

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received

MAR 10 1983

date entered

## 1. Name

historic Whitinsville Historic District

and/or common same

## 2. Location

street & number Multiple

N/A not for publication

city, town Northbridge

N/A vicinity of

~~Congressional District~~

state Massachusetts

code 025

county Worcester

code 027

## 3. Classification

### Category

☒ district

☐ building(s)

☐ structure

☐ site

☐ object

### Ownership

☐ public

☐ private

☒ both

### Public Acquisition

☐ in process

☒ being considered

### Status

☒ occupied

☐ unoccupied

☐ work in progress

### Accessible

☐ yes: restricted

☒ yes: unrestricted

☐ no

### Present Use

☐ agriculture

☐ commercial

☒ educational

☒ entertainment

☒ government

☒ industrial

☐ military

☐ museum

☒ park

☒ private residence

☒ religious

☐ scientific

☐ transportation

☐ other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name See attached list

street & number

city, town

N/A vicinity of

state

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Worcester County Courthouse, Registry of Deeds

street & number 37 Harvard St.

city, town

Worcester

state Massachusetts

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Inventory of the Historic Assets

title of the Commonwealth

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1981

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston

state Massachusetts 02108



## 7. Description

Whitinsville Historic District, Northbridge

### Condition

☒ excellent  
☐ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved date N/A

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

334  
cont  
from  
Text

The Whitinsville Historic District lies on the Mumford River in the southern part of the Town of Northbridge. The District contains about 350 structures on approximately 250 acres of land. It is situated in a valley bounded on the North and South by steep hills and on the East and West by large mill ponds (Linwood Pond and Meadow Pond, respectively). Six main roads converging at this valley form the framework of this District. Within the Whitinsville District is a mixture of industrial, public, and residential buildings representative of a large 19th and early 20th century factory village.

### Industrial Buildings

Grouped in three complexes along the Mumford River, Whitinsville's factories reflect a century's development in industrial architecture, from the 1820s through the 1920s. The earliest, the "Brick Mill" (1826; Photo #1, Map #17) was built by Col. Paul Whitin and Sons as a cotton factory. It is a prototypical mill of the 1820s, with a clerestory monitor, undecorated end stair-tower, small rectangular windows, and an open, Federal-style belfry sitting on the middle of the roof ridge. In a nearly perfect state of preservation (with only its west facade marred by a 3-story brick addition of 1905), the "Brick Mill" is one of the most significant examples of its type and period of factory construction still standing in New England.

Across Hill St. from the "Brick Mill" stands the Whitinsville Cotton Mills complex (Photo #2, Map #49), built by P. Whitin & Sons in 1845, with a rear ell added in 1864. It is an outstanding example of 1840s mill construction, with its smooth-faced ashlar walls, clerestory monitor, and open Federal-style belfry sitting on a central, projecting stair-tower. In 1976, the mill experienced a generally sympathetic conversion to apartments (Cotton Mill Apartments), with the greatest changes occurring in fenestration (e.g., recessed dormers cut into the clerestory).

Dwarfing the others is the immense complex of the Whitin Machine Works (1847-1923; Map #251) which stretches along both sides of the Mumford River to the East of Memorial Square. Reflecting the congestion and density accompanying rapid economic growth, the Whitin Machine Works, at its peak, encompassed nearly 1 3/4 million square feet of floor-space, divided into some 40 separate units. Only fragments remain of its original structure, a handsome Gothic Revival factory erected in 1847. In particular, an octagonal corner tower, with crenelated battlements and drip molding over windows, forms a visible part of the complex's river wall.

The most architecturally significant portion of the Whitin Machine Works is its northern facade, running along Main St. From East to West, it consists of: the Main Office Building (1918), whose Neo-Federal details, wrought iron sconces, and copious ivy give it the appearance of a college dormitory; the 1864 Machine Shop (Photo #3), an outstanding Lombard Romanesque structure designed by Edward Lamb of Worcester, with brickwork enlivened by corbeling and blind arches, segmental-arched windows, and a

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projecting central stair-tower supporting an octagonal, round-arched belfry crowned by a conical cap; and the 1922 Machine Shop, designed by J.D. Leland of Boston, with spare Neo-Classical detailing on its East-facing front, including a ceremonial balcony and a large clock face.

## Public Buildings

The Whitinsville Historic District contains a number of significant public buildings, most of them concentrated near the mills in the vicinity of Memorial Square (at the juncture of Main St., Hill St., Church St., and Linwood Ave.). Built in the half century following 1870, these structures were for the most part gifts to the community by the Whitins, Lasells, and associated mill-owners. Often designed by leading Boston and Worcester architects, these public buildings form an imposing monument to Victorian paternalism. They fall into three principal categories: civic buildings, schools, and churches.

Whitinsville's civic buildings from this period include a town hall, a bank/post office building, a Civil War memorial, a library, and a gymnasium. Oldest of all is the Town Hall (Photo #5, Map #48), built in 1872 by John C. and Charles P. Whitin on the site of the old family homestead, adjacent to the Whitin Machine Works. It is an imposing, 2-story brick building with chaste Italianate detailing. It has a pedimented gable end with oculus facing Memorial Square, a bracketed cornice, large round-arched windows in the upper (auditorium) floor, string courses, and one-story entrance porches on its north and west sides, with clustered, unfluted columns.

Diagonally across Memorial Square from the Town Hall is the Whitinsville Savings Bank/Post Office (Map #215), erected in 1905 by the town's leading mill-owners. An impressive Neo-Classical structure with its broad side facing the square, it stands two stories tall, is built of brick and cast stone, and has a hipped roof with wide overhanging eaves. Its most outstanding feature is its central, projecting portico, with a pediment decorated with anthemion, an entablature whose frieze bears the inscription "Whitinsville Savings Bank," and monumental, paired, unfluted Doric columns. Originally, the Post Office was located in a 1-story, balustraded pavilion on the building's east end.

The granite Civil War Monument (Map #74) was also built in 1905, in the Common in the center of Memorial Square. Neo-Classical in style, it has a high, star-shaped base, with intervening benches and anthemion decorations, which supports a tightly clustered trio of unfluted Ionic columns beneath an entablature surmounted by a bronze eagle on a ball. In 1922, a curved, polished granite bench was placed behind this monument as a World War I memorial.

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2 objects →

4 Bldgs



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Perhaps the single most elaborate civic building in the District is the Whitinsville Social Library (Photo #6, Map #212), which Arthur Whitin gave to the town in 1913. Designed by Boston architect R. Clipston Sturgis, it is a 1-story, granite Neo-Classical building located on Church St., near Memorial Square. Hipped-roofed, with its broad side facing the street, it has slightly protruding pavilions at each end of the facade topped by cross-gables with returning eaves. Its central doorway is ensconced in a smaller projecting pavilion, decorated with a pediment, vermiculated quoins, and a vermiculated Gibbsian surround around the door itself surmounted with a cartouche. Rising from the center of the roof is a circular belfry, with Ionic columns interspersed between louvered round arches supporting an urn-encrusted entablature that is capped with a massive copper finial.

The final civic building to appear in the District was the Whitin Gymnasium (Map #252), which the daughters of George M. Whitin erected in his memory in 1923. A 1-story, flat-roofed structure with its broad side facing the Whitin Machine Works across Main St., it is built of brick decorated with cast stone. It has such simple Neo-Federal details as flared, keystone lintels on its windows, and urns and garlands in a recessed arch over its entry. Originally, it had a raised attic story, which was removed after a fire in 1959.

The District also contains a number of significant school buildings. The oldest is the Clarke School (Map #83), built in 1878 on Cross St. Designed by Worcester architects Fuller & Delano, it is one of the most important Stick Style structures in the District. It is 2½ stories tall, has a high hipped roof with a central pent dormer, and has a central pavilion projecting from its broad side facing Cross St. Built of wood, it has such Stick features as ornamental boards overlaying its clapboards, pent window caps, and a pent-roofed entrance porch with a central gable decorated with a stick-work gable screen.

Next to appear was the Aldrich School (Map #216), built with Whitin money in 1890 as the town's first high school. Designed by Boston architects Hartwell & Richardson for a Hill St. lot just up from Memorial Square, it is a simple example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style. Built largely of brick, it is 2½ stories tall and has a high hipped roof with two massive cross-gables at each end covering slightly-projecting pavilions. Typical of the style, it has a large, Syrian-arched recessed entry, highlighted with drip molding, and a turreted central dormer. Bands of sandstone trim give some sense of polychroming.

Finally, on Linwood Ave. sits the Whitin-Lasell High School (Photo #7, Map #64), built in 1906 with funds donated by Arthur Whitin and Josiah Lasell. Designed by leading Boston architects Peabody & Stearns, it is

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a 1½-story brick building with a variety of Neo-Classical, symmetrically-arranged details. It has a high hipped roof with two large cross-gables grouped towards the center of its broad facade. Each gable end has bracketed, slightly-flared eaves and a decorative oculus. There are two round-arch, keystone, recessed entrances on either end of the building's front.

The District also contains three notable churches. The Village Congregational Church (Photo #4, Map #213) was built with Whitin family funds in 1898 on the Memorial Square site of an earlier church building. Designed by Boston architects Shepley, Ruten and Coolidge, it is an extremely fine example of an academic Romanesque Revival structure. Built of light-brown sandstone, its most outstanding feature is a massive 3-story entrance tower projecting from the front of its gabled auditorium. The tower features crenelated battlements, wall buttresses, round arches cut into its upper story for a belfry, and a polygonal projection on its southeast corner. Its main entrance has recessed, grouped round arches, while adjoining the tower is a 1-story side-entrance pavilion decorated with a blind arch containing a trio of open round arches supported by Medieval columns.

