarily agricultural. Mixed husbandry, which included the cultivation of grains and potatoes, apple orchards, dairying, and cattle-raising occupied most of the town's residents. Uxbridge's resources resulted in an average agricultural community: 12.6% of the acreage stood unimprovable, 3% under tillage, 13.3% in mowing and meadow, 10.9% in pasturage. A high percentage, 60.2%, remained unimproved or wooded. Hay yields were high from the rich bottom lands in the river valleys and on the gently sloping hillsides. Small scale milling and manufacturing existed along several streams. In 1795, four grist mills, three sawmills, a fulling mill, gin distillery, and two triphammer shops were operating. Good quality bog-iron ore had been mined in Uxbridge since the 1730s, particularly in the Ironstone area, which took its name from the supplies of ore in the drainage area of the brook. An iron forge and triphammer were erected in Ironstone in the 1730s, and remained on the site until the early 1800s, producing agricultural and edged tools.

Uxbridge's agricultural, manufactured, and forest products made their way to Providence, Rhode Island markets in exchange for manufactured European goods by the time of the Revolution.

Providence merchants such as John Brown had established stores or supplied shopkeepers in the Blackstone Valley with imported goods in exchange for local goods. Because of the Blackstone River, the network of roads and turnpikes radiating from Providence, and later the Blackstone Canal, Uxbridge was drawn into the Providence economic sphere.

Brickmaking occurred at various times during the 18th and 19th centuries. A brickyard was located in Ironstone during the late 18th century and several brick buildings in this area date from the 1770s and from the early 19th century. The earliest brick textile mill was the 1828 mill of the Uxbridge Woolen mill, built to replace the burned 1825 frame mill.

The first textile mills in Uxbridge was erected in 1810. On the site of the present Scott Mill in Elmdale, Daniel Day of Uxbridge erected a small wool carding and spinning mill. This was the second woolen mill erected in the Blackstone Valley, and only the third mill on the Blackstone River in Massachusetts. A small cotton mill was also established in 1819 in North Uxbridge on the site of the later Crown and Eagle Mills, erected in 1823 and 1827 by Roger Rogerson, a Boston merchant. A second woolen mill and a cotton mill followed in 1814 at Rivulet and Ironstone. The construction of the Capron Mill in 1820 on the Mumford River in the town center introduced power loom weaving of woolen cloth on 12 satinet looms, the first ever constructed, and made by a Cumberland, Rhode Island machine shop. With the exception of Rogerson's cotton mill, which began to weave cloth on power looms in 1816, the early mills produced only yarn until this time which was sold or put out on contract to hand weavers. In 1825, two more woolen mills were erected on the sites of the Waucantuck and Hecla mills (the latter is now gone), and were equipped with power looms for satinets and cassimeres from the start. Power looms were installed in the spinning mills before the end of the decade. By 1830, Uxbridge contained eight cotton and woolen mills, one fulling mill, a shuttle manufactory, pail manufactory, two triphammers, three gristmills, and six sawmills. Textile machinery was manufactured during the 1820s in several shops, but eventually closed because they could not compete with the larger Worcester machine shops. Tanning and currying and boot and shoe making were carried on, but remained minor industries. The 1832 manufacturing report listed 20 men and women involved in leather working and shoemaking valued at only \$23,000. The textile industry, however, employed 123 men and 291 women by 1832 in the production of \$351,000 worth of cotton and woolen goods.

Uxbridge's commercial and manufacturing importance was greatly enhanced by the completion of the Blackstone Canal in 1828. The canal facilitated transportation of agricultural goods, raw materials, and finished goods to and from all points between Worcester and Providence, and improved and regulated the water level in the river, a great help to manufacturers. Sylvanus Holbrook, a Northbridge mill owner, claimed the effect of the canal on the river was such as to allow him to do twice as much business in his mill. Uxbridge was also the halfway point between Worcester and Providence and was an overnight stopping place for canal boats.

A bank was established in Uxbridge in 1825 at the height of the pre-canal prosperity. The Blackstone Bank, capitalized at \$600,000, was the only bank of discount and circulation in this part of the Blackstone Valley.

E. Architecture

Residential: Over 60 Federal period houses are inventoried in Uxbridge. The center chimney plan continues to be the most popular, judging from the number of remaining examples. Both one- and two-story dwellings of this type survive. Twenty-one one-story and 16 two-story structures are recorded. The two-story, double chimney plan occurs for the first time in the Federal period with 16 examples noted. Many double-chimney, double-pile, brick houses survive; brick examples occur more frequently around the town center. Several end chimney plans, of both frame and brick construction, survive.

