

# MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

## WHATLEY

Report Date: 1982

Associated Regional Report: Connecticut Valley

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

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

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

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

The activity that is the subject of the MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior. This program receives Federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability or age in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility as described above, or if you desire further information please write to: Office of Equal Opportunity, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20240.



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## MHC RECONNASISANCE SURVEY REPORT

DATE: December 1982

COMMUNITY: Whately

### I. TOPOGRAPHY

Whately is located on the western banks of the Connecticut River. The eastern portion of the town consists of prehistoric lake bottom and river floodplain. Originally, these lowlands and the lower portions of Whately's western uplands were covered by glacial Lake Hitchcock. This lake inundated the Connecticut River Valley from central Connecticut to southern Vermont where it met Lake Upham. Since then, the Connecticut River has cut into the easternmost section of the lake bottom and deposited fertile alluvial soils. These lowlands also contain extensive deposits of clay.

Not surprisingly, 16 potteries were established in Whately between ca.1788 and 1861. A complex of moderate uplands extend west from Whately's eastern lowlands and dominate the remainder of the town. These uplands are part of the eastern foothills of the Green Mountains. Elevations increase from 200 feet to 300 feet on the eastern periphery of the uplands to between 800 and 1,000 feet near the Whately/Williamsburg line. The highest point is an unnamed peak (1,065 feet) situated in southwestern Whately. Additional prominent elevations include two other unnamed peaks (1,061 feet, 1,049 feet) flanking the previously mentioned hill, Chestnut Mountain (770 feet) southeast of West Whately, Mount Esther (980 feet) located in northwestern Whately and Stone Mountain northeast of Chestnut Mountain. Whately Glen is the site of a spectacular set of waterfalls. The western portion of town is drained by West Brook which flows from northwestern Whately southeast into the Mill River in northern Hatfield. Despite its size, West Brook has been utilized as a power source for 18 mills. Eastern Whately is drained by the Mill River which originates in Conway. It flows south through Whately and eventually drains into the Connecticut River in southern Hatfield. Local freshwater bodies are limited to the Northampton Reservoir and several small ponds.

### II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Originally part of the Hatfield grant with Hadley (1658), extending along Mill River to Great Swamp along the Connecticut River meadows. There was attempted settlement at Bashan (Hopewell) in 1682, abandoned in 1688. Western boundary established in 1695 with Hatfield Addition (Williamsburg) and northern boundary with Deerfield Addition in 1712, defined with Conway in 1767. North Hatfield precinct created in 1761 and incorporated as Whately in 1771 with southern boundary at Hatfield line (Hampshire County). Northern boundary with Deerfield adjusted in 1810 and Whately included within Franklin County in 1811.

### III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Rural agricultural town on primary north-south corridor from Deerfield to Northampton. Located along the west bank of the Connecticut River extending to the western uplands, with reported native area at Whately Glen and Great Swamp Island, and suspected sites along Straits Road river terrace. Settled from Hatfield after King Philip's War with attempted plantation at Bashan (Hope-well) abandoned with late 17th century native attacks. Formal town established before the Revolution at Whately Center with some well preserved mid-18th century houses along Chestnut Plain Road to Whately Glen. Expansion of agricultural settlement along the Connecticut River lowlands at East Whately during the early 19th century with limited farming along West Brook valley in the western hills, including some period cottages along Conway Road. Civic center remained at Whately common through the Federal period with several brick houses along Chestnut Plain street village to Whately Glen.

The introduction of commercial tobacco and regional railroad connections during the mid 19th century expanded settlement along Depot Road to East Whately with some period Greek Revival houses. Limited development of West Whately Center during mid 19th century with sawmills and Victorian chapel. Tobacco maintained through the early 20th century at East Whately with Mission style school and auto highway activity along the Route 5 corridor with period bungalows. At present, development evident along Interstate 91 to Deerfield while Whately Center retains historic fabric. Uncertain future of tobacco farming threatens the stability of the East Whately landscape with historic period barns, while West Whately remains isolated with local recreational activity.

