

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

ORANGE

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.

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MHC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY REPORT

DATE: 1982

COMMUNITY: Orange

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Orange is the northeasternmost town in Franklin County. The town is comprised of moderate uplands broken by a large number of tracts of plains and swampy lowlands. The Plains is a particularly large expanse of plains located in the southeastern corner of Orange. Generally, the uplands reach between 900 feet and 1200 feet in elevation. The highest point is Pitt Hill (1252 feet) located west of the village of North Orange. Other prominent elevations include Temple Hill (1125 feet) and Tully Mountain (1163 feet) both situated in northern Orange, Beech Hill (1131 feet) south of Pitt Hill and Chestnut Hill (1247 feet) located in the town's southwestern corner. Orange is bisected by Millers River which flows west across the width of the lower portion of town. It eventually flows into the Connecticut River in Montague. While this river drains southern Orange the remainder of the town is drained primarily by the Tully River and Poor Farm Brook, both of which are tributaries of the Millers River. All ten of Orange's ponds and lakes are man-made.

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Originally included sections of various grants from 1735 with Payquage (Athol) in east, Roxbury Canada (Warwick) in north, and New Salem in south with boundary along Millers River. Additional sections included Royalshire (Royalston) in northeast and Ervings Grant (Erving) in west by 1752. Majority of area north of Millers River included as town of Warwick in 1763, Athol in 1762 and Royalston in 1765 with area south of Millers River in New Salem in 1753. Area north of Millers River established as district of Orange in 1783 with step boundary along Warwick and Royalston line following original lot divisions (1735). Incorporated as town of Orange in 1810 with Athol boundary along East Branch of Millers River adjusted in 1816. Area south of Millers River annexed from New Salem in 1837 including Little Grant (Orange Airport) and western section along Millers River annexed from Erving (West Orange) also in 1837.

III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Secondary commercial industrial center on east-west corridor between Fitchburg and Greenfield. Located along Millers River with secondary access to Quabbin valley and central highlands including suspected native site potential around Lake Mattawa and Tully Pond. Settled as composite grant from Warwick and New Salem during late Colonial period with meeting house center at North Orange by late 18th century, including some well preserved period houses of pre-Revolutionary date along Athol Road. North Orange remained as civic focus of upland farming district through early 19th century with original houses extending to Tullys Meadow and landmark Federal church preserved with

surrounding stylish houses. Secondary mill village survives intact at Tully Pond with cottages and original houses along Royalston Road. Other early cottages remain along Chestnut Hill Road and Walnut Hill Road from New Salem to Lake Mattawa.

Significant development along Millers River corridor during Early Industrial period with regional railroad connections to primary focus at Orange Center and secondary village at West Orange, including porticoed Greek Revival houses. Location of sewing machine manufacture during Civil War sponsored local urban growth at Orange Center with early Victorian houses along Prospect Street and modest Italiante examples along Mechanic and North Main. Continued expansion of industrial activity during late 19th century with substantial brick factory district along River Street of well detailed design and multistoried business blocks along East Main Street between surviving 19th century cottages. Attempted development of suburban residential area on south side to Walnut Hill with some elaborate examples on South Main Street including well preserved Queen Anne Churches. Urban growth stagnated by early 20th century although industrial expansion continued along Millers River corridor, including early concrete tapioca factory on West Main. Highway commercial expansion along Route 2 axis of Mohawk Trail during Early Modern period with original diner intact on Main Street and notable Art Deco restaurant in West Orange. Fringe development expanded along River Street south side to Orange airport with tourist camp intact at Birchland Club and summer cottages at Lake Mattawa and Packard Pond.