VIII. EARLY INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1830-1870)

A. Transportation Routes

The early 19th century road system continues in use. The Providence and Worcester Railroad opens service in the Blackstone Valley corridor in 1847. Blackstone Canal ends operations in 1848. Boston and New York Railroad opens service through Ironstone to Norwich-Worcester line in Mechanicsville (Connecticut) in 1854.

B. Population

Population growth continues to be steady from 2,086 in 1830 to 3,058 forty years later. At least a portion of the growth can be attributed to expansion in the manufacturing sector: in 1820 accounting for ca. 20% of employment, for 33% ten years later, 38% in 1840. By 1875 it predominated with ca. 68%. With industrialization came an influx of Irish immigrants, the overwhelming number within the foreign population of 23.5% in 1855, 21.6% in 1865.

By 1832, the Unitarian segment of the population had overtaken the Orthodox, forcing the latter, consisting primarily of church members, to withdraw and unite with the newly formed Evangelical Congregational Church. The latter group endorsed temperance in 1828, anti-slavery in 1855 and experienced a revival in 1831. A Baptist society was formed in North Uxbridge in 1842. Catholic masses began in 1853 when the town became the center of a parish including the neighboring towns of Grafton, Millbury, Northbridge, and Douglas.

A high school was established in 1855, the school districts eliminated in 1869.

C. Settlement Pattern

Continued development of Uxbridge Center west of the Mumford River as the town's institutional/commercial focus. Development east of

the river is industrial/residential. Expansion and/or post-fire rebuilding takes place at secondary manufacturing villages, and some additional, small-scale industrial development occurs.

The institutional focus at Uxbridge Center persists, with construction of the Evangelical Congregational (1833), and Unitarian (1835) churches on opposite sides of Main Street, and subsequent construction of St. Mary's Catholic Church further north on Main Street. The commercial focus shifts south of Douglas Street toward the depot. High income residential development seems to extend north on Main Street. Residential development also extends south on Main and west on High Street. East of the river, the Capron Mills are enlarged in the 1830s. Initial development of a residential area occurs on Capron and Oak Streets north of Mendon Street during the period. Further east, the Central Mills begin operation on the former Blackstone Canal in the 1850s, with duplex worker housing on Mendon Street.

In North Uxbridge (Rivulet Village, Rogerson's Village) there is little change, with continued linear concentration along the Hartford Turnpike, and some intensified clustering at its intersection with the Main Street/railroad corridor. Some worker housing is probably added at Rivulet and Rogerson village mills. Within residential estate is built east of Crown and Eagle complex.

Mid 19th century expansion of worker residences also takes place at Wheelockville (linear infill along Mendon Street west of mill) and Centerville (linear extension north on Hecla Street). Ironstone mill is rebuilt in 1832, and some construction may have occurred after the rail station is established in 1854. Of other dispersed industrial activity, the most notable is the small Emerson Brook textile mill.

D. Economic Base

The textile industry maintained its primacy in the economy of Uxbridge through the period despite much financial distress brought on by the Panic of 1837. Pre-Civil War production peaked during the 1850s when more than 560 men and women produced nearly 2.5 million yards of cotton and woolen cloth worth more than \$760,000. During the entire pre-war period, the products of the textile industry accounted for at least 80% of the value of goods manufactured in Uxbridge. By 1865, as a result of the war-time government contracts for uniform cloth, woolen cloth production exceeded 1.1 million yards worth more than \$1.4 million, while cotton production fell off by nearly 2/3 from the pre-war level. Together, the two cotton mills, two shoddy mills, and six woolen mills employed 329 men and 232 women, and the value of textile goods comprised more than 95% of total manufactured goods..

Boot and shoe making was the second most valuable industry during the pre-Civil War era. Employment and production rose steadily from 12 men and 2 women in 1832 to 82 men and 16 women in 1855, when 29,600 pairs of boots worth \$75,700 were manufactured in the town's shops. The industry declined by 1860 to 23 employees and \$27,000 worth of boots, declining further to one shop and one shoe-

maker by 1870. A tannery and currying shop in Ironstone supplied leather to the boot shops, to the textile mills (belting), and to a saddle, harness, and trunk manufacturer established during the 1840s and continuing into the 1860s.