Equally prominent is St. Patrick's Catholic Church (Map #84), built also in 1898 at the corner of Church and Cross Streets. Designed by architect Charles D. Maginnis, it is an imposing brick basilican-plan church with Victorian Gothic detailing and a clerestory roof. Its narrow end contains a central doorway nestled in a huge terra cotta pointed arch, with a rose window above it and pointed-arched corbeling. Pointed arches throughout have typical Victorian Gothic polychroming. The church's most striking feature is a 7-story bell tower set to the rear of its south side, with the top two stories having grouped pointed-arched openings within polychromed pointed blind arches.

Finally, there is the United Methodist Church (Map #71) that was erected on Linwood Ave. in 1911. Designed by architect Edwin T. Chapin of Worcester, it embodies the Neo-Gothic style that was popular at that time. Front-gabled and built of granite, it has a 3-story, square entrance tower projecting from the western end of its facade. The tower has crenellations, wall buttresses, large pointed-arched openings with tracery for a belfry, and a pointed-arched entrance. On the opposite end of the facade projects a 1-story entrance pavilion with wall buttresses, a finial, and a pointed-arched doorway surmounted with drip molding. In the church's gable end is a large pointed-arched window, while beneath it, dominating the center of the facade, is a great bowed window with stained glass and tracery.

Residential Buildings

Along the north, south, and west sides of Whitinsville's mill complexes extend the housing of the people who worked in them. Surviving houses in the District reflect the complete social spectrum of the factory village, from the mansions of the owners and top officials of the mills, to the

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commodious residences of mid-level managers, to the cottages of foremen, to the duplexes of skilled and clerical workers, to the multi-family tenements of unskilled laborers. In addition to this social differentiation, Whitinsville's houses vary widely according to age. They span the century or more of the community's industrial development, and reflect the architectural styles popular in each period. Thus the District contains significant numbers of Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and American Colonial style houses, and lesser traces of the Georgian, Federal, Italianate, Mansard, Stick, and Shingle styles. For many of these styles, there exists a range of high-style to vernacular, reflecting the social/industrial hierarchy of the time.

Residential Buildings: Pre-1830

The District contains only one 18th century structure, the James Fletcher House, 1 Elm Place (Photo #9, Map #347), built in 1770 by the proprietor of an iron forge on the nearby Mumford River (now the site of the "Brick Mill"). Two and a half stories tall and end-gabled, the James Fletcher House has such Georgian vernacular features as a large central chimney, flush eaves on the gable ends, and a slightly-asymmetrical three-bay facade. More recent additions include a pedimented entrance porch and a sun porch on the side.

With the advent of industrialization in the early 19th century, a small Federal style mill village grew up adjacent to the Mumford River. It included the house of one of the first mill-owners, the Paul Whitin Homestead, 72-76 Linwood Ave. (c. 1800; Photo #8, Map #55), which originally stood on the site of the present Town Hall. Although the house was considerably altered in the 1870s, when it was moved to its present location and converted into a tenement, it retains such Federal-period features as projecting flared lintels with keystones over the windows, 6/6 sashes, and a 5-bay facade / central doorway on an end-gabled house form.

On Fletcher St. stand several types of worker housing that have survived from the late Federal period. 20-22, 26-28, and 36-38 Fletcher St. (c. 1826; Photo #16, Map #20, 21, 22) are 2½-story, end-gabled brick tenements, with flared lintels in the brick-work over the windows and 5-bay facades. 70 and 76 Fletcher St. (c. 1830; Map #26, 27) are 1½-story, end-gabled capes, with Federal vernacular doorways featuring attenuated, fluted Doric pilasters and rectangular transoms surmounted by projecting cornices.

Residential Buildings: Early Victorian

Between 1830 and the mid-1860s, Greek Revival was the dominant architectural style in Whitinsville. Surviving examples range from the high-style mansions of the industrial elite to the most vernacular workers' tenements. At the upper end of the scale is the John C. Whitin House, 10 Chestnut St. (c. 1840; Map #289), the first residence of the prime mover behind

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the Whitin Machine Works. It features a pedimented, end-gabled roof, a recessed portico along its front, supported by monumental fluted Doric columns, and full-length windows on the ground floor. Originally located on Main St. opposite the Whitin Machine Works, it was moved to its present site about 1870; several decades later, a large Colonial Revival wing was added to its west side. Equally grand is the Samuel Batchelor House (Photo #10, Map #211), built c. 1830 on Church St. by a leading official in the Whitin Machine Works. It has a full Greek-temple front, with pediment, entablature, and monumental fluted Ionic columns, as well as a central doorway surrounded by full-length sidelights and a rectangular transom.

In addition to these two outstanding examples, the District contains some 62 lesser Greek Revival houses, mostly built by the mill-owners for their employees. In most cases, these houses are characterized by paneled corner pilasters, entablatures under the eaves, and doorways surrounded by entablatures and paneled pilasters. With the exception of a large 2½-story pedimented house at 76 Hill St. (c. 1850; Photo #5, Map #221), these Greek Revival residences fall into three general categories: 1½-story single-family cottages, 1½-story duplexes, and 2½-story multi-family tenements.

There are some sixteen 1½-story single-family Greek Revival cottages, built around 1850, scattered throughout the Whitinsville District. While four, 1, 5, and 6 Elm St. (Map #333, 334, 344) and 1 Linden St. (Map #294), have end-gables and central doorways, the remainder follow the typical front-gable, side-hall plan of the period. More elaborate examples, with a recessed one-story porch supported by fluted Doric columns or by Doric posts, are found at: 62 Hill St. (Map #219), 106 Fletcher St. (Map #29), 27 and 43 Cross St. (Map #82, 80), and 32 Cottage St. (Map #34). Simpler versions, originally without porches (which have since been added) are found in two clusters, 202, 208, and 216 Main St. (Map #237, 238, 239) and 56, 82, and 88 Hill St. (Map #218, 222, 223), as well as at 66 High St. (Map #275).

The District contains numerous examples of 1½-story Greek Revival duplexes. Typically, they are end-gabled, have 6-bay facades with paired central doorways, and are decorated with corner paneled pilasters, entablatures under the eaves, and doorways surrounded by paneled pilasters and topped by narrow rectangular transoms and entablatures. The largest cluster of such houses, with 17 examples dating from 1847, is found at 2-4, 6-8, 7-9, 10-12, 11-13, 14-16, 15-17, 18-20, 19-21, 22-24, 23-25, 26-28, 27-29, 30-32, 31-33, 34-36, and 35-37 Forest St. (Photo #17, Map #253, 254, 269, 255, 268, 256, 267, 257, 266, 258, 265, 259, 264, 260, 263, 261, 262). Many are in an excellent state of preservation, except for hipped dormers and sun-rooms added in 1910. Smaller groupings of these Greek Revival duplexes, built c. 1845-1850, are found at 24-26, 30-32, and 42-44 Linwood Ave. (Photo #19, Map #50, 51, 52) and at 19-21, 27-29, and 45-47 Fletcher St. (Map #43, 42, 41), while individual examples appear at 9-11 Grove St.

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(Map #352), 60-62 High St. (Map #276), and 92-94 Linwood Ave. (Map #57).

Finally, the District contains 19 examples of larger, 2½-story Greek Revival structures, built between 1845 and 1864 as multi-family tenements. All are end-gabled with paired central doors, with the exception of two front-gabled examples: 42-46 Fletcher St. (Map #23) and 126-132 Main St. (Map #234), which alone in this group boasts a full pediment. Ten examples, scattered throughout the District, have such Greek Revival features as paneled pilasters at corners and doorways and entablatures at eaves and over doorways: 59-63 and 71-77 Fletcher St. (Map #39, 38), 13-19 Elm St. (Map #336), 25-27, 29-31, and 33 East St. (Map #156, 157, 159), 1-3 and 17 Grove St. (Map #350, 353), 3-5 Forest St. (Map #270), and 76 High St. (Map #273). However, seven such tenements, built in 1864 at 2-6, 8-14, 16-22, 24-30, 32-38, 40-46, 48-54, and 56-62 High St. (Photo #18, Map #283, 282, 281, 280, 279, 278, 277, 276), are almost totally vernacular, with only eyebrow windows tying them to the Greek Revival tradition.

Far less common than the Greek Revival are the Italianate houses in the Whitinsville District, with only nine examples surviving from the 1855-1875 period. Even such a small sample, however, reflects the range of the social hierarchy in the village.

At the top of the scale, two Whitin family members built ornate Italianate villas in the mid-1850s on the hill above Douglas Rd., overlooking the Whitin Machine Works and the Mumford River. Although both houses have since disappeared, the Charles E. Whitin Carriage House (1856; Map #348) survives as the most high-style Italianate structure in the District. Cubiform in shape, it has round-arched windows with drip moldings, paired brackets supporting overhanging eaves, and a hipped roof surmounted by a bracketed cupola with round-arched windows.

Two L-shaped Italianate houses are representative of the District's middle class. 24 Cottage St. (c. 1860; Map #35) is 2½ stories tall, has round-arched windows with drip molding in its gable ends, and features a bracketed, 1-story bay window. More modest is 88-90 High St. (c. 1870s; Map #271), which is 1½ stories tall, with paired narrow windows and a bracketed canopy over the door in its ell.