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

#### A. Transportation Routes:

Important corridor of regional routes along the Connecticut River Valley with secondary connections to the western uplands. Primary north-south trail from Pocumtuck (Deerfield) to Capawonk (Hatfield) and Nonotuck (Northfield) documented as Straits Road along the river terrace (Temple 1972:48,120; Cane 1971:102). Alternate north-south route along the edge of uplands and Mill River reported as former Mother George Road, apparently to Great Swamp and Indian Hill (Temple 1872:49; Cane 1971:101-102). Connecting trails through western hills appear to have followed West Brook with branch to Beaver Brook (Williamsburg) and upper Deerfield River (Conway) from West Whately (Cane 1971:101). Other possible connections are conjectured from Whately Glen over Indian Hill from Great Swamp.

#### B. Settlement Patterns:

There were no reported native Contact period sites. However, the presence of good agricultural land and extensive water sources suggests there was substantial native period settlement. Native encampments most likely focused on Whately's eastern lowlands, particularly in the vicinity of the Connecticut and Mill rivers, the gentle hills

overlooking the latter river, Whately Glen and the West Brook River Valley. "Indian Hill" (northeast of the Glen) was reputedly the site of a Pocumtuck village in the 17th century.

C. Subsistence Patterns:

The fertile Connecticut River floodplain would have provided native period occupants with excellent horticultural land. Additional agricultural land was present in the lowest portion of the West Brook Valley, particularly its lower portion. The Connecticut River and the falls at Whately Glen were rich sources of fish. Whately has traditionally been a valuable native hunting area. Native hunting probably focused in the West Brook Valley, and the western portion of local lowlands, especially in the vicinity of the Great Swamp.

D. Observations:

The Whately area probably contained a sizeable native village situated on the town's gentle uplands (vicinity of Chestnut Plain Road). This area appears to have fallen on the periphery of the Norwottucks, historically centered in Northampton and Hadley and the Pocumtucks, who congregated in Deerfield. Whately's closer proximity to Deerfield suggests the area fell under the direct control of the Pocumtucks. This designation runs contrary to that of several local/regional histories which place Whately under the control of the Norwottucks. Regionally, the various native occupants of the Middle Connecticut River Valley fell under the control of these same Pocumtucks rather than the Nipmucs as claimed by some secondary sources. Whately has a high likelihood for extant period sites. The eastern lowlands, the easternmost uplands, Whately Glen and the West Brook Valley should be considered particularly archaeologically sensitive.

V. PLANTATION PERIOD (1620-1675)

A. Transportation Routes:

Primary north-south path from Deerfield to Hatfield and Northampton improved as Straits Road along the Connecticut River meadows (East Whately).

B. Population:

Whately probably continued to have a substantial native population during this period. The town lacked a colonial population.

C. Settlement Patterns:

Native settlement patterns probably were similar to those suggested for the Contact period. "Indian Hill" (immediately north of Whately Glen) is reputed by some sources to be the site of a native period stronghold.

The only colonial occupation that took place consisted of temporary camps established by Hatfield residents hunting, farming or overseeing livestock grazing in the area.

D. Economic Base:

Native subsistence patterns were basically similar to those described for the preceding period. Hunting and trapping of fur-bearing animals likely increased with the establishment of an English market for native furs by the late 1630s. Native trade contacts most likely focused on the colonial settlements of Hatfield, Northampton and Springfield.

E. Observations:

Whately remained relatively free of colonial development, largely because of the area's exposure to native attack and the availability of high quality land further south in the more heavily settled portion of the Connecticut River Valley. Detailed documentary research and archaeological examination of Indian Hill should be undertaken to determine if this site was native-occupied.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

A. Transportation Routes:

Survey of North Hatfield division (1701) established north-south highway along the upland front as Chestnut Plain Road (1716) with east-west connector to Straits highway as Christian Lane-Depot Road (Crane 1971:100-101). Location of Whately meetinghouse (1773) on Chestnut Plain Road created radial connectors to western uplands including Spruce Hill Road, Mount Esther Road and Grass Road from West Whately. Other period highways included extension of River Road from Hatfield along Connecticut levee and Egypt Road from Claverack (Westbrook).

B. Population:

The outbreak of Anglo-Indian conflict in the Valley in 1675 signalled the end of this area's occupation by a substantial native population. However, small native bands continued to occupy Whately seasonally until the late 1690s. In ca.1695, this band of Albany area natives consisted of 12 men, 9 women and 23 children.