Present development most obvious from Route 2 bypass along South Main Street to Orange Center threatening original Prescott meeting-house. North Orange retains remarkable historic character as suburban civic focus with similar preservation at Tully village from Athol expansion. Orange Center suffers from economic decline with integrity of business district threatened by abandonment, although south side industrial complex remains intact as converted commercial area. Outlying farmsteads retain active agriculture with increasing suburban expansion from Amherst and southern New Hampshire.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500-1620)

A. Transportation Routes:

~~Regional corridor between~~ Quabbin valley and central highlands with connections to Connecticut River. Primary east-west trail apparently followed north bank of Millers River from Pequage (Athol) as Brookside Road-Main Street (Route 2A) to Moss Brook (West Orange). Several north-south trails appear likely along topographic grain from Quabbin valley to Millers River. Fordways suspected at West Orange and Orange center, including Chestnut Hill Road around Coolidge Swamp, Holtshire Road along Lake Mattawa with alternate branch along Walnut Hill Road to

Orange ford and Route 202 across The Plains. Trail routes north of Millers River probably followed Moss Brook and Route 78 along Orcutt Brook to Moores Pond (Warwick) from West Orange fordway. Primary trail north from Orange Center ford apparently followed base of Fisher Hill to North Main Street with possible loop to Farm Brook as Dine Hill Road. Alternate route north likely followed Wheeler Avenue from East

Main Street and north as East Road to White Pond (North Orange) and connections northwest as Poor Farm Road along base of Temple Hill. Other trail links from White Pond probably followed Creamery Hill-Tully Road north along Tully River and south as Athol Road. Connections to adjacent Tully Pond possibly followed from Royalston Road east and north-south along Tully Road to East Branch fordway.

B. Settlement Patterns:

There were no reported native Contact period sites. Native period occupation probably occurred primarily on the lowlands adjacent to the Millers River, particularly in the vicinity of the villages of West Orange and Orange and the river's southern bank southeast of the latter village. Additional sites were likely established on The Plains, the lowlands adjacent to Tully River and Tully and Packard ponds. Upland sites may have been located on the relatively level summit of Temple Hill.

C. Subsistence Patterns:

The area's hilly terrain and marshy lowlands would have discouraged native horticulture. Some horticultural tracts may have been established on the Miller's River floodplain. Native fishing would have focused on the previously mentioned river. Hunting probably took place primarily on the town's lowlands, especially along the Miller's River and the plains.

D. Observations:

The Orange area was probably capable of supporting a moderate native population. By the early 17th century this area may have roughly delineated the territory of Pocumtuck-related settlements congregated in the Middle Connecticut River Valley from the Nipmucs of central and central western Massachusetts. The greatest potential for extant archaeological evidence of native period sites should be on the Millers River floodplain especially immediately east of West Orange, its southern bank east of the village of Orange, along Tully River and in the vicinity of Tully and Packard Ponds.

V. PLANTATION PERIOD (1620-1675)

A. Transportation Routes:

Primary east-west trail remained along Millers River with north-south route from Lake Mattawa to Tully Pond across Orange Center fordway.

B. Population:

Orange probably continued to be occupied by a moderate sized native population. The first colonial settlement did not occur until the mid-18th century.

C. Settlement Patterns:

Native settlement patterns likely were basically the same as those outlined in the Contact period.

D. Economic Base:

Native subsistence patterns probably were largely similar to those of the preceding period. However, natives likely increased hunting and trapping of fur-bearing animals in response to the development of an English market for native furs.

E. Observations:

Colonial interest in upland areas such as Orange in the Connecticut River Valley study unit was limited during this period. Large tracts of high quality land were still available within the Middle Connecticut River Valley.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

A. Transportation Routes:

Settlement of Warwick (1737) and New Salem (1737) established lot division highways along topographic grain, including North Main, Oxbow, Cross and Middle Road from Poor Farm Brook to Millers River (Warwick) and Chestnut Hill, Walnut Hill and North Pond Road around Lake Mattawa (New Salem). Primary regional corridor remained as east-west routeway along Millers River following Main Street from Brookside Road (Route 2A) with crossings at West Orange and Orange Center.

B. Population:

It is unclear how extensive Orange's native period population was. There were no figures for the town's colonial population. The secondary sources provide little information concerning previous residences of period settlers. Two families were former residents of Rochester and Milford, Massachusetts.