On East St. are two Italianate versions of the house type so prevalent in the Greek Revival style: the 1½-story, end-gabled duplex with paired central doors. 21-23 East St. (1875; Map #138) has paired brackets under overhanging eaves, cornice caps over windows, and a canopy supported by over-sized brackets and decorated with a bracketed cornice. More complex is 52-54 East St. (1870s; Map #138), with paired brackets at its eaves, a porch with chamfered posts connecting two bay windows, and a high-pitched central gable.

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The District also has several larger multi-family houses with Italianate detailing: 14-20 Elm St. (c. 1870; Map #342) is a 2½-story, end-gabled structure whose central doorway has a flat-roofed canopy supported by oversized, Neo-Grec ornamented brackets; 8 Elm St. (c. 1870; Map #343), 2½ stories and front-gabled, has a bracketed pent canopy on a side door and a 2-story bay window; while 90-98 Fletcher St. (c. 1850; Map #28), originally the Samuel Fletcher house, has a 2½-story, end-gabled central block flanked by 1½-story, end-gabled wings whose doorways have Neo-Grec bracketed canopies.

Finally, the earliest row-houses built in Whitinsville contain elements of the Italianate style. Located at 168-178, 190, and 220-230 Main St. (Map # 236, 235, 240) and at 7-17 High St. (Photo #20, Map #284), these 1864-vintage structures are 2½ stories tall, end-gabled, and have 18-bay facades with three pairs of doorways. Over each set of doors is a canopy supported by three large scrolled brackets.

There are only two Mansard style structures, dating from the mid-1870s, in the Whitinsville District. The more elaborate of the two, 128 Linwood Ave. (Map #58) served as a hotel before being converted into a residence. Standing 1 3/4 stories tall, it has a straight mansard roof with gabled dormers, and a full-facade porch with chevron molding and brackets that is supported by chamfered posts on high pedestals. Nearby, 144 Linwood Ave. (Map #60) is also 1 3/4 stories tall with a slightly concave Mansard roof, but has lost all other details through siding.

Residential Buildings: Late Victorian

The Stick Style, in its pure form, is found only on eight examples of worker housing scattered throughout the Whitinsville District. Most typically, they feature stick-work supporting canopies over their front doors. Those with stick-style pent canopies include: 192 Castle Hill Rd. (c. 1880s; Map #9), a 2½-story, front-gabled, single-family house; 24-26 Elm St. (c. 1870s; Map #341), a 2-story, end-gabled multi-family house; and 32-34 Elm St. (c. 1870s; Map #340), and 180-182 and 186-188 Castle Hill Rd. (c. 1880s; Map #11, 10), 1½-story, end-gabled duplexes. Variations, with Stick-style, flat-roofed canopies, are found on the 2½-story, end-gabled houses at 39-43 and 40-44 Elm St. (c. 1880s; Map #337, 338). More unusual is 28 East St. (c. 1870s; Map #132), a 1½-story, end-gabled house, which has stick-work screens in its gabled wall dormers.

Several of the most notable residences in the District contain a mixture of Stick detailing with one or more of the other styles popular in the post-Civil War period. For example, the Gustavus Taft House ("Hillside"), 46 Hill St. (Photo #11, Map #217), built in 1875 by the Superintendent of the Whittin Machine Works, features an exotic blend of Stick, Victorian Gothic, and Mansard elements. Two-and-a-half stories tall and "L"-shaped,

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the Taft house has diagonal Stick framing on its wall surfaces, Victorian Gothic gable screens, and a high Mansard roof (with cresting) on a 3 3/4-story tower.

Even more elaborate is the Arthur Whitin House, 87 Linwood Ave. (1875; Photo #12, Map #68), which combines the Stick and Queen Anne styles. Two-and-a-half stories tall, it has an extremely irregular high hip roof, with numerous gabled dormers and gable ends over projecting bays and pavilions. Stick style features include stick-work in gable ends, stick framing on facades, pent window caps, and a generally rectilinear, boxy form. Queen Anne influence is seen in the turned posts of its large front porch.

Another notable Stick/Queen Anne structure in the District is the stable at 5 Elm Place (c. 1880; Map #36), that is all that remains of a once-extensive Whitin estate. It is a long, rectangular, 1½-story building with a complex end-gabled roof. It contains such Stick style details as stick-work in the gable ends and large stick brackets supporting an entrance canopy on its south facade. The Queen Anne style is reflected in the shingles in the gable ends and the patterned shingles in a prominent cross gable.

Five simpler houses in the District also contain a mixture of Stick style and Queen Anne features. 21 Pleasant St. (c. 1890; Map #94), a 2½-story, hip-roofed, single-family house, combines stick brackets in a cross gable with such Queen Anne elements as turned posts, fan brackets, patterned shingles, and patterned, colored glass. 36-38 East St. (c. 1870s; Map #135) is a 2½-story, end-gabled, multi-family house, with a stick-supported pent canopy on the side and patterned shingles in the decorative pediment on its front porch. Nearly identical are the three 1½-story, front-gabled duplexes at 18, 30-32, and 36-38 Water St. (c. 1880s; Map #323, 321, 320), which have stick-work in their gable ends, and side entrance porches with stick brackets and Queen Anne turned posts.

Roughly one-third of the houses in the District, some 97 structures in all, were built in the Queen Anne style. They include larger and smaller single-family houses, larger and smaller duplexes, and a variety of multi-family tenements and row-houses. They range from complex, high-style expressions to extremely vernacular examples with only one or two elements of the style. All told, the Queen Anne houses in the District encompass at least 23 different housing types, with as many more varieties of ornamentation. Whitinsville's Queen Anne neighborhoods range from middle class enclaves along Linwood Ave., Pleasant St., and Hill St., to uniform worker housing in the district to the West of the Whitin Machine Works, to highly variegated worker housing in the blocks between Linwood Ave. and Church St.

The most notable Queen Anne houses in the District form a small row along Linwood Ave., between Cross St. and the high school. All of them fall into the category of middle class housing, as opposed to the larger

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estates of the mill-owners. 145 Linwood Ave. (c. 1900; Map #65) is a 2½-story, hip-roofed house with multiple gables, a turreted corner tower, and a wrap-around, 1-story porch with turned posts. 131-137 Linwood Ave. (c. 1890; Map #66) is an ornate 2½-story duplex, with paired front gables, large 2-story porches with turned posts and lattice-work, patterned shingles in the gable ends, and cut-away corners. 121 Linwood Ave. (c. 1890s; Map #67) is a 2½-story, front-gable house, with a prominent cross gable and hipped dormer, a porch with an entrance pediment, a recessed second-story porch with spindle-work, and patterned shingles and a Palladian window in the gable end.

In the blocks to the North and West of these houses are five slightly smaller single-family residences with complex Queen Anne ornamentation. 2 Brook St. (c. 1890s; Map #106) is a 2-story, hip-roofed house with turned posts on its porch and a 2-story, aproned bay window. 42 Johnston Ave. (c. 1890s; Map #204) is a 2-story, front-gabled house with patterned shingles, patterned colored glass, and a wrap-around porch decorated with an entrance pediment. 36-40 Johnston Ave. (c. 1880s; Map #30) is a 1½-story, front-gabled house with turned posts, patterned shingles, and a square corner tower with a bell-cast hipped roof. 24 Willow St. (c. 1890s; Map #102) is a 1½-story, end-gabled house with a corner tower, gabled wall dormers, and a wrap-around porch decorated with turned posts and spindles. Finally, 16 Willow St. (c. 1890s; Map #104) is a 1½-story, "L"-shaped, gable-roofed house with cut-away corners and a porch with turned posts and spindles.

The District also contains 13 single-family houses with somewhat simpler Queen Anne trim. 16, 28, and 33 Pleasant St. (c. 1890; Map #88, 90, 92) are basically similar front-gabled, 2½-story houses, with patterned shingles and porches with turned posts and entrance pediments. 20 Pleasant St. (c. 1890; Map #89), is a 2-story, "L"-shaped, gabled house with turned porch posts and paneled wall detail. Five of these houses are front-gabled and 1½ stories tall: 195 and 205 Hill St. (c. 1890s; Map #230, 229) have fan brackets at the eaves and turned porch posts; 84 East St. (c. 1890s; Map #144) has patterned colored glass and a wrap-around porch with turned posts; 39 Johnston Ave. (c. 1890s; Map #203) has a wrap-around porch with paired brackets and possibly patterned shingles (now covered with synthetic siding); and 31 Willow St. (c. 1890s; Map #99) has turned porch posts and colored patterned glass.

The remaining four single-family Queen Anne houses retain only a portion of their original trim: 15 Linden St. (c. 1890s; Map #290), a 2½-story, end-gabled house, has only a polygonal corner tower left; 10 Pleasant St. (c. 1890; Map #87), a 2½-story, hip-roofed house, has only an entrance pediment on its porch; 34 Brook St. (c. 1890; Map #355), a 1½-story, "L"-shaped, gabled house, has only turned posts with brackets on its porch; and 5 Grove St. (c. 1890; Map #351), a 1½-story, end-gabled house, has only turned posts on its entrance porch.

