

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

MILLBURY

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.

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MHC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY REPORT

DATE: 1984

COMMUNITY: Millbury

I. TOPOGRAPHY

The town of Millbury, lying in south-central Worcester County, straddles the Blackstone River, which flows in a southeasterly direction through the town center. Singletary Brook and Dorothy Brook flow into the Blackstone from the southern and northern portions of the town, while Ramshorn Brook drains the southwestern third of the town as it flows northwesterly into Auburn. The three streams and the Blackstone River provided many excellent sites for waterpowered manufacturing during the 19th century. Particularly heavily developed was Singletary Brook through Bramanville, where the stream falls 150 feet in one mile; during the mid 19th century seven large mills utilized the stream to power their operations within this one mile stretch.

The two drainage areas of Ramshorn Brook in the west and Singletary and Dorothy brooks in the east also mark two separate soil types occurring in Millbury. The western area is dominated by Sutton loam, while Gloucester soils dominate in the Blackstone Valley. The soils are generally stony in both areas, though large patches of agriculturally significant, less stony Sutton and Paxton loams are found around West Millbury, and Gloucester loam and Ondawa fine sandy loam occupy the area south of the Old Common and along the Blackstone River. These soils are well suited to hay and grains, while the stony lands were largely used as permanent pasture. Elevations in the town range from 700 feet above sea level in the southwest to 500 feet above sea level in the east and 400 feet above sea level in the Blackstone Valley.

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Second parish of Sutton, 1742. Incorporated as a town from part of Sutton, 1813. Part of Auburn annexed in 1851. Bounds with Oxford and Sutton established, 1907.

III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Industrial/residential community on the Blackstone Valley corridor, with native sites at Singletary, Ramshorn, and Dorothy ponds, and "Soapstone Hill" at Bramanville. First permanent European settlement ca. 1720 in West Millbury, with early mill at Singletary Pond outlet. Peripheral area of Sutton, with Second Parish meetinghouse site established in 1746. Dispersed 18th century agricultural settlement, with early industrial development on Singletary Brook (1777 paper mill) and Blackstone River (1808 armory).

Widespread, continuous post-1825 industrial growth at Millbury Center and Bramanville stimulated in part by many available

waterpower sites and good location on canal (1828) and railroad (1838, 1847) routes. Diversified 19th and early 20th century manufacturing center, with textiles dominant. Irish and French Canadian immigrant labor force. Early automobile suburb development from Worcester continues to present. A wide variety of partially intact 19th and early 20th century industrial complexes survive, as do many clusters of worker housing. Millbury Center retains many components of its 19th century commercial/residential/institutional structure. Agricultural landscapes continue in use in the Grass Hill area of West Millbury.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500-1620)

A. Transportation Routes

Blackstone River corridor, with tributary paths to highland pond and quarry sites. North-south route along Blackstone River and Dorothy Brook-Meadow Brook tributary past Dorothy Pond (Providence Road-Riverlin Street-Millbury Avenue). Alternate branch Riverlin Street to the northeast. Short length of east-west trail south of Lake Quinsigamond in the northeast corner (Creerer Hill Road). East-west route to Singletary/Ramshorn ponds and highland quarry sites along Singletary Brook (West Main Street). North-south upland route to Singletary Pond area (Greenwood Street-abandoned route from Old Common to Harris Road).

B. Settlement Pattern

The area is well watered by Ramshorn Pond and Brook, Singletary Pond and Brook, the Blackstone River, and Dorothy Pond. Each of these can be expected to yield sites, and several have. The area is particularly rich in quarry sites and rock shelters, indicative of the more short-term visits characterizing family and task bands' use of upland areas.

C. Subsistence Pattern

Seasonal visits by small bands for the exploitation of waterways for fish in the spring and of uplands for hunting in the winter, and for tool materials from the quarries southwest of the Blackstone.

V. PLANTATION PERIOD (1620-1675)

A. Transportation Routes

Contact period trails continue in use.

B. Settlement Pattern

Reduced use by Native Americans with the formation of praying towns and the increased numbers of colonials in the area.