C. Settlement Patterns:

Colonial period settlement was generally scattered and extremely light until the early 1760's. The first home was reputedly established by Joseph Lawrence between 1752 and 1762 on a 325 acre tract of land situated in eastern Orange and owned by Reverend Benjamin Ruggles of Middleboro. Subsequent post 1762 settlement occurred north of the village of Orange. Homes were erected east of Fall Hill and in the general vicinity of the village of North Orange on Wheeler Ave., Poor Farm Road, and Athol Road. By the end of the period a small settlement node had developed on the site of North Orange. The settlement lacked a meetinghouse until c.1781. Local residents probably attended church services and town meetings in Athol.

D. Economic Base:

Orange's colonial economy is poorly documented by secondary sources. Local residents focused on livestock production and lumbering. Period industrial development was modest. The only documented period industrial facilities were a sawmill and tannery established by Nathan Goddard in c.1760 (N.A.1926:13).

E. Architecture:

Of the earliest houses of the period, dating after the town's first settlement c.1762, very few survive. The only structures predating 1775 observed in the field were located at North Orange and included one house and two cottages. None of these exhibited the full five bay front typical of the late 18th century houses but all incorporated the traditional center chimney. The house, with a four bay wide front, featured an entrance surround with triangular pediment. The cottages, one (dated 1771) with a four bay front and one half cottage, are both more simply detailed. The only other extant building of the period known is the Mayo Tavern (1773), a center chimney plan, five bay front house which was one of the town's first taverns.

F. Observations:

Orange's late settlement date was due largely to the area's vulnerability to native attacks. The period settlement situated in Orange was an outgrowth of the primary settlement node established in Athol during the Colonial period. Local settlers relied heavily on Athol because of Orange's limited economic base. Future research should detail period settlement patterns and economic development since existing secondary sources are inadequate. There is a good possibility of archaeological evidence of the period settlement surviving in northern Orange because of the town's continued rural nature.

VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

A. Transportation Routes:

Establishment of Orange meetinghouse at North Orange (1783) formed radial highway connections from town center with improvement of Warwick highway as North Orange Road and highway around Temple Hill to Blissville (now abandoned). Primary connections remained as Wheeler Avenue and Athol Road south to Millers River and Tully Road north to Warwick, with Royalston Road east to Tully Pond down steep grade of Orange Hill. Improvement of north-south highways to Orange Center from New Salem with South Main Street (Route 122) to Millers River bridge (c.1800).

B. Population:

Of all the towns existing in Franklin County in 1790, Orange had the smallest growth in the Federal period, rising only 12.2% between 1790 and 1830. At the latter date, the town reported 880 residents, up from 784 in 1790.

C. Settlement Pattern:

Civic focus established with meetinghouse at North Orange (1782) with mill village at Tully Pond. Upland agriculture extended to limits of cultivation along Tully Meadow to Blissville with lowland farming around North Pond (Lake Mattawa), including attempted meetinghouse from New Salem (1800). Mill sites established along Millers River at South Orange (1790) and expanded as economic focus with textile mills (by 1815) with secondary village at Ervingshire (West Orange).

D. Economic Base:

Predominantly agricultural economy though mills established on Millers River as early as 1790, when Jacob Holmes erected saw and grist mills at Orange village. Scythe shop (1803) and carding Machine (1804) probably located at village. The making of palm-leaf hats, a major industry by the 1840s, was begun in Orange in 1805 by Abner and Jacob Whitney. By 1832, though Orange produced only \$480 worth of palm-leaf hats, New Salem, including a good part of what is now Orange, was the leading town in the county, with \$27,500 worth. (After the boundary lines were adjusted in 1837, Orange became the leading town.)