Wood and metalworking were minor industries through the period. Several cabinet makers, a shuttle maker, and manufacturers of coaches, chaises, and railroad cars operated between the 1830s and the 1860s, but all employed less than 5 men per shop and production remained low. Lumbering provided winter employment to as many as 80 men. In 1855, 5,737 cords of firewood and 762,000 feet of boards were cut from Uxbridge forests. A tinsmith, shoemakers' tool manufacturer, card factory, screw shop, and gunsmith, along with several blacksmith shops, also operated on a small scale at various times prior to and after the Civil War.

Brickmaking resumed during the 1840s and continued only through the 1860s. Two stone quarries established by Benjamin and Joseph Blanchard in 1865 provided building material locally and to Providence and Boston. The Linwood Mill in North Uxbridge was built of stone from the Blanchard quarries and stone from the quarries was used to rebuild Boston after the Great Fire.

The decade of the 1850s was one of great growth in the economy of Uxbridge as the output from textile manufacturing more than doubled in value and from shoemaking more than tripled. The first steam engine in Uxbridge was installed in the Waucantuck Mill as an auxiliary power source during this decade (1854); water power remained the major source of power for most mills for at least another decade. The completion of the Providence and Worcester Railroad and its replacement of the financially and legally troubled Blackstone Canal in 1848 was an important factor in this growth, speeding transportation, extending market reach, and further lessening costs. The canal, despite the many legal struggles with manufacturers over water rights, limitations on operation due to freezing and low water, and almost no financial return on the initial investments, was an important impetus to the town and region during the late 1820s and 1830s. Between 1830 and 1835, nearly 17,000 tons of raw materials, manufactured goods, and agricultural products were carried to and from Uxbridge on the Canal.

After the sale and liquidation of the Blackstone Canal Corporation, a section of the canal was put to use by Moses Taft, an Uxbridge native and second-generation mill owner, who purchased the water rights and erected a mill along the Blackstone River east of the Center. With a slight diversion into the mill, the Canal became a headrace for Taft's Central Woolen Mill, erected in 1853.

Investments in the textile mills came largely from Uxbridge natives, several of whom (Taft, Wheelock) were second-generation mill owners. The Whitin Brothers of Northbridge owned and operated the Crown and Eagle Mills after 1851 and the Linwood Mill after 1873, and Richard Sayles and William Davis of Providence headed several groups of investors from Rhode Island. The mills changed

hands frequently as fires, generational succession, and financial reversals occurred frequently.

Agriculture in Uxbridge experienced a steady increase in the value of its products despite a contraction in cultivated acres and decreases in the quantities of cheese and butter produced and grains and potatoes grown. However, cattle-raising and sales of whole milk increased, and with it the amount of beef, pork and veal sold and acreage devoted to hay and permanent pasture. In 1865, more than 225,000 lbs. of beef, 98,000 lbs. of pork, and 18,000 lbs. of veal were slaughtered and sold. Hay acreage increased 700 acres in a decade, and milk sales nearly tripled between 1855 and 1865 to 23,600 gallons.

E. Architecture

Residential: Most development after ca. 1840 centered in the villages. The predominant style of the period appears to have been the Greek Revival. Several one-story, five-bay, center chimney houses and one brick three-bay center chimney house are recorded. In addition, the double chimney plan continues to occur. However, the popular gable end configuration occurs with the greatest frequency throughout the town. Primarily one- and two-story side-passage plans prevail although somewhat more sophisticated temple front dwellings survive as well. A few double chimney plans are recorded with Italianate features while most of the later period houses are side-passage plans with Italianate and some Victorian Gothic and Queen Anne trim. Also noted are two Gothic Revival-influenced houses: a ca. 1860 one-and-a-half-story T-plan with bargeboard and brackets and a one-story side-passage plan with Gothic trim. Several side-passage Second Empire dwellings characterized by mansard roofs survive. Two other buildings of note are constructed in the Victorian Gothic mode. One is a ca. 1880 two-story, three-bay dwelling with a projecting center pavillion that rises to a tower, gabled dormers, and a two-story bay which also extends above the roofline forming a tower. The other is the asymmetrical Capron House, a two-story, three-bay dwelling with double chimneys and a mansard roof trimmed with bargeboard. Paired windows, decorated dormers, a tall bay window, and a one-story porch joining the one-story bay windows which flank the center entry add sophistication to the structure.

IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870-1915)

A. Transportation Routes

The 19th century road and rail network continues in use. By 1900, the town is served by the regional street railway service. From the Linwood junction (Northbridge), the streetcar line continues south on Main Street to Uxbridge Center, then west to Wheelockville. Here the line splits, with one branch continuing east on Mendon Street to Mendon/Milford; the other passes south on Hecla Street through Centerville, along a new right-of-way in the valley, and then on the Providence and Worcester roadbed into Millville.