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The 57 Queen Anne duplexes in the District fall into two basic categories: uniform rows of mill housing in the area to the West of the Whitin Machine Works; and highly diverse examples in the neighborhoods to the East of the Machine Works. The first type consists of 39 identical duplexes that were all built around 1889 and that incorporate the following features: 1½ stories tall, end-gabled roof, a central gable decorated with fish-scale shingles, solid vergeboards, and drilled-hole motifs, an entrance porch with turned posts, and peaked windows in the gable ends. With the exceptions of 2-4 and 8-10 Fletcher St. (Map #18, 19), these duplexes are all clustered on Main St. and its adjoining streets, as follows: 5-7 and 10-12 Linden St. (Map #293, 295); 211-213, 223-225, 231-233, 240-242, 243-245, 252-254, 253-255, 258-260, and 270-272 Main St. (Map #248, 247, 246, 241, 245, 242, 244, 243, 31); 1-3, 2-4, 5-7, 6-8, 9-11, 10-12, 13-15, 14-16, 17-19, 18-20, 21-23, 22-24, 25-27, and 26-28 Maple St. (Map #311, 298, 310, 299, 309, 300, 308, 301, 307, 302, 306, 303, 305, 304); 1-3, 2-4, 5-7, 6-8, 9-11, 10-12, and 13-15 Oak St. (Map #325, 331, 326, 330, 327, 329, 328); and 1-3, 2-4, 5-7, 6-8, and 9-11 West St. (Map #315, 313, 316, 314, 317).

Of the 18 remaining Queen Anne duplexes, only four have retained much of their original complexity. 20-22 and 23-25 Willow St. (1895; Map #103, 98) and 24-26 Brook St. (c. 1880s; Map #112) are all 1½-story, end-gabled houses with pairs of 2-story, turreted bay windows on either side of central entries. While all three houses have entrance porches connecting the bay windows, those on Willow St. have turned posts, while the one on Willow St., rather oddly, has chamfered posts. 62-64 East St. (c. 1890s; Map #139) is a double-decker whose appearance differs markedly from most other houses in the District. Two stories tall with a flat roof, it has a 2-story wrap-around porch with turned posts.

While the remaining 14 Queen Anne duplexes vary according to size and configuration, they all bear only a trace of stylistic detail, usually only turned posts on porches and patterned shingles in gable ends. This group includes one 2½-story hipped-roofed example: 37-39 Pleasant St. (c. 1890s; Map #91); three 2-story hipped-roofed examples: 80, 87-89, and 88 East St. (c. 1900; Map #143, 164, 145); one 1 3/4-story, end-gabled example: 221 Hill St. (c. 1890s; Map #227); five 1½-story, end-gabled examples: 6-8 Briggs St. (c. 1890s; Map #121), 12-14 Baton Ave. (c. 1890s; Map #207), 8-10 and 12-14 Brook St. (c. 1890s; Map #108, 109), and 53 East St. (c. 1880s; Map #162); and four 1½-story examples with paired front gables: 31-33 Brook St. (c. 1890s; Map #123), 76-78 East St. (c. 1900; Map #142), 36-38 Johnston Ave. (c. 1890s; Map #206), and 33-35 Willow St. (c. 1890s; Map #100).

Finally, the District contains 19 larger multi-family structures with varying amounts of Queen Anne trim. Among the more complex examples are: 11 Brook St. (c. 1890s; Map #127), a 2½-story "L"-shaped house with a corner porch, 2-story aproned bay window, patterned shingles, and decorative paneling; 20-22 Brook St. (c. 1890s; Map #111), a 2½-story, end-gabled house

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with patterned shingles in a central gable, turned posts and spindle-work on its porch, and fan brackets; and 9 Willow St. (c. 1890s; Map #95), a 2½-story, front-gabled house with patterned shingles, spindle-work, and cut-away corners.

Six other multi-family houses, while somewhat simpler, also contain a variety of Queen Anne details: 16-18 Brook St. (c. 1890s; Map #110), a 2½-story, "L"-shaped house, has turned porch posts and decorative paneling; 17-19 Brook St. (c. 1890s; Map #126), a 2½-story, end-gabled house, has turned porch posts, fan brackets, and a central gable; 27-29 and 28-30 Brook St. (c. 1890s; Map #124, 113), 2½-story, end-gabled houses, have turned posts and entrance pediments on their porches; 32-34 Brook St. (c. 1890s; Map #114), also 2½-story and end-gabled, has a pair of turreted bay windows in front, with shingled aprons and paired brackets; and 42-44 East St. (c. 1880s; Map #136), 2½-story and end-gabled, has a central gable adorned with patterned shingles and a gable screen, and turned porch posts.

The remaining 10 multi-family houses contain only such minimal Queen Anne details as turned porch posts and patterned shingles. They include three 2½-story, end-gabled examples: 66-68 East St. (c. 1880s; Map #140) and 52-54 and 62-64 Fletcher St. (c. 1880s; Map #24, 25); a 2½-story, front-gabled example with a 2-story porch: 3 Brook St. (c. 1890s; Map #129); a 2½-story, "L"-shaped example: 1 Johnston Ave. (c. 1890s; Map #202); a 1½-story, end-gabled three-plex: 27-29½ Willow St. (c. 1890s; Map #59); and four 2-story, 6-family, end-gabled row houses: 10-16, 22-28, 48-56, and 78-82 Water St. (c. 1900s; Map #324, 322, 319, 318).

The District contains only a relative handful of Shingle style houses. For the most part, they are commodious single-family residences built for upper-level managers in the mills. The greatest concentration of completely-shingled examples is in the Chestnut St. area, including: 3 Chestnut St. (1889; Map #286), a 2½-story, flared hipped-roofed house, with a central dormer and shingled porch posts; 7 Chestnut St. (1895; Map #287), a 2-story, end-gabled house with a flared gambrel roof and gambrel gable-within-a-gable in front; and 71 High St. (c. 1890; Map #231), a 1½-story, end-gabled house, with an offset, 2-story turreted bay window in front, and a recessed, round-arched entrance on the side.

13 Chestnut St. (c. 1890s; Map #288) has a look-alike at 213 Hill St. (c. 1890s; Map #228): both are 2-story, front-gabled houses with porches with shingled posts tucked under over-sweeping roofs. Other notable Shingle style examples are: 66 Linwood Ave. (c. 1890s; Map #54), a 2½-story, end-gabled house with curved window heads and shingled porch posts; and 70 Hill St. (c. 1890s; Map #220), a 2½-story, hipped-roofed house with a central dormer with a recessed shingled arch, and a curved, projecting porch with a low shingled wall (sadly, this house has recently been sided).

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The District also contains several more vernacular shingled houses, in which only portions of the building reflect the Shingle style. 174 Castle Hill Rd. (c. 1890; Map #12) is a 1½-story, front-gabled house with shingles and a curved window head in its gable end. 229-231 Hill St. (1888; Map #226) and 9 Linden St. (1888; Map #292) are identical 2½-story end-gabled duplexes, with only shingle detailing in their large central dormers and their gable ends to place them in this stylistic category.

Finally, there are several hybrid Late Victorian houses in the District, that combine elements of the Shingle style with features from other styles popular at the time. Most notable is "Oakhurst," 120 Hill St. (c. 1890; Photo #13; Map #224), designed by architect Samuel Stahl for mill-owner Chester W. Lasell, which is the largest estate to have survived in the District. A long, rambling, 2½-story, end-gabled mansion, "Oakhurst" combines a shingled upper story and shingled recessed arches in gable ends with the asymmetry, irregular roof-line, and exposed chimneys typical of the Queen Anne style. Moreover, it contains such Colonial Revival features as a multi-columned, balustraded entrance porch and decorative, round-arched and oval windows. A far simpler hybrid is 35 Brook St. (c. 1890s; Map #122), a 2½-story, front-gabled house, which is sheathed in shingles and has a curved window head, but also has unfluted Colonial Revival columns on its porch.

While the District contains a number of pure examples of the Colonial Revival style, none of them are even remotely high-style. In fact, there is only one single-family specimen to be found, 35 Cross St. (1895; Map #81), a 2½-story, front-gabled house which, although having lost most of its detailing to siding, at least has retained its smooth, round Colonial Revival porch columns.

However, the District does contain 18 multi-family dwellings that possess various elements of the Colonial Revival style. Most elaborate is 77-79 Linwood Ave. (c. 1890; Map #69), a 2½-story, hipped-roofed duplex, with clustered Colonial Revival columns on its entrance porches and curved pediments on prominent dormers. Also of interest is 112-114 East St. (c. 1900; Map #150), a 2½-story, end-gabled house with a gabled projecting central pavilion and a porch with clustered Colonial Revival columns.

Near the eastern end of East St. stands a cohesive group of six Colonial Revival duplexes that the Whittin Machine Works erected around 1900. While all are 1 3/4-stories tall, end-gabled, and have entrance porches with Colonial Revival columns, they fall into three distinct varieties: 108-110 and 117-119 East St. (Map #149, 168) have jerkin-headed central gables; 116-118 and 120-122 East St. (Map #151, 152) have gabled central gables; while 109-111 and 121-123 East St. (Map #166, 169) have gambrel roofs and gambrel central gables.

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There are four other duplexes in the District with simple Colonial Revival detailing. Two of them are 2½-story, front-gabled examples: 19-21 Willow St. (c. 1890s; Map #97) has elliptical fan-lights in a glassed-in, wrap-around porch; and 94 East St. (c. 1900; Map #147) has a 2-story, recessed porch with Colonial Revival columns and balustrades. The final two duplexes have only Colonial Revival columns to link them to this particular style: 13-15 Willow St. (c. 1890s; Map #96) is 2½ stories with a hipped roof and a hipped central dormer, while 25-27 Pleasant St. (c. 1890s; Map #93) is 2½ stories with an end-gabled roof and a central gable in front.

Finally, the District contains six 6-family row-houses, built around 1900, that have porches with Colonial Revival columns. They all are 2 stories tall and are end-gabled. With the exception of 1-11 Lake St. (Map #33), they form a continuous row along the north side of East St., at its eastern-most end: 141-147, 149-155, 157-163, 165-171, 173-179 East St. (Map #170, 171, 172, 173, 174).