E. Architecture:

Residential: Approximately two dozen houses and cottages of the Federal period survive in Orange. These include roughly equal numbers of two-story houses and one-story cottages. Most period structures are located in the northern half of town, at North Orange and Tully and along outlying roads. Almost nothing of the Federal period settlement at Orange Center survived later 19th-century commercial development. For houses, the double interior chimney, center hall plans predominated while for cottages, traditional center chimney plans were the rule. Of note are an end chimney brick house with a framed attic and a well-detailed hip roof double chimney house on Main Street at North Orange. The Main Street house is notable for its quality detailing including a mutulary cornice whose elongated metopes link it stylistically to the Samuel Allen House (between 1809-1816) in New Salem, which features a similar cornice. Federal houses were noted in the field on Main Street (North Orange), North Main Street and Road, Tully and Athol Roads on on East Main Street at Orange Center.

Institutional: The first meetinghouse in the town was the Congregational meetinghouse of 1781, at present the Community Church of North Orange. A 46' x 36' two-story gabled structure, the meetinghouse was remodelled in 1832 and its present appearance probably dates from that time. Of note are fluted triangular panels flanking a rectangular gable window; the batwinged shape of the panels is similar to that noted on houses built by Calvin Stearns in Northfield and may relate the 1832 remodelling to Stearns or a local apprentice. The church's belfry appears to date from the late 19th century. No other institutional buildings of the period are known to survive. A Methodist class was established in 1795 but a meetinghouse was not begun until 1822; the structure was never completed and was demolished c.1852. Five schools were built in 1787 but only four appear on the 1830 map of the town.

Commercial: At least three taverns (Goddard, Mellen and Mayo) operated in the period. In addition to the 1773 Mayo Tavern, at least one tavern, the Goddard (later Perry) Tavern still stands. The building, a two-and-a-half story structure of c.1825, stands at North Orange. It is unusual for its gable front, five bay wide form and its transitional Federal/Greek Revival styling.

VIII. EARLY INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1830-1870)

A. Transportation Routes:

Improvement of east-west corridor along Millers River with Fitchburg Railroad (1848) including depots at Orange Center and West Orange. Expansion of local street grid from Orange center included north-south Mechanic Street and east-west Prospect Street with West River Street connecting to West Orange along south bank.

B. Population:

In 1837 a large part of New Salem was annexed to Orange, and the sharp 70% population rise reported in the 1830s is no doubt largely due to this increase in territory. Much of Orange's real growth, however, occurred in the 1860s when the town grew by nearly 30% -- probably largely as a function of the chair and machine shops developing at Orange Center.

In 1855, only 2.1% of the population claimed foreign birth -- well under the 6.7% county average, and atypical of a developing manufacturing community. Of the immigrants, nearly three-quarters were Irish, many of whom had probably arrived with the construction of the railroad.

C. Settlement Pattern:

Civic focus relocated from North Orange to South Orange economic center on Millers River (1837) with rapid expansion of industrial development after opening of regional railroad connections (1848) and Civil War sewing machine factories (1863). Affluent suburban district developed along Prospect Street with commercial district along East Main Street to Fitchburg depot on South Main Street. Secondary industrial villages continued to expand at West Orange with meetinghouse -- (1836) and at Tully Pond. Dairy farming maintained along Tully Meadows from North Orange Center and around North Pond (Lake Mattawa) from New Salem.

D. Economic Base:

The water power of the Millers River, together with the arrival of the Vermont and Massachusetts Railroad in 1848 introduced a strong woodworking and furniture industry, as well as important machine shops. Earliest development, however, was at Tully, where about 1830 Calvin Mayo constructed a power canal from the Tully River for a small industrial community, including Jillson's triphammer and a foundry run by Nathan Mayo, Ashael Harrington, and others. It is unclear how long either lasted; apparently by mid-century a woodworking shop, ancestor of the existing shop, had been added to the foundry, probably discontinued after a fire in 1865.