Whately's colonial population consisted of approximately 48 families and 320 individuals in 1771. This latter figure had grown to 410 individuals by 1776. Most of the settlement's period residents were former Hatfield inhabitants. Others moved from Ashfield, Watertown, Bridgewater and the vicinity of Colchester, Connecticut.

C. Settlement Patterns:

The above-mentioned natives (reputedly Norwottuck refugees) travelled annually from the Albany area to Whately while they established seasonal hunting camps. One site reputedly was located on the eastern periphery of the glacial floodplain slightly south of the Long Plain and Straits Roads intersection. Secondary sources also indicate Whately was on several occasions occupied by hostile native forces during King Philip's War (Temple 1871:27,29).

There are conflicting claims concerning initial colonial settlement. One source states colonial settlement took place in the 1680s in the vicinity of Hopewell (general area adjacent to the junction of Long Plain and Straits Roads). The settlement was short-lived, with abandonment occurring in the late 1680s with the resumption of Anglo-Indian fighting. However, it appears that the first colonial homes were not established until the mid 1730s. Several settlers built homes on the eastern lowlands in the general vicinity of the southern portion of Long Plain Road and north of "the Zebira Bartlett place." These homes were abandoned with the outbreak of Anglo-Indian conflict in ca.1748 for the safety of Hatfield. Resettlement took place in the early 1750s. By the mid 1750s, a small settlement node had developed in the vicinity of Deacon Joel Dickinson's pallisaded residential complex, situated immediately south of the Chestnut Plain /Haydenville Roads intersection. Additional homes were erected further north on Chestnut Plain Road between Esther and Roaring brooks. By the end of the period, the settlement node had shifted slightly north to Whately Center. The town's first meetinghouse (ca.1773) was erected at the junction of Chestnut Plain and Depot Roads. By the early 1760s, settlement had also begun to expand south, west, and southwest of the Whately Center node. Homes were constructed on the southern portion of Chestnut Plain Road, in the vicinity of Spruce Hill, Chestnut Mountain and the village of West Whately.

#### D. Economic Base:

The Albany area natives occupying the town's eastern lowlands sustained themselves by hunting in local woodlands and trading and/or begging in the colonial settlement.

Prior to colonial settlement, Whately was utilized by Hatfield residents for crop and grazing land. The early 1680s witnessed the division of Whately into lots intended for grazing and crop production. The colonial settlement of Whately focused primarily on stock raising, particularly cattle and sheep. By 1771, Whately residents owned 375 sheep. Primary crops were wheat, corn and flax. Small quantities of tobacco were being cultivated by the early 1770s. The first industrial operation appears to pre-date colonial settlement. In ca.1709 Jeremiah Wait reputedly established a fulling mill on West Brook, probably slightly west of the village of West Whately. Subsequent period industrial development did not take place until the 1760s. Adonijah Taylor established a grist mill on Roaring Brook in the general vicinity of Whately Glen in ca.1763. Shortly after (ca.1765 or 1766) he built a sawmill not far from this site. Reuben Belding began operation of a grist and sawmill complex on the lower portion of West Brook near the Whately/Hatfield line prior to 1770. A tannery was established in ca.1763 by Paul Belding, probably on the western side of Mount Esther. Daniel Morton ran the only documented period tavern (ca.1759) in his home on Chestnut Plain Road immediately north of Whately Center. In ca.1768, Deacon Simeon Waite and his son established a store near "the straits" on Christian Lane.

#### E. Architecture:

No remaining structures evident.

#### F. Observations:

Whately emerged from the French and Indian Wars of the 18th century relatively unscathed. However, the fighting slowed the community's economic and residential development. As a result, Whately remained closely tied to Hatfield throughout this period. Future research should clarify the initial settlement date and location of the colonial settlement. Additional research should be devoted to determining the origins of the Albany natives who occupied Whately in the late 17th century. Why did they travel such great distances to hunt and trade when similar resources were available in the Hudson and Mohawk River valleys? Were they displaced local natives who maintained their traditional subsistence patterns? The town has excellent potential for archaeological evidence of period settlement, particularly in the vicinity of Chestnut Plain Road and Long Plain Road. Structural remains present on the western banks of West Brook in West Whately may be the remains of the reputed ca.1709 fulling mill.

### VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

#### A. Transportation Routes:

Primary north-south highway from Deerfield to Whately Center remained as Chestnut Hill Road with east-west connector to Straits (East Whately) as Depot Road-Christian Lane.

#### B. Population:

Between 1776 and 1790, Whately's population grew from 410, one of the smallest in the county, to 736, producing a growth rate of 79.5%, seventh highest among the sixteen towns with recorded populations in 1776. After 1790, this growth slowed, and Whately reached its 19th-century peak population of 1,111 in 1830.

#### C. Settlement Patterns:

The civic focus was maintained at Whately Center (Chestnut Street) with a secondary village in the Connecticut River meadows at East Whately. Agriculture remained as the primary activity on the fertile lowlands with limited farming along the West Brook valley (West Whately).

#### D. Economic Base:

Whately was predominantly an agricultural town, whose extensive meadowlands provided substantial crops of rye and other grains. By 1789, Whately boasted of some of the first rye gin distilleries in the state (Crafts, p.253, says it was "the first"). Tobacco had been raised in Whately and other towns throughout much of the 18th century, but it was not grown for market much before 1800. At that time, Joshua Belden, Levi Morton, and Perez Wells, who were the largest growers, began sending out tobacco by peddler for sale in the hill towns. The introduction of plug or pressed tobacco from Virginia, however, put an end to tobacco growing until the 1840s. The Belden Brothers and others turned then to the raising of broom

corn, begun in Whately about 1805 after the earlier successes of Levi Dickinson in Hadley. The business of making brooms, however, did not assume much importance before 1827 when Francis Belden devised machinery to produce brooms in neater shapes at less cost. By 1832, 100,000 brooms valued at \$12,500 were Whately's largest industry in terms of product value, and the industry was second in the county to Deerfield.

Another important product for the period was pottery. Whately clay proved a valuable raw material for redware pottery, and by 1797, Stephen Orcutt was operating a kiln near the Hatfield line, probably influenced by a neighboring Hatfield potter, Jonathan Pierce from Wethersfield, who had moved to Hatfield and established a kiln by 1778. One of Orcutt's employees may have been Thomas Crafts, who opened a kiln in the South Whately area in 1802. Until the 1820s, Crafts produced only redware, but with the arrival of Sanford S. Perry, a Troy, New York maker of black teapots, Craft himself turned to teapots in 1822. by 1833, Crafts had expanded into stoneware as well. In his instruction of brothers, sons, and nephews, Crafts was responsible for a minor blossoming of the pottery industry in Whately--and briefly in Ashfield--that lasted until 1860.

The Federal period also saw the establishment of virtually all of the sixteen mill priveleges along West Brook--said to be one of the best mill streams for its volume in the state. Saw, grist, and turning mills, together with small forges for iron edge and agricultural tools flourished here. At least three cloth-dressing mills were established, with successor woolen mills in operation by the close of the period.

#### E. Architecture:

Residential: Approximately two dozen Federal houses and cottages survive across the town. These include a full range of period plan types with center chimney and center hall (double or end chimney) plan houses surviving. Residential construction appears to have been steady throughout the period as houses dated from the 1780s through 1830 were observed. In general, houses seem to outnumber cottages, an indication of the town's prosperity in the Federal period. Another indication of prosperity is the substantial quality of the houses themselves: most are fully developed, five-bay, center entrance structures two or two-and-a-half stories in height. Of note is an end chimney, hip roofed brick house on Chestnut Plain Road at the town center. Other Federal period houses were observed at the town center, on North Street near Whately Glen, at West Whately, on Haydenville and Conway Roads and on River Road at the extreme northern end of the road. Of special note are well preserved clusters of period farmhouses at West Whately, on North Street at Whately Glen and at the town center.

Institutional: Relatively little institutional activity occurred in the period. The only ecclesiastical activity was the organization of a Baptist society in 1789. Several schools, however, were built in the period, of which two survive. In 1800, five schools stood in the town. In 1780 the town had voted to build three schools, but



these were apparently never constructed. In 1810, two brick schools, both of which were extant in 1970, were constructed. One, the North Street School, had dimensions of 30 x 24 feet and probably is currently in residential use. The other, somewhat modified, was moved and stands at Storowton in West Springfield.