20 Cross St. (c. 1890; Map #85) merits separate mention as an unusual house that combines predominantly Colonial Revival features with other Late Victorian influences. Standing 2½ stories tall, it has a jerkin-head roof whose gable end faces the street. Its porch has Ionic Colonial Revival columns, while its gable end contains a semi-circular fanlight surrounded by a band reading: "F.A. Adams Art Studio." On the side, near the front corner, is a 2nd-floor oriel window with diamond panes and a pediment.

Residential Buildings: 20th Century

The final "historic" style to appear in the Whitinsville District is the American Colonial, the Post-World War I, stripped-down version of the Colonial Revival. There is one high-style residence in the District that stands on the borderline between these two Colonial phases: the Josiah Lasell, 2d House, 255 Hill St. (1904; Photo #14, Map #225). Typical of the Colonial Revival, it has a high, slightly-flaired hipped roof with large pedimented dormers; a trio of long, round-arched windows with keystones in the second floor over the entry; and a balustrade decorated with urns on the roof of the entrance porch. However, it also has such American Colonial features as a totally self-contained rectangular form, without any projecting bays or towers; an extremely small-scale entrance porch; and hardly any other decorative trim.

The District also contains five middle-class examples of the American Colonial style, built in the inter-war decades: 5 and 25 Brook St. (Map #128, 125), 51 Cross St. (Map #372), and 14 and 16 Linden St. (Map #296, 297). Basically similar except for minor stylistic details, these are 2½-story, end-gabled houses with such American Colonial features as small, columned entrance porches with pediments and/or elliptical arches, elliptical fans over doorways, and 1-story sun-rooms or sun-porches attached to the

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sides. In addition, there is also from this period one example of a Dutch Colonial house, at 106 East St. (Map #148), 1 story tall and end-gabled, with nearly a full second story under a gambrel roof and with long pent dormers in the front and rear.

Finally, the District contains a group of 42 more vernacular houses with American Colonial detailing, clustered on the East end of town in the vicinity of Church St. Built immediately following World War I by the Whitin Machine Works for upper-level workers, this showcase neighborhood was one of the company's last major housing projects. This area has a mix of single-family cottages, duplexes, and a large boardinghouse. Although these houses contains at least 14 different stylistic varieties, they share many of the same stripped-down versions of Georgian and Federal elements: pediments on porches, projecting pavilions, and dormers; Doric porch posts; elliptical arches in porches; and doorways decorated with partial-length sidelights, Doric pilasters, and entablatures.

This neighborhood contains: 10 single-family, end-gabled capes at 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, and 18 Summit St. (Map #363, 364, 365, 366, 370, 371) and at 9, 10, 23 and 24 Woodland St. (Map #199, 194, 201, 190); 14 2½-story, front-gabled duplexes at 346-348, 354-356, 374-376, 382-384, 390-392, 402-404, 406-408, 414-416, and 420-422 Church St. (Map #354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362) and 9-11, 10-12, 21-23, 22-24, and 26-28 Leland Rd. (Map #184, 181, 178, 187, 177); 8 2½-story, end-gabled duplexes at 13-15, 14-16, 17-19, 18-20, and 25-27 Leland Rd. (Map #185, 180, 186, 179, 188), 1-3 and 5-7 Woodland St. (Map #197, 198), and 9-11 Summit St. (Map #368); four 2-story, hipped-roofed duplexes at 5-7 and 13-15 Summit St. (Map #367, 369) and 2-4 and 6-8 Woodland St. (Map #196, 195); four 1½-story, end-gabled duplexes at 12-14, 15-17, 16-18, and 20-22 Woodland St. (Map #193, 200, 192, 191); and two 2½-story, four-family houses with gable-on-hip roofs at 1-7 and 2-10 Leland Rd. (Map #183, 182).

Finally, this neighborhood contains one large boardinghouse, Plummer House, 434 Church St. (Map #120). This structure actually consists of two separate buildings, joined by a connecting wing. One section, with its broad side fronting on Church St., is 2 stories tall and has a gable-on-hip roof. It features a monumental, central, projecting, pedimented portico, with a keystone semi-circular window in the pediment, that is supported on monumental Doric posts. Beneath this portico is a central entrance, decorated with an elliptical, keystone fan and partial-length sidelights, while on each end of the building is a doorway with a cornice cap. The second part of the boardinghouse runs parallel and behind the first, with its narrow end fronting on Leland Rd. Standing three stories tall, it also has a gable-on-hip roof. It has 3-story, central, projecting, pedimented front porches, with monumental Doric posts and a keystone, semi-circular window in the pediment. These two structures are connected by a 1-story, flat-roofed wing, with windows set in elliptical blind arches, and with a central entrance porch having a pent roof with pedimented gable.

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The boundaries given to the Whitinsville Historic District contain the town's most intact and concentrated grouping of factory-related architecture. Except for scattered re-siding, the District today retains a distinctive physical and social character developed over the 19th and early 20th centuries. Limited commercial intrusions have insinuated themselves into the district, while the prominent Whitinsville Cotton Mills have been sympathetically recycled into apartments.

The Whitinsville Historic District potentially contains a significant body of information, not included in written documentation, but existing in the form of subsurface archaeological remains. A research strategy employing archaeological techniques and examining the internal composition of the district's components through a comparative study of features and artifacts may profitably address pertinent questions concerning social stratification, cultural variability and technological change. This information may contribute much to our understanding of synchronic and diachronic aspects of the development of a New England industrial village from the 18th through 20th centuries.



## 8. Significance Whitinsville Historic District , Northbridge

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
			<input type="checkbox"/> science
			<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
			humanitarian
			<input type="checkbox"/> theater
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	1770–1930	Builder/Architect	Listed in Text
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### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Whitinsville Historic District epitomizes one of the leading institutions of the Industrial Revolution -- the New England mill village. In the course of the 19th century, hundreds of self-contained mill villages grew up on water-power sites throughout New England, manufacturing such products as textiles, metal goods, and paper. Typically, each mill village was dominated by a handful of individuals, the mill-owners, who controlled most aspects of community life. The mill-owners not only built and operated the factories that were the principal source of employment, but they also provided company housing for their workers as well as a variety of services and institutions.

While such features appear in the histories of hundreds of New England mill villages, Whitinsville is outstanding on two accounts: one the one hand, it provides an unusually complete record of the phased expansion of an industrial community, with physical evidence appearing at roughly twenty-year intervals from its rural origins in the late 18th century to its full maturity in the 1920s; secondly, for many of its stages of growth, Whitinsville contains remarkably full-blown and intact examples of the economic and social institutions of mill village life. For these reasons, Whitinsville deserves recognition as one of the premier examples of this significant phase of the Industrial Revolution, and meets criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

### Industrial Development

Whitinsville's mills reflect more than a century's evolution in two of New England's leading industries: textiles and textile machinery. While nothing remains of the village's 18th century iron forge and its textile mill of 1809, their pioneering role is represented by the surviving houses of their artisan-proprietors, the James Fletcher House, 1 Elm Place (1770; Photo # 9, Map #347) and the Paul Whitin Homestead, 72-76 Linwood Ave. (c. 1800; Photo #8, Map #55). These simple, vernacular structures typify the humble origins of many of New England's industrial entrepreneurs.

Whitinsville's two cotton mills, the "Brick Mill" (1826; Photo #1, Map #17) and the Whitinsville Cotton Mills (1845 and 1864; Photo #2, Map #19), represent between them three stages in the evolution of the early New England textile industry. The "Brick Mill" is a superb example of the early "integrated" factories of the 1820s, housing both the weaving of cloth on power looms along with the earlier spinning technology. While it is thus considerably larger than many of its predecessors (the first-generation "spinning mills," such as the one built in the village in 1809), its size was still limited by the inefficient water-power systems of the date. Like many of its contemporaries, the "Brick Mill's" dependence on water wheels and shaft drives resulted in a building that was still relatively domestic in scale. Also

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typical is the timing of the "Brick Mill's" construction. Built in 1826 by Paul Whitin & Sons, it was part of the great expansion of the cotton industry in the mid-1820s that was triggered, in part, by the Tariff of 1824.

When the original section of the Whitinsville Cotton Mills was built in 1845, it reflected the tremendous advances in water-power technology that accompanied the introduction of the turbine and the belt-drive. With these innovations, the Whitins were able to run a factory fully four times as large as the "Brick Mill" from roughly the same water power site. In vastly expanding the Whitins' manufacturing capacity, the Whitinsville Cotton Mill was part of the industry-wide boom of the mid-1840s, in the wake of the great depression of 1837-1842.

Similarly, the wing added to the Whitinsville Cotton Mill in 1864 reflected both technological and economic changes. Like many of their fellow-industrialists, the Whitins were now able to install a supplementary steam power plant to increase their output. That they should have chosen to do so in the midst of the Civil War indicates that they were among the fortunate portion of the cotton industry that was able to overcome supply problems to meet the tremendous wartime demand for cloth.

Overshadowing these cotton mills is the vast complex of the Whitin Machine Works (1847-1923; Photo #3, Map #251). It represents the growth of a major ancillary industry that emerged in New England to service the needs of the cotton and woolen manufacturers -- the production of textile machinery. Like the proprietors of many pioneer cotton mills, the Whitins maintained a small machine shop to build and repair machinery (in the 1820s, it was housed in part of the "Brick Mill"). What separated the Whitins and set them on their significant course was the inventive genius of one of the founder's sons, John C. Whitin. In 1831, he patented a cotton picker machine that was such an improvement over its predecessors that it generated a great and lasting demand. It was on the basis of this and succeeding inventions that the Whitin Machine Works was founded and grew into an industrial giant.