Also at Tully was the pail factory of Bill & Taylor -- one of three in the town by the 1850s. In 1855 the product of the three pail factories in Orange was valued at \$25,000 -- the largest single recorded

industry in town at that time. In Franklin and Worcester counties, only Orange, Athol, Royalston, and Erving reported pail factories in 1855, but, as in the chair and cabinetware industry which Orange and Erving shared with Worcester County towns, by 1865 the industry in the upper tier towns of Worcester County, encouraged no doubt by plentiful hardwoods and the Fitchburg railroad, would blossom. In Orange in 1855, the second largest industry (in terms of product value) was in chairs and cabinetware. Davis & Kilburn at the center and Joseph Pierce at Tully together employed 45 men and women (the largest industry in town in terms of employees). In 1865, with an employee roster of 100 men and women -- up 122% from a decade earlier -- chair shops dominated the town's manufacturing employment.

Woodenware in general dominated the town's economy for the entire period. As late as 1865, the product of planing and saw mills, together with pail mills, and the makers of chairs, cabinetware, carriages, kegs, and coffins were the town's major source of employment. The town was also a leading supplier of lumber in the county. In 1845 Orange reported 2,620,000 feet of lumber cut -- over a fifth of the entire lumber production in the county, and more than double the figure of the next highest town, Wendell.

The same year also saw the peak reported value of palm-leaf hat manufacture in which 400 women and 75 boys produced \$20,657 worth of hats, again over one-fifth of the county value, and highest in the county. As indicated earlier, much of this industry may have been picked up from New Salem in 1837 when the town boundaries were adjusted. In 1845 a third of all the boots and shoes produced in Franklin County were made in Orange.

The two largest machine shops in Orange were begun by men who got their start in the Worcester County chair industry -- Andrew Clark, founder of the sewing machine business in Orange, and Rodney Hunt. Much of Orange's machine shop industry was shared with Athol to the east. The earliest machine shop in Orange may have been about 1840, though Hunt didn't begin building woolen mill machinery until 1858. In 1862 the firm of Hunt, Waite & Flint was formed producing woolen machinery and breast and turbine water wheels. A second water wheel manufacturer, the Chase Turbine Mfg. Company, was established in 1865 when J. D. Chase and Sons moved to Orange from West Concord, Vermont. By the 1870s, with Levi Kilburn (of the Kilburn Chair Factory) as treasurer, they appear to have been closely integrated with other Orange industries.

The largest industry to be established in this period, however, was the sewing machine works of Andrew Clark and William P. Barker, who in 1860 introduced the "New England Single Thread Sewing Machine." After the firm introduced the "Gold Medal" machine in 1867, the company was reorganized and by 1870, as the Gold Medal Sewing Machine Company, reported sales of \$444,000 -- much the largest value of any town manufacturer. The Rodney Hunt and Gold Medal firms had a dominant role in the nearby Orange Foundry, which produced castings for both firms. The Orange Manufacturing Company made the cabinetware for sewing machines.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Great expansion took place at Orange Center with the arrival of the railroad (1848) and the establishment of several important factories in the 1840s and '60s. More modest growth occurred at Tully and at North Orange while along most rural roads, small farm cottages were built in scattered locations. Cottages were the pre-dominant house form, regardless of location. Sidehall and center entrance cottages in the Greek Revival and Italianate styles were built in large numbers and with almost equal incidence of both plan types; center entrance plans utilized either center or double interior chimneys. In general, development at Orange Center focused along East, West and North Main Streets north of the Millers River in the Fishers Hill area. In addition to the standard plan types mentioned above, the other plan type used with some frequency was the gable front five bay wide plan with center entrance; approximately a dozen cottages with the broad gabled form, common in Worcester County, were noted across Orange. For houses, the sidehall plan was the most common type used. Orange is notable for the number of sidehall plan temple front Greek Revival houses standing there with approximately a half dozen examples observed, most at Orange Center. Also of note are a three-story brick mansard roofed house with asymmetrical plan (c.1865), a towered Italianate villa on High Street and a broad gabled Greek Revival double house.