C. Subsistence Pattern

Reduced but continued patterns established during the Contact period.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

A. Transportation Routes

Trails improved as colonial roads. Peripheral area of Sutton, with roads into the area from Sutton Center after 1714. Second parish focus at Old Common after 1742, with roads to dispersed farms, primarily in western highlands. Main north-south route from Worcester to Sutton (Greenwood Street-abandoned Road-Harris Road); from Worcester to Providence (Grafton Street); and through Blackstone Valley (Millbury Street-Riverlin Street-Providence Street).

B. Population

Few figures available as contained within the town of Sutton at this time. With formation of parish in 1742, members included 40 males and 30 females.

C. Settlement Pattern

Some colonial settlement probable near water privileges after the granting of land for the parent town of Sutton. Sufficient members by 1742 to warrant the formation of a second parish. Little other information since not an independent town.

D. Economic Base

Little information because the town was still contained within Sutton, but there were many important mill privileges located here along the Blackstone River and Dorothy and Singletary brooks and ponds.

E. Architecture

Residential: Earliest recorded building is Fuller-Trask-Davidson House (1742), a two-story, five-bay, center chimney plan with lean-to. Center and double chimney plans appear to have been the predominant house form.

Institutional: First meetinghouse built in 1743.

VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

A. Transportation Routes

The Colonial period roads continue to be used. The Blackstone Canal opens service along the Blackstone River corridor by 1829, with nine locks in Millbury.

B. Population

With incorporation in 1814, population is ca. 500, and growth is very rapid, to 926 in 1820 and to 1611 in 1830. Voluntary associations and reform activities came early to the area: a Masonic organization formed in 1797 by Oxford and Sutton drew members from the Millbury area; a temperance society was formed in 1808; a musical society in 1820; followed by the country's first Lyceum in 1826.

The First Society experienced several revivals during the period, and a second was formed in 1827 to accommodate the large population growth. This society began in affiliation with the Presbyterians in order to avoid compulsory parish taxation. The Shakers made a brief appearance in 1793. Both the Methodists and Baptists began organizing within the town.

C. Settlement Pattern

Continued dispersed agricultural settlement, with beginnings of industrial activity on Singletary Brook corridor and at Armory Village (Millbury Center). Shift in population focus away from Old Common which, however, remains the institutional center through the period. Second meetinghouse built in 1802, and by 1830 perhaps a half dozen residences cluster nearby. Small secondary nucleation in West Millbury area at Oxford Road/Carleton Road/West Main Street intersection. Industrial development on Singletary Brook in 1777, with Burbank paper mill; also below the Singletary/Blackstone confluence with establishment of armory in 1808. Growth in Armory Village accelerates after ca. 1825 with construction of Blackstone Canal. Residential construction around Main/North Main Street intersection. First Presbyterian (1828), later Second Congregational Church located near intersection on North Main Street.

D. Economic Base

Since the Revolutionary War period, metalworking and small mills along the town's streams were an important part of Millbury's economy. A tremendous growth in the town's manufacturing sector occurred during the last two decades of the period, particularly during the 1820s. Stimulated by the quick succession of textile mill openings during the mid 1820s, population nearly doubled between 1820 and 1830. By 1832, the year of the U. S. Treasury Secretary's census of manufactures, nearly one half of the 1,611 men, women, and children then living in Millbury were employed at least part-time in the well developed and extensive textile, metalworking, and leather industries with annual production valued at more than \$700,000.

The excellent waterpower sites on Singletary Brook in Bramanville supported a variety of industries dating to the mid 18th century. A gunpowder manufactory, linseed oil mill, fulling mill, ironworks and armory, and Abijah Burbank's paper mill were all located here during the mid and late 18th century. The paper mill, established

in 1776, was the first in Worcester County and supplied most of the paper to the printers in the region during the Revolutionary War. Only the paper mill and armory survived into the 1830s, as most sites along Singletary Brook were further developed for textile manufacturing or for the manufacture of textile machinery by the late 1830s.