From its first building in 1847, the Whitin Machine Works expanded decade by decade through the 1920s to meet the regional, then national, and eventually international demand for its products. By the late 19th century, it had become one of the handful of firms that dominated the manufacture of machinery for the picking, carding, and spinning of cotton and wool. Reflecting this achievement were the numerous additions to the Whitinsville plant -- machine shops, foundries, and specialized structures -- that ultimately gave it a floor-space of 1 3/4 million square feet.

#### Residential Development

Whitinsville's housing incorporates those features most typical of New England mill village life: company ownership and a social stratification that

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emulated the job hierarchy in the mills. To those features is added a time dimensions, with the town's residential neighborhoods reflecting more than a century's evolution in these social patterns.

The vast majority of houses in the Whitinsville District were built by the mill-owners and rented out to the workers in their factories. In fact, there is a close correlation between the various expansions of the mills and the construction of additional worker housing. Thus, the erection of the "Brick Mill" in 1826 was accompanied by the building of the three brick tenements and the two capes at 20-22, 26-28, 36-38, 70, and 76 Fletcher St. (Photo #16, Map #20, 21, 22, 26, 27); the construction of the Whitinsville Cotton Mills in 1845 and its addition in 1864 saw the building of the Greek Revival and Italianate cottages, duplexes, and tenements at 1, 5, 6, 8, 13-19, and 14-20 Elm St. (Map #333, 334, 344, 343, 336, 342), at 19-21, 27-29, 42-46, 45-47, 59-63, 71-77, 90-98, and 106 Fletcher St. (Map #43, 42, 23, 41, 39, 38, 28, 29), and at 24-26, 30-32, 42-44, and 92-94 Linwood Ave. (Map #50, 51, 52, 57).

Much of the remaining housing in the Whitinsville District was a product of the steady expansion of the Whitin Machine Works, from the 1840s through the 1920s. In order to house the workers for their 1847 machine shop, the Whitins built the single-family Greek Revival cottages at 32 Cottage St. (Map #34), 27 and 43 Cross St. (Map #82, 80), 66 High St. (Map #275), 56, 62, 82, and 88 Hill St. (Map #218, 219, 222, 223), 1 Linden St. (Map #294), and 202, 208, and 216 Main St. (Map #237, 238, 239); the 17 Greek Revival duplexes at 2-4 to 35-37 Forest St. (Photo #17, Map #253-269), as well as those at 9-11 Grove St. (Map #352) and 60-62 High St. (Map #276); and the multi-family Greek Revival tenements at 25-27, 29-31, and 33 East St. (Map #156, 157, 159), 3-5 Forest St. (Map #270), 76 High St. (Map #273), and 126-132 Main St. (Map #234).

Similarly, construction of the 1864 addition to the Machine Works caused the Whitins to build the seven multi-family tenements at 2-6 to 56-62 High St. (Photo #7, Map #276-283), as well as the four Italianate row-houses at 168-178, 190, and 220-230 Main St. (Map #236, 235, 240) and at 7-17 High St. (Photo #18, Map #284). A major expansion of the Whitin Machine Works in the late 1880s was accompanied by the erection of 37 Queen Anne duplexes at 5-7 and 10-12 Linden St. (Map #293, 295), 211-213 to 270-272 Main St. (Map #241-248, 31), 1-3 to 26-28 Maple St. (Map #298-311), 1-3 to 13-15 Oak St. (Map #325-331), and 1-3 to 9-11 West St. (Map #314-317).

Continued growth of the Whitin Machine Works around 1900 produced the six Colonial Revival duplexes at 108-110, 109-111, 116-118, 117-119, 120-122, and 121-123 East St. (Map #149, 151, 152, 166, 168, 169), as well as the 11 row-houses with simple Queen Anne or Colonial Revival trim at 141-147 to 173-179 East St. (Map #170-174), 1-11 and 4-14 Lake St. (Map #33, 32), and 10-16, 22-28, 48-56, and 78-82 Water St. (Map #324, 322, 319, 318).

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Finally, major additions to the Machine Works following World War I led to the construction of the large neighborhood of worker housing at the north-eastern edge of the village, with its ten single-family capes at 1, 2, 3, 4, 10 and 18 Summit St. (Map #363, 364, 365, 366, 370, 371) and at 9, 10, 23, and 24 Woodland St. (Map #199, 194, 201, 190); its 31 American Colonial duplexes at 346-348 to 420-422 Church St. (Map #354-362), at 9-11 to 26-28 Leland Rd. (Map #178-181, 184-188), and at 1-3, 2-4, 5-7, 6-8, 12-14, 15-17, 16-18, and 20-22 Woodland St. (Map #197, 196, 198, 195, 193, 200, 192, 191); its two 4-family houses at 1-7 and 2-10 Leland Rd. (Map #183, 182); and its large boardinghouse, the Plummer House, 434 Church St. (Map #120).

Besides demonstrating the close relationship between industrial expansion and the construction of company-owned worker housing, Whitinsville also exemplifies the social stratification typical of the New England mill village. As in most such communities, it contains a range of residences reflecting the hierarchy of work within the mills. However, there are two ways in which Whitinsville is exceptional: 1) its residential stratification is among the most full-blown and finely-drawn to be found anywhere in New England; and 2) in its century of development, it illustrates the several stages in the evolution of such a community.

By the time it reached full maturity in the 1920s, the Whitinsville Historic District contained at least a dozen clearly differentiated levels of housing. At the top of the hierarchy were the large estates of the principal mill-owners, the Whitins and their descendants, of which only "Oakhurst, 120 Hill St. (c.1890; Photo #13, Map #224) still remains. Just below this pinnacle were the large, though less-imposing, mansions of the lesser members of the mill-owning family and of their top lieutenants in the mills (many of whom married into the family), including: the original John C. Whitin House, 10 Chestnut St. (c. 1840; Map #289); the Samuel Batchelor House, Church St. (c. 1830; Photo #10, Map #211); the Gustavus Taft House, 46 Hill St. (1875; Photo #11, Map #217); the Arthur Whitin House, 87 Linwood Ave. (1875; Photo #12, Map #68), and the Josiah Lasell, 2d House, 255 Hill St. (1904; Photo #14, Map #225). In addition, there are also remnants of several now-destroyed family mansions: the Charles E. Whitin Carriage House (1856; Map #348) and the stable at 5 Elm Place (c. 1880; Map #36).

The next lower rung in the village consists of the roomy, single-family houses of the mills' upper-level management. Examples of this category are found at 3, 7, and 13 Chestnut St. (Map #286, 287, 288), at 70, 76, and 213 Hill St. (Map #220, 221, 228), and at 66, 121, and 145 Linwood Ave. (Map #54, 67, 65). Beneath this group, a large class of lower-level managers and white-collar professionals occupied the smaller single-family houses at 174 and 192 Castle Hill Rd. (Map #12, 9), at 24 and 32 Cottage St. (Map #35, 34), at 27, 35, and 43 Cross St. (Map #82, 81, 80), at 1, 5, and 6 Elm St. (Map #333, 334, 344), at 106 Fletcher St. (Map #29), at 66 and 71 High St. (Map #275, 231), at 56, 62, 82, 88, 195, and 102 Hill St. (Map #218, 219, 222, 223, 230, 229), at 1 Linden St. (Map #294), at 202, 208, and 216 Main St. (Map #

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237, 238, 239), at 1, 2, 3, 4, 10 and 18 Summit St. (Map # 363-366, 370, 371), and at 9, 10, 23, and 24 Woodland St. (Map #199, 194, 201, 190). One specialized sub-group, salesmen for the Whitin Machine Works, lived at 10, 16, 20, 21, 28 and 33 Pleasant St. (Map #87, 88, 89, 94, 90, 92).

Beneath the tiers of white-collar housing stretched the equally-complex gradations of the blue-collar neighborhoods. These sections contain street after street of multi-family, company housing (whose construction was discussed above in relation to the various phases of industrial expansion). These units varied greatly according to their size and the amenities they afforded (e.g., privacy, porches, architectural details). Workers' ranks in the mills (according to their skills and seniority) determined the level of desirability of their housing.

The choicest worker housing in Whitinsville, the duplexes along Church St., Leland Rd., Summit St., and Woodland St., were reserved for foremen and clerical employees. Assistant foremen lived in the Colonial Revival duplexes on East St. Skilled workmen lived in the duplexes on Forest St., Linden St., Main St., Maple St., Oak St., and West St. Finally, at the bottom of the scale, unskilled workers occupied the multi-family tenements and row-houses on East St., High St., Lake St., Main St., and Water St.

In addition to exemplifying the many social divisions in mill village life, Whitinsville's housing also illustrates how this stratification evolved in the course of the 19th century. In particular, it reveals a growing gap between the lifestyles of the mill-owners and their workers, as well as an increasing differentiation among the various ranks of white and blue-collar workers.

The best indication of the mill-owners' rise in status, both absolutely and relative to their employees, is found in the changing character of their residences. At the outset, the houses of the first generation of manufacturers were quite modest. Both surviving examples from the late 18th century, the James Fletcher House and the Paul Whitin Homestead, differ little in size or decoration from the homes of neighboring yeomen farmers.

The second generation of mill-owners' residences represented a major leap in magnificence from these humble origins. Built in the 1830s and '40s and utilizing the Greek Revival style, the John C. Whitin House and the Samuel Batchelor House project definite images of wealth and power. However, compared to their successors, they had distinct limitations. Their grandeur depended more on their striking temple fronts than on any great size. Moreover, their placement was less than splendid, located in close proximity to both roadways and the mills.