Institutional: Industrial expansion was accompanied by significant institutional growth. Three additional Congregational Societies were organized in Orange (1837; meetinghouse, 1836; dissolved, 1860), North Orange (1843; dissolved 1850) and South Orange (1846; meetinghouse 1852). A second short-lived Methodist Society formed in 1853 (dissolved by 1879), a Baptist church was established in 1834 and in 1851, a Universalist Society was founded at South Orange. The town's first Town Hall was built at South Orange in 1837. By 1855, the town had thirteen school districts. A public library association (no building) was established in 1868; in 1864, a Fire Department was organized. It appears that the only institutional buildings of the period to survive are Universalist Church (probably 1858) at Orange and the Prescott Church, a one-and-a-half story Greek Revival building of c.1845.

Commercial: With the exception of the two-and-a-half story L-plan Greek Revival Putnam House (c.1850), no period commercial buildings are known still standing.

Industrial: The only known extant industrial building is the Chase Turbine Manufacturing Company of c.1860, a one-story brick Italianate building.

IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870-1915)

A. Transportation Routes:

Continued improvement of east-west corridor along Millers River with electric trolley line from Athol to Orange Center along East Main Street to West Main Street factory district (by 1904). Expansion of local street grid from Orange Center included East River Street across

The Plains and Hayden, Pleasant and Chase Street north-south to Walnut Hill. Primary east-west axis remained as Fitchburg (Boston and Maine) railroad along Millers River.

B. Population:

Between 1870 and 1915, Orange grew by 157.2% -- third highest growth rate in the county. Almost all of this growth, however, occurred between 1870 and 1890, particularly as New Home, Rodney Hunt, and Chase Turbine expanded. Orange reached its peak population in 1905 at 5,578, a figure it would not reach again until the late 1930s. In 1915 Orange's population stood at 5,379.

In 1880 Orange's dominant immigrant groups were Irish and Canadians. Twenty-five years later, however, the number of foreign-born residents had increased 400%. Much of this new group (37%) was made up of Swedes. The Orange Swedish community in 1880 represented 67% of all the Swedes in Franklin County. The second largest group that year were the English, with 16%. By 1915, a large group of Russian immigrants (12%) were also reported in Orange.

C. Settlement Pattern

Continued expansion of South Orange as center of economic and civic activity with primary industrial corridor along Miller River railroad line. Commercial district remained along East Main Street with multiple story business blocks along North-South Main Street to bridge and civic focus at Prospect Street hill. Considerable industrial expansion on south side along River Street axis with secondary residential growth along South Main and Walnut Hill Street with some attempted affluent development. North side remained as modest residential district with multiple family housing along Mechanic Street and West Main, extending to secondary village at West Orange and on East Main to Riverside. North Orange continued as local civic focus of upland farming district with local mill village at Tully Pond. Lowland farming maintained around Lake Mattawa with some summer cottages along shore.

D. Economic Base:

For most of the period, Orange's manufacturing economy was dominated by the New Home Sewing Machine Company. In 1875 the total value of Orange's manufactured product was \$782,149 -- second highest in the county after Montague (chiefly Turners Falls). Of this amount, nearly half represented the value of sewing machines. The next largest amount was the product of the two machine shops, Rodney Hunt and Chase. Four furniture shops were third in product value.

Beginning in the late 1880s, the town began to attract a large group of new industries, probably as a result of vigorous efforts on the town's behalf by local businessmen. At Wheeler in 1891, a mile east of the village, John W. Wheeler, treasurer of the New Home Sewing Machine Co., built a modern box factory for the National Keg & Box Company of New York. Jay B. Reynolds moved his shoe factory from Brockton to Orange in 1887, by 1892 employing 250 hands. In 1890,

the Leavitt Machine Company was incorporated, making a reputation in reseating machines for Globe valves. In 1894 J. S. Whitman of Millers Falls came to Orange to start the Whitman Grocery Company, whose chief product was tapioca. (In 1908 the company was renamed the Minute Tapioca Company.) Expansion continued in the 20th century's first decade as two tool companies, Adell Mfg. Co. (1903) and the Union Tool Co. (1908, from Fitchburg) were established. Reputedly "the first structure erected in the United States for the exclusive production of automobiles" (Stone, 476) was erected for the Grout Brothers Automobile Company. William L. Grout had been superintendent of the New Home Sewing Machine Company. Automobile production does not seem to have lasted long, however.