Among the earliest and during this period the most important industry to be developed was iron and metal working, beginning with an iron refinery and forge about 1740. During the Revolutionary War, Asa and Andrus Waters established an armory and manufactured guns at the lowest privilege on Singletary Brook. After the war, the forges and triphammers produced hoes, scythes, axes, and mill-irons until 1827. A second armory was erected by Asa and Elijah Waters in 1808 on the site of the mid 18th century iron forge and refinery. A contract from the U. S. Government for the manufacture of guns initiated the erection of the armory and included forge shops, rolling and slitting mills, triphammers, a saw and mill iron factory, and a steel furnace. Located on the north side of the Blackstone River, the works were the core of Armory Village which grew around the armory. The armory provided employment to skilled ironworkers and machinists until 1845, when the use of private armories by the U. S. Government was discontinued.

A number of innovations developed at the Waters armory greatly improved the gun manufacturing process and were quickly adopted by all the armories in Europe and the U. S. In 1817, Asa Waters received a patent for his invention for welding gun barrels under triphammers with concave dies. The following year he was granted the first patent for a lathe that successfully turned gun barrels to a uniform thickness, thus eliminating the possibility of the barrel exploding due to uneven thickness, as was the case with the earlier method of grinding barrels on a revolving stone. This invention led directly to the development of the eccentric lathe by Thomas Blanchard, a native Millbury mechanic hired by Waters. By use of a cam motion, the new lathe could turn the irregularly-shaped barrel butt. Blanchard went on to develop a machine for turning gun stocks, and his work with precision milling machines contributed to the eventual development of the system of interchangeable parts while he was employed at the Springfield Armory. While operating a machine shop in West Millbury before going to Springfield, he also invented a tack-making machine. Hervey Waters, brother of Asa and a skilled mechanic, invented machines to make solid-headed and wire-headed pins, a machine that automatically stuck the pins on a card, and a process for rolling scythe and bayonet blades. Millbury also boasted as an achievement among its many, innovative and skilled machinists and metalworkers the first brass foundry in central Massachusetts, established in West Millbury by Asa Kenney during the first decades of the 19th century.

The manufacture of textiles and textile machinery was established in Millbury by at least 1813, when Thomas Blanchard patented and sold a new machine for shearing woolen cloth. Machine shops

producing woolen machinery and spindles were established in 1826 and 1828, and a shop that manufactured cotton machinery was set up in 1831. The first textile manufactory was the Goodell Mfg. Co., incorporated in 1822 on the Blackstone River site of the later Cordis Mills. The mill was equipped with common (as opposed to fancy) Scotch power looms manufactured in the Worcester shop of Howard and Hovey. These looms used a crank motion which, though superior to the cam-operated mechanism of the Lowell and Moody loom, did not gain the wide acceptance with textile manufacturers of the Lowell looms. Three more woolen mills were built between 1827 and 1831, and a cotton thread mill and two cloth mills were added in 1825, 1828, and 1830.

Tanning and currying of leather and the manufacture of boots and shoes were established by the 1820s. By 1832, more than 2,000 sides of leather and nearly 36,000 pairs of boots and shoes were manufactured by 65 men and 25 women. Many of the shoes were sold to the South for slave wear.

Despite the increasing dominance of manufacturing industries through the early 19th century, agriculture remained a full- or part-time occupation of many residents. Cattle-raising, dairying (butter and cheese), and the cultivation of grains and potatoes were the major activities. Sheep-raising, common in the late 18th and early 19th century, had begun to decline by the late 1820s, while the number of cows increased.

E. Architecture

Residential: Increased building activity in traditional center chimney and development of double chimney plan produced significant number of period houses, including the high-style late Federal Asa H. Waters House (1826-29) on Elm Street. This elaborate three-story, five-bay structure displays elaborate period details and some Georgian Revival details, including the two-story Corinthian portico.

Institutional: The second meetinghouse (50 x 52 feet) was built between 1802-04 on the site of the original structure. The Second Congregational (Evangelical) was constructed in 1828.

Commercial: No extant period commercial structures known.

Industrial: Development of privileges along the Blackstone River and some early mill buildings. None known to survive.