B. Population

Population growth continued steadily during the period, expanding from 3,058 in 1870 to 4,921 in 1915. Immigration remained important and accounted for about 25% of the population during the period. By 1895, French Canadians overtook the Irish in this migration, followed still by the English, Swedes and Turks. Toward the end of the period, migrants included Poles and Italians in significant numbers.

In 1875, a Methodist Episcopal society was formed and built its church in the Center. Later, with the increase in the Catholic population, a second church, Good Shepherd, was built in North Uxbridge, primarily for the French Canadians. Voluntary associations were formed to accommodate all segments of the population: United Workmen, Hibernians, Odd Fellows, Masons, Knights of Columbus, the Grange, as well as patriotic associations. The library became free and public in 1874.

Manufacturing remained the primary employment, accounting for about 50% of male employment in 1875 and reaching a high of 63% in 1905. Trade employment expanded, while farming stabilized during this period at ca. 200.

C. Settlement Pattern

Continued institutional/commercial/residential growth in Uxbridge Center, significant residential/institutional development in North Uxbridge, and minor development in the secondary manufacturing villages. In Uxbridge Center, the Library (1893) is added to the established institutional complex, but a second institutional focus is started near the depot with the town hall (1879) and Methodist Episcopal Church (1880). Brick commercial blocks are built along Main Street, after several fires in the 1890s. Residential construction extends north on Main Street and west on Douglas Street past Seagrove Street. East of the river, further expansion of the Capron Mills occurs, and the Capron/Oak Street area develops residentially, with some high income estates.

In North Uxbridge, the Rivulet Mill is rebuilt after a fire in 1871, and housing developed along Rivulet Factory Road. Worker housing extends south from Linwood (Northbridge) along Railroad Avenue to Maple Street. Institutional development, with North Uxbridge Baptist Church (Main Street/Hartford Avenue, 1880) and Church of Good Shepherd (Catholic - Railroad Avenue, 1907).

Residential development continues to expand north in Centerville, especially on the west side of Hecla Street. Elmdale mill is rebuilt and worker tenements constructed after 1879 fire. Ironstone mill rebuilt after 1876 fire, but area soon declines.

D. Economic Base

Although the prosperity of the Civil War years, when several textile mills ran 24 hours a day to fill government contracts, was not sustained through the 1870s and 1880s, the town remained an

important manufacturing center. Major reasons for this continuity were the constant improvements in the physical plant and machinery of the mills and the continued residency and civic involvement of several of the mill-owning families.

The town matured during the post-Civil War years, as several institutions were formed and civic improvements carried out. A second bank, the Uxbridge Savings Bank, was formed in 1870. In 1872 the first and only newspaper in town began publication, and the District Court for Uxbridge, Blackstone, Northbridge and Douglas was established and sat in Uxbridge half the time. A Farmers' Club for Mendon and Uxbridge was organized in 1878, and in 1883 became the Blackstone Valley Agricultural Society after the Worcester South-east Agricultural Society folded. The Uxbridge Water Company was formed in 1881 and a reservoir built and pipes laid under the streets.

A considerable contraction in the town's manufacturing and agricultural production occurred during the late 1870s and early 1880s despite increased employment figures. The value of textile goods produced dropped from \$1.6 million in 1865 to \$627,000 in 1885. The town lost 20 business establishments between 1875 and 1885. The value of agricultural goods fell from more than \$210,000 in 1875 to less than \$194,000 in 1885. However, during the late 1870s and early 1880s a number of improvements in the textile industry stimulated the local economy. A group of Boston and Uxbridge investors, including the Wheelocks, formed the Calumet Woolen Co. in 1883 and purchased the Central and Hecla mills. Expenditures on improvements to the mills, machinery, and tenements totalled more than \$250,000 and were a great impetus to the improvement of the town. The population of the town increased by 500 between 1880 and 1888. Other improvements were made at the Capron Mills in 1880, at a mill on Emerson Brook, where shoddy factories were established, and at the Scott Mill in Elmdale, which burned in 1879 and was immediately rebuilt.

The decade following 1893 was one of near depression and extremely dull trade in the textile industry. A number of mills operated part-time or closed for months at a time and several mills experienced strikes and other labor/management conflicts. The Calumet Woolen Co. was dissolved and the mills sold at auction in 1905. The Calumet Mill was purchased by Arthur Wheelock and incorporated as Stanley Woolen Mill, which continues to produce fancy woolens (1983). Hecla Mill was purchased by the American Woolen Co.