Outside of the village some textile firms were established: at Eagleville was the shoddy mill of the Eagle Mill Co. (1867), while a second shoddy factory was operated at Fryville by Frost & Hill. There were furniture shops in Blissville, Tully, as well as at the center.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Extensive residential development continued at Orange Center with most of the housing constructed south of the Millers River. A small secondary village developed at West Orange and some summer resort development also took place at Lake Mattawa but elsewhere in the town, very little new construction occurred. In general, higher quality single family houses were located along and to the west of South Main Street (Walnut Hill) and more modest workers' housing located east of South Main Street. An extended network of residential streets covered the east face of Walnut Hill by the end of the period and the blocks filled in with comfortable one-and-a-half and two-story frame Stick Style, Second Empire and Queen Anne houses, most incorporating sidehall plans. Large towered Queen Anne, Stick Style and Colonial Revival houses were built on South Main Street in the 1880s and '90s. After the turn of the century, similar large Queen Anne, Colonial Revival and Craftsman houses were built on the upper slopes of the hills east of North Main Street. Simpler workers' housing of the period consists primarily of small sidehall plan Queen Anne and Stick Style cottages. Sidehall plan Queen Anne houses were also built at West Orange. Development of Lake Mattawa began after the turn of the century and consisted of small hip or gable roofed cottages.

Institutional: The major institutional buildings in the town date from the Late Industrial period. These include the Town Hall (c.1900), a brick Romanesque Revival structure with arcaded windows and terra-cotta trim, the Richardsonian Romanesque Centre School (c.1890), shingled Queen Anne/Colonial Revival Center Congregational Church (c.1900) and Memorial Hall (1892). At least three other churches of the period survive: the Lutheran, First Methodist (c.1890) and Swedish (c.1885). Other institutional buildings are the neoclassical Wheeler Memorial Library (1912; architect unknown) and Beaux-Arts/Georgian Revival Wheeler Mansion (c.1910; architect unknown), now the

Eastern Star Home and the town's most elaborate mansion with a monumental Tuscan portico, seven bay facade, heavy Doric cornice and extensive surface ornamentation. Also dating from the period is the Gale-Brooke Shcool at North Orange, a hip roof Colonial Revival building of c.1910.

Commercial: The majority of the commercial buildings on East Main Street date from the Late Industrial period. Most of these are simple two and three story brick blocks in Panel Brick and Romanesque Revival styles of note are the yellow brick Masonic Block (c.1890) with an arcaded third story, the Mattawa Block (c.1890) and yellow brick bank of c.1900.

Industrial: Major industrial construction took place in the period along the Millers River. Probably the finest complex of buildings is the New Home Sewing Machine Company's factory of c.1885, consisting of approximately a half dozen three and four story brick buildings of varying size. Almost all are distinguished by their use of Romanesque Revival and Panel Brick details including segmental arched windows, roundhead windows, corbelled string courses and cornices and arched entries. Other industrial buildings are the Minute Tapioca building (c.1900), which resembles the shoe factories of southeastern Massachusetts in its closely set banded windows and frame construction, and the Orange Foundry, a one-story early 20th-century brick building with a sawtooth monitor roof.

X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915-1940)

A. Transportation Routes:

Abandonment of Athol-Orange trolley line (c.1925) and improvement of local highways as regional auto roads. Primary east-west axis designated as Route 2 (now Route 2A) through Orange Center to West Orange with Route 78 as secondary connector to Warwick and New Hampshire along Orcutt Brook. Primary north-south regional highway designated as U.S. 202 from Athol to Pelham with secondary connector to Worcester as Route 122 following South Main Street. Orange Municipal Airport located along East River Street at The Plains (c.1935) with early hangars now replaced.