VIII. EARLY INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1830-1870)

A. Transportation Routes

The early 19th century road system continues in use. Boston and Worcester Railroad branch line to Millbury Center, 1838. The Providence and Worcester Railroad opens service through the Blackstone Valley corridor in 1847. The Blackstone Canal ceases operations in 1848.

B. Population

Population growth continues to be rapid, more than doubling through the period from 1,611 in 1830 to 4,397 in 1870. The largest increases occurred between 2,171 in 1840 to 3,081 in 1845, and to 3,780 in 1865. An academy was founded in the town in 1832 which became the town's high school in 1850; school districts were abolished in 1863; by the end of the period evening classes for factory operatives had been organized. A library association, the Society of Social Friends, began in 1833 and donated their collection to form a free and public library. Abolitionist sentiments took hold in the 1840s, followed by xenophobic reaction to immigration in the 1850s when a Know-Nothing candidate was elected representative to the town. The foreign population within the town was high, reaching 31.7% by 1865, including Irish and Canadians, in nearly equal numbers by the period's close. At the same time, manufacturing employment rose dramatically, from 495 in 1840 to over 2,500 in 1875. Agricultural workers increased initially with population growth, then falling off dramatically, from 296 in 1840 to 159 in 1875.

The Baptists and Methodists consolidated their members, forming permanent societies in 1835 and 1840 respectively. The location change of the first Congregational meetinghouse from the Old Common to Bramanville in 1835 led to the short-lived (1837-57) West Congregational. Episcopalians attended in Wilkinsonville to the southeast. A Roman Catholic mission operated from Worcester from 1850 until a distinct parish was formed in 1869. A Hibernian Society was formed in 1871 when the Irish population stabilized.

Two Protective Union stores were established in the town ca. 1855.

C. Settlement Pattern

Significant growth and development occurs around industrial waterpower sites in Millbury Center and Bramanville, and a shift of the highland agricultural focus occurs from the Old Common to West Millbury.

Development at the Old Common ends with the physical removal of the Second Meetinghouse to Bramanville in 1836. Agricultural focus shifts to West Millbury, with West Millbury meetinghouse (1837-57) established at Carleton Road/Oxford Road junction. Secondary industrial development at West Millbury on Ramshorn Brook, with residential development along West Main Street.

In Bramanville, a string of textile mill complexes are built along Singletary Brook along West Main Street from Rhodes Street west to Harris Road. The second meetinghouse, moved from the Old Common, is rebuilt on the north side of West Main Street in 1836. Worker cottage and duplex construction on West Main Street and south on Rhodes and Burbank. No clear differentiation in location of proprietors' homes.

Major period growth in the Millbury Center area, particularly after improved railroad connections in 1838 and 1847. Industrial development is dispersed at the many waterpower sites in the area, with the most significant locations north of West Street, south of School Street, along Canal Street, south along Providence Street, and northeast on Riverlin Street. With industrial growth, residential expansion occurs both north and south of the Blackstone. In the south, houses are built on South Main, Sycamore, Blackstone, and Maple Streets, with some linear extension south on Providence Street. North of the river, residential expansion occurs north on Main Street, each along Linden (East Main), Church, and Canal Streets, and west on Elm, Grove, Waters, and West Streets. Higher income residences appear predominantly to the north and west. An institutional focus of sorts develops at "the common," particularly after the Baptist Church (1864) locates across from the Second Congregational Church, with commercial activities surrounding this area. Other churches are dispersed, with Methodist Episcopal (1840) on Linden (East Main) and St. Brigid Irish Catholic church (1850) south of the river on Dublin (Pearl) Street. When the town hall is moved to the Center in 1851, it is located west on Elm Street in the Academy (1832) Building.

D. Economic Base

Nearly all sectors of Millbury's economy experienced growth during the period ending with the Civil War: the number of textile mills doubled by 1865; leather processing and shoemaking increased nearly five-fold in value by 1855; metalworking, stimulated by the needs of the U. S. Government during the war, increased more than five-fold by 1865; and agricultural and forest products increased in value as the population of Millbury and neighboring Worcester grew rapidly. Early growth was in part stimulated by the completion of the Blackstone Canal in 1828, which opened a new, much cheaper method of transporting raw materials, farm produce, and manufactured goods between Providence and Worcester. Between 1831 and 1825, 7,364 tons of goods were moved in and out of Millbury on the canal. Eight locks were located in Millbury and Dority Pond was created to supply the canal with water. Railroads erected through the town further improved communications and stimulated growth. By the late 1840s, the Providence and Worcester Railroad and a branch of the Boston and Albany Railroad connected the town to major markets. The town's population nearly tripled during the years between 1830 and 1870, a rate of growth not duplicated since.