Commercial: At least four taverns, including the Gad Smith Tavern (1779), operated in the period.

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

##### A. Transportation Routes:

Significant improvement of north-south corridor with Connecticut River Railroad (1846) across pine plain with depot at Whately Station (Depot Road). Parallel extension of north-south highway (Route 5-10) apparently laid out from North Hatfield along Mother George Road to Great Swamp Road.

##### B. Population:

Whately's population remained relatively stagnant during this period, though losses outnumbered gains. Between 1830 and 1865, the town lost 99 persons. In the post-Civil War years, possibly as a result of the boom in tobacco production, the town gained 56 persons, the largest gain in the period.

In 1855, 5.7% of Whately's population were foreign-born, with 63% of that number being from Ireland and another 18% from Germany and Holland.

##### C. Settlement Patterns:

The civic center was maintained at Chestnut Street focus (Whately) with formation of economic center at East Whately railroad depot (1846). Secondary village developed at West Whately in western hill lands along the West Brook valley. Expansion of agriculture with the introduction of commercial tobacco (1843) along the Connecticut River lowlands with local village at East Whately.

##### D. Economic Base:

The tariff of 1828 had brought about a radical change in woolen manufactures. Throughout the valley, many small woolen mills started up in the years immediately following. By 1837, Whately had three woolen mills on West Brook, employing 36 men and women--the largest non-agricultural employment in the town. The product value of these mills peaked in 1845 at \$40,935. With the reduction of the tariff in 1846, however, business declined until a brief surge during the Civil War, when Henry James, who also had a satinet mill in Williamsburg, produced satinet valued at nearly \$87,000. By 1870, the industry had come to an end.

The manufacture of pocketbooks had been initiated in South Deerfield by Dennis Armes. In 1826 it was picked up in Whately by R. B. Howard, a maker of pocket combs and button molds, and until the introduction of factory production in South Deerfield, Whately shops (three by 1850) consistently led the county, valley, and state production of the article.

Other industries included production of paste blacking, wooden ware, stone and earthenware, drain tile, bricks, and tanned hides. But Whately's major industries in the Early Industrial period was in the raising of broom corn and tobacco. In the 1830s, most of the farmers in the eastern and central part of the town raised broom corn, and quite a good proportion of them manufactured the corn into brooms. "Broom makers," wrote Crafts (p.266), "were seemingly as numerous as shoemakers in Lynn." Those who did not manufacture their own brooms could readily find a market for the corn. By 1850, there were eight broom factories. Five years earlier the total product value of brooms, \$19,719, was 40% of the entire county production, at the head of seven other towns reporting. The year 1845, however, marked the re-emergence of tobacco, and much sooner than in Hatfield or Hadley, broom making and broom corn production was cut drastically. By 1855, Whately's share of the county production had dropped to 15%.

In 1843, Steven Belden, who had contrived a machine for tying his corn brooms, brought back some Connecticut field tobacco seed, a broadleaf, fragrant smoking tobacco, and raised some next to his broom corn stands. After treating it, he shipped it in barrels to New York with his corn brooms. The success of this venture decided others to try their hands at it (Cane:75). By 1855, with 69 acres planted in Connecticut seed tobacco, Whately led the Valley in tobacco acreage. The Gazetteer of Massachusetts that year counted 97 great tobacco barns in Whately. Between 1855 and 1865, there was a tremendous explosion in the amount of land devoted to tobacco. Acres numbering 381 in 14 towns expanded to 5,400 acres in virtually every town in the Valley. Whately's own acreage increased by 340%, although it fell to fifth place in the Valley. Prices, which averaged about 12.5¢ per pound, greatly stimulated production.

#### E. Architecture:

Residential: The pace of residential construction remained steady through the mid 19th century, with approximately two dozen houses of the period observed. Houses and cottages appear to have been constructed in approximately equal numbers. The predominant plan types for the period were the center hall, double chimney and the sidehall plans. A few houses with four-bay, gable front facades were also observed as were a few houses with asymmetrical plans incorporating side ells. In general, the Greek Revival style predominated and most houses incorporate entrances with straight transoms and full length sidelights. Period houses and cottages are clustered at the town center, at West Whately and on Haydenville, Conway, Webber and River Roads and North Street. Of special note for the period are the number of well-detailed mid-19th century barns surviving, some of which include board and batten siding and decorative valences.