Starting in the decades following the Civil War, the owners of Whitinsville's mills began to live as true lords of the manor. Not only did they build full-blown mansions, but they placed them in the midst of huge, park-like settings. John C. Whitin led the way in 1870 when he moved his original

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house to Chestnut St. and replaced it with an immense Victorian Gothic structure (long since destroyed), set high up on the hill overlooking the Whitin Machine Works (part of whose grounds now makes up Whitin Park). Of the various comparable estates that his descendants erected along Hill St., "Oakhurst" is the only one that remains intact within the borders of the Historic District.

At the same time that the mill-owners were adopting an increasingly grand lifestyle, the housing for their workers was becoming more and more stratified. In the 1820s, social divisions had been relatively simple, with the Whitins' employees living in either the three identical tenements or the two capes (possibly reserved for foremen) along Fletcher St. With each succeeding generation of mill housing, however, the village grew increasingly fragmented along class lines: the 1840s and '50s brought duplexes and single-family cottages of varying sizes and ornamentation; the 1860s added new layers at the bottom of the scale, with its multi-family tenements and row-houses; and the decades between the Civil War and 1920 saw the fleshing out of both the white and blue-collar hierarchies, culminating in the dozen or more divisions described above.

Institutional Development

Like the proprietors of most New England mill villages, the Whitins and their successors provided a range of community services for their workers. Whitinsville is exceptional, however, in both the number and magnificence of the institutions that the mill-owners endowed. Going far beyond meeting minimum needs, they erected an elaborate paternalistic system whose goals (largely successful) were to keep their work force content and peaceful.

By the time Whitin paternalism had reached its fullest expression in the 1920s, it had come to dominate most aspects of mill village life. Many of these company-controlled institutions are represented by buildings standing in the Whitinsville Historic District. Several pertained to the economic well-being of Whitin employees: workers purchased basic foodstuffs and dry goods from several company stores, of which the building at 49-51 Linwood Ave. (Map #72) is the last remaining example; they received dairy goods and fresh produce from a string of company farms, including Castle Hill Farms (c. 1875; Map #4-6) within the District's boundaries (moreover, workers were put to work on these company farms during slack times at the mills, building such improvements as the immense stone walls at Castle Hill Farms); and on pay days, many employees lodged part of their earnings in the Whitinsville Savings Bank (1905; Map #215), established by top company officials.

The Whitins also provided for the educational, social, and recreational needs of their work force: village children went to the various schools endowed by the mill-owners, including the Clarke School (1878; Map #83), the Aldrich School (1890; Map #216), and the Whitin-Lasell High School (1906; Photo #7; Map #64); for entertainment, workers could choose between the professionally-equipped Whitinsville Social Library (1913; Photo #6, Map #212) or the athletic facilities of the Whitin Gymnasium (1923; Map #252);

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and for those sharing the Whitins' religious faith, they could worship in the massive Village Congregational Church (1898; Photo #4, Map #213), erected with funds donated by the family.

Finally, the mill-owners underwrote many aspects of local government: in 1872, they built the Town Hall (Photo # 5, Map #48) as a memorial to their dynastic founders (which structure came to symbolize the mills' pervasive influence over town affairs); in 1922, the Whitin Machine Works built and equipped a fire station, on the corner of Main St. and West Water St., to serve both its own needs and those of the whole community; and the Whitins were also responsible for transforming Memorial Square into a focal point for civic ceremonies, with its Civil War Monument (1905; Map #74), World War I Memorial (1922), and its park-like landscaping.

Beyond the sheer number of these paternalistic institutions, Whitinsville is notable for the high quality of the structures that house them. Without exception, the buildings erected by the Whitins were built of rich materials and lavishly decorated. Moreover, the mill-owners brought in some of New England's leading architects to design them, including Peabody & Stearns, Hartwell & Richardson, Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge, and R. Clifton Sturgis from Boston, and Fuller & Delano from Worcester. As a result, Whitinsville contains an array of public buildings that go far beyond the merely functional to reflect the seignorial pretensions of the Whitins, themselves.



## 9. Major Bibliographical References

McCrea, William J., "Whitinsville, Massachusetts: An Industrial Community" (unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Virginia; copy in the Inventory files of the Massachusetts Historical Commission).  
Navin, Thomas R., The Whittin Machine Works Since 1831 (Cambridge, Mass.: 1951).

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 250

Quadrangle name Uxbridge, Mass.-R.I.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

I - 19 279920 4665300

A 19 280720 4666100  
Zone Easting Northing

B 19 280100 4665000  
Zone Easting Northing

C 19 279450 4665100

D 19 279480 4664100

E 19 278950 4664550

F 19 279150 4665180

G 19 278700 4665450

H 19 279240 4666020

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Boundaries are based on the historic extent of the village while excluding modern intrusions such as a shopping center north of Church Street. The district extends southward along Castle Hill Road to include the Castle Hill Dairy Farm discussed on page 8-6. See attached assessors map.

**List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries**

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Wendy Frontiero, Preservation Planner with B. Michael Zuckerman, consultant  
and Kenneth Warchol, Northbridge Historical Commission  
organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date November 29, 1982

street & number 294 Washington Street telephone 617 727-8470

city or town Boston state MA 02108

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☒ state ☐ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Peter L. Wasilowski

title State Historic Preservation Officer MHC date 3/2/83

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date 4/7/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration





Northbridge Assessors Records  
Dated 1/16/01  
Scale: 1 inch = 215 feet  
Approx. 250 acres in  
District



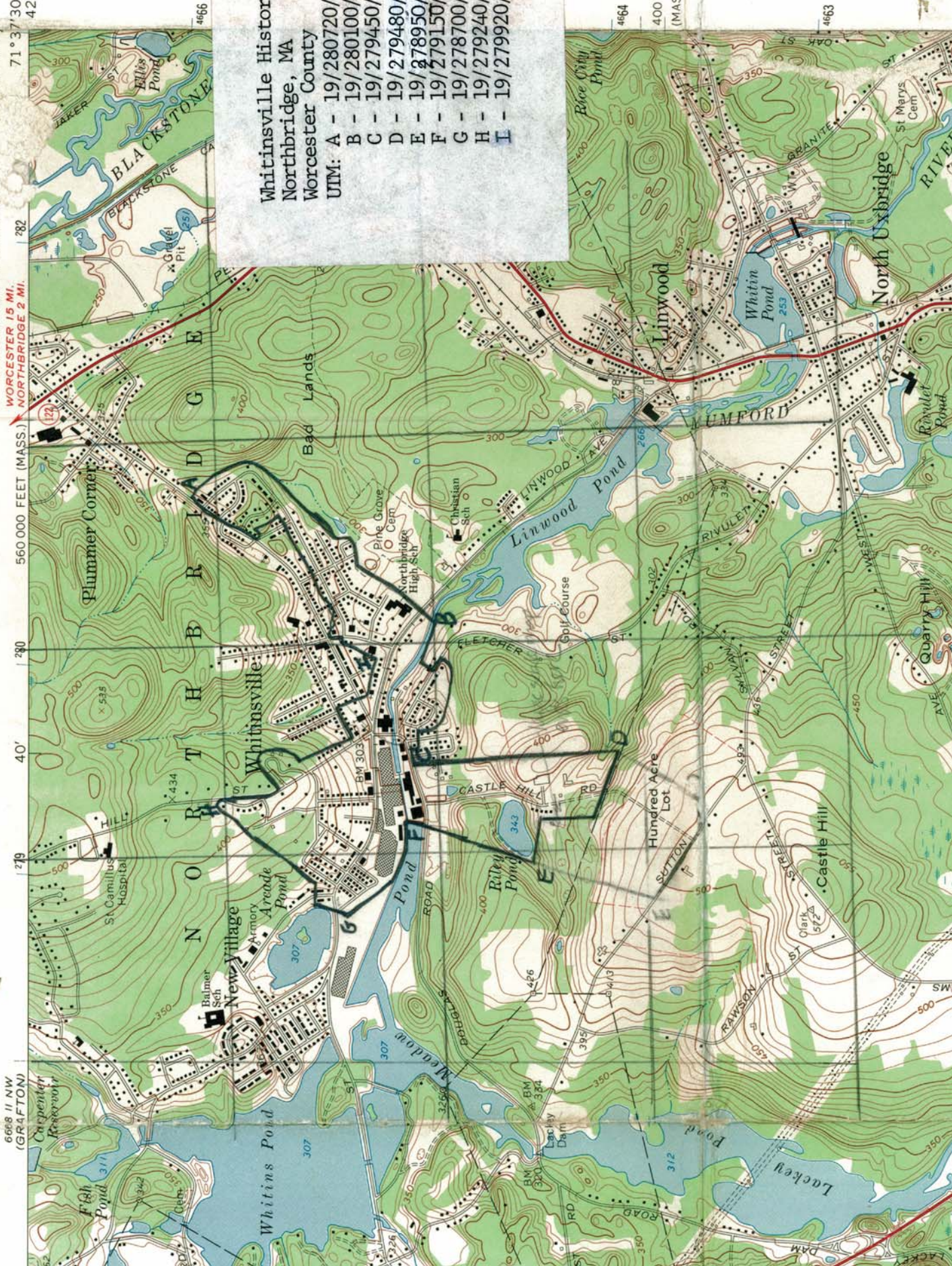
6668 II NW  
(GR4FTON)

WORCESTER 15 MI.  
NORTHBRIDGE 2 MI.