The greatest expansion occurred in the textile industry, which until the 1840s was dominated by woolen manufacturing. In 1837, six woolen mills and one cotton mill were in operation; by 1865 the number had changed to five woolen mills, eight cotton mills, and one hosiery mill. Three new textile mills were erected during the period at Bramanville, where by 1870, seven textile factories drew their power from Singletary Brook. A carding and spinning mill was operated on Ramshorn Brook between 1837 and 1839, and five textile mills were erected along the Blackstone River during

the 1840s and 1850s. Through the entire period, the products of Millbury's textile industry accounted for at least 70% of the total value of goods manufactured. By 1865, the textile mills employed 347 men and 400 women, more than one half of all the men and nearly all of the women employed in manufacturing occupations.

Tanning, currying, and shoemaking also prospered during the period. The number of hides processed rose from 2,000 in 1832 to 52,000 in 1837; by 1855, 63,250 hides were tanned and curried, and valued at nearly \$100,000. Boot and shoe manufacturing followed a similar pattern of growth. From 5,800 pairs made in 1832, the quantity increased to more than 90,000 pairs in 1837, worth \$93,000. Production remained at this level until the Civil War, which disrupted the Southern market of the town's shoe manufacturers, for most of the shoes made were for Southern slaves. After the war, production in the surviving shops and factories shifted to more expensive shoes. In 1865, two thirds less employees produced only 17,000 pairs of shoes, but their value was more than \$86,000.

The third major sector of the manufacturing component in the town's economy was metalworking. Asa Waters' furnace, armory, and scythe shop were continued through the period by his son Asa H. Waters, who also engaged in the manufacture of textile machinery, locomotives, and hollow ware. During the Civil War, the armory received a U. S. Government contract to produce bayonets and component parts for Springfield muskets. Employment during the war years grew to more than 100 men. Other metalworking firms included a manufacturer of penknives during the 1830s and 1840s; three textile machine shops active through the 1840s; a plough manufactory and maker of shovels, forks, and hoes; the Ohio Mowing Machine Co.; a tinsmith; a manufactory of mechanics' tools; and the Buck Bros. Edge Tool Works, located on Dorothy Brook. The Buck Bros. Works, which moved to Millbury from Worcester in 1864, produced chisels, gouges, plane irons, and other edge tools. In 1865 they employed about 30 men and produced goods worth \$51,000.

Several smaller industries were also established during the period: the manufacture of railroad cars and carriages was begun in the 1840s in the town center, shuttles and porcelain shuttle eyes were made after 1863; from the 1830s to 1850s black lead, or graphite, from Elliot's Worcester coal mine was ground in West Millbury and sold for stove blacking and to shipyards for hull paint.

The growth of the town's population and manufacturing sector required large quantities of lumber and firewood. During the pre-Civil War decades the quantity of lumber and firewood cut reached 600,000 feet of boards and 1,800 cords annually. Several sash, blind, and planing mills and a box mill provided materials for builders and boxes for the shoe and tool industries.

Agricultural practices changed with the growth in population and industrial development. The cutting of the town's forests opened

more land for pasturage and hay cultivation. As a result, cattle-raising and dairying increased markedly. By 1865, nearly 290,000 lbs. of beef, pork, and veal were slaughtered and sold, and whole milk sales more than tripled between 1855 and 1875 to 75,000 gallons. Cheese production declined radically from more than 15,000 lbs. in 1845 to less than 1,000 lbs. in 1865. A much smaller decline occurred in butter production on the town's farms. The total acreage devoted to grains decreased, but increased planting of potatoes and vegetables kept the total cultivated acreage relatively level through the period. During the 1860s, attempts were made to cultivate tobacco. In 1865, 6,800 lbs. of leaf were grown on nine acres, and an agar manufactory operated for several years during the mid 1860s.