**Institutional:** Institutional activity of the period included the founding of a Universalist (1839), a Second Congregational (1842) and Unitarian (1866) societies and the construction of a present Congregational meetinghouse (1843) and town hall (1844). The meetinghouse is a one-and-a-half story Greek Revival building with a three-bay wide, center entrance facade and belfry with spire. The Town Hall originally stood only one story tall, but was enlarged in 1871; as it currently stands, the structure is a two-story three-bay by four-bay Italianate structure with flushboarding and pilasters on the facade, roundhead windows and doors.

**Commercial:** Several commercial buildings of the period stand at Whately Center at the intersection of Chestnut Plain and Haydenville Roads. These consist of one- and two-story gable front frame structures with three-bay wide, center entrance facades. They were probably constructed after 1840.

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

### A. Transportation Routes:

Continued improvement of north-south corridor with New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad (1890) parallel to original Connecticut River mainline (now I-91 location). Extension of rural trolley system from Northampton to Deerfield with local streetcar route along River Road through East Whately (1903).

### B. Population:

In the years immediately following the Panic of 1873, which was such a disaster for local tobacco growers, Whately lost over 10% of its population, reaching 958 in 1875. In 1880, the population made a sudden leap to 1,074, though a good part of this gain was probably only the record of transitory railroad laborers, temporarily located in Whately to construct the northern extension of the New Haven and Northampton Railroad, completed in 1881. In the five years 1885-1890, the town lost nearly a quarter of its residents. After 1895, however, as Poles and other Central Europeans began settling in Whately as farm hands, losses turned to gains, particularly after the opening of the trolley in 1903 connecting Whately with Greenfield and Northampton.

By 1915, Whately had the fourth highest immigration population in the county, or 28.8%. Of this number, nearly three quarters were Poles, giving Whately the fourth largest Polish community in the county.

### C. Settlement Patterns:

Whately Center was maintained as the civic focus on Chestnut Street with the economic focus at East Whately depot. Secondary villages were at West Whately in western hill land and at East Whately along the axis of River Road. Commercial tobacco remained as the primary economic activity on fertile lowlands with recreational site at Whately Glen (Roaring Brook).

#### D. Economic Base:

By 1875, Whately's largest manufacturing industry was Eliphas Wood's broom factory--an industry that despite the competition from Midwestern brooms, would continue into the 1890s. Other products from other mills along West Brook were primarily wood related: brush handles, croquet sets, lumber and shingles. In 1900, what activity remained along West Brook was all but eliminated with the construction of the Northampton Reservoir. Three years later, South Deerfield accomplished the same feat on Roaring Brook.

But, whereas in manufactured products Whately ranked thirteenth, in the value of its agricultural products (in 1880) Whately ranked fourth in the county. In onions, Indian corn, and potatoes, Whately ranked 3rd, 5th and 6th among the Franklin County towns. But it was tobacco that gave Whately its agricultural prominence.

The average price of tobacco in the late 1850s and early 1860s had been about 12.5¢ per pound. But the depreciation in paper money in the late 1860s caused the price of tobacco to rise to the astronomical heights of 30-35¢ per pound. "The world seemed to go wild over our profits," Crafts wrote, "and every effort was used to increase the acreage." (p.269) The Panic of 1873, which brought this hysteria to a screeching halt, was successful in ruining most of the local tobacco growers in Whately and the rest of the Valley. By 1885, Whately's tobacco crop, mirroring exactly Franklin County's, was valued at a quarter of its worth two decades before. Another factor in declining crops was the rising tide of imports from the island of Sumatra, of a superior light-colored tobacco leaf. The McKinley Tariff of 1890 slowed importation, and by 1905 the tobacco industry had largely recovered. Whately's production that year was about a third of the county production, while in the Valley as a whole, Whately ranked third after Hatfield and Hadley. The most important development in tobacco raising, however, were the experiments at the Connecticut Experiment Station at Windsor in 1899-1900, showing that the Sumatra plant could successfully be grown under shade. In 1901, Whately's Lemuel Graves was among the first in the Valley to grow Sumatra tobacco under cotton cloth. By 1911, shade-grown tobacco was no longer experimental.