1282

71° 37' 30"

42° 07' 30"



Whitinsville Historic District

Northbridge, MA

Worcester County

UTM: A - 19/280720/4666100  
B - 19/280100/4665000  
C - 19/279450/4665100  
D - 19/279480/4664100  
E - 19/278950/4664550  
F - 19/279150/4665180  
G - 19/278700/4665450  
H - 19/279240/4666020  
I - 19/279920/4665300

400 000 FEET  
(MASS.)





1. The Brick Mill, Douglas Rd. View looking west. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





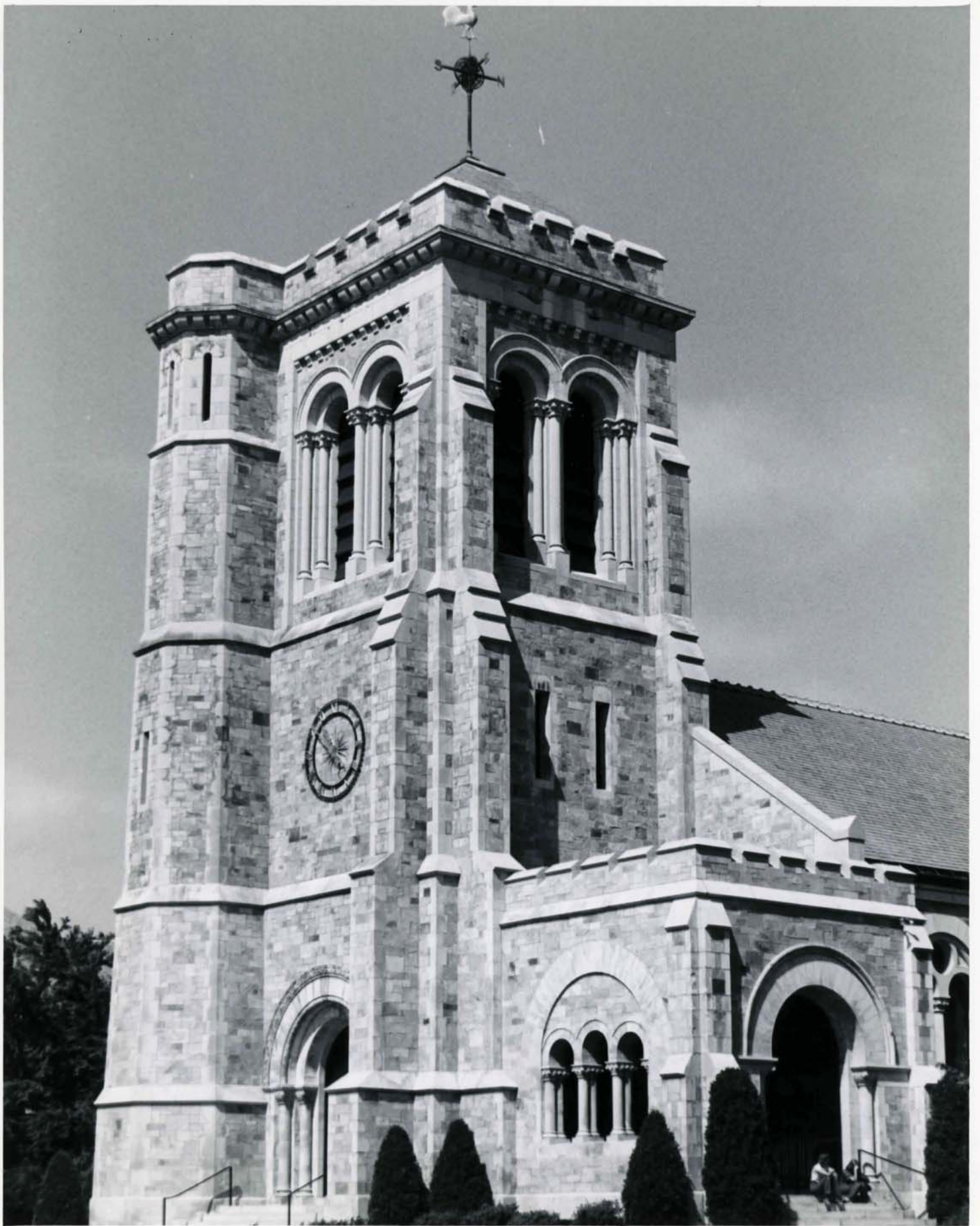
2. Whitinsville Cotton Mills, Douglas Rd. View looking east. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





3. Whitin Machine Work Shop, 1864 addition, Main Street. View looking east. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





4. Village Congregational Church, Church St. View looking north. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





5. Town Hall, Douglas Rd and Main St. View looking southwest. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





6. Whitinsville Social Library, Church St. View looking north. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





7. Whitin-Lasell High School, 119 Linwood Ave. View looking northeast. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





8. Paul Whittin Homestead, 72-76 Linwood Ave. View looking southeast. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





9. James Fletcher House, 1 Elm Place. View looking southwest. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





10. Samuel Batchelor House, 80 Church St. View looking north. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





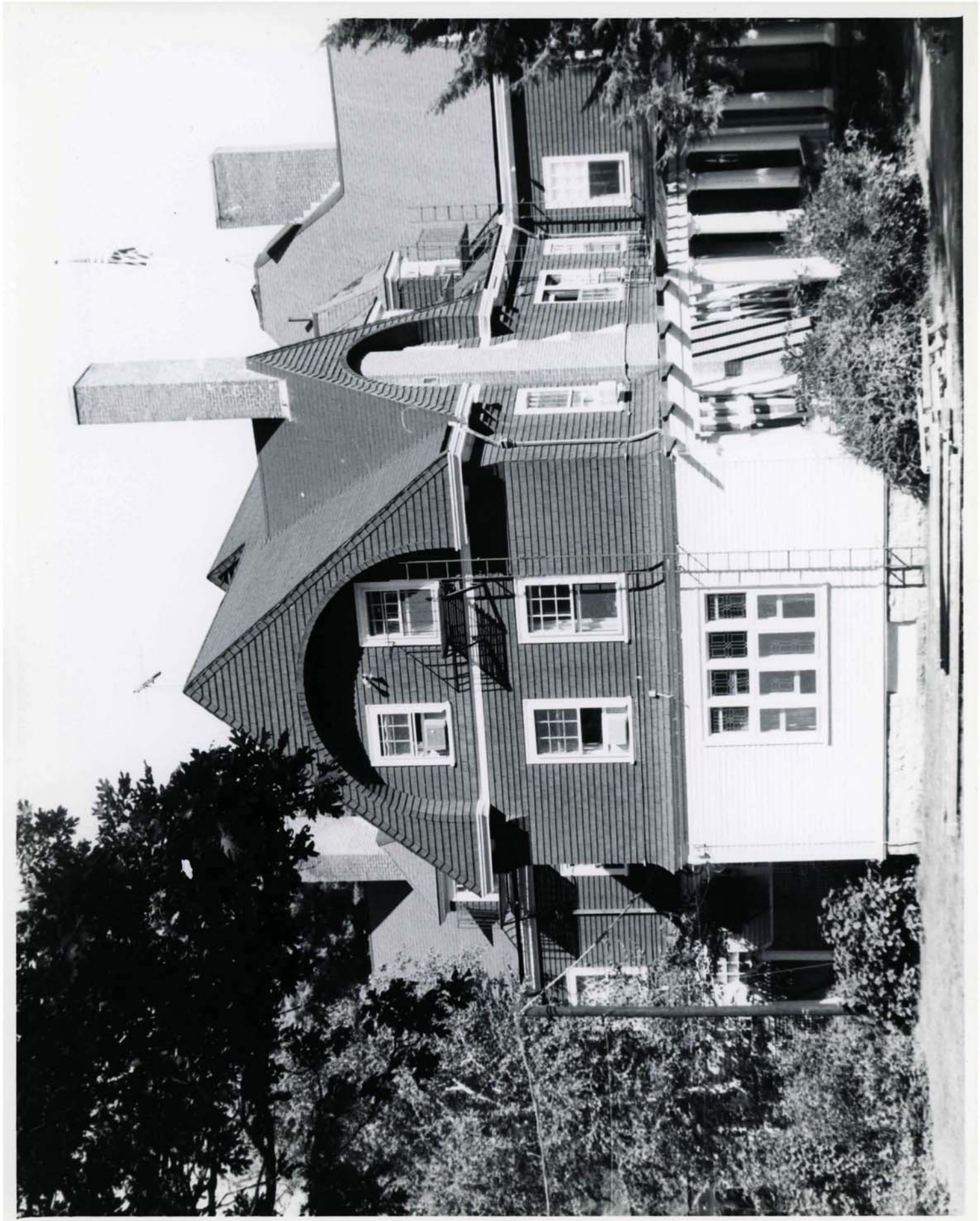
11. Gustavus Taft House ("Hillside"), 24 Hill St. View looking northeast. (Photo: Ken Warchol, 1979)





12. Arthur Whittin House, 87 Linwood Ave. View looking northeast. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





13. "Oakhurst," 120 Hill St. View looking east. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





14. Josiah Lasell 2nd House, 255 Hill St. View looking northeast. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





15. Hill Street (street view), 76-80 Hill St., looking north. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





16. Fletcher Street Tenements, 20-22, 26-28, 36-38 Fletcher Street, looking southeast. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





17. Forest Street Tenements (Street view), 7-9, 11-13, 15-17 Forest Street, looking northeast. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





18. High Street Tenements (Street view), 52, 46, 42 High St., looking south. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





19. Linwood Avenue Tenements (Street view), Greek Revival Duplexes, 24, 30 & 42 Linwood St., looking southeast.  
(Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)





20. High Street Tenements (Street view), 7-17 High Street, looking north. (Photograph: Ken Warchol, 1979)