E. Architecture

Residential: Some double chimney house forms, but predominant house type appears to have been the gable end, side-passage plan, with Greek and Italianate details. Temple-front Greek Revival houses in the Center. Worker housing in Bramanville characterized by two-story, double chimney forms. A two-story, five-bay, brick Second Empire dwelling noted.

Institutional: The 1802-04 meetinghouse (First Congregational) was dismantled and moved to Bramanville in 1835. The rebuilt structure is a gable end Greek church with a Doric portico. In 1837, the West Congregational Church was built in West Millbury following the removal of the First Congregational Church to Bramanville. This building was later bought by Methodists; in 1871 it was sold and moved. The First Baptist Church was built in the Center in 1864 and is a gable end, brick Romanesque building with two side towers. A Methodist church was built in the Center in 1840. St. Brigid's Roman Catholic mission construction a mission church in 1850.

No town hall as such was built in this period, but a hall is recorded as being in use for town purposes in the 1860s. Firehouses were built as early as 1837. The Millbury Academy was built in 1832 and was a two-story, gable end brick structure. The town high school acquired the building in 1851.

Commercial: No known surviving period commercial buildings.

Industrial: Industrial development increased significantly. Mills constructed beginning early in the period.

IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870-1915)

A. Transportation Routes

The 19th century road and rail system remains in use. In addition, by 1900 the town is served by a number of electric streetcar lines from Worcester. Worcester Consolidated Street Railway steam power generating station built southeast of the Center on Providence Road in 1898. Two lines run from the north

to Millbury Center: along North Main Street, and Millbury Avenue-Howe-Avenue. These join and continue south along Providence Road. A branch line on West Main Street connects to Bramanville. In addition, the northeast corner of town is served by a line from Worcester to North Grafton on a new roadbed north of Grafton Street.

B. Population

After decades of rapid growth, the town settles into fluctuation and maintenance until after World War I. Beginning at a figure of 4,397 in 1870, and ending at a high figure of 5,295, a second high was reached in 1895 at 5,222, a second low in 1890. A corresponding drop occurs in the number involved in manufacturing occupations, by half from 1875 and 1915.

The foreign population decreased at a steady rate from 33.4 in 1875 to 24.5% in 1915. Canadians overtook the Irish by 1875, French Canadians in particular dominating after 1885. With this shift a second Catholic parish, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, was formed in 1882. French Canadian organizations also flourished, including St. Jean Baptiste (1880), Naturalization (1889), Artisans (1902), and Forestiers (1909).

C. Settlement Pattern

Industrial expansion continues, although the location of industrial foci remains essentially the same. Millbury Center continues to grow as the residential-institutional-commercial focus. Little development in the western highlands. Union Chapel built in West Millbury in 1888. Ramshorn dam break of 1873 destroys much of existing West Millbury industry.

At Bramanville, post-fire reconstruction and expansion occurs at several mill complexes, including Mayo woolen mills (1879), and West End Thread (ca. 1910). Residential expansion takes place south on Burbank and Rhodes Streets and north on Beach Street. Major residential construction, at least in part expansion from Millbury Center, occurs in the Gould, Elmwood, West Main Street triangle. A number of late period worker duplexes are built on West Main Street, east of Brierly Pond.

Plant expansions continue around Millbury Center, including 1878 Rivulet Village on Dorothy Pond with 20 worker tenements, and 1914 Cordis Mill expansion. New town hall (1879) located at "Commons" institutional focus. Strong second cluster maintained to the west at West Main/Waters Street intersection with the addition of Unitarian Church (1884), Church of Assumption (French Catholic, 1886), and High School (1914). Some vertical expansion occurs in the commercial district around the institutional focus with the addition of brick, multi-story blocks in the 1880s and 1890s. Residential expansion continues north on Main Street beyond Miles Street and along the southern and western base of Prospect, and north on Riverlin Street-Millbury Avenue. South of the river,

infilling occurs in the established areas, with extensions west on Sycamore Street and southeast on South Main Street.