#### E. Architecture:

Residential: Significant new development occurred at East Whately in the last decades of the 19th century and at the town center around the turn of the century. In the first instance, residential construction accompanied the growth of tobacco farming along the River Road while in the second, limited summer house construction took place. At East Whately, on Long Plain, Straits, Depot and River Roads, small one and one-and-a-half story vernacular workers' cottages with gable or hip roofs and center entrance, three- or four-bay wide fronts. Some feature double facade gables. In addition to such cottages, a few pyramidal hip roofed, four-square plan Colonial Revival two-story houses were also built at East Whately. An area of similar development, which also included a fair number of modest late Italianate and Queen Anne sidehall plan

cottages, is located along Route 10. At the town center, very much more pretentious housing was constructed around the turn of the century. Approximately a half dozen Queen Anne and Colonial Revival houses were built at the town center ca.1900, most along North Street and Chestnut Plain Road. Notable examples include a Queen Anne/Craftsman bungalow, a gambrel roofed Queen Anne cottage and the Colonial Revivalization of a 1778 center chimney house. In addition to houses, many tobacco barns were built in the period, especially on River Road and Route 10.

**Institutional:** Relatively little institutional construction took place in the period; only three buildings are known to have been built in the period, but of these, two are of some note architecturally. These are the brick Georgian Revival Center School (1910) a very well-detailed gable on hip roof end chimney brick building with a pedimented entry and a center cupola, and the East Whately School (1915). The East Whately School is a gable roofed T-plan stucco Tudor Revival structure with coped parapeted gables and banded windows with drip molds. Also built in the period was the one-story Queen Anne West Whately Chapel (1896).

**Commercial:** Commercial structures of the period consisted of several hotels at the town center and a few small stores also at the town center and in various other locations. The Maplewood Hotel, a temple front Greek Revival house with Colonial Revival additions, operated from the end of the century until 1910, when it burned. Still standing at the town center is the Whately Inn (1874; remodelled 1897), a two-and-a-half story vernacular Italianate structure with two-story verandas. A few small one- and two-story stores were built at the town center and on Route 10 in the period.

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

### A. Transportation Routes:

Abandonment of New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad (1930) and East Whately trolley line (1924). Continued improvement of north-south corridor as auto highway U.S. Route 5 and State Route 10 (by 1930) along Mill River and Great Swamp Road from Northampton to Deerfield.

### B. Population:

Whately's growth continued until 1920. Then, possibly as a result of the new immigration laws, it abruptly ceased, and for the remainder of the period the town lost residents. The largest single period of loss was in 1935-1940, when the town lost 13% of its population. In 1940, the population stood at 979.

### C. Settlement Patterns:

The civic focus was maintained at Whately Center along Chestnut Street with development of commercial highway activity along Route 5 axis from Deerfield and recreational site at Whately Glen. Gradual development of extended street village along Christian Lane (Depot

Street) from Whately Center to East Whately with isolated civic center at West Whately in West Brook valley. Tobacco and onions maintained as primary farming on Connecticut lowlands with development along River Road.

D. Economic Base:

For much of the period, Whately's major crops were potatoes, onions, and tobacco, the latter given a special boost when Japan invaded the Dutch East Indies, including Sumatra. No further manufacturing industries identified.

E. Architecture:

Very little construction took place in the period. Almost all of the activity centered along Route 10. Surviving from the 1920s are several small cottages, a motor court, an oversized milk bottle dairy bar sign and some gable overhang one-story gas stations.

XI. SURVEY OBSERVATIONS

General: Whately does not at present have any inventory recorded. Given the outstanding quality of preservation of the town's Federal and 19th-century agricultural landscape, inventory work should be made a major priority. Of particular note is the quality of preservation in the western half of the town (West Whately, Haydenville and Conway Roads) and at the town center. In those areas, agricultural landscapes with farmhouses and outbuildings are very well preserved with few intrusions. The town center is of outstanding quality, with many fine houses, institutional and commercial buildings. A large number of houses for sale were noted in the town and suggest that the area is in transition and potentially threatened.

XII. SOURCES

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