B. Population:

Although Orange continued to grow slightly (7.1% between 1915 and 1940), the town's major period of growth had passed. The largest growth periods were in the late '20s (after a sharp decline, 1920-25) and in the late '30s. By 1940, Orange's population stood at 5,611.

C. Settlement Pattern:

Orange Center remained as primary civic and commercial focus along industrial railroad corridor of Millers River. Business district stabilized along East Main Street with limited residential expansion on south side to Walnut Hill. Highway commercial activity developed

along Route 2 corridor from Athol with secondary growth along East River Street around Orange Airport. North Orange continued as historic civic center of dairy farming district with summer cottages around Packard Pond from Tully village, and similar resort development on south side around Lake Mattawa from Orange Center.

D. Economic Base:

Little new industrial development. In the 1920s, both the New Home Sewing Machine Co. and the Minute Tapioca Co. were absorbed by larger outside firms. The former, with 600 operatives in 1930, was still much the largest manufacturer in 1930.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Limited residential construction took place in the 1920s at Orange Center. Small one-story cottages with hip or gable roofs and shingled, clapboarded or stucco finishes were built on the edges of 19th-century development and along Route 2A east and west of the center. Colonial Revival and Craftsman designs predominated. The only other significant development took place at Lake Mattawa, where small summer cottages were built through the 1920s.

Institutional: Only a few institutional buildings were constructed in the period, most were schools. Among the buildings constructed were the two-story tapestry brick Armory (c.1920) and the brick Georgian Revival High School (c.1925) on South Main Street.

Commercial: Several commercial buildings of note were built in the period along Route 2A. These include an outstanding stucco Moderne restaurant (c.1935) at West Orange, notable for its semicircular plan with semicircular bays; it is currently being restored and may be returned to commercial use. Other noteworthy period buildings are two concrete block garages, both with roofed-over pump areas (one with a yellow tile roof (Sunoco)), and a Worcester diner, at the town center.

XI. SURVEY OBSERVATIONS

General: Orange is fortunate to be one of the most thoroughly inventoried towns in Franklin County; unfortunately, the inventory forms, done by the Franklin County Arts Council, are rarely complete and almost never include any historical data whatsoever. Missing are dates of construction, original use, original owners, architects and historical significance. Inventory forms document (photographically) most 18th and early 19th-century houses, the town's churches and the more substantial commercial blocks and industrial complexes. Late 19th-century residential development and allied institutional construction (schools) are overlooked; also overlooked is 20th-century commercial and resort development. Of particular note in the town are the very well-preserved early 19th-century landscapes at North Orange and Tully, both of which would appear to have National Register district potential. Of significance, but with a greater degree of alteration, is the late 19th-century civic center at Orange; while

East/West Main Street has suffered somewhat from later 20th-century development, several residential neighborhoods behind the center are quite well preserved. These include the Walnut Hill section to the southwest of the center and Mechanic Street, parallel to North Main. Greek Revival, Italianate, Second Empire and Stick Style houses of quality were noted in these areas. The New Home Sewing Machine Company is also notable architecturally and probably merits National Register listing.

Industrial: Although the major downtown industrial buildings were surveyed in 1978 by the Arts Council, the buildings were not identified as to their original owner and builder, nor as to their significance. The majority of both the New Home Sewing Machine Company complex and Chase Turbine buildings survive, and could probably be considered as part of a potential downtown NR district. Other survivals include the Minute Tapioca Company, the Orange Foundry, Union Tool, and Adell Manufacturing. The two-story brick Grout Brothers Automobile Co. by itself is worthy of further study and possible NR consideration.

XII. SOURCES

Miner, Beatrice M., History of Orange, 1753-1976 (Orange, 1976).
(Copy in Orange Public Library)

North Orange Reunion Association, History of North Orange, Massachusetts
.... 1781-1924 (North Orange, 1924?).