D. Economic Base

The textile industry continued to dominate Millbury's economy, followed by metalworking. Tanning and shoemaking declined considerably after the Civil War, as only one shoe factory remained by the 1890s. Woodworking and building remained strong during the 1870s, a period of physical growth in Millbury. Between 1865 and 1880, the town gained more than 1,000 residents. Depressions in the textile industry during the early 1880s and mid-1890s temporarily halted the town's growth, but the decade before the First World War saw a return to prosperity and population growth.

The woolen industry returned to dominate in the 1870s and maintained its position through the period. By 1875, six mills produced cassimeres and satinets worth over one million dollars. Millbury's woolen mills contained 41 sets of machinery, second in the county behind the city of Worcester. In addition, three wool scouring mills were established by 1875 on Ramshorn Brook in West Millbury. The number of cotton mills declined from nine in 1865 to six in 1875, to three in 1895, as the mills either converted to woolens or burned and were not rebuilt. The depression of the 1890s was particularly difficult, as several mills lay idle or worked on reduced wages and hours, often for months at a time. Mills which were destroyed include the Berlin Mills, purchased by the Worcester and Millbury Street Railway and replaced by a power station; the Millbury Cotton Mills, burned in 1895; and the Crane and Walters Mfg. Co. mill in Bramanville, which was sold at auction in 1892 and burned the next year. Several strikes at the woolen and cotton mills during this period intensified the impact of the depression.

By the late 1890s, the textile industry recovered. Linen manufacturing was introduced for the first time in Millbury at the Wheeler Mill in Bramanville in 1899, and by 1907 three mills located along the Blackstone River and Singletary Brook produced linen goods. The West End Thread Co. of Boston began the manufacture of linen thread in 1903 at a Bramanville mill. The facilities were enlarged several times, and new housing for employees was built in 1911. By 1915, this was the second largest taxpayer in Millbury. The Mayo Woolen Co., incorporated in 1897, began to purchase the idle mills in Bramanville. By 1912, the company owned and operated four mills and employed 225 men and women in the production of 600,000 yards of woolen cloth annually.

The manufacture of metal and metallic goods remained strong through the period. By 1895, 16 firms produced artisans' and edge tools; machinery for printing, woodworking, and wool scouring; street cars; wire heddle frames and mill wire goods; tinware; and iron castings, all worth more than \$250,000. The H. T. Merriam Co., operating during the late 1880s and 1890s, manufactured iron goods, bridges, and iron building fronts. Millbury had also

become an important trading center. Although far from rivaling neighboring Worcester, the town contained 44 trading establishments in 1905 that sold more than \$400,000 worth of goods.

Agricultural practices increasingly concentrated on dairying and the raising of vegetables. Market gardening and poultry-raising accounted for nearly 20% of the \$214,000 value of agricultural goods sold in 1905. That year market gardens totaled 151 acres, the ninth highest figure in the county. The town also contained 175 acres of orchards. Dairying dominated the town's agriculture; by 1895, 473,814 gallons of whole milk were produced, ranking Millbury 21st in the county in milk production. Hay and pasture accounted for more than one half of the farmland, though total farm acreage decreased and woodland doubled between 1875 and 1905.

E. Architecture

Residential: Majority of period houses are found in the Center. These consist mostly of the gable end, side-passage plan of two or three bays. Examples of the more traditional double chimney plan were also observed.

Institutional: The First Baptist Church erected during the early portion of the period is a brick Romanesque design. Our Lady of Lourdes (1890s?) is a late Gothic style frame, gable end structure. Union Chapel in West Millbury, a one-story gable end building, was built in 1888 to serve the followers of the old West Congregational Church. The Unitarian church, a gable end Victorian Gothic structure with shingled surfaces and a side entry tower, was built in 1888 and demolished in 1922. St. Brigid's is also a two-story, gable end Victorian Gothic church with a side tower. Our Lady of the Assumption, a gable end plan with a side tower, was constructed in 1886. This building burned in 1914 and was replaced in 1916 with the two-story, gable end nave plan design incorporating a clerestory and side aisles. A new St. Brigid's was built in 1955.