The greatest improvement in the economy of Uxbridge since the Civil War occurred during the First World War, when contracts from the governments of the U. S., France, and Italy raised production to more than 3 million yards of khaki and overcoat cloth for the armies of these countries. This prosperity stimulated much growth and improvement in the mills and machinery which continued through the 1920s.

Agricultural production during this period became increasingly focused on dairying. By 1905, 465,000 gallons of milk were sold

and the products of the dairy accounted for 34% of the \$306,000 total value of agricultural goods. While grain cultivation continued to decrease, market gardening increased; by 1905 vegetables made up 7% of total production and trailed only the dairy and hay in value. Woodland had increased to nearly 9,000 acres by 1905, almost twice the area of 1865, as permanent pasture and hay field acreage decreased by more than one half during the same period. Active farm acreage fell by more than 5,000 acres between 1895 and 1905, as the number of dairy farms fell from 59 to 25 and mixed husbandry farms fell from 134 to 127. Nevertheless, improved dairy herds and practices led to a gain of nearly \$90,000 in the total value of agricultural goods between 1895 and 1905.

E. Architecture

Residential: Little growth occurred outside the village centers during the Late Industrial period. In the town center, residential development occurred along Mendon and North and South Main Streets as well as in the village of North Uxbridge and Wheelockville.

X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915-1940)

A. Transportation Routes

The street railway system is abandoned in the 1920s, as local roads are improved as automobile highways. Route 122 (Main Street) becomes the main north-south route. Route 146 (Ironstone Road) is improved as an alternate route south of Uxbridge Center by the 1930s, with a new, straightened roadway south of the Friends meetinghouse. Route 16 is improved as the main east-west highway (Douglas Street-Mendon Street), while Hartford Avenue continues as a secondary east-west route.

B. Population

Population growth increases through the period, expanding from 4,921 in 1915 to 6,397 in 1935, then experiences a sharp decline to 5,417 in 1940. The foreign-born portion of the population decreases to 19.4% by 1940. The Depression hit the community hard, leaving 217 males seeking work and 105 on emergency work projects in 1940. Agricultural employment shrank the most to only 61 males.

C. Settlement Pattern

Residential growth continues in Uxbridge and North Uxbridge, with no notable development in the secondary centers. In Uxbridge Center, residential extension continues north on Main Street toward North Uxbridge, and west on Douglas and Hazel Streets, with infilling between Main, Douglas, and Hazel Streets. East of the river, Capron Mill expansion continues, as does residential infilling north of Mendon Street. In addition, St. Mary's Church relocates from its Main Street location to a new church on Mendon Street, east of the river, in 1926.

In North Uxbridge, housing development continues from Linwood southeast along Railroad Avenue and on side streets to the north-

east. Residential development also takes place on the south side of Hartford Avenue between the railroad and the Crown and Eagle Mills. Linear residential development also extends south on Main Street toward Uxbridge Center.

D. Economic Base

The prosperity and growth brought on by World War I continued virtually uninterrupted through the 1920s. By 1922 more than 1,200 men and women were employed in manufacturing and produced more than \$6.4 million worth of goods. The Waucantuck mill expanded to six times its original size by 1928, and employed 500 operatives in three shifts, continuing 24-hour operation for more than ten years. The Capron and Rivulet Mills were purchased by the Uxbridge Worsted Co. and in 1923 were part of a large corporation headquartered in Uxbridge with mills also in Lowell, Millbury, and Woonsocket. At the Stanley Woolen Mill, several large additions were built which doubled the capacity in 1923 and again in 1928. With the exception of the Hecla Mill, the textile firms of Uxbridge survived the Depression of the 1930s, although the growth and prosperity was temporarily halted, to be revived again by a wartime economy.

Agriculture in Uxbridge continued in the trends of the early decades of the century. Dairying remained the leading activity on most farms, but fruit orchards and poultry houses became much more common. As construction of roads and urban growth occurred in the area, the sandy hills of Uxbridge became increasingly valuable. Many gravel and sand pits were opened during the period and continue to the present to supply sand for highway construction.

E. Architecture

Residential: Some Colonial Revival buildings erected and limited examples of Dutch Colonial and Bungalow types observed.

XI. OBSERVATIONS

The Uxbridge inventory is more than adequate, covering all types of buildings and treating vernacular, popular and high style domestic architecture (see also Uxbridge multiple resource form).

Six gable end entry 19th century barns are recorded, one being a well preserved, elaborate, late example with decorative period trim and a cupola.