Mt. St. Joseph's Industrial School, a two-story, gambrel-roofed Colonial Revival structure, was erected ca. 1900. Millbury High School is a two-and-a-half-story, hipped roof, brick Colonial Revival building.

The public library is a 1915 brick Georgian Revival design. A Victorian Gothic brick town hall was constructed in 1878.

Commercial: The two-and-a-half-story St. Charles hotel building is a late Second Empire design in Bramanville. Several commercial blocks survive in the Center, ranging from two to three stories and built during the last two decades of the 19th century.

X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915-1940)

A. Transportation Routes

By the 1920s, the streetcar system is no longer in use, and local roads are improved as automobile highways. In the northeast, Grafton Street (Route 122) is improved as a segment of the Worcester-Grafton road. In the Blackstone corridor, the road south from Worcester through Millbury Center (Route 122A) is improved (North Main Street-Canal Street-Main Street-Providence Street). Southwest secondary highway through Bramanville to Sutton Center and Manchaug (West Main Street-Sutton Road) is also improved. By the early 1930s, a new east-west regional highway (Route 20, Southwest Cut-off) passes through the northwest corner of town. By 1940, the new four-lane north-south Worcester-Providence Turnpike (Route 146) in the Blackstone corridor is completed through Millbury.

B. Population

Some growth occurs early in the period when total figures increase from 5,295 in 1915 to 6,441 in 1925. Afterward, the fluctuation returns, ending in 1940 with a high of 6,983. Foreign population continued to drop, to 14.8% in 1940.

C. Settlement Pattern

Some residential infilling and peripheral expansion occurs in the established population centers, but main period activity appears to be the extension of Worcester suburbs into the north part of town. In Millbury Center, some high income residential development occurs on Prospect Hill north of the Center. A library (1914) and Post Office Building (1941) are added to the Waters/West Main institutional cluster. Assumption Church rebuilt 1916 after 1914 fire. Suburban development occurs near the Worcester line: in the northeast on Wheelock Avenue, south of Grafton Street; in the northwest in the Park Hill Avenue area at the Route 20/Route 146 intersection; and in the Millbury Avenue area along the eastern shore of Dorothy Pond. Churches constructed with population growth in East Millbury area: Raymond Memorial Congregational Church (1934), Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church (1938).

D. Economic Base

The war-time demand for woolen cloth and the following prosperity sustained the town's textile-based economy at a high level through most of the 1920s. The value of manufactured goods in 1920 totalled \$8.7 million. More than 1,200 men and women were employed, equaling the previous high employment during the immediate post-Civil War years of the late 1860s and early 1870s. Production declined slowly through the 1920s, and the Depression of the 1930s reduced employment one fourth and cut production by more than one third over the 1920 figure. The Atlanta Woolen Mills, which occupied the old armory site along the Blackstone

River, and the Millbury Cotton Mills just downstream, were removed during the 1930s, as was the former John Rhodes warp mill in Bramanville. Most other mills survived the Depression, though some, like the Millbury Woolen Co. in the Cordis Mills, ceased operations for some time during the Depression. Mayo Woolen Mills closed during the late 1930s or early 1940s and the factories were occupied by Delco Rubber Corp., the Marshall Greene Textile Machine Co., and the Bausquet Spinning Co. Edge tool, wire, and steel manufacturing continued as several new firms were formed in the 1920s. By 1940 production returned to \$7.8 million in 25 establishments with 1,225 employees.

The amount of farmland continued to decline as residential development and woodlands expanded. Further speculation in dairying, market gardening, orcharding, and poultry meant less mixed farming and virtually no cultivation of grains. With the rise of the automobile and truck, the need for hay was greatly reduced and as a result, the amount of land used for mowing decreased.

E. Architecture

Residential: No significant development apparent.

Institutional: Ca. 1920 Colonial Revival High School constructed. Post Office building erected during the late 1930s/early 1940s.

XI. SURVEY OBSERVATIONS

No survey available. Definite need for comprehensive survey evident from research and field observation.

